

THE 4th ZOOLOGICAL CONGRESS OF THE LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES

The 4th zoological congress of the Latin American countries was held in Caracas (Venezuela) from Nov. 4-10, 1968. It was attended by zoologists from all Latin American countries (except Cuba), from the U.S.A. and Canada. Europe was represented by delegates from France, Italy, the Netherlands and Czechoslovakia. Participating in the congress was also a delegate from Israel.

The various sessions in which papers were presented dealt with a number of subjects: functional anatomy of animals, systematics, development and distribution of animals, histology and embryology, physiology and biochemistry, ecology, parasitology, communities of marine- and freshwater animals.

Round-table discussions were held on: 1. the evolution of Cenozoic terrestrial vertebrates of South America, 2. problems on the biogeography and the origin of species in the neotropical region, 3. development of the fauna of pre-Cenozoic vertebrates in South America, 4. comparative cytology and chromosome development, 5. parallelism, the distribution and development of ectoparasites and their hosts, 6. models and computer techniques in zoological research.

The parasitological section dealt with parasitic protozoans, particularly those parasitizing the blood and digestive system of poikilothermic vertebrates (reptiles, fishes) and with the blood- and intestinal protozoans of the canybara.

The helminthological papers were concerned mainly with problems on the biology of trematodes and cestodes and with some questions of a faunistically ecological nature.

The papers on arachnoentomology discussed mainly acarological problems on the specificity and distribution of the species referring to the developmental parallelism in parasite-host relations. Mostly mites from bats or other mammals were used for model animals in these experiments.

After the congress the delegates were invited to participate in an excursion to the biological field station at Rancho Grande near Maracay in the Cordillera de Costa; there, the delegates visited also the nearby moist primeval mountain forest.

The sessions of the congress were held in the lecturing theatres of the Universidad Central de Venezuela, Caracas. The congress itself was extremely well organized; the presented papers outlined the principle trends of zoological research in Latin America and pointed out future perspectives. The zoologists of these countries having overcome their initial difficulties, seem now prepared to make full use of the many opportunities offered to them for fully developing zoological and parasitological research in this region.

Doc. Dr. B. Ryšavý, Dr.Sc.