

THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL ENTOMOLOGICAL SYMPOSIUM ON THE FAUNA OF CENTRAL EUROPE

Periodic symposia on the fauna of Central Europe organized since 1964 (when the first such symposium was held in Opava, Czechoslovakia) have become a well-known opportunity for specialists to meet and discuss the problems of Central European fauna. Great attention has been always paid to parasitic organisms and their relationships to hosts. The Fourth Symposium was held between 1 and 4 September 1969 in Białowież, Poland. The first two days were allotted to sessions. A number of lectures were devoted to the problems of parasitological fauna, of which especially interesting was the paper on the distribution of *Monomorium pharaonis* in Poland, studied by Dr Wiśniewski of Poznań. Also interesting were some observations on methods used, e.g. by Niedbala, Rajska, Rohloff, in the collection of soil samples.

A lively interest was aroused by current topics discussed at plenary sessions. The contribution by Prof. Teyrovsky on the elucidation of some zoogeographic terms, the paper by Dr Endrödi on taxonomic evaluation of insect forms and the lecture by Dr Kaszab on the international cooperation in the research of insect fauna of Central Europe, with an emphasis on the problem of reliable determination, provoked a considerable discussion.

A lively debate about the last mentioned problem was mostly concerned with determination keys. It has become evident that only few specialists exist who can write a good determination manual; on the other hand, however, it is often very difficult to find a publisher for such a manual. It has proved to be more advantageous and feasible to publish keys to smaller groups. The inexpensive Polish manuals, most of which are out of print, can serve as an example. The trend to publish keys in national languages allegedly makes the determination for untrained workers possible, but it remains disputable whether persons without any preliminary studies are able to use such highly professional manuals and whether colour atlases might be more suitable for them.

The symposium was concluded by an excursion to the Białowież primeval forest where the participants could closely observe nature almost intact by man. The next 5th symposium is to be held in Hungary in 1971 and its programme is to comprise more contributions concerned with applied entomology.

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