

a tribute to IH



**a collection of papers honouring
Professor Ivan Horáček**

60 years of Professor Ivan Horáček

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Professor Ivan Horáček is known, both at home and abroad, as a significant representative of Czech zoology, an internationally renowned chiropterologist and a personality with incredibly wide interests in biology with successful overlaps to other sciences, mainly mathematics and philosophy. Considering such an extensive range of interests, he is more than just an important zoologist specialised mainly in the study of bats, although in this field he has been engaged primarily, as documented by the high number of papers published, and he is also respected worldwide as a leading specialist in this field. However, throughout his career, he has also paid much attention to the study of fossil fauna of vertebrates, mainly small mammals, and he thus also ranks among important European palaeontologists. Besides that, he became significantly involved in the issue of evolutionary developmental biology. Above all, for more than twenty years already, Ivan has been engaged as both teacher and scientist at the Department of Zoology, Charles University in Prague, where he became a professor in 2004.

Ivan was born in Havlíčkův Brod, East Bohemia, on 10 April 1952, but the family later moved to Prague, where he studied secondary school and graduated in 1970. Although his father was a civil engineer, Ivan became attracted to the study of nature, mainly of its animate part. In addition, he got interested in speleological research, for which he had many opportunities in the vicinity of Prague, namely in the Bohemian Karst area. As a sociable person and also as a leading spirit, he became surrounded, already at the secondary school, by a group of friends with similar interests and he also soon made contacts with the older generation of Prague zoologists and





speleologists. In this cooperation, he obtained extensive knowledge of biology already during the high school studies, drawing the attention of Prague naturalist circles as a “prodigy”. He thus soon became a respected partner of field and society events in both domains and aroused public notice by his first interesting publication attempts. At that time, he already regularly attended university and academic institutions and got involved in their research activities with much diligence and thoroughness. Logically, he was expected to begin his studies at the Faculty of Science without any problems. However, the situation got complicated short before graduation because of his participation in a student event compromising the then leading political party, when he fell in danger of prohibition of studies at the Charles University. He managed to avoid this unexpected barrier by applying to the University of Agriculture in 1970 (at that time he liked to present himself as “studying to become a peasant”). Luckily the situation changed soon and already in the years 1971–1976 he could successfully finish his studies of zoology at the Faculty of Science, Charles University, where he achieved the title of graduate biologist.

His lifelong specialisation was prefigured by the theme of his diploma thesis *Population Ecology of the Mouse-eared Bat (*Myotis myotis*) in Central Bohemia*. It was an extensive and important monograph on one of the commonest Central-European bats, which later on, after supplementing and publication (1985), became an example to a number of similar studies of Czech and foreign colleagues. During university studies, Horáček was intensively engaged in the general research of Czechoslovak populations of bats and already at that time he ranked among leading and definitely the most active Czech experts on this group. By the end of his university studies, he had become author or co-author of around 10 original papers on bat fauna and ecology, which significantly contributed to the knowledge on bats of central Europe and the Balkans. In 1977 he defended his *Rerum Naturalium Doctor* thesis at the Department of Zoology, Faculty of Science, Charles University, summarising most of his findings on systematics, morphology, biology and ecology of bats in Czechoslovakia and other countries.

Since his first excursions in caves, Ivan paid attention also to appearance of bat bones in cave sediments and subsequently started to investigate such deposits systematically. He collected quite

