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On the occasion of the ninetieth birthday of RNDr. Jaroslav L. Stehlík, CSc.

On April 11, our dear colleague and long the mentor to Czech and Slovak heteropterology, RNDr. Jaroslav L. Stehlík, CSc., celebrated his ninetieth birthday. Moreover, the year 2013 is also the seventieth anniversary of the publication of his first scientific paper. For the past decade, Jaroslav has been spending his retirement in fruitful work on his beloved Pyrrhocoroidea, resulting in 38 scientific papers devoted to the taxonomy and chorology of that group. In acknowledgement of Jaroslav's life achievements in entomology, he was appointed a honorary member of the Czech Entomological Society in 2006. We would like to congratulate Jaroslav Stehlík on his anniversaries and wish him all the best for the years to come. Here we include some recollections by two of his close colleagues, to commemorate the occasion.

Petr Kment

Meeting Jaroslav Stehlík

Two research topics have dominated the scientific life of Jaroslav Stehlík. One is eco-faunistic research into the Heteroptera of Moravia and Slovakia, which has resulted in a plethora of publications containing exemplary summaries of the chorology, bionomics and diagnostics of species concerned. The other has been the alpha-taxonomy of the Pyrrhocoridae (firebugs, red bugs, cotton-stainers) and Largidae of the world. Jaroslav was also able to maintain an overview of general entomological approaches to the true bugs, although he did not actively pursuit such studies.

I cannot really remember how I perceived Jaroslav's abilities when, in early 1950s I was casting about for a suitable topic for my MSc thesis ("diploma thesis" in those days) at the Biological Faculty of Charles University in Prague. From my point of view, it should have been on Heteroptera but could not address taxonomy (a subject then very nearly taboo to the authorities). I was not interested in diapause (then a favoured subject) and I flatly refused applied topics. I asked Jaroslav for advice, warmly embraced his suggestion, and in 1957 I defended a thesis entitled "Ectodermal female genitalia of the trichophorous Heteroptera". Evidence of the topicality of the subject was that, almost simultaneously, two other university students of the Heteroptera, Geoffrey G. E. Scudder in Oxford and Carl W. Schaefer in Storrs, Connecticut, began their theses along similar lines.

I cannot be grateful enough to Jaroslav for setting me on my life-time research course, a combination of morphology, phylogeny, higher classification and taxonomy of critical groups of true bugs.

My initial contacts with Jaroslav could, of course, never be entirely free of the limits imposed by our differences in age and status, but these soon disappeared and I had the privilege to know him both as a heteropterist and a personality. He was always true to his

pronounced opinions on science, but he did not expect you to share them; he was friendly and open with those he trusted, but always ready to defend his territory. He loved the research he had chosen for himself, loved the Moravian and Slovakian countryside and its natural history, and in times when boorishness was nearly a required norm, he remained courteous and elegant, a trait surely greatly appreciated by his women collaborators. He did not cease research on retirement, and the volume of flow of his publications on Pyrrhocoroidea is astonishing. Surely all hemipterists would appreciate Jaroslav's decision to write a kind of synthesis of his unique knowledge of these bugs.

Dear Jaroslav, I wish you health, strength and happiness in both your personal and scientific life, and many further years of enjoyment of your research.

Pavel Štys

A circuit tour and short circuits in southern Slovakia with Jaroslav in 1991

At the invitation of my friend Jaroslav Stehlík we undertook a collecting trip through South Slovakia in June 1991. It was a highly interesting and successful trip with plenty of interesting collection sites and rare species of bugs to capture.

Starting in Brno, we first went to the Nové Zámky district with all the famous places in its surroundings. We prepared breakfast in our hotel room and for this purpose Jaroslav had an immersion heater in his luggage. Trying to heat about a litre of water to prepare the coffee, there was a short in the unit and we had coffee neither that morning nor for nearly all the days that followed. Jaroslav was quite upset; the immersion heater belonged his wife, who used it in the school in which she taught. It was not possible to obtain a replacement. This was our first mishap with the electricity. We drove on and took up residence in a hotel in Veľký Krtíš. It was very hot, even during the night, and we kept the window open. This type of window could rotate about its vertical axis. In the night, a strong wind blew up, the window spun and threw the bedside lamp to the ground. In an instant, the whole hotel had no power. A classic case of short circuit.

Our last hotel was located in Lučenec, farther to the east. At that time Lučenec was a pretty, small town with many shops and I decided to look for an immersion heater to replace Madame Stehlík's ruined one. I was successful, and managed to buy an identical model in a hardware shop. An hour later Jaroslav came back to the hotel, again very sad because he had not obtained an immersion heater in the very same shop. The shopkeeper had informed him that the article he required had been sold only a short time earlier and that it had been the only one they had. But then his joy and mine were unconfined, when I was able to tell him who the previous customer had been, and hand the device to him.

Back home in Ingelheim, mounting and identifying the bugs collected for the first time, my eyes were opened to the species, most of which were new for my collection. A list of plant-bug species new for Slovakia was published in *Entomological Problems* (Günther 2000).

We collected many more rare species during those days in June 1991, a proof that even electrical short circuits could not influence our success.

Hannes Günther



On a collecting excursion with Slovak heteropterists, 1960s. From left to right: J. Vacek, Irina Vavřínová, Adela Beláková, Jaroslav L. Stehlík, and Olga Štěpanovičová (archive of the Moravian Museum, Brno).



The staff of the Dept. Entomology, Moravian Museum on the roof of its building in 1969. From left to right: Pavel Lauterer, Marie Novotná, Ludmila Pospíšilová, Jaroslav L. Stehlík, Irina Vavřínová, and Mrs. Kaczmarová (archive of the Moravian Museum, Brno).



Jaroslav L. Stehlík in his office in the Moravian Museum in early 1950s (archive of the Moravian Museum, Brno).

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