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In memoriam of RNDr. Pavel Lauterer (1933 – 2016)

Igor Malenovský¹



Pavel Lauterer 2006 (Alp Flix, Switzerland)
(Photo W.E. Holzinger)

On December 3, 2016, RNDr. Pavel Lauterer, our respected colleague, excellent teacher and dear friend, passed away at the age of 83.

Pavel was born on 25 August 1933 in Brno, Moravia, Czech Republic (then Czechoslovakia). Since his very young age, he was deeply interested in natural history and entomology in particular. In his passion, he was fully supported by his family. Both Pavel's parents were physicians in Brno. His father, Prof. MUDr. Zdeněk Lauterer, professor of psychiatry, collected butterflies in his youth. His mother, MUDr. Milada Lautererová, née Fleischerová, a pediatrician, had an outstanding knowledge of botany and published a widely popular book on poisonous plants. Pavel's grandfather, MUDr. Josef Fleischer, and granduncle, MUDr. Antonín Fleischer, were both physicians, taking an active part in Czech cultural and political life, and also entomology – they built up large collections of Coleoptera and wrote many papers

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on the Czechoslovak beetle fauna. Pavel's uncle, Zdeněk Fleischer, a professional gardener, was a passionate amateur coleopterologist as well. It was him in particular and popular books by Prof. Dr. Jan Obenberger, a leading authority in Czech entomology at that time, who had a deep influence on the young Pavel. Pavel started to observe and collect beetles and ants in the vicinity of Brno in 1947 when he was thirteen. His first scientific paper, based on his field excursions in Moravia, often made together with his uncle Zdeněk, appeared in 1954.

In 1953, during his studies at the Faculty of Science in Masaryk University, Brno, Pavel started to focus on Auchenorrhyncha. His interest for this insect group was inspired by Dr. Jaroslav Stehlík, heteropterist and the head of the Department of Entomology of the Moravian Museum in Brno, where the significant Auchenorrhyncha collection of Dr. Leopold Melichar was housed. Pavel became a voluntary associate and later also an employee of the museum department. He graduated from the university in 1957 with a diploma thesis dealing with the community ecology of Auchenorrhyncha in red-clover fields.

In 1958, Pavel Lauterer moved to Olomouc, another city in Moravia, where he became the head of the parasitological and zoological laboratory of a regional hygienico-epidemiological station and worked for four years on parasitic arthropods, especially ticks and mosquitoes, and pests of stored products. In his spare time, he continued studying Auchenorrhyncha and became also interested in the taxonomy and faunistics of Psylloidea and the parasitoids of Auchenorrhyncha, especially Diptera: Pipunculidae and Strepsiptera. In Olomouc, Pavel met his future wife, Viera. They got married in 1960. Later, after moving back to Brno, they raised their beloved daughter Hana, born in 1965.



Fig. 1: Pavel Lauterer in the 1960s (Photo: family archive)

In 1962, Pavel returned to the Moravian Museum, Brno, and worked there as a researcher and curator at the Department of Entomology until his retirement in 2002 (Fig. 2). However, even many years after his retirement, he attended the museum daily as a voluntary research associate and worked intensively on many projects. In the museum, he was in charge of most insect collections (except for Heteroptera and Lepidoptera) and greatly improved their standards. He tirelessly participated in all steps of the collection management, from material acquisition, mounting and sorting to identification of specimens, their systematic organisation in the collection, databasing, sending out material on loans, etc. Even in times when the Communist totalitarian regime rendered this exceptional and far from easy, he tried to keep himself and the collection in continuous contact with the international scientific community. Occasionally but always warmly, he hosted experts from beyond the Iron Curtain, visiting the insect collections in Brno (David A. Young, Mervin W. Nielson, Lois O'Brien, to name only a few). The fall of the communist regime in Czechoslovakia in 1989 represented an important milestone in Pavel's life and made him very happy. Finally, he could communicate with all colleagues and travel abroad freely (Fig. 3).

Pavel was an enthusiastic collector and loved being in the field, equipped with his robust sweep net and aspirators (Fig. 4). For fifty years, from the 1950s to 2000s, he systematically explored the Auchenorrhyncha, Psylloidea and Pipunculidae fauna of Moravia, Slovakia and less intensively also Bohemia. He recorded many species for the first time from today's Czech Republic and Slovakia and published his findings on the distribution and biology of leafhoppers, planthoppers, psyllids and big-headed flies in a series of papers, greatly increasing the knowledge on the fauna of both countries.