a large material from a number of sites and became familiar with topics of mammalian paleontology or stratigraphy and paleoecology of the Quaternary period, the topics in which later trained a number of younger colleagues and students. His interest in fossil deposits and dynamics of karst development lead him to a fruitful co-operation with karsologists such as Pavel Bosák, nowadays a leading personality in the Czech geology and vice-president of the International Union of Speleology, with whom he organised ambitious field projects and, besides other, co-edited a voluminous international monograph *Paleokarst*. In the 1970' Ivan came in contact also with Oldřich Fejfar and Vojen Ložek, prominent experts in mammalian paleontology and Quaternary science, and after finishing his university study (and a year spent in the military service) he entered a stay at the Institute of Geology of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences. In the years 1971–1990, Horáček along with Vojen Ložek established a respected Laboratory of Quaternary Research. The Laboratory was located in little convenient premises outside the main building of the institute, but it provided quite suitable conditions for independent research including extensive field investigations. A broad-scale approach to study of the Quaternary topic established by outstanding personality of Vojen Ložek formed there an extraordinary inspiring platform for a multidisciplinary modern study of numerous fossiliferous sites both in Czechoslovakia and abroad. Large materials collected at that time present a robust background for further comparative studies and a solid base also for contemporary projects by Horáček's MSc and PhD students. In general, the time spent in the Institute of Geology was a very fruitful period for Ivan, and its importance is significantly reflected in rich Horáček's bibliography from that time (see below), having ranked him among leading experts in the Quaternary mammals of Central Europe and co-author of many important palaeontological monographs of the region. After all, it is known that it also was a happy period for Ivan at the height of his career, intensified by numerous excursions mainly to the beautiful Slovakian nature, and at the time when independence and friendly conditions in a small team of intelligent and positive people were priceless. Concerning this period, importance of studies by Horáček and his colleagues for the so far little studied region of Slovakia as well as the acclaim of these publications and their continuation in later similar activities in the Balkans and Medi-





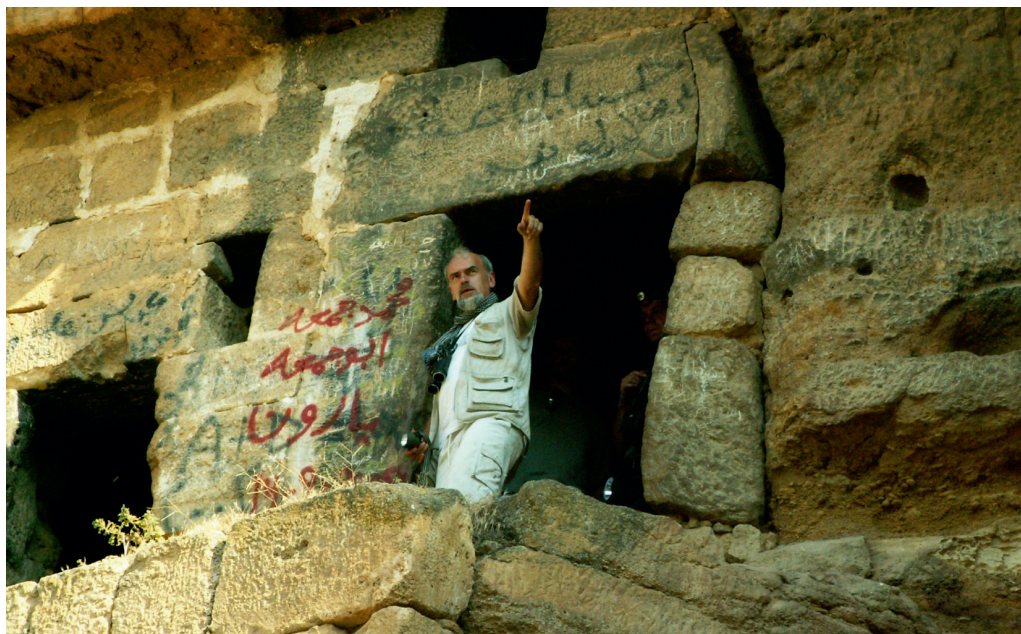
terranean at all, especially in Bulgaria, should be highlighted. This period of Horáček's work at the Institute of Geology was definitely beneficial and by far was not finished by his departure from this workplace, as evidenced by numerous items in his later bibliography. After all, at that time Horáček also paid attention to his formal professional development and after finishing the research assistantship he defended an extensive and excellent thesis *Palaeoecological Importance of Small Mammals of the Quaternary of Czechoslovakia* (supervised by Vojen Ložek) and obtained the PhD degree.

