



Dr László Gozmány

(1921 – 2006)

The Biological Section of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the Hungarian Natural History Museum celebrated Dr László Gozmány, curator emeritus of the Lepidoptera collection, with a special session on biology and physiology of the Lepidoptera in June, 2006. The festive event was dedicated to his approaching 85th anniversary, which was due in November. Following the event the already weak health of Dr Gozmány rapidly declined and he died of heart failure in Budapest on the 15th of December, 2006, slightly more than one month after his anniversary.

Dr Gozmány was the greatest Hungarian lepidopterist ever. He devoted his life entirely to the taxonomy and phylogeny of Microlepidoptera, but he was also very active in faunistics, nature conservation, and nomenclature. He was born in Budapest on November 9th, 1921. He received education as a jurist in classical and living languages and civil law. After the 2nd World War he worked as a 1st class officer in the government's administration until 1948, when he took part in a zoological expedition to the Eastern Mediterranean. On his return he was appointed curator of Lepidoptera at the Hungarian Natural History Museum, where he remained in that capacity until his retirement. Meanwhile he received a CSc. and a DSc. in biology, both from the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

In addition to more than a hundred scientific papers on nomenclature, taxonomy, and systematics of Microlepidoptera, Dr Gozmány wrote nine Lepidoptera fascicles of the *Fauna Hungariae* series published by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. He was also the author of the Holcopogonidae, Lecithoceridae and Symmocidae volumes of *Microlepidoptera Palearctica*, but the last one will be published posthumously. Many other important monographs left his desk, including his beloved opus on the lepidopteran fauna of Greece which is also in due to be published. Probably the most influential and well-known work of Dr Gozmány is the famous and highly reputed *Vocabularium nominum animalium europae septem linguis redactum*.

As curator of Lepidoptera he took office in a difficult period as the collection had been abandoned and lepidopterology was in decline because of the losses caused by the war and communist dictatorship. Dr Gozmány built the entire micromoth collection in the seventies following the current state of the classification, and in the last decade of his life the collection was revised to reflect more recent knowledge.

Dr Gozmány remained faithful to his desk and the collection until the very end of his life. Even in an advanced age he visited the museum every week for managing his correspondence and keep contact with the staff. The reprints of his last scientific contribution has arrived just in the days when colleagues and fellow biologists celebrated him in the museum.

Dr Gozmány was an honorary member of SEL and SHILAP, and he was awarded, among others, the Frivaldszky Memorial Medal of Golden Class by the Hungarian Entomological Society, the Jakob Hübner Award by the Association of Tropical Lepidoptera, and the Eötvös Wrath of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

The memorial ceremony for Dr Gozmány was an official event of the Hungarian Natural History Museum. The funeral oration was given by the Director General, Dr István Matskási. The mother institute is going to publish a special volume of the Academic journal *Acta Zoologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* dedicated to the memory of Dr Gozmány. We hardly accept the passing of our “Laci Bácsi” and keep him in our best memory.

The staff of the Lepidoptera collection:

ZSOLT BÁLINT, ANDRÁS KUN, LÁSZLÓ PEREGOVITS & LÁSZLÓ RONKAY

Budapest, April 16th, 2007