Fig. 2: Pavel Lauterer in his office at the Moravian Museum in the late 1990s (photo: Moravian Museum archive)

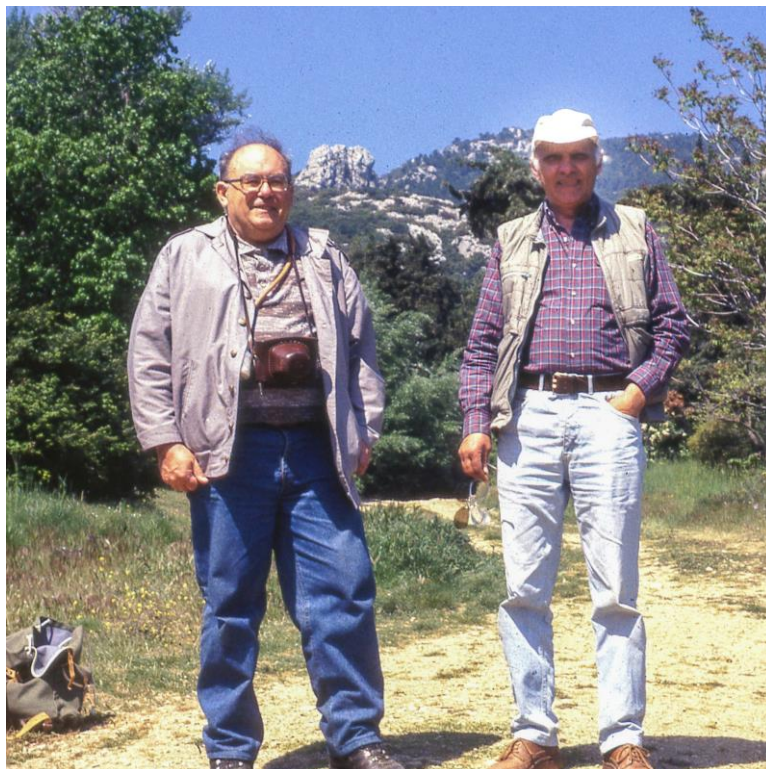


Fig. 3: Pavel Lauterer with Sakis Drosopoulos on a field trip in Greece in 1995 (photo: S. Drosopoulos)

During his life, he witnessed dramatic habitat destruction, especially of wetlands and dry grasslands, at many localities due to intensification of agriculture and forestry or, in contrast, their abandonment. He documented the disappearance of many once common insect species and the spread of invasive alien species. From the 1960s to 1990s, Pavel undertook several field trips also to the Balkans – during his holidays in Bulgaria and former Yugoslavia and during a stay in Greece with Prof. Dr. Sakis Drosopoulos (Fig. 3) – and collected a prolific material also there. In total, his huge collection of Auchenorrhyncha, Psylloidea and Pipunculidae housed in the Moravian Museum comprises approximately 350,000 specimens, mainly European, most of which he himself mounted, labelled and identified.

Pavel had a very good eye for detail, noticing even subtle morphological differences between taxa. He could also patiently track and observe live insects for many hours in the field or in experimental rearings which he usually set up in the small balcony of his home apartment. Both capacities enabled him to solve difficult taxonomic problems. He described two genera and 13 species of Auchenorrhyncha and four genera and 46 species of Psylloidea as new to science. His first new species was *Edwardsiana stehliki* (Cicadellidae: Typhlocybinæ), which he discovered on hazel in the parks and gardens of Brno during his university studies and which he described in 1958. Typhlocybinæ remained Pavel's favourite group of Auchenorrhyncha for the rest of his life. He collaborated, exchanged material and kept friendly correspondence for many years with another expert on those small leafhoppers,