Already at time of the political changes in Czechoslovakia in 1989, Horáček was appointed to become a fellow of then newly established Institute of Philosophy and Methodology of Science at the Charles University, where he was responsible for teaching of Theoretical Biology and interfaces with the Department of Zoology where about a year later he got a position of assistant professor. Even though his palaeontological activities were undoubtedly successful and his cooperation with palaeozoologists at the Institute of Geology was beneficial and certainly harmonious, Horáček did not hesitate to follow the enticement of the home *Alma mater*. After all, even before he never lost contact with his study workplace, his bibliography before the year 1990 also includes tens of titles dealing with purely zoological, mostly chiropterological issues, although at that time his official position was a geologist and palaeontologist. In this period he published important systematic, zoogeographic and ecological papers mainly on the less known European bats (*Myotis daubentonii*, *M. nattereri*, *M. dasycneme*, *M. blythii*, *Rhinolophus euryale*, *R. ferrumequinum*, *Hypsugo savii*, *Eptesicus nilssonii*, etc.). At the same time, leading Horáček's share in the first stage of the project of monitoring of hibernating bats in Czechoslovakia (1969–1978; see Bárta et al. 1981) should be mentioned as well as his important involvement in organisation of bat ringing in this

period. At that time he had already gathered most of the material which he later used to publish a number of chapters (*Hypsugo savii*, *Plecotus auritus*, *Plecotus austriacus*) in the European monograph *Handbuch der Säugetiere Europas* (2004).

The year 1990 was thus a beginning of a new work period for Ivan; since that he has been fully focused on chiropterological issues at the Department of Zoology again and he has been also very active as a teacher, at that in several fields of zoology (lectures: Taxonomy and Phylogenetics of Chordates, Zoogeography, Principles of Biogeography, Ecology of Mammals, Mammalogy). And to that he added other topics, so far not dealt with at the Department of Zoology in Prague, such as the Theoretical Analysis and Mathematical Formulations in Biological Research, Theoretical Biology, General and Comparative Odontology, Psychical Apparatus. With some of these courses he contributed also to teaching of biology at the newly established Faculty of Biological Sciences of the University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice and other universities in the Czech Republic where he supervised also further MSc and PhD students. He also leads original seminars, such as the appreciated annual excursion on Quaternary palaeobiology to both Czech and foreign sites. Under his supervision, a number of chiropterological MSc and PhD theses have been defended.

However, this pedagogical business does not significantly affect the traditionally high research activity of Ivan Horáček, his interest in this period has been just more concentrated on the main chiropterological issues. In the bibliography from this period we can again find tens of chiropterological publications, from small reports to important monographs. Horáček was also involved in continuing organisation of censuses of bats in hibernacula of the Czech Republic and he was a co-editor of the summary of results (2001). He also was a co-author of several monographs on the bat fauna of different parts of the eastern Mediterranean (Turkey, Greece, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Crete). A number of publications from this as well as from the older period logically became





a basis for his summarising habilitation thesis (1996) *Aspects of Biogeographical Studies of Central-European Mammals* and for becoming an Associate professor. Finally in 2004 he was awarded the degree of full professor.

Regardless the number of demanding functions related to intensive pedagogical and social activities in these years, Ivan continued with intensive research in both of his main specialisations, as documented by the number of papers in his bibliography. Similarly as before, chiropterological publications alternate with palaeontological, evolutionary biology and odontological issues. In cooperation with his students and colleagues, he published several comprehensive papers in renowned journals. In this period he also helped to found the European Society for Evolutionary Developmental Biology and organised its first meeting in 2006. Concerning the chiropterological issues, he continued with the study of ecology and phylogenetic relationships of some bat species and species-groups, at present of *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* and *Rousettus aegyptiacus*.

In this context, Ivan's permanent interest in the research of bats in the nearby as well as more distant foreign countries should be mentioned. At the beginning of his activities, it was mainly the above mentioned Slovakia, which he surveyed in detail from both the chiropterological and speleological point of view. In the years 1971–1995 he continued with a number of trips to the Balkan countries, mainly Bulgaria and Greece, but also to Kirghizstan, Romania and Albania, and later to Turkey, Cyprus and other countries, including some states of Indochina. He assessed the scientific findings from these trips in tens of publications (see Bibliography), some of them yet have to be assessed. The list of Horáček's research stays in foreign scientific institutions is comparably rich (London, Frankfurt a/M, Bonn, Erlangen-Nürnberg, Munich, Berlin, Laussane, Białowieża, Cracow, Vienna, Budapest, Moscow, St. Petersburg, etc.). These journeys enabled him to study the rich museum material as well as to make contact with the most important foreign experts, which were later used by a number of his students and colleagues. Also thanks to these activities, Horáček himself became one of the most internationally renowned and respected Czech chiropterologists.

