

In memoriam Tomáš Soldán *9 November 1951 – †13 August 2018

An outstanding entomologist Tomáš Soldán passed away in August 2018 after a short and unexpected illness at the age of 67. Tomáš travelled around the world, yet the Bohemian Forest was his most favourite landscape close to his heart, which he liked to visit and explore. His work significantly contributed to the knowledge of biodiversity of aquatic biotopes in the Bohemian Forest. He even named a new mayfly, considered as endemic species, *Ecdyonurus silvaegabretae*, in honour of these mountains.

Tomáš was born in Prague and, since his childhood, he was fascinated by insects, especially butterflies and beetles. That is why his study of systematic zoology and entomology at the Charles University was predestined. During his studies, he met important personalities of the Czech entomology who significantly influenced his next career. After graduation in 1975, he joined the Entomological Institute of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, where he worked for 43 years of his professional life. Together with his mentor, Vladimír Landa, he studied the mayflies (Ephemeroptera) in the broadest sense, from morphology and



taxonomy to ecology and faunistics. He has become a world-renowned and leading researcher of Ephemeroptera, whose work culminated in the opus magnum, *The Mayflies of Europe* (2012), written together with his friend Ernst Bauernfeind. Tomáš described more than 70 species of mayflies, while nine other species of aquatic insects were described by foreign colleagues in his honour and bear the patronymic name *soldani*. Nevertheless, his scientific scope was much wider. He dealt with the development and ultrastructure of insect gonads, influences of biologically active substances on insect reproduction, or participated in the development of the method of sterilization of male tse-tse flies, which was applied in several African countries. His footprint was also tracked in the field of hydrobiology, as he conducted long-term research of the biodiversity of streams in the Czech Republic and worked in several projects dealing with the assessment of the ecological status of streams.

After moving to České Budějovice in 1979, Tomáš became more intensely engaged in the research of aquatic ecosystems in South Bohemia and the Bohemian Forest. Since 1991, he also was one of the first lecturers at the newly founded Faculty of Science of the University of South Bohemia. His long-term study of aquatic insects in various aquatic habitats in the Bohemian Forest and elsewhere brought the knowledge on biodiversity and species distribution and, in particular, unique data for evaluating long-term changes in biodiversity of streams and lakes. These data have been increasingly valuable over time as they describe aquatic biotopes prior to recent anthropogenic interventions. As one of the first scientists, he participated in long-term research on the recovery of the Bohemian Forest lakes from acidification, which currently benefits from historical data collected by several generations of scientists. In his monographic study (Silva Gabreta, 2012), he summed up all the knowledge on aquatic insects of the Bohemian Forest lakes. He often invited young colleagues and students to participate on the field work in the Bohemian Forest and, thus, a number of studies in the Bohemian Forest began as a field trip with Tomáš. In recent years, he participated in the research of restored streams in the Vltavský Luh.

Tomáš Soldán wrote more than 300 scientific publications, but their list and description can hardly capture their author's personality. Tomáš was a well-educated and friendly man, who travelled over dozens of countries and inspired many followers by his range of knowledge and experience. He was a passionate collector of mayflies, who is remembered first of all as the man in rubber boots with a metal strainer collecting mayflies in the middle of the river. He always amused people around him with his unrepeatable sense of humour, so we will really miss his jokes, "heroic stories", and bon mots.

Jindřiška Bojková