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Prof. dr Jan Rafalski

Professor Jan Rafalski, died on 13 March 1995, was a full professor at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Head of the Department of Animal Morphology, Faculty of Biology.

We have decided to honour Our Teacher with this collection of papers and articles dedicated to the Professor. The articles deal with new species, morphologically or zoogeographically interesting. Professor Rafalski was always very fond of new species of animals. He would spend a lot of time examining samples of soil and finding new species of mites, small myriopods or insects. Then He would show them to us and would prepare new articles on those interesting mites or Pauropoda. Without exaggeration He was an excellent field investigator, endowed with great intuition. It was not a problem for Him to describe different land habitats, identify interesting representatives of fauna and flora. He was an expert on the flora and fauna and, particularly, on the invertebrates of Poland.

Professor Jan Rafalski was born on 1 April 1909 in Sankt Petersburg. In 1932 He graduated from the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences at the Poznań University and in 1939 was awarded the master's degree in philosophy. From 1929 He worked at the Department of Comparative Anatomy and Biology at the Poznań University as laboratory assistant and illustrator, later as an assistant. On 1 September 1939 he was appointed senior assistant. Conscripted into the army, he took part in the September campaign in the rank of second lieutenant. When injured, he was taken prisoner of war and spent some time in German camps in Murnau and Hadamar where He taught courses at the Teachers' College. In 1945 Professor Rafalski returned to Poznań and helped to restore the assets of the University. In 1949 He defended His doctoral dissertation, in 1955 was appointed assistant professor and in 1960 opened the Department of Animal Morphology. In 1962 He was appointed associate professor and in 1973 full professor. He retired in 1979 but remained active until the last months of His life.

He taught classes in the zoology of invertebrates, comparative anatomy, embryology and many monographic lectures. Professor Rafalski was an excellent lecturer. His beautiful, colour drawings added much flavour to His lectures.

Professor Rafalski was an honorary member of the Zoology Committee of the Polish Academy of Sciences, member of the Scholarly Board of the Woliński National Park, member of the Scholarly Board of the Institute of Biology at the Silesian University in Katowice, member of the Scholarly Board of the Department of System and Experimental Biology at the Polish Academy of Sciences in Cracow. From 1956 He was the editor of *Badania Fiziograficzne Polski Zachodniej* and *Prace Komisji Biologicznej PTPN*, member of the editorial board of the *Catalogue of Polish Fauna*, keys to determining Polish invertebrates, *Monographs of Polish Fauna*, *Zoological Review*. From 1955 until retirement He was the supervisor of the Naturalist Special Interest Group run by His students.

Professor Rafalski supervised 16 doctoral dissertations and assisted in 18 post-doctoral dissertations, nearly 100 master theses. He also reviewed 17 doctoral dissertations and 11 post-doctoral dissertations, many professorial and editorial reviews. These data say nothing of the time He offered His students and many consultants in different zoological and ecological areas. He never had time for His own work but He always had time for His disciples. Much too late did we realize that we always interfered with Professor Rafalski's work asking Him lots of questions, asking Him to read our manuscripts which He patiently read and corrected, contributing lots of His own ideas. He always drew from His extensive knowledge and abundant experience as editor. He was truly a co-author of many of our articles and papers. However, He never wanted His name to appear next to ours. This is why it is impossible to find an article with Professor Rafalski's name as co-author.

Professor Rafalski received numerous prizes and honours for his teaching and research: ministerial prizes, National Education Committee Medal, Honorary Badge of the Union of Socialist Youth, Bachelor's Cross of Polonia Restituta and Commander's Cross of Polonia Restituta.

We are sure that this monograph would be very welcome by Professor Rafalski. After all He was always pleased with the development of systematic research which He advocated ardently and which, thanks to Him, has been promoted to a very high rank.

Prof. dr. hab. Czesław Błaszak