The range of social and other activities of Ivan Horáček is also quite wide. In the course of time, he went through a number of functions in national and foreign scientific societies, associations, committees and expert boards and naturally he also is a long-time member of many national and foreign scientific societies, such as the Czech Zoological Society, American Society of Mammalogists and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Säugetierkunde. Within these activities, he also organised two successful bat research symposia in Prague in the years 1987 (European Bat Research Symposium) and 2010 (International Bat Research Conference) and at the same time he was an editor of the relevant symposium publications, *European Bat Research 1987* (1989) and *A Tribute to Bats* (2010). These activities include his involvement in organisation of the Symposium of Vertebrate-Prevertebrate Transition (Aspects of Vertebrate Origin) in Prague in 2005 and two smaller symposia on the occasion of jubilees of his teachers Vojen Ložek and Oldřich Fejfar (2005, 2011). His share in founding and his long-term presidency of the Czech Bat Conservation Trust (Česká společnost pro ochranu netopýrů) is particularly important. He also was a regular participant of a number of national and foreign congresses, symposia and meetings and his contributions, often not published or preserved only as abstracts, number several tens.

As a personality with wide range of knowledge and interests, Ivan Horáček has also proved successful in popularisation of zoology and palaeontology. He is a co-author of a very successful guide *Identifying Our Mammals* which was published in two editions (1982, 2005) and author of a popular science book *Flying Mammals* (1985) as well as of several translations of foreign publications on biology and palaeontology. He has also published around thirty popular essays, tens of reviews and articles in popular magazines, epilogues and laudatio articles. He has proved successful as an author of scripts or a specialist adviser of a number of popular films aimed at the issues of natural science and also have given tens of interviews on this topic for media.

As a zoology teacher at the Faculty of Science, Charles University and as a visiting teacher at several other Czech universities, mainly the University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice,



in the last twenty years he has participated in the education of several hundreds of biology students and supervised over fifty master theses and over twenty doctor theses. In this way, he has significantly contributed to the development of Czech zoology, mainly of vertebratology fields (namely mammalogy and palaeomammalogy), and to the publicity of Czech contribution in these specialisations both among the public and in national and foreign naturalist circles.

Ivan Horáček is indeed a Renaissance man, presumably the last of his kind among Czech naturalists. His horizon is by far not limited by vertebrate zoology, both recent and fossil, biomathematics and theory, philosophy and methodology of natural history. In a fascinating range, his interests also include psychology and psychoanalysis, theory and practice of fine arts, poetry and music, including its avant-garde movements. He never sacrificed the range of knowledge to immediate boom successes and all his knowledge and skills are well-founded – with the same elegance he contributes to the prestigious *Nature* journal and to the surrealist revue *Analogon* (where he acts a member of editorial board similarly as in *Acta Chiropterologica*, *Myotis* or the series *Cambridge Studies in Morphology and Molecules: New Paradigms in Evolutionary Biology*). All who know him, and they include whole generations of students, colleagues as well as members of the lay public fascinated by his popularisation activities, appreciate his nice and friendly character, the readiness to help others and the top pedagogical abilities. Only the older ones will recall the gradual metamorphosis of the birthday person from a young man with a black forelock to a mature scholar with grey hair and a pipe. We wish he was an adornment to the Czech scientific and art circles for sixty more years!

