In memory of Yuri Petrovich Korshunov
(22.IX.1933–1.VIII.2002)

An eminent lepidopterist in world terms, scientific worker of the Zoological Museum at the Institute of Systematics and Ecology of Animals (Siberian branch of Russian Academy of Sciences), honorary member of the Russian Entomological Society Yuri Petrovich Korshunov died on August 1st, 2002, in Novosibirsk.

Yu. P. Korshunov was born on September 22nd, 1933 in Chernorechka village near Novosibirsk. The family soon moved to Novosibirsk. His mother’s ancestors were migrants from the Volga region, his father’s ones were from the Samara region.

Korshunov’s first observations of insects began in his early childhood. The district of Novosibirsk where he lived resembled a village, there were lots of insects and other wild creatures. Yuri built open-air cages for caught butterflies, observed lizards and frogs. He was very impressed having read J.-H. Fabre’s “Life of insects”. Yuri looked for chrysalides of the Small Tortoiseshell (Aglais urticae) and observed the birth of butterflies. His parents presented him a small microscope. Yuri read books and looked films about famous Russian and foreign travelers. Thus the way into biology was predetermined.

A small tourist group was organized in his school in 1946. Korshunov traveled with his fellows and a teacher in the Altai mountains, there the group met ichthyologists from the just now organized Siberian branch of Academy of Sciences. Since that time Korshunov’s scientific life was tied with the Biological Institute. Yuri became a member of young naturalist society “Siberia”, headed by S. A. Strom, an eminent student of Siberian local lore, and visited semi
nars conducted by zoologists K. T. Yurlov and I. N. Glotov. He got to know A. E. Standel, a
local amateur lepidopterist, who made available for Korshunov his great collection of butter-
flies and moths and gave him first lessons in lepidopterology. These regular studies mostly de-
termined the scientific interests of Korshunov. He journeyed in summers through the Altai
together with tourist groups, organized by S. A. Strom and collected entomological material.
In 1951 Yu. P. Korshunov entered Tomsk University. There he read many special books in the
very rich University library, made acquaintance with the remains of A. A. Meinhard’s butterfly
collection. Besides he observed the winter life of birds, monitoring them in Tomsk Botanical
gardens.
The year 1953 was tragic for Korshunov. An encephalitis tick bit him, the illness wasn’t diag-
nosed in proper time, it was long and poignant. The after-effects of illness had an influence
upon the whole of the life of Yu. P. Korshunov, they were a cause of his premature decease. Mi-
grated to Charkov A. E. Standel invited Korshunov to this town to undergo a special cure and
to study at Charkov University, at the Entomological faculty headed by Prof. S. I. Medvedev.
Korshunov moved to Charkov and kept on studying there. He journeyed with A. E. Standel
through the Charkov region. He continued studies with Standel simultaneously with active
ones at the Faculty. Korshunov visited Moscow during the winter vacations in 1954. He got to
know the famous entomologist A. A. Yakhontov, whom he considered as his teacher in scien-
tific methodology. He examined the great collection by amateur lepidopterist A. V. Tsvetaev,
then he went to Leningrad where he made acquaintance with B. N. Schanwitsch, A. A. Stakel-
berg and other famous scholars, and saw the collection of butterflies and moths in the Zoologi-
cal Institute, the greatest collection in the country.
In May 1954 Korshunov took part in a student expedition to the Crimea, then he joined a
Moscow research group headed by G. A. Mazokhin-Porshnyakov. He moved with this expedi-
tion to Transcaucasus (one of the scopes of this expedition was to test the effectiveness of vari-
ous types of lamps for attraction of nocturnal insects; Korshunov kept the interest to this
theme later, see Korshunov, 1960b).
Korshunov practically ceased his graduating thesis in May 1954, it was dedicated to the but-
terflies of the southern and mountainous parts of the Crimea. He visited Novosibirsk during
his winter vacations in 1956 and settled to get a job at the Siberian branch of Academy (future
Biological Institute). Korshunov began his professional scientific life in an expedition dedi-
cated to the research of the fauna of the future Ob reservoir territory. Korshunov’s main indi-
vidual scope was the collecting of butterflies, he studied at the same time other groups of
insects. Then he worked during 2 summer seasons at the Experimental farm of Siberian branch
of Academy, near Acha village north-east of Novosibirsk and in Bugotak hills. There he found
several species of butterflies and moths new for the region: Pyrgus serratulae, Parapieris calli-
dice, Colias heos, Glossiana angarensis, Boloria aquilonaris, Lampides boeticus (occasional
flight), Cupido osiris, Aricia nicias, Macroglossum stellatarum, Oeneis jutta. Quite the whole
territory from the Urals as far as the Far East was in those times an enormous white spot with
only a few relatively carefully studied points. The butterfly fauna was poorly known, the distri-
bution of described taxa remained uncertain, at the same time it was clear that there are
many unknown species and forms. Yu. P. Korshunov decided to devote his life to the study of
the whole volume of the Rhopalocera fauna of Russian Northern Asia.
Yu. P. Korshunov headed or took part in many expeditions of a very wide geographical range:

