

Academician Josef Kratochvíl is seventy

Academician J. Kratochvíl belongs to the leading personalities of Czechoslovak biology, zoology and entomology, noted through their scientific work as well as organizing activity among the public both in Czechoslovakia and abroad. He celebrated his 70th birthday on January 6, 1979. This date is connected with the 50th anniversary of his scientific activities in the fields of arachnology, entomology, mammalogy, applied zoology and of natural foci investigation.

A native from Moravia, he graduated from the Natural Sciences Faculty of the University in Brno in 1931 and qualified to become university lecturer at the same faculty in 1937. In 1945 he was appointed professor in applied entomology and later also in zoology at the Agricultural University in Brno.

On his initiative in 1954 the present Institute of Vertebrate Zoology, Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, was founded and J. Kratochvíl was made its director (till 1976). In 1955 he was elected Corresponding Member of the Academy, in 1972 as Full Member (Academician) and was active as a member of the Presidium of the Academy.

As professor of the Zoological Institute of the Agricultural University J. Kratochvíl correctly assessed taxonomy and ecology of mammals as zoological problems which were almost untouched in Czechoslovakia at that time. After conducting faunistic research in some zoogeographically interesting regions of this country he released monographs on individual species of mammals, some of which represent important animal reservoirs of various pathogenic agents. In this way his scientific activities became closely related with the studies of Czechoslovak parasitologists, in the field of natural foci investigation, with whom he has continued to cooperate for many years.



His work in applied theriology has been associated with his activities in the research of natural focality of infections in Czechoslovakia since 1951, where he primarily solved the problems of animal reservoirs. He took an active part in Czechoslovak priority of complex investigations on natural focality of infections under conditions of cultivated landscape (the problems of the Rožňava epidemic, the first outbreak of tick-borne encephalitis, transmitted

to man through consumption of raw goat milk, the natural foci in central Slovakia, the natural focus of leptospirosis in the High Tatras etc). His participation in these investigations, mainly in Slovakia, greatly contributed to the solid theriological assessment of the existence of individual natural foci, so that his pupils (Nosek, Grulich and others) gained from his knowledge and insights and could develop further research in this field.

In recent years he has been actively interested in the research of synanthropic animals, mainly birds, as disseminators of some diseases among animals kept in large scale units. One of the major papers, based on the investigations dealing with synanthropic relationships of mammals (in collaboration with B. Rosický) has become the basis for further evaluation of this important ecologic phenomenon. With regard to penetration into human dwellings, out-buildings and equipment Rosický and Kratochvíl use the division of mammals into eusynanthropic, hemisynanthropic and exoanthropic mammals.

The publication of his monograph on the common vole (J. Kratochvíl et al., „Hraboš polní — *Microtus arvalis*“, Praha, 1959) has become a pioneer work in the field of theriology in Czechoslovakia and has won a great response abroad because of its comprehensive concept, including epidemiological data and the importance of the common vole as host of endo-and ectoparasites.

Academician Kratochvíl organized several team investigations, participated in the team

research on natural foci of diseases, was the leader of several theriological expeditions (to Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Austria, Cuba etc).

J. Kratochvíl has so far published more than 250 original scientific papers and monographs, 9 books, 9 textbooks for college students, more than 200 short professional and popular articles, and two volumes of "Applied Zoology" serving as textbook for all agricultural colleges in Czechoslovakia. In this work extensive chapters are devoted to endo-and ectoparasites of domestic animals and man.

J. Kratochvíl succeeded in demonstrating the usefulness of applied zoology for a Central European country. His works concerning animal reservoirs will always be a basic source for further advances of Czechoslovak parasitology. He has given the impetus to new trends in the development of Czechoslovak vertebratology and founded a modern theriological school that has established successful collaboration on a world-wide scale. His merits in the development of theriology were unanimously esteemed by electing him President of the 2nd International Theriological Congress held in Brno in June 1978.

On the occasion of this double anniversary, the Editorial Board of *Folia parasitologica* wishes Academician J. Kratochvíl to enjoy good health in the future years and to attain further scientific success for the benefit of zoology, parasitology and whole mankind.

Prof. Dr. B. Rosický, D.Sc.