

In memoriam of Professor Dr. Mladen Živkov, DrSc.

Professor Dr. Mladen Živkov, DrSc., an highly respected Bulgarian zoologist and ichthyologist, died after a serious illness on 6 January 2009.

He was born in Gorna Luka, Montana (Bulgaria) on November 3, 1941. Owing to his deep interest in nature, excellent results at secondary school and long standing good relations between Bulgaria and the Czech Republic he matriculated at Charles University, Prague. At that time, he was greatly influenced by Professor Ota Oliva, a well known Czech ichthyologist. Prof. Živkov graduated as an ichthyologist from the Department of Systematic Zoology, Faculty of Science, Charles University in Prague, Czechoslovakia (now Czech Republic), in 1967.

Just after his return to Bulgaria he started to work at the Institute of Zoology of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences in Sofia, first as a research scientist (1973–1984), then as an associate professor (1984–2000) and full professor (2000–2009). In 1981 he obtained the degree of PhD and in 1999 the degree of Doctor of Sciences (DrSc.) in Hydrobiology.

Professor Živkov was a founder of modern Bulgarian ichthyology. He devoted most of his time to research on fish faunistics, species diversity and ecology of freshwater fish. He mainly studied ecological parameters, namely the growth, reproduction, feeding and population dynamics of fish. The results of his scientific papers are widely cited and used in applied ichthyology, fish conservation biology, reservoir management, fishery and aquaculture.

During his academic career, Professor Živkov was a member of staff of the Institute of Zoology, head of the Laboratory of Ichthyology from 1994 and head of the Department of Hydrobiology from 2000. During 1984–1993 and 1999–2003 he was Secretary of the Institute's Scientific Council, and since 2003 designated as the Director of the Institute of Zoology. In 2004–2008 Professor Živkov was a coordinator of five big national and three international projects and participated in many others.

Professor Živkov was a member of many expert and scientific councils and commissions (National Scientific Coordination Council on Biodiversity, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Ministry of Environment and Water, National Agency of fishery and Aquaculture, Ministry of Agriculture and Food Supply, Bulgarian Union of Hunters and Anglers, Institute of Fishery and Aquaculture Varna, Institute of Fishery and Aquaculture Plovdiv, Sofia University, Plovdiv University, etc.).

He was the Chief Editor of *Fauna of Bulgaria*, and member of the editorial board of the journals *Acta Zoologica Bulgarica* and editorial board of *Ichthyologia* (Belgrade).

Professor Živkov published over 120 scientific papers and 6 books and monographs and was also active in teaching and training MSc. and PhD. students.

He kept up many professional and personal contacts with foremost ichthyologists and was always willing to help anybody who visited Bulgaria. Professor Živkov had a very specific relationship with the Czech Republic. He never forgot the years he spent at Charles University, Prague. He was a fluent Czech speaker and his scientific collaboration and friendly contacts with Czech and Slovak ichthyologists lasted to his death. For many years he actively helped Czech students and scientists from Charles University and the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic by organizing field trips and excursions to Bulgaria.

Bulgarian science has lost one of its important representative and founder of modern Bulgarian ichthyology. We all have lost a good friend and colleague.

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(Left) Professor Mladen Živkov with Professor Karel Pivnička at the Landscape Protected Area Křivoklátsko in the Czech Republic in June 2007. (right) Professor Živkov as a participant at the X. Czech Conference of Ichthyology, Prague, 26–27 June 2007. (Photographs by Miroslav Švátora.)

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