At the same time Yu. P. Korshunov analyzed this enormous material. He described the Rhopalocera fauna, studied during the expedition at the “Stolby” reservation near Krasnoyarsk (Korshunov, 1969a, 1969e, 1971b); beside it he studied other groups of insects together with other investigators (1969b, c, d, 1971c). Many works of Korshunov are dedicated to the Rhopalocera fauna of various regions of Asian Russia: Polar circle (Korshunov, 1975, 1982c, 1985a); Western Siberia (Korshunov, 1959b, 1960a, 1963, 1966a, 1968, 1973a, 1973c, 1981b, 1985b), among it the Upper Ob basin (Korshunov, 1959a, 1961, 1962b, 1966b), North Baraba (Korshunov, 1974b); Tuva, Yakutia, Baikal region and the adjacent Mongolian territory (Korshunov, 1973b, 1979a; 1970a, 1978b, 1987c; 1974a, 1976d, 1977).

72 new taxa (genera, species and subspecies) were described by Yu. P. Korshunov, partially together with his colleagues (see the attached list of new taxa), the overwhelming majority of them was accepted as valid by a majority of experts. New taxa were described in monographs and several articles, especially dedicated to their description (Korshunov, 1977, 1980b, 1982c, e, 1984a, b, 1985c, 1987a, 1988b, c, 1990a, b, c, e, 1995b, 1996d, 1998b, 2000a). The results of many years’ work are summed up in Yu. P. Korshunov’s monographs. The first monograph, “Butterflies of the Western Siberian Plain. A key.” (Korshunov, 1985e), contained key tables, detailed descriptions of all the butterflies in question and many illustrations.

The second monograph was “A catalogue of Rhopalocera (Lepidoptera) of the USSR” (Korshunov, 1972d). Korshunov’s catalogue put the study of this group of insects on a new foundation, attracting a fresh scientific interest to this field. Korshunov’s advice and assistance to specialists in various fields furthered the publication of new studies of butterflies, including M. M. Sirotkin’s catalogue of the Moscow and Kaluga regions, A. P. Kumakov’s descriptions of the Saratov region, etc.

The book “Butterflies of Asian part of Russia” (1995b, co-author P. Gorbunov) with addenda & corrigenda in Korshunov (1996d, 1998b) contains full information (nomenclature, area, morphological fatures, praeimaginal stages, etc.) of the whole of the butterflies in this area, including maps and numerous drawings.

The title of the fourth monograph is “Butterflies of the Urals, Siberia and Far East. Key and annotations” (Korshunov, 2000a) – a new remake of this work will be published soon. Besides a complete key table, this work contains short, but comprehensive biological commentaries on each species.

The book “Butterflies of North Asia. New taxa and synonyms” (unpublished; internet version of this book is placed on Korshunov’s site http://www.jugan.boom.ru) includes original descriptions of Northern Asian taxa since the year 1980, made by the author and other scholars, often published in various difficult obtainable books and articles.

