

70th life anniversary of Vlastimil Mikoláš - one of the founders of Thaiszia – Journal of Botany

Vlastimil Mikoláš was born on 25th October 1953 in Frýdek-Místek in the Czech Republic and lived in the small village Pražmo near the Czech-Slovak border area. Having finished a primary school in 1968 he started to study at Grammar School in Frýdek-Místek. After his school-leaving exam he started to study at the Faculty of AgriScience, Mendel University in Brno [Agronomická fakulta Mendelovy univerzity v Brně].



He finished his studies with a diploma thesis focused on differentiation of families Cyperaceae and Juncaceae based on vegetative characters in the former Czechoslovakia (1977). After the graduation he worked as a research assistant in Cereal Breeding Research Institute in Kroměříž [Výskumný a šlechtitelský ústav obilnářský, Kroměříž], in the years 1977-1980. In 1980-1983 he worked as a botanist in the Museum in Příbram [Okresné vlastivědné muzeum Příbram] and later, 1983-1984 in the Museum in Vyškov [Muzeum Vyškovska]. In 1984 Vlastimil started to work in the Botanical Garden of Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice as a head of the Department of Endangered and Medicinal Plants. Later he worked as the custodian of the botanical collection and revitalized the local herbarium collection (abbreviation KO in the Index Herbariorum). Vlastimil with his diligent collecting activity added over 15,000 herbarium specimens, collected mainly from eastern Slovakia, Moravia and northern Hungary, to the collection. During his career he dealt with several taxonomically complicated apomictic genera like *Achillea*, *Alchemilla*, *Crataegus*, *Euphrasia*, *Rubus*, *Sorbus* and *Taraxacum*. After dismissal from the work in 2000 he has worked as private botanist and has sold the herbarium specimens (Jurkovičová et al. 1998; Mártonfióvá & Mártonfi 2013).

The personal herbarium of V. Mikoláš consist of ca 90,000 herbarium specimens with many duplicates mostly in *Rubus*, *Sorbus* and *Taraxacum* genus. The majority is still in his own private herbarium. Over approximately 20,000 specimens are deposited in the herbarium KO, over 5,000 in BRNM as well as SAV, over 7,000 in W, ca. 900 in GJO (see JACQ: Virtual herbaria) and some specimens in Taiwan National Museum and Forest Institute, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität in München (MSB),

Maribor University, Východoslovenské múzeum v Košiciach (VSM), Múzeum Spiša (SNV) and in Slovenské múzeum ochrany prírody a jaskyniarstva (MOP) (acronyms according to Thiers 2023+ and Vozárová & Sutorý 2001).

Vlastimil is a member of several botanical societies and editorial boards: Slovak botanical society at SAS [Slovenská botanická spoločnosť pri SAV], Czech botanical society, IAPT, International Organization of Plant Biosystematics, International Aroid Society, IAVS, International Aroid Society, European Pteridophyta Group, OPTIMA, Arbeitskreis Heimische Orchideen Baden-Württemberg, Thaiszia - Journal of Botany.

Vlastimil quite liked to go to different parts of the world, where he was able to search for botanical rarities with his extensive botanical knowledge. He paid the most of his research trips and botanical expeditions from his own resources, as well as his participation at several international scientific conferences and workshops in Europe and several expeditions to Balkan, Turkey and Central Asia.

By means of exchange and purchase Vlastimil built stunning and respectable library with botanical literature as a dominant. Besides the European regional Floras (the complete series of Flora of Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Poland, Serbia, Bulgaria, Macedonia; many Hungarian books, some volumes of Flora Iberica, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Nordic countries and many others), he owns also Asian Floras (Tibet, China, Taiwan, Turkey, Iran, Caucasus and many others), many floras from former Soviet Union and its various parts (Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Abkhasia, Russians Far East, Russian Arctica, local Oblast's floras and others); to a lesser extent, also books from America and other regions and continents. A part of the library is represented by the books dealing with ruderal vegetation, National Red books, books devoted to endemics, different plant groups, various determining and illustrated regional keys, national parks and nature in general, over 300 maps (whole Europe, world), hundreds of botanical journals from the whole of world and thousands of botanical reprints and printed articles.

