



In Memoriam

Professor Blagoy Gruev, D. Sc. (1936-2015)

On February 15th 2015, one of the most prominent Bulgarian taxonomists and zoogeographers – Professor Emeritus Blagoy Gruev passed away. Born in Plovdiv on 24.04. 1936, he graduated in the University of Plovdiv, became Assistant in the Zoology of Invertebrates (1966), and later Associated Professor (1979) and Professor (1989), Dean of Biological Faculty of Plovdiv University (1993 – 1999). Becoming gradually one of the best specialists in the large family Chrysomelidae (Coleoptera) in Europe, B. Gruev defended theses as Doctor in Biology (1971) and Doctor in Sciences (1987), the latter on the “Fauna and Zoogeography of the subfamily Alticinae (Chrysomelidae, Coleoptera) of the Balkan Peninsula”.

Since his first publication in 1964, B. Gruev published (partly with Prof. P. Angelov and his long term co-author V. Tomov) a series of papers not only on the Chrysomelidae of Bulgaria, but also on the fauna of many other countries.

I remember with gratitude that he published many papers on the Chrysomelidae, collected by me from Nepal, India, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Burma, Afghanistan and other places. Gruev had acquired excellent reputation with his colleagues as one of the most reliable specialists in Chrysomelidae. Gruev and Tomov accumulated a vast collection of Chrysomelidae from the entire Palearctic Region, including many type specimens. Part of it he deposited in the National Museum of Natural History – they will be kept forever in good order and available to specialists.

The active work of Gruev and Tomov was crowned by the two volumes of “Fauna Bulgarica” (1984, 1986, altogether 607 pp.) and by a catalogue of Bulgaria’s Chrysomelidae. The long experience of B. Gruev reflected also in catalogues of Chrysomelidae of Macedonia (1998), Turkey (1999), Greece (1990), Romania (1993), Cyprus (1995) and the Balkan Peninsula (1992, monograph of 512 pp.).

Gruev lectured for many years in the Plovdiv University, on biogeography, zoology of invertebrates and the special course “Principles of the zoological taxonomy, systematics and classification”. His experience in biogeography was materialized in several manuals, still the most used by students and zoologists. His “General Biogeography” had three editions (1988, 1994, 1999), the last two together with B. Kuzmanov. Gruev also authored several articles on the zoogeographic elements of Balkan Peninsula. Together with D. Bechev, Gruev published the very useful Bibliography of the Zoogeography of Bulgaria (2004, First Roll).

Retired in 2004, in 2010 Gruev was honoured with the title Professor Emeritus. We, Bulgarian zoologists, will remember this excellent specialist and Colleague. He will be remembered also by his foreign colleagues worldwide.

Petar Beron