

Correction & update

**On the Linck collection and specimens of snakes
figured by Johann Jakob Scheuchzer (1735) –
the oldest fluid-preserved herpetological collection in the world?**

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The contributions of Dr. Konstantin Wöpke to the reorganization of the Linck collection in the Naturalienkabinett Waldenburg have been outlined by Bauer and Wahlgren (2013). Unfortunately, Dr. Wöpke was inadvertently misidentified in Figure 7 (p. 227) of this paper. Originally identified as the figure on the left, he is, in fact, the figure on the right of the photo, wearing a white lab coat. The figure on the left of the photo is the mineralogist Alfred Seifert. This photograph had earlier appeared, correctly labeled, in Budig (1999).

Through the kindness of Mr. Dietrich Wöpke, who has shared some biographical data with me, I am able to provide some further information regarding his father. Konstantin Wöpke was born 29 July 1905 in Crimmitschau, 17 km west of Waldenburg, as the son of Richard and Helene (née Brendel) Wöpke. He attended school in Leipzig until the outbreak of World War I and then continued his schooling in Gotha. He studied zoology, botany, chemistry in Jena, Freiburg im Breisgau and in Leipzig. In 1930 he was promoted to the degree of Dr. phil. on the basis of his dissertation “Die Kloake und die Begattungsorgane der männlichen Zauneidechse (*Lacerta agilis* L.)” completed in Leipzig under the direction of Prof. Dr. Johannes Meisenheimer (1873–1933), a specialist on the development of invertebrates, and published in Jena (Wöpke 1930). He subsequently worked as a teaching assistant at the Zoological Institute of the University of Leipzig and as a research assistant at the Anatomical Institute in Würzburg. From 29 May 1933 to 6 July 1935 he reorganized the approximately 5000 zoological objects in the Fürstlich-Schönburg-Waldenburgische Naturalienkabinett in Waldenburg, struggling with misidentifications, mislabeling, and a century or more of the intermixing of more recently acquired specimens with the 17th and 18th century material of the original Linck collection.

In January 1934 Wöpke passed the state examination for secondary school teachers in the subjects of zoology, botany and chemistry. After graduating from his internship year at the Fürstlich-Schönburgischen Deutschen Oberschule he was employed as a private tutor at the Kammergut in Hardisleben in Thuringia. He was subsequently excluded from school employment by the Saxon Ministry of Education on political grounds and instead, from 1936 to 1939 he served as a research assistant in the Imperial Biological Institute in Naumburg/Saale, where he worked on “Phylloxera in the wine growing areas of Saale and Unstrut.” The documentation and results of this work, although apparently unpublished, are maintained in the German Federal Archives. Although he had moved on from Waldenburg, in 1937 Wöpke’s opinion was solicited about the renovation of the collections of the Franckesche Stiftungen in Haale (Mojsejenko 2013) and in the same year his guide to the Naturalienkabinett in Waldenburg was published (Wöpke 1937). In August 1939 he was sent to military service and in April 1944 he was killed in Russia. Although Wöpke’s scientific career was cut short, his contribution to the reorganization of the Linck collection in Waldenburg is a lasting legacy.

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