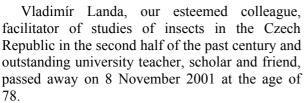
Vladimír Landa (1923 - 2001)

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Vladimír Landa was born on 1 November 1923 in a teacher's family in West Bohemia where he spent his childhood being stimulated in interest in nature by his father and by Prof. Komárek who later became his university teacher at the Charles University in Prague. After attending grammar school he studied from 1945 – 1948 at the Faculty of Natural History and later he worked for a short time as an assistant professor in Department of Zoology. After having served in the army in 1950-1953, Vladimír Landa joined the staff of the Laboratory of Entomology in Prague led by Professor Komárek whom he had earlier assisted in research on mayflies during the war years. When the Institute of Entomology of the Academy of Sciences was established in 1962 Vladimír Landa became its first director. He worked at this position till 1990 carefully building this institute from a small laboratory in provisional spaces into an important centre of the laboratory and field research in entomology. Under his leadership, the



institute acquired a unique position and achieved wide international reputation.

There are several main streams of Vladimír's research activities. First of all, he was outstanding student of aquatic insects, mainly of the order Ephemeroptera. Vladimír' s publications have dealt with their morphology, taxonomy, and ecology. Although he described numerous species the most important results he published concerned comparative anatomy of organ systems of larvae. He studied the tracheal system, alimentary canal, malpighian tubules, ventral nerve cord, and gonad of more than 80 % of known genera at that time. Comparisons of anagenetic trends showed in different lineages enabled him to reconstruct phylogenesis of suborders and individual families or subfamilies. His higher classification of the order is widely accepted in reviews and monographs on Ephemeroptera till the present. On the basis of detailed field observations he was the first who suggested the classification of life cycles of mayfly species. His monograph on taxonomy of the former Czechoslovakia's mayfly fauna is often used students, hydrobiologists taxonomists, despite it is now more than 30 years old and, unfortunately, written in Czech. He studied more than 2,500 localities at this area and there are more than one million specimens in his collection. This collection has served as the basis of much of his research as well as that of many others with whom he has generously shared this

valuable resource. His cooperation on a system enabling bioindication of water quality according to mayfly communities and prediction of future changes of aquatic environment was extremely stimulative. Anyone who had engaged Vladimír in conversation about mayflies quickly becomes aware of his vast knowledge of the group, and one got the impression that he had to possess more unwritten information about mayflies than he had written, even given in his lengthy bibliography.

From the early fifties, Vladimír has been intensively studying the development of insect gonads in general, namely spermatogenesis and oogenesis. He started with the cockchafer that represented a serious pest at that time like model organism. He described spermatogenesis and oogenesis of this beetle in detail and published pioneer study on structure, function and transfer of the spermatophore published e.g. in *Nature*.

Last but not least, Vladimír was interested in specific and general problems of plant protection and in general problems of changing environment. For the past at least 20 years he has been intensively working in SGOMSEC (Scientific group of methods for safety evaluation of chemicals). He has prepared numerous contributions at this respect by no means limited only to insects. Vladimír worked for a long time in some scientific bodies like e.g. SCOPE, IUBS, ISCU or Man and Biosphere Programme.

Although this obituary is really not intended to enumerate the number of Vladimír's publications, awards, positions achieved and organizing activities, I would like to mention his 6 books and monographs, more than 100 original scientific papers and tens of other publications despite administrative duties would sometimes hardly left time for true laboratory or field work. To acknowledge his scientific credit. Vladimír Landa was elected a member of Russian Academy of Sciences. honorary member of Academia Scientiarum Fennica, former Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences and Czech and numerous abroad entomological and zoological societies and numerous editorial boards. As a teacher at the Charles University, Praha and the University of South Bohemia, České Budějovice, Vladimír incorporated his general and special knowledge into his courses and presentations. As a leading scientists, university professor and supervisor of younger colleagues he established his own scientific school characterized by a dynamic conception of the biological basis of the protection of plant from insect pests and integrated pest control. He has been the tutor of tens of PhD and

postdoc students some of whom are now leading scientists in entomological laboratories and other research institutions in the Czech Republic as well as abroad.

Anyway, one of his specific abroad activities must not be omitted. Being at his first visiting professor stage in the USA in 1968, the idea to organize international conferences on mayflies arose from a discussion with Prof. Edmunds and the late Prof. Peters. He was always proud to be a member of Permanent Committee of these conferences till the present. He was delighted and very happy to have a possibility to organize one of our conferences (1983) in the Czech Republic and host the conference participants in his Institute of Entomology.

A very modest man, Vladimír was always quiet and honest, well wishing and completely devoid of aggressiveness, never refusing to give advice or even a personal help to anybody. Among his great qualities were courtesy and fair play. Being a personality that is not easily forgotten he was respected and popular among his fellow ephemeropterologists and friends for his optimism and cheerful disposition. He will always be inseparable part of the development of our modern entomological research, and a fondly remembered person among his disciples and colleagues.

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