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### **Professor Janusz Wojtusiak**

(1942-2012)

researcher of butterflies, passionate about nature, fascinated by mountains



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Janusz WOJTUSIAK was born in 1942 in Kraków. Since early childhood he was fascinated by nature, and particularly butterflies. Beyond any doubt, this interest was instilled in him by his father, the well-known Polish biologist, Roman WOJTUSIAK, Professor of the Jagiellonian University. With his father, he observed and collected butterflies in the then extremely rich and diversified locations around Kraków, such as Podgórk Tynieckie, Kostrze, Ojców and the Niepołomicka Forest, as well as during summer vacations in their favourite Kościelisko locality in Podhale, and in the Tatra Mts.

He began his biological studies in the Jagiellonian University in 1959. During the studies he was very active in academic life, having organised the Club of Young Naturalists, led a number of speleological expeditions in the Polish Jura and Tatra Mts., and conducted scientific camps for students. After graduating in 1964, he was employed as an Assistant in the Department of Systematic Zoology and Zoogeography led by Professor Stanisław SMRECZYŃSKI. Throughout the 1960s and in the early 1970s he was particularly involved in the activities of the Polish Mountaineering Association driven, as he himself put it, by his affection for the mountains and by the desire to go explore the unknown.

During 1966-1967 and again in 1973, he participated in the first Polish climbing expeditions in the Hindu Kush Mts. in Afghanistan and in Kashmir in Pakistan. During these expeditions, Janusz WOJTUSIAK gathered a rich and extremely valuable collection of butterflies including several thousand rare specimens of *Parnassius* swallowtails, *Baltia* pierides, and *Karanasa* satyrines. As he later recalled, when other members of the expeditions were occupied with climbing the snow-covered peaks, he was rather more interested in penetrating the high-mountain valleys in search for interesting insects. The material brought back from the expeditions enriched the collection of the Zoological Museum of the Jagiellonian University. During expeditions to Asia, he also shot many hours of documentary film which have recently been converted to digital format.

His Ph.D. thesis presented in 1971, concerned the morphology of microlepidoptera of the Adelidae family and was one of the pioneering studies, in which he described in detail and illustrated the female copulatory apparatus in this group, together with its musculature. Soon after gaining the title of *doctor habilitatus* at the beginning of the 1980s he was appointed Head of the Zoological Museum of the Jagiellonian University. Immediately afterwards he was offered a contract to teach at a university in Nigeria, which, in these difficult times, was a rare opportunity for Polish academic teachers to receive a decent salary. As such, from 1982-1986, Janusz WOJTUSIAK taught zoology and entomology at the University of Nigeria in Nsukka. Throughout that period, he spent almost all his free time undertaking excursions into forests and savannas looking for interesting film footage and insects for the scientific collection of the Zoological Museum. The material collected by him, principally in south-eastern Nigeria, in the Nsukka and Okomu forests, as well as the Obudu and Oban mountains, includes thousands of specimens and is one of the most exhaustive collections of butterflies and moths from this region of Africa anywhere in the world. Many specimens were species new to science, later described by specialists in various systematic groups, whilst some types of specimens deposited in Kraków elevated the rank of the scientific value of the collection at the Jagiellonian University. Another scientific result of his stay in Nigeria

was the description of an unknown behaviour in the ants of the genus *Oecophylla*: the retrieving of very large preys on smooth and almost vertical surfaces thanks to adhesive pads, arolium, on their feet.

After returning from Nigeria, Janusz WOJTUSIAK continued his research in the field of entomology. His interests focused on circadian cycles in insects, various aspects of the behaviour of social insects such as: ants, bees, and termites, as well as issues in taxonomy and the faunistics of butterflies.



With students, during a course of Tropical Ecology at the Rancho Grande Field Station, 2010

In 1989-1990 he gave lectures in forest entomology at the invitation of the University of Wisconsin in Stevens Point. At that time he also started active co-operation with the leading zoological museums in Europe and the United States, but above all with the Natural History Museum in London. This project was focused at producing a comprehensive work detailing the scientific collection of butterflies in the Zoological Museum of the Jagiellonian University. In 1991, he published a textbook on the ethology of insects, which is currently the only such comprehensive treatment of this topic in the Polish language. For several years, Janusz WOJTUSIAK continued his studies aimed at updating and publishing a new edition of this textbook, but these plans were thwarted by his illness. At the end of the 1980s and in early 1990s he again collected butterflies in tropical countries on several occasions, especially in India, and Tanzania, and under the scientific programme of the Zoological Museum in São Tomé and Prin-

cipe. The latter expeditions again resulted in very interesting scientific material serving as a source for a number of scientific publications concerning, *inter alia*, fauna, and taxonomy, including new species as well as various aspects of the biology and ecology of butterflies of that region.

In 1994, Janusz WOJTUSIAK received a professorial nomination from the President of the Republic of Poland, Lech WAŁĘSA. From the mid-1990s, the scientific interests of Professor Janusz WOJTUSIAK were geared towards the mountain areas of South America, as he noticed the hidden scientific potential in the mostly unknown fauna of many systematic groups of butterflies of this region of the world. From 1996 onwards he either participated in or organised more than ten scientific expeditions into the Andes, namely: in 1996 – into the Cordillera de Merida in Venezuela, in 1997 to western Colombia, in 1998 to northern Peru, in 2000 and again in 2008 to Bolivia, in 2002 to central Peru, to Ecuador on several occasions from 2002-2004, under the project sponsored by the State Committee for Scientific Research (KBN), and in 2007 – again to Venezuela. During these scientific expeditions, extraordinarily valuable and extensive materials of the Lepidoptera order were collected, which resulted in more than 100 scientific publications and descriptions of more than 400 new species of butterflies and moths, principally of the Tortricidae family, in co-authorship with Professor Józef RAZOWSKI. Together with the latter, Janusz WOJTUSIAK described a new olfactory organ located on the abdomen of the African representatives of the Adelidae family. One of his most interesting achieve-



During a film shooting session on Lake Maracaibo in Venezuela, 2010



vements was discovering and describing the first brachypterous and non-flying male, from among all the moths in the world, in the genus *Xenomigia* (Notodontidae). Janusz WOJTUSIAK was the initiator of research and teaching co-operation agreements between the Jagiellonian University and several leading scientific institutions and universities in South America, including the Venezuelan Institute for Scientific Research, and the National University of San Marcos in Lima. These agreements facilitated, to a great extent, the research activities of scientific staff, doctoral students and undergraduates of the Jagiellonian University, carried out in the largely uncharted mountain forests of this continent. The exploration of the Andes placed the Zoological Museum firmly on the list of the most highly regarded museum and research institutions in Europe, with respect to the studies of butterfly fauna and global biodiversity.

Janusz WOJTUSIAK was an academic teacher highly regarded and well-liked by his students. For many years he taught the ethology of insects, zoogeography and entomological techniques. From 2007 onwards he co-organised ( the course of Tropical Ecology on which he also gave lectures, with the fieldwork part of it being undertaken each year in Venezuela, the first such course of its kind in Poland. In recent years he devoted much time to his new hobby of making films about nature. He made and edited many hours of documentary films, which are now used as teaching aids and in the promotional activities of the Jagiellonian University.

He filled his free time with making field excursions in the Tatras, Alps and Rocky Mountains from which he always brought back interesting insect specimens. Janusz WOJTUSIAK was a very active advocate of the construction of a new seat for the Zoological Museum of the Jagiellonian University and the need to create a modern basis for teaching within the Centre for Education in Natural Sciences, whose planning he supervised as a senior consultant.

Written by: Tomasz W. PYRCZ