Furthermore, Yu. P. Korshunov wrote together with A. Kumakov a monograph about butterflies of the Saratov region (Korshunov, 1979b). Several articles of Korshunov are dedicated to common problems of the fauna of butterflies (Korshunov, 1981a, 1984d, 1987d).


In October 1987, on KORSHUNOV’s initiative the first Entomological conference on Diurna in the history of Russian and Soviet entomology took place in Novosibirsk. Papers were read by 35 naturalists from 30 cities of the USSR.

Yu. P. KORSHUNOV prepared long ago his thesis for a candidate’s degree, the volume and content of his monographs permitted him to get a doctor’s degree without writing a thesis, but his scientist’s overscrupulosity permanently delayed the term of their defence: he repeated often that the available Siberian material is not yet satisfactory for such an action. But in spite of the absence of a formal degree Yu. P. KORSHUNOV was considered as a leading expert in Rhopalocera not only in the country, but also in the whole of the world.

KORSHUNOV’s name was appropriated to several taxa of insects: Aphis korshunovi IVANOVSKAJA, 1971 (Aphidae); Plebejus argus korshunovi STANDEL, 1960; Neozephyrus korshunov DUBATOLOV & SERGEEV, 1982 (Lycaenidae); Coenonympha glycerion korshunovi NEKRUTENKO, 1978; Hyponephele korshunovi LUKHTANOV, 1994 (Satyridae); Coenotephria korshunovi VIIDALEPP, 1976 (Geometridae); Prosimulium korshunovi PATRUSHEVA, 1975 (Simuliidae).

Besides his scientific activities, Yu. P. KORSHUNOV wrote 73 popular-scientific, polemic and memoirs articles in newspapers and magazines, spoke via radio and TV, led yearly student practical works in the Zoological museum. Korshunov never denied to advice anyone. He was a good-natured and friendly man, with a perfect sense of humor. Having lost his wife V. D. PATRUSHEVA in 1976, he lived alone, spending his scanty earnings on books, diskettes, and other PC hardware. The computer helped him very much in the last years, because the arthritis and weak sight hindered his work. The possibility of correspondence by e-mail made his life easier, he didn’t feel himself lonely, isolated from world’s scientific life. He lived the last 7 years in the Museum, because it was hard to him to go home, all his books and the computer were in the working place. He died sitting at his writing-table.