Expeditions (arranged chronologically, except for the area of the Czech Republic and Slovakia)

- 1985** - former Yugoslavia including Northern Macedonia (Baba, Šar Planina, Vraca planina)
 - Kosovo (Prokletije) and Monte Negro (Sinjajevina)
 - Visegradi hegység Mts (Hungary)
- 1986** - Pirin, Rila (Bulgaria)
 - Rügen Island, the Harz Mts (Germany)
- 1987** - Pontic Mts, Cilician Taurus, Anti-Taurus Mts (near village Aladağ) (Turkey)
 - Peloponnesse and Olympos Mts (Greece)
 - Polish side of High Tatras
- 1988** - Jakupitsa Mts, Galicica Mts, Baba and Vraca Planina (Northern Macedonia)
 - Suva planina (Serbia)
 - Hoverla (Ukrainian Carpathians)

- 1989** - the Greater Caucasus, the surroundings of Mt Elbrus, NW Caucasus and Rocky Caucasus
 - western Tajikistan, Hissar (Hisor) and Petr I. Range (Peter the Great Range)
- 1990** - lake Sevan (Armenia)
 - Kazakhstan, semideserts N to Alma-Ata and Tian Shan S of Alma Ata
 - Boz Mts (Boz Dağlari), Lycian Taurus, Uludağ Mts and Mt Sandras Daği (Turkey)
- 1991** - Mt. Giewont, Polish side of High Tatras (focused to *Alchemilla*)
- 1992** - NW Hungarian mountains: Keszthely Hegység, Bakony, Vértes and Budai Hegység focused to *Sorbus* species
- 1993** - Bulgarian mountains: the Strandzha Mts, Rodopy, southern Pirin and Belasica Mts on Bularian-Macedonian-Greek border zone
 - Polish side of High Tatras
 - Raxalpe, Leitha Mts (Leitha Gebirge), Niedere Tauern (Austria)
- 1994** - *Taraxacum* workshop VII (April 28 to May 1), Haiger (Hessen, Germany)
- 1995** - central part of Ukrainian Capathians
- 1997** - Edinburgh Botanical Garden, Pteridophyta excursion (Wales, Great Britain)
- 1999** - Mt. Slavnik (1028 m a.s.l.), Čičarija Mts, Istria (focused on *Sorbus*)
 - *Taraxacum* Workshop 9, Germany, Isle of Rügen, Altenkirchen/farm „Hof Wollin“ May 16th to 19th
- 2000** - 4th *Hieracium* workshop (31 May to 5 June 2000), Niederspree (Germany)
 - Öland island, central and southern Sweden
- 2008** - Ómassa, Bükk Mts, Miskolc (Hungary)
- 2009** - Kozina, Čičarija Mts, Istria (also in 2010 and 2011 with W. Starmühler for collection *Herbarium Istriacum*) (Trieste, Italy)
 - northern Velebit Mts (Croatia)
 - Lviv (including Botanical Garden), Zalizhchyky (Ternopil'ska oblast), Uzhhorod (Ukraine)
- 2010** - Kamianets-Podil'skyi (Khmelnitskyi oblast, Ukraine)
 - Crimea (Ukraine)
 - Bavarian forest (Bayern, Germany)
 - Portorož, Seča (Slovenia)
- 2011** - 12th *Hieracium* workshop (19-23 June 2011), Spånhult (Sweden)
- 2016** - Čučerje village, Medvednica Mts, Zagreb (Croatia)
- 2018** - Azores islands

Vlastimil is kind and modest man with sense of justice. He is also a poet, is the author of ca. 2000 poems. He is interested also in music (listening, jazz, rock and folk), cosmology, politology and philosophy. He is radical pacifist, he hates wars and weapons.

Currently, despite his poor health, he continues to work on his large herbarium and improves his library. He also still likes to travel around Europe and observe the local flora.

Supplement to bibliography¹

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Thiers B. (2021+) [continuously updated]: Index Herbariorum: A global directory of public herbaria and associated staff. – New York Botanical Garden's Virtual Herbarium, New York. – Published at <http://sweetgum.nybg.org/ih>

Vozárová M. & Sutorý K. (2001): Index herbariorum Reipublicae bohemicae et Reipublicae slovacae. – Bull. Slov. Bot. Spoločn. 7, 95 p.

JACQ consortium (2004 ff.): Virtual Herbaria Website at <https://www.jacq.org/f>

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¹ bibliography to 2012 see Mártonfiová & Mártonfi (2013)