

HELMINTHOLOGIA, 52, 1: 83 - 84, 2015

## Professor Vlastimil Baruš has passed away



The Czech and Slovak parasitological community has received a sad news about the death of the respected parasitologist Prof. Ing. Vlastimil Baruš, D.Sc., who lost his courageous battle with illness and passed away on September 6, 2014, shortly before his 79<sup>th</sup> birthday.

He was born on October 11<sup>th</sup>, 1935 in Kojetín (the Písek district, the Czech Republic). During his studies at the University of Agriculture and Forestry in Brno (1953-1958), he specialized in helminthoses of domestic animals. He continued his parasitological journey at the Institute of Biology and the Institute of Parasitology of Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences (CAS) in Prague. There he had studied various aspects of morphology, biology and ecology of parasitic nematodes of vertebrates. Since 1976, his scientific career continued at the CAS at the Institute of Vertebrate Biology (IVB) in Brno. Thanks to his work ethic and organizational

abilities, he soon became a respected member of the CAS top management. Except for hiatus from 1985 to 1986, when he became a chancellor of the University of Agriculture and Forestry in Brno (currently known as the Mendel University in Brno), he remained faithful to the Academy. He served as the head of the Institute of Vertebrate Biology until 1989. Professor Baruš accepted humbly and respectfully the social shifts brought about by the regime change in 1989. He divided his professional activities between his home institute – IVB of Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic (AS CR) and the Department of Botany and Zoology at Faculty of Science of the Masaryk University in Brno. This allowed Professor Baruš to continue and extend his pedagogical and teaching activities as the professor of zoology. He supervised many young postgraduate students of parasitology and was a true role model for them.

Professor Baruš has authored and co-authored 25 books. A special attention should be paid to an encyclopaedic writing entitled *"Fauna of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, Amphibia"*, *"Fauna of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, Reptilia"* and *"Fauna of the Czech and Slovak Republics, Lampreys and Fishes, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> part"*, which demonstrate his wide scientific overview. Naturally, the majority of over 400 original scientific papers were devoted to his favourite roundworms and parasitology. The Professor's excellent knowledge was the guarantee for determination of nematodes parasitizing in vertebrates in different parts of world and his vast collection of a highly valuable material allowed him to describe 78 new nematode taxa. His studies on epizootology of syngamosis and subulurosis of poultry and anguillulosis of eels has left an indelible mark on this field of science. He also contributed to the clarification of antagonism and competition in flukes (*Schistosoma* vs. *Echinostoma*), he was involved in formulation and application of reservoir habitationism phenomenon in nematodes and presented conception for synantropisation and synurbanisation. His share in the ichthyological research, where he participated in the studies of diversity and production of freshwater fish from Palearctic and Neotropical areas, in invasive fish species explorations and in analysis of bio-concentration of heavy metals in fresh and brackish water fish tissues, is undoubtedly undeniable. Altogether, it is impossible to list all of his activities. Nevertheless, one particular activity cannot be forgotten. It was his active interest in fishing and fishery in general, which led to an intensive cooperation with the Moravian Fishing Association.

In recognition of his life's work, Professor Vlastimil Baruš was awarded various prizes of the Czech Academy of Science and the State decoration. He was a member of six international scientific societies and a member of several editorial boards at the international scientific journals.

Being a teacher, a co-worker and above all, a long-time friend for many of us, we deeply mourn the loss of Prof. Baruš. Nevertheless, thanks to his work, publications and monographs, there is

the permanent trail to follow and new inspiration remains for those who wish to take over. He truly was a larger-than-life personality and will always remain in our minds and hearts.

*Milan Gelnar, Božena Koubková, Kristína Cíváňová*



*The Helminthologia Editorial team had the pleasure to work with Prof. Baruš for many years. He was a passionate and devoted scholar, author and reviewer, but most of all, man of integrity and character. We feel blessed to have known him and we shall miss his scientific contributions and positive attitude.*