

BOLESŁAW BURAKOWSKI - a personal appreciation

It is with great pleasure that, on an occasion of his ninetieth birthday, we present the following Festschrift volume to our senior colleague and teacher, Dr. Bolesław BURAKOWSKI.

B. BURAKOWSKI was born on November 28, 1905 at Lewiczyn (Grójec District, Poland). He spent his early years in rural surroundings combining both early education and a necessary work to support himself. He completed Kazimierz Kulwieć High School in Warsaw, and this period was again combined with both theoretical and practical training in joinery for self supporting and developing interests in that activity. In 1927-1928 he served in army. He married in 1930, and from 1944 after a sudden death of his wife was taking care of his three children by himself.

He attended Warsaw University (Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics) in 1928-1929, and then because of a necessity of taking a regular job (at Warsaw Polytechnic School, in an accounting department) he moved to a Polish Free University (an afternoon school for working people) where with several breaks he continued until 1939. During the World War II, he moved out of Warsaw to a small farm near Otwock. Due to many complicated events with the archives of the Free University he could not continue an almost completed course at the University until 1949, when these were recovered. In the meantime he took up his old job at the Warsaw Polytechnic School becoming in 1952 acting chief accountant of this University. He left the job in 1952 after completing his master dissertation at the Faculty of Biology and Earth Sciences of the Warsaw University (31.X.1952).

Earning that degree he was able to become a professional zoologist which has always been his strong desire. Before this post he served for several years as a volunteer at the Coleoptera Section of the State Zoological Museum. He started his first job in zoology as an assistant at the State Zoological Museum on 16 November, 1952. After completing all the necessary courses and exams he got his Ph.D. in

entomology at the Warsaw University in 1963 for his dissertation on the biology and morphology of the rare pythid species *Pytho kolwensis*.

Since 1953, B. BURAKOWSKI has been a dedicated field collector and keen observer of the biology of beetles, and has amassed a collection of about 40,000 larval specimens collected by himself, and mostly associated with adults by a rearing process done in his laboratory. This is a unique collection which gave (and will continue to give) many opportunities to himself and to other people, that have always been generously supplied with his material by B. BURAKOWSKI, to discover many unknown immature stages and very important biological observations. His special interests were in the beetles inhabiting forests, especially those developing in bark, wood or associated fungi. These groups are the best represented in his collections, but many other groups, like *Carabidae*, *Lampyridae* and many others are also well sampled. The continued interest in the fieldwork and rearing B. BURAKOWSKI has maintained from his early start in entomology to present. It is worth to say that the last number of a culture in his field book he brought to his lab in early October from the Białowieża Primeval Forest is 6990, and surely there are many more to come.

