



IN MEMORIAM

Professor Valentin Ivanov Lavchiev, DSc

(11.01.1932-21.03.2005)

After a prolonged illness the eminent Bulgarian zoologist and ecologist Prof. Valentin Ivanov Lavchiev, DSc closed his days on 21 March 2005. His death was a big loss not only for the Bulgarian zoological science, but also for all who knew him and worked with him, because he was an erudite with a sense of responsibility, a benevolent director of studies and colleague.

Prof. Valentin Ivanov Lavchiev, DSc was born on 11 January 1932 in Nova Zagora, where he finished primary and secondary school. In 1956 he graduates in biology at the Sofia University. Still there he shows interest towards research work in the field of entomology and starts to collect and study the dipterous insects in Bulgaria under the guidance of the renowned Bulgarian entomologist Prof. P. Drenski. After graduating he teaches biology in Blagoevgrad and works at the Sanitary and Epidemiological Station in Ruse for a short time. In 1963 he wins a competition for research associate at the Institute of Zoology, BAS, where he works almost 40 years until his retirement on a pension at the end of 1999.

Valentin Lavchiev carries out an active research activity at the Institute of Zoology and wins recognition as a leading specialist in the taxonomy, distribution, biology, ecology and epidemiological significance of the synantropic and synbovile flies (family Muscidae) in Bulgaria and in the neighbour countries. From the 240 known species of synantropic and synbovile flies in Bulgaria he has determined and reported for the first time for the Bulgarian entomofauna over 200 species, 2 of which are discovered and described by him for the first time in the entomological literature. In 1987 he defends a dissertation: *Contents, Ecology and Fight against Flies in the Anthropobiocenoses in Bulgaria*, and receives the scientific degree Doctor of Biological Sciences, and in 1989 he is elected a professor in ecology. A merited end of his taxonomic and faunistic studies was volume 5 of the fundamental scientific series of the Institute of Zoology *Catalogus Faunae Bulgarica* (2003), written and prepared for publishing at the time when Prof. Lavchiev was already confined to his bed by a heavy illness and could not visit his laboratory.

Except taxonomic and faunistic research Prof. V. Lavchiev carries out on a large scale experimental and terrain studies of medical and economic importance also on the biology of development, ecology and behaviour of flies with the purpose to fight them. As a result of long standing laboratory and production experiments he works out and implements efficient insecticides (Muscotox, Decasol, Alphatox, etc.) with a great economic effect for the country.

The scientific and practical achievements of Prof. V. Lavchiev in the field of entomology and ecology of insects are published in 110 scientific contributions and in 2

popular science books, often cited and used by specialists and in practice.

Prof. V. Lavchiev, DSc was a respected colleague, with ethic and well-developed sense of humour, and with valuable qualities of a good organizer and instructor. He was for a long time head of one of the basic sections at the Institute and a head of the Scientific Council. After the changes in the country in the 1990s he took an active part in the reformation of BAS as a member of the General Assembly, the Managing Board, different committees, etc. As a member of the Medico-Biological Committee and the Presidium of the Higher Attestation Committee, as a professor at the Faculty of Biology, instructor of doctorants and diplomants he had considerably contributed to the formation of young scientific staff, to the raising of the level and the prestige of the biological science in this country. On the occasion of his 70th birthday he was awarded the highest scientific distinction of BAS – Honorary Medal on a Band “Prof. Marin Drinov”, for his multilateral scientific, organizational and social activities.

Prof. V. Lavchiev, DSc left a bright trace in the Bulgarian science as an active and productive researcher, and as a respected colleague, a good company and a warm-hearted man in the memory of all who knew him and worked with him.

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