

In memoriam of Lubomír Hromádka



Lubomír Hromádka left us after a long and serious illness on Monday, 3 October 2016. He was born in Prague on 26 April 1931 into a family of tailors, and he followed his father into that profession. Since his retirement in 1991 he devoted most of his time to entomology. Lubomír was interested in nature since his childhood. At the beginning of the 1960's, he was inspired by Andrej Szujecki's "Klucze do oznaczania owadów Polski - Steninae" [Key to the identification of Polish insects - Steninae], and his interest in Staphylinidae was initiated.

He collected beetles mainly in the surroundings of his cottage in Doubravčice near Kostelec nad Černými lesy. The publications of Volker Puthz on staphylinid

subfamily Steninae inspired Lubomír's focus on taxonomy and systematics of this subfamily.

From the start and throughout his scientific career he closely cooperated with the Department of Entomology of the National Museum in Prague, where he arranged and determined groups, which he dealt with. Since his retirement, he worked almost exclusively on Afrotropical fauna of the subtribe Philonthina, and revised step by step hundreds of species. He borrowed, processed and determined many thousands of specimens deposited in various museums of the world. He liked to meet colleagues from various museums coming to Prague insect bursa and bringing him specimens for revision or identification. His favourite collections were from Natural History Museum, London and Musée d'Afrique central in Tervuren. I remember how Lubomír was happy when I brought him more than 4.500 specimens I selected for him in Tervuren, which completely filled the luggage compartment of my car.

After years of studying of types of Philonthina and filling in his file catalogue with illustration of types, he began publishing revisions of selected genera or species groups. He liked to discuss his manuscripts with editors personally, and that's why so many of his papers were published in scientific journals in the Czech Republic.

Lubomír Hromádka is one of the few Czech specialists to be included among the biographies of well known staphylinidologists in Herman's world Catalog of Staphylinidae (Herman 2001: 81). A biography to his 80th birthday was completed with a list of papers (Janák 2011). He published more than 90 scientific papers and was the sole author of 316

species and 2 subspecies and coauthor of 4 more species. Eight species has been named in his honour: *Stenus hromadkai* Puthz, 1979, *Stenus hromadkaianus* Puthz, 1993, *Philonthus lubomiri* Herman, 2001, *Daolus hromadkai* Bordoni, 2004, *Stenus lubomiri* Naomi, 2006, *Philonthus hromadkai* Schülke, 2012, *Attagenus hromadkai* Háva, 2016 and *Philonthus lubomirhromadkai* Geiser & Barclay, 2017.

All colleagues and friends will remember Lubomír Hromádka and his great contribution to Staphylinidae.

Jiří Janák

“We had two things in common, Lubomír and me. We were of almost the same age and we both were dedicated to the study of our favoured beetle family. Lubomír developed the liking of the Philonthines and eventually became the leading researcher of this group for Africa. Lubomír was kind enough to offer me and my wife to stay in his apartment during some of our yearly visits to Prague. That gave me an opportunity to discover his other, non-entomological, qualities. I was amazed by his extensive collection of paintings of prominent artists and his profound knowledge in this field. I will remember him as a close friend and respected colleague staphylinidologist.” (Aleš Smetana, Ottawa, Canada)

“I knew Lubomír from the beginning of the seventieth of the last century. We were in close contact, since Lubomír also was very interested to work on *Stenus*. So we exchanged material and discussed taxonomical problems. I encouraged him to work on material from Japan and on Neotropical species. So most of his first papers were devoted to *Stenus*. In 1979 we were happy to meet Lubomír in Prague. I appreciated him very much, his kind personality and hospitality will be unforgotten.” (Volker Puthz, Schlitz, Germany)

“During the years I corresponded with Lubomír from The NHM. He was ever the sincere gentleman that I had pleasure in meeting whenever in Prague. To tackle *Philonthus*, especially the good Rev. Tottenhams endless matchbox trays of low pinned specimens, was nothing short of heroic. He was a milestone in the study of Staphylinidae, a lovely and very interesting man.” (Martin Brendell, former Head Curator of Coleoptera at the Natural History Museum, London, UK)

“As a curator at the Natural History Museum and a regular visitor to Prague insect bursa, I always enjoyed my meetings with Lubomír to exchange loans of beetles. He borrowed and identified over 3,000 of our specimens of difficult genera like *Philonthus*, *Gabrius* and *Hesperus*, and described many new species from our material. He had an endearing habit of naming his rove beetles after the genera of African animals whose dung and carrion they might have frequented in life, and as time passed, having exhausted all the megafauna, he had to choose smaller and smaller mammals, and then birds, to keep up a supply of names for new members of his hyperdiverse genera. Most of all though, I remember his warmth, and gentle old-world charm, always a smile and a handshake among the chaos of the bursa. One could see that this was a man with the calm and patience to approach Philonthini. I was sad not to see him last time, and his loss will make the Prague meetings a little bit lonelier.” (Max Barclay, Curator and Collection Manager of Coleoptera and Hemiptera at The Natural History Museum, London, U.K.)

"I was truly honored that I could Lubomír know and work with him on his articles about Staphylinidae. Honor his memory." (From the journal *Studies and Reports*, Jiří Háva)

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