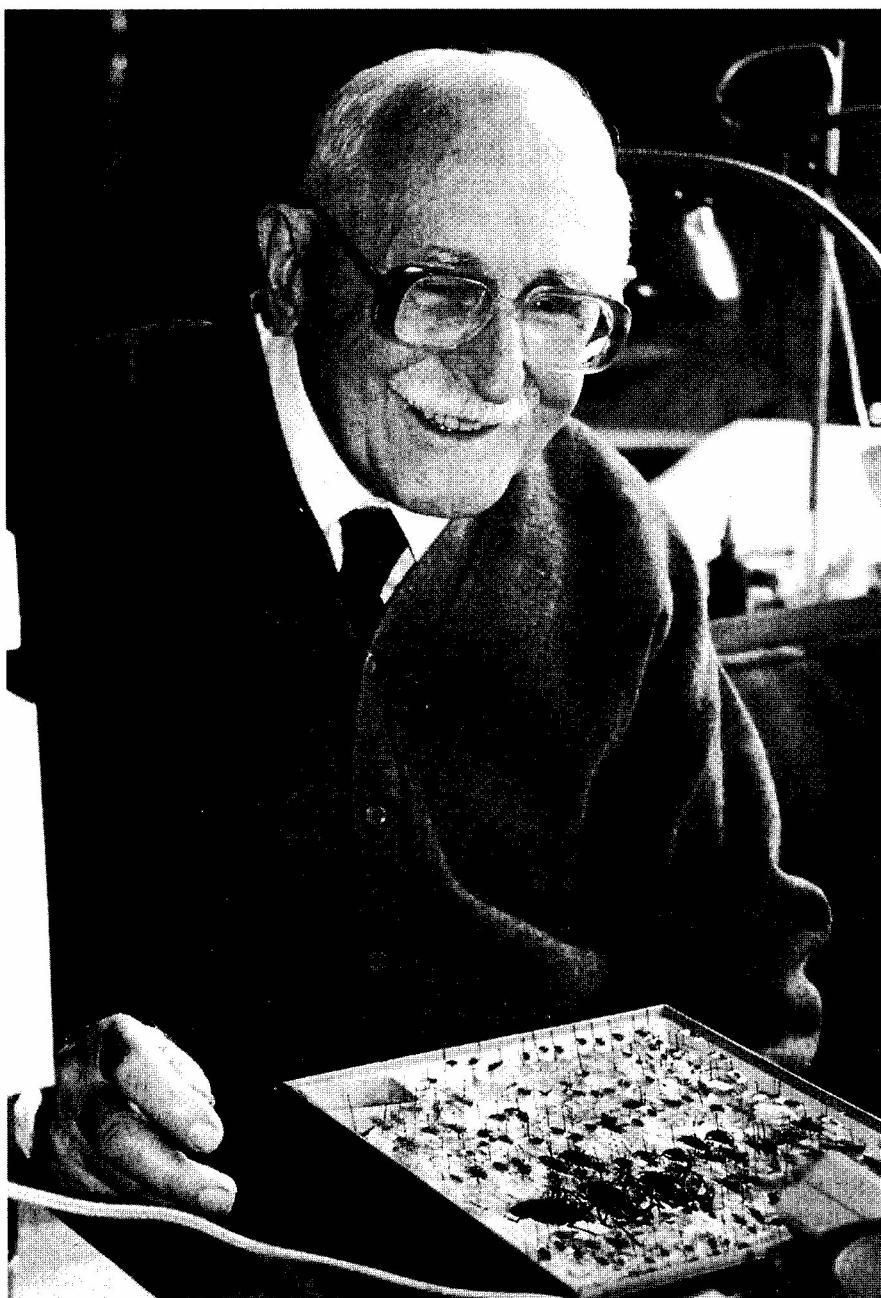
In 1972 he retired from his position, but to date is a half time contract employee of the Museum and Institute of Zoology, continuing his interests in the biology of the *Coleoptera* and completing with Dr. M. MROCZKOWSKI and J. STEFAŃSKA a monumental work on the Catalogue of Polish *Coleoptera* (20 volumes published to date).

During his career, B. BURAKOWSKI has been and an active member of the Polish Zoological Society (a recognized Honorary Member) and the Polish Entomological Society (the Gold Award). As a recognition to overall activities he was awarded the Knight's Cross of the Order of Polonia Restituta.

It is my great pleasure to present this brief account on the biography of my senior colleague, who with no reservation has always shared his incredible knowledge and collections of immature beetles, and in spite of his advanced age has always had a strong desire and willingness to collaborate with much younger and less experienced people. Working with B. BURAKOWSKI on a joint project has always been a pleasure both because of his skills, knowledge, and a unique personality that does not age at all. The long list of his projects yet to complete he has many years of active life to follow. We have to remember that Dr. BURAKOWSKI has started his professional entomological career at the age of 47 !, so he has to be given an extra time compared to the most of the people in the field. We all wish him that.

I would like to extend the sincerest wishes to Dr. Bolesław BURAKOWSKI from myself, the employees of his home institution The Museum and Institute of Zoology (Polish Academy of Sciences) and all the fellow entomologists - Happy Birthday and many more peaceful and active years to come !!!

Stanisław Adam ŚLIPIŃSKI
 Director
 Museum & Institute of Zoology



Dr. Bolesław Burakowski, photograph taken in October 1995 by Tadeusz Płodowski

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