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6th National Seminar on Diptera

The 6th National Seminar on Diptera was held in Cikháj near Žďár n. S. from 22nd to 24th October, 1980. These meetings of Czechoslovak dipterologists have been organized regularly every two years since 1970. The organizer of the 6th Seminar was the Faculty of Biology of Animals and Man, J. E. Purkyně University in Brno. The seminars on Diptera serve for the exchange of new knowledge, show the present state of research of Diptera and deal with concrete measures for a further development of this branch in Czechoslovakia. Like at the pre-

vious seminars, a great attention was paid to the groups of Diptera of economic and parasitic importance.

The seminar was attended by 42 participants from research institutes, universities and museums. They read 35 reports, one third of which concerned medical and veterinary dipterology (4 reports dealt with mosquitoes, 5 with synanthropic flies, 2 with black flies, and 1 with warble flies and midges). The reported topics were: the research of mosquitoes in large towns and in Lower Elbe region, factors involved in

their seeking for the prey and application of synthetic pyrethroids in the control of mosquitoes, occurrence and ecology of black flies in Prague and High Tatra Mountains, systematics of midges and distribution and ecology of warble flies parasitic in deers. The reports concerning the synanthropic flies dealt with their ecology, distribution and resistance against some organic substances and pyrethroids.

The opening lectures were devoted to the 70th anniversary of Prof. Dr. Jaroslav Kramář, D.Sc., a prominent Czechoslovak zoologist and specialist in the family Culicidae and to the questions of a higher taxonomy of Diptera and

hormonal regulation of behaviour of Diptera. The problems of further development of dipterology in Czechoslovakia, particularly finishing of the list of Diptera in Czechoslovakia which is being prepared for publication, study of dipterological material from Carpathian region in Czechoslovakia and Czechoslovak expedition to Mongolia were discussed in detail.

The seminar showed the present state and development of the research of Diptera in Czechoslovakia which corresponds to the great medical and economic importance of these insects.

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B. A. Vainshtein: Opređelitel' lichinok vodyanykh kleshchey. (A key to the larvae of water mites). Publ. House Nauka, Leningrad 1980, 238 pp., 787 Figs. Price 3.20 R.

In the publishers' annotation the reviewed book has been designated as the first of its kind in the Soviet and the most extensive in the world literature. In these few words the quantitative character has been expressed of the book in which the author described (on 238 pages) and depicted (in 787 figures) larval stages of 99 species of water mites belonging to 29 genera and 15 families. More remarkable, above all, is the high quality of the monograph. Its author, the prominent Soviet acarologist, revised the problem of taxonomic evaluation of the larval stages of water mites, taking as a basis for his work the studies of larvae reared in his laboratory. He collected the initial material of adult mites in the Yaroslavl' Oblast so that the book will serve not only the Soviet but other European specialists as well. The careful, long-term and purposeful preparation for the compilation of this monograph is evidenced by a number of relevant papers published by Vainshtein in the past twenty years and cited in the extensive bibliography at the end of the book.

In the concept of the book Vainshtein directed his attention not only to the elaboration of the key as indicated by the title of the book. Its first section is concerned with general problems. First he discusses the placement of water mites in the class Arachnida; in this respect he accepts the classification of mites after A. A. Zakhvatkin (1952). Thereafter he lists water mites in the system of the suborder Trombidiformes in the cohort Parasitengona, dividing them into superfamilies, of which three represent terrestrial

mites (Calypostomoidea, Smaridioidea and Trombidioidea) and the remaining superfamilies include water mites.

In subsequent chapters the author gives a detailed account of the exterior morphology, ontogenesis and biology of larvae. In the last mentioned particularly valuable is a survey of relationships of different groups of larvae to their hosts. The general section is concluded with an extensive chapter on the evolution of water mites and a short paragraph on the collecting methods and preparation of their larvae. It is to be regretted that in this paragraph the author has not given adequate space to the methods of culturing water mites, which are dismissed in one sentence only.

The systematic section contains a key to seven superfamilies, each of them represented by a brief characterization, and a key to families and lower taxons. All descriptions are provided with numerous figures of taxonomically important morphological details which help to comprehend the descriptions perfectly.

The book makes a marked contribution to the acarological literature. Specialists in other biological disciplines, particularly hydrobiologists and mainly parasitologists will eagerly reach out for it not only because water mite larvae are nearly all parasitic, but for the reason that the majority of them parasitize Diptera associated with water environment, primarily mosquitoes.

Dr. M. Daniel, C.Sc.