Taxa described by Ivan Horáček

- †*Sorex fejfari* Horáček et Ložek, 1988 (Eulipotyphla: Soricidae)
- †*Sorex (Drepanosorex) postsavini* Horáček et Ložek, 1988 (Eulipotyphla: Soricidae)
- †*Vespertilio villanyiensis* Horáček, 1997 (Chiroptera: Vespertilionidae)
- †*Hanakia* Horáček, 2001 (Chiroptera: Vespertilionidae)
- †*Quinetia* Horáček, 2001 (Chiroptera: Vespertilionidae)
- †*Hanakia fejfari* Horáček, 2001 (Chiroptera: Vespertilionidae)
- †*Miostrellus egeriensis* Horáček, 2001 (Chiroptera: Vespertilionidae)
- †*Myotis zieglerei* Horáček, 2001 (Chiroptera: Vespertilionidae)
- †*Nyctalus storchii* Horáček, 2001 (Chiroptera: Vespertilionidae)
- Parastrellus* Hofer, Van Den Bussche et Horáček, 2006 (Chiroptera: Vespertilionidae)
- †*Scotophilis* Horáček, Fejfar et Hulva, 2006 (Chiroptera: Vespertilionidae)
- †*Scotophilis libycus* Horáček, Fejfar et Hulva, 2006 (Chiroptera: Vespertilionidae)

Taxa described in honour of Ivan Horáček

- †*Myotis horaceki* Ziegler, 2003 (Chiroptera: Vespertilionidae)
- †*Ochotona horaceki* Čermák, 2004 (Lagomorpha: Ochotonidae)
- †*Miniopterus horaceki* Gunnell, Eiting et Geraads, 2011 (Chiroptera: Miniopteridae)
- Rhinolophus horaceki* Benda et Vallo, 2012 (Chiroptera: Rhinolophidae)

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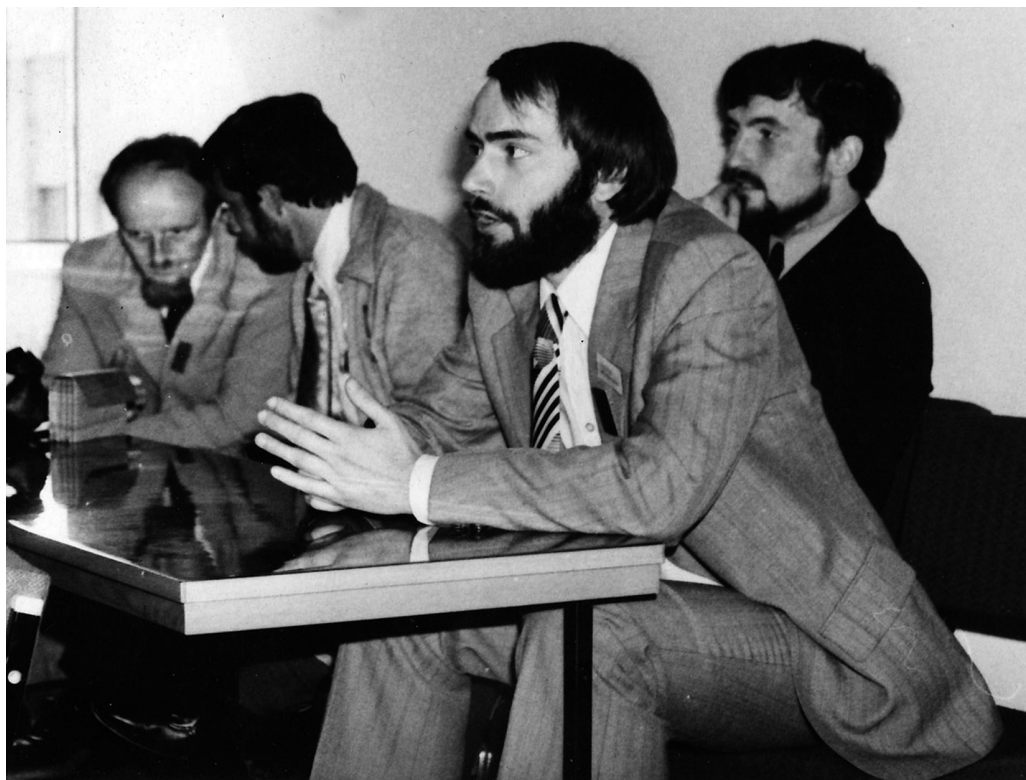
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