

Ivo Hodek: 85th Birthday

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Ivo Hodek, or Ivo to all his friends, celebrated his 85th birthday in 2016. His youthful enthusiasm for work and scientific study make this anniversary hardly credible for all who know him personally. All this points to an enormous scientific productivity. This is not only the result of recent efforts but also a long and fruitful scientific career. Let us first briefly outline his early life and recall his achievements.

Born on 3 June 1931, Ivo completed his high school education in 1950 and began his university studies, first at what is now the Czech University of Life Sciences Prague, and then at the Faculty of Science of Charles University, Prague, which he completed in 1954. His fascination for ladybeetles (Coleoptera: Coccinellidae) began during his undergraduate studies and was the subject of his graduate (1954) and PhD Thesis (1957), which were on the ecology of the seven-spot ladybeetle, *Coccinella septempunctata*, by far the most abundant coccinellid species at that time, but now replaced in the order of dominance by the invasive *Harmonia axyridis* – an indication of how quickly time passes! Then in 1957 he started a fruitful career at the Entomological Institute of the Czechoslovak Academy of Science, where he became the leader of a world famous research group studying the biology of aphidophagous insects. More details of Ivo's career may be found in his biography published in this journal in 2001 (Hůrka et al. 2001).

Here we would like to pay tribute to the achievements of Ivo's scientific research, which spans several fields. As mentioned above, his first interest was in the biology of ladybird beetles, in particular the ecophysiology of two important species, *Coccinella septempunctata* and *Ceratomegilla* (at that time *Semiadalia*) *undecimnotata*. Ivo was interested in the nutritional biology of the first species, which led him to discover the toxicity of *Aphis sambuci*, which is toxic because of the alkaloids and glycosides it sequesters from its hostplant *Sambucus nigra*. He also investigated the conspicuous overwintering of the second species, resulting in their hibernation in massive assemblages on prominent hills. Ivo studied these assemblages on volcanic hills, the near České Středohoří Mountains, and in similar areas in Slovakia and further away in Western and Southern Europe and Central Asia. These extensive studies on coccinellid biology provided the basis for three books, which appeared at ca. 20 year intervals: *Biology of Coccinellidae* (1973), *