EDITORIAL

Dieter Sturhan Dr. Rer. Nat. (1936 – 2017)

Dr. Dieter Sturhan was born on 30th September 1936 in Meerbeck in Lower Saxony, and died on 29th November 2017 in Muenster. He studied zoology, botany, and geography at Universities of Kiel, Munich, and Erlangen. He acquired his PhD. in 1962, and in the same year started working at the Institute for Nematology of the Biological Centre for Agriculture and Forestry in Muenster where he worked with small breaks until his retirement. His work abroad was quite extensive, he acted long-term as a consultant for nematology in German government's projects in several foreign countries. Within international scientific cooperation with foreign countries, he worked on nematological research projects with many nematologists including us in Slovakia.

In his life-long nematological research, Dr. Sturhan focused on diagnostics, taxonomy, biology, ecology and geographic expansion of soil and plant nematodes, in particular of phytopathologically important parasitic plant nematodes. These included mainly plant nematodes of the Longidoridae, Trichodoridae, Heteroderidae, Meloidogynidae, and Aphelenchoididae families. His extensive publishing work reflects the preciseness and strenuousness of Dr. Sturhan's scientific work, and it is a source of knowledge for generations of nematologists around the world.

Besides his research, Dr. Dieter Sturhan worked in several nematological, zoological, ornithological, and phytopathological societies of the world. Since 1974, he worked as a German correspondent for the European Society of Nematologists, and he was a member of editorial boards of several nematological magazines around the world. At home in Germany, he regularly organized and conducted annual courses of practical identification of parasitic plant nematodes for plant protection workers, taught applied zoology at the University of Muenster, and worked as the chairman of Nematological Society at the German Phytomedical Society. Apart from scientific work, the character of Dieter Sturhan must be highlighted. He considered his co-workers not only as colleagues – nematologists but also as close friends, often family friends. It made no difference to him if they were from Eastern or Western Europe, Asia, or America. For many years, Dieter Sturhan committed himself in helping the homeless, immigrants from south-eastern Asia, and was part of the German Peace Movement.

With the passing of Dr. Dieter Sturhan we lose an exceptional scientist, nematologist colleague, and a precious friend.

Marta Lišková, Zuzana Vasilková