Dr. Irena Dworakowska, and many other colleagues who shared his interest in Auchenorrhyncha and Psylloidea taxonomy and biology. Many of his fundamental taxonomic papers on Psylloidea, including e.g. a review of the psyllid fauna of Iran and the systematic revisions of Rhinocolinae, the genus *Bactericera*, and of *Aphalara exilis*, *Craspedolepta flavipennis*, *Trioza rotundata* and *T. galii* species groups, were published in collaboration with PD Dr. Daniel Burckhardt from Switzerland whom he met for the first time in 1981. They soon became close friends and visited each other regularly in Brno, Geneva and Basel. Especially in the 2000s and 2010s, Pavel devoted much of his time and effort to studies on the biology and distribution of phytoplasma vectors in Europe, such as *Cacopsylla* spp. in fruit orchards and planthoppers and leafhoppers in vineyards, which became pests causing significant economic loss. As a taxonomic expert always prepared to readily identify large quantities of Auchenorrhyncha and Psylloidea specimens and deeply acquainted with their life histories, he was frequently asked for collaboration by several research teams focusing on the monitoring of phytoplasma vectors and their control in the Czech Republic, Germany and Italy.

Pavel was a deeply respected member of the central European Auchenorrhyncha working group (Arbeitskreis Zikaden Mitteleuropas) and regularly attended its annual meetings (Zikadentagungen) from their early start in 1994 in Halle an der Saale (Germany). Many of us remember him also from lively discussions and friendly get-togethers at the European Hemiptera Congresses in Amaliapolis (Greece, 1998), Ivrea (Italy, 2007), Velence (Hungary, 2010) (see Fig. 4) and Blagoevgrad (Bulgaria, 2012).



Fig. 4: Pavel Lauterer collecting insects during the 5th European Hemiptera Congress in Velence, Hungary, 2009 (photo: G. Kunz)

In total, Pavel published 169 papers in scientific journals, 16 book chapters, 3 online documents and 18 abstracts of conference presentations. He was also a great populariser of entomology: he authored several dozen articles for Czech professional agricultural and popular science magazines and daily press and created four exhibitions on insects in the Moravian Museum. The last one, "Let the Beetle Live!" travelled with great success through many museums in the Czech Republic in 2000–2003. In his busy schedule as a scientist and curator, he still found a lot of time to inspire and educate young people.

For thirty years from the 1970s until the 1990s he was the head of an entomological circle for primary and secondary school students in Brno. During regular Friday afternoon sessions he educated them on identifying insects, helped with their early scientific activities, gave lectures on various insect groups and organised field excursions, always treating the boys and girls as if they were his own family. He was also advisor for several master and PhD students. Many of his students have retained their interest in entomology to this day, either as amateur or professional biologists. Of them, Prof. Dr. Vojtěch Novotný, Dr. Roland Mühlethaler, Dr. Václav Čermák and the author of this obituary have been publishing on Auchenorrhyncha or Psylloidea.

Pavel Lauterer's legacy, his collection and publications, will undoubtedly serve many future generations. His name has been immortalised in five genera – *Lautereriana* Dworakowska, 1974 (Cicadellidae: Typhlocybinae); *Lautereria* Young, 1977 (Cicadellidae: Cicadellinae); *Lauterodelphax* Asche & Remane, 1983 (Delphacidae, a junior synonym of *Mirabella* Emeljanov, 1982); *Lautereropsis* Burckhardt & Malenovský, 2003 (Psyllidae); and *Pavelauterum* Gnezdilov, 2013 (Issidae). Ten species of Auchenorrhyncha [*Szymczakowskia lautereri* Dworakowska, 1974; *Sundara lautereri* Dworakowska, 1977; *Empoasca lautereri* Mitjaev, 1980; *Eupteryx lautereri* Mühlethaler & Gnezdilov, 2013 (all Cicadellidae: Typhlocybinae); *Thagria lautereri* Nielson, 1977 (Cicadellidae: Coelidiinae); *Rhotanella lautereri* Zelazny, 1981 (Derbidae); *Macrocixius lautereri* Orosz, 2013; *Neobenarella paveli* Holzinger, Holzinger & Egger, 2013 (both Cixiidae); *Lanaphora paveli* Asche, 2013 (Delphacidae); and *Platymetopius pavelitus* D'Urso, Bückle & Guglielmino, 2013 (Cicadellidae: Deltocephalinae)], seven species of Psylloidea, seven species of Heteroptera, five species of Diptera and one species of Hymenoptera (Dryinidae) have been also named in his honour. But his exceptional friendly and encouraging attitude, deep and universal knowledge, indefatigable enthusiasm and his sense of humour will be sorely missed by all those who knew him personally.

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(a continuation from Witsack 1998, Beiträge zur Zikadenkunde 2: 3-8)

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