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Appendices

New taxa described by Yu. P. Korshunov

1. Pseudophilotes jacuticus Korshunov & Viidalepp, 1980
2. Plebejus argyrognonon chalcha Korshunov, 1982
3. Polyommatus eros taityrensis Korshunov, 1982
4. Ravenna pacifica Dubatolov & Korshunov, 1984
5. Neolycaena falkovitshi Zhdanko & Korshunov, 1985
6. Rubrapterus Korshunov, 1987 (type species: Lycaena bavius Eversmann, 1832)
7. Apatura metis irtyshica Korshunov, 1982
8. Argynnis sagana relicta Korshunov, 1984
9. Argynnis sagana nordmanni Korshunov, 1984
10. Clossiana distincta machati Korshunov, 1987
11. Clossiana distincta dubatolovi Korshunov, 1987
12. Oeneis pseudosculda Korshunov, 1977
13. Oeneis sapozhnikovi Korshunov, 1982
15. Ravenna pacifica Dubatolov & Korshunov, 1984
16. Oeneis patrushevae Korshunov, 1985
17. Oeneis sarala Korshunov, 1988
18. Oeneis judini Korshunov, 1988
19. Oeneis shurmaki Korshunov, 1988
20. Oeneis ammosovi Dubatolov & Korshunov, 1988
22. Erythodriopa Korshunov, 1988 (type species: Parnassius ariadne Kindermann in Lederer, 1853)
23. Hipparchia dagi Korshunov & Krasilnikova, 1990
27. Rubrapterus Korshunov, 1990 (type species: Lycaena bavius Eversmann, 1832)
28. Sachiaia Korshunov, 1990 (type species: Parnassius tenedius Eversmann, 1851)
29. Sachiaia ammosovi Korshunov, 1990
30. Quinicaus Korshunov, 1990 (type species: Parnassius szecheyii Frivadszky, 1886)
31. Kreizbergius Korshunov, 1990 (type species: Parnassius simo Gray, 1852)
32. Hesperia comma planula Korshunov, 1995
33. Hesperia comma shushkini Korshunov, 1995
34. Leptidea amurensis jakutica P. Gorbunov & Korshunov, 1995
35. Euchloe ausonia dubatolovi Korshunov, 1995
36. Euchloe naina Korshunov, 1995
37. Roddia Korshunov, 1995 (type species: Papilio i-album Esper, 1780)
38. Euphydryas iduna semenovi Korshunov & Ivonin, 1995
40. Clossiana ostarte ershovi Korshunov & P. Gorbunov, 1995
41. *Clossiana matveevi* P. Gorbunov & Korshunov, 1995
42. *Boloria altaica pustagi* Korshunov & Ivonin, 1995
43. *Hyponephele cadusina gurkini* Korshunov, 1995
44. *Erebia kosterini* P. Gorbunov, Korshunov & Dubatolov, 1995
45. *Erebia mckinleyensis ola* Korshunov, 1995
46. *Erebia theano tshugunovi* Korshunov & Ivonin, 1995
47. *Erebia theano shoria* Korshunov & Ivonin, 1995
49. *Erebia mckinleyensis ola* Korshunov, 1995
50. *Erebia theano tshugunovi* Korshunov & Ivonin, 1995
51. *Oeneis sculda vadimi* Korshunov, 1995
52. *Oeneis elwesi ulugchemi* Korshunov, 1995
53. *Oeneis magna pupavkini* Korshunov, 1995
54. *Heodes alciphron rubidus* Korshunov, 1995
55. *Polyommatus icarus omelkoi Dubatolov & Korshunov, 1995
56. *Oeneis alpina gomojunovae* Korshunov, 1995
57. *Oeneis elwesi ulugchemi* Korshunov, 1995
58. *Erebia euryale flaveoides* Korshunov, 1995
59. *Colias palaeno gomojunovae* Korshunov, 1995
60. *Colias palaeno gomojunovae* Korshunov, 1995
61. *Colias palaeno gomojunovae* Korshunov, 1995
63. *Triphysa albovenosa sacha* Korshunov, 1995
64. *Triphysa albovenosa sacha* Korshunov, 1995
68. *Triphysa albovenosa sacha* Korshunov, 1995
69. *Triphysa albovenosa sacha* Korshunov, 1995
70. *Triphysa albovenosa sacha* Korshunov, 1995
71. *Triphysa albovenosa sacha* Korshunov, 1995
72. *Triphysa albovenosa sacha* Korshunov, 1995

Scientific works by Yu. P. Korshunov
(in Russian, except 1998a)

2 (1956): Ecological and zoogeographical characteristics of the Lepidoptera fauna (Rhopalo-cera) of the mountainous part and the southern coast of the Crimea. – Itogovaja stu­denceskaja nauc-naja konferencija Char’kovskogo universiteta. Tezisy dokladov. Char’kov, pp. 211-212.
5 (1960a): Butterflies (Lepidoptera, Rhopalocera) in the Middle Priobye. Izvestija SO AN SSSR 7: 116–120.
7 (1961): The butterflies (Lepidoptera, Diurna) of the coastal zone of the Novosibirsk reservoir. Trudy Biologiceskogo instituta SO AN SSSR 7: 199–207.


Articles written by Yu. P. KORSHUNOV:

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Parnassius eversmanni MÉNÉTRIÈS, 1849, pp. 309–310
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Polyommatus cyanus (Eversmann, 1837), pp. 253–254


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Argynnis sagana relicta KORSHUNOV, 1984, pp. 56–57
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