



IN MEMORY OF
Academician, Professor,
PhD in Biology Victor CIOCHIA
Zoologist Entomologist, Ornithologist

(February 4, 1932 – November 14, 2014)

Passing into eternity of a great scientist is a loss for the entire academic and scientific community of a nation and of the entire mankind, as well. The Romanian biological world is now poorer due to the disappearance of **Academician, Professor, PhD in Biology Victor CIOCHIA**. Who was Victor Ciochia?

He was a member of the Academy of Agricultural and Forestry Sciences, Professor and PhD program coordinator, biologist and hunter at the same time, ichneumonologist, ornithologist, outstanding specialist in biological control of pest insects, great lover and protector of nature, a rebel of fate and a fervent patriot, who paid with hard years of jail for the audacity to declare himself a true Romanian.

Professor, PhD in Biology Victor CIOCHIA attended high school at the "Andrei Saguna" National College of Brasov, then the Faculty of Biology of the "Al. I. Cuza" University of Iasi, where he was colleague with other great biologists such as: Professor PhD Gheorghe MUSTAȚĂ, Professor

PhD Ionel ANDRIESCU, Professor PhD Ioan MOGLAN, Professor PhD Constantin PISICĂ, Professor PhD Raol Constantineanu, as disciples of the European distinguished ichneumonologist of the second half of the twentieth century, MI Constantineanu. In 1972 he obtained his PhD in biology from the "Al. I. Cuza" University, presenting his PhD thesis entitled "*Contributions to the Study of Trachysphyroids (Hym., Ichn.) of RSR*", published in 1979. For his original and novelty studies in his thesis he was conferred the "Emil Racovita" prize awarded by the Romanian Academy in 1981. Over the years, Mr. Victor CIOCHIA published several monographs dealing with other orders of insects as well: "Catalogue of Lepidoptera collection of Braşov County Museum" (1980), "Catalogue of teaching material collection of Lepidoptera of the "Lucian Blaga" University of Sibiu" (2000) "Day Butterflies of Romania" (2012).

The tortuous road of life and the destiny bring him again after many years in the academic world, and starting 1997 he became tenure professor at the "Lucian Blaga" University of Sibiu, where he taught subjects such as: zoology, entomology, plant protection, and ornithology. Starting 1999, he had been a PhD coordinator at the University of Bucharest, Faculty of Biology, and over several years he has trained 11 Ph.D.s in Science, in the field of biology.

He dedicated his spare time to conducting ornithological research, as passion of his youth, dealing in particular with the dynamics and migration of birds. Also as a collaborator of the Romanian Ornithological Society he ringed over 2500 birds using Japanese nets; about 4% of the birds ringed by the professor were found in: Africa, Asia Minor, Russia, Greece, Italy etc. He discovered the bird *Sylvia melanocephala* in the Agigea Marine Sand Dunes Reservation, as the first time that bird was mentioned in the Romanian fauna. He also identified the Histria Sinoe area as the European wintering area of the red-breasted goose (*Branta ruficollis*).

The Professor's extensive research in the field of ornithology is covered by the following monographs: "The dynamics and migration of birds" (1984), "Brooding birds in Romania" (1992), "Aves Danubii" (2001) published in Romanian and German, "Bird Dictionary" (2002), "Small Treaty of ornithology" vol. I, volume II (2007), "Bird flight and migration" (2011), "Sedentary ornithofauna of Ro-

mania"(2013).

The study of insects was one of the professor's concerns since he was student. From taxonomic point of view, he described for the first time in science 9 species and 10 subspecies from the *Ichneumonidae* (*Trachysphyroidae*), also a new genus and a new species for the fauna of Europe and 5 genera, 64 species, 2 subspecies and 4 new varieties for the Romanian fauna.

Given that there is no presentation of the aphids in the Romanian literature, in 1997 he made the first monograph entitled the *Brief presentation of aphids, host plants and main natural limiters of Romania*, which presents all aphid species known in our country until 1996, their host plants and also some remarks on some of their natural limiters.

The 11 monographs which he had coordinated and published throughout his life together with other researchers deal with plants and nature protection: "Biological control of pests, the essential component of agroecosystems protection" (1986) "Sugar beet pests and diseases" (1976), "Protection of sugar beet" (1980), "Sugar beet pests and diseases - Album" (1984), "Technologies of industrial growth of several auxiliary insect species used in biological pest control" (1993), "Limitation of plant and animal pest populations in crops through biological and biotechnical means for environmental protection" (1997) (for this monograph he has been awarded with the M. I. Constantineanu award), "Crop protection in the mountain area" (1998), "Ecological Protection of the crop plants and the environment" (2005), "Aphids in Romania, natural limiters, methods of reducing populations" (2008).

During his life, the eminent scientist was a member of: "Gh. Ionescu-Șișești" Academy of Agricultural and Forestry Sciences from 1991-2014, the Academy of Romanian Scientists (1991-2014), Member of the New York Academy of Sciences (1994-2014), member of some national scientific societies: Romanian Ornithological Society (1967-2014), the Romanian Society of Biological Sciences, the Romanian Society of Ornithology, Bird and Nature Protection (founder 1990-2014), the Romanian Association for Ecosanogenesis (founder and chairman from 1995 to 2014), the Romanian Society for General and Applied Entomology (1994-2014), the Romanian Lepidopterological Society (1995-2014), international scientific societies: Société Ornithologique de la France (1966-2014), Ligue Française Pour la Protection des Oiseaux (1969-2014), Association des amies du Parque Re-

gionaux de la Corse (1973-2014), Société pour l'étude et protection of nature de la Bretagne (1969-1980), the International Council for Hunting, Paris (1968-1976), the International Bureau for the Protection of Birds (CIPO Cambridge, 1985-1988-1991), International Organization for Biological Control (1982-2014), Working Committee for the Atlas of European Breeding Birds.

It is hard to describe in a few pages the life's work of Professor Victor Ciochia, with his outstanding achievements. His fascinating personality attracted the younger generation and gathered around him both students, as an exceptional teacher, and young researchers, specialists, being a pioneer in environmental protection, part of the plethora of great nature protectors. He brilliantly organized scientific meetings at national and international level, being himself a great entomologist and ornithologist, a tireless campaigner of biological control, dedicating his entire life to the Romanian research in this field.

Through these lines I want to bring a modest homage and deep admiration to Professor Victor Ciochia, who can serve as a model for future generations, next to the other prestigious Romanian scientific personalities of our century in the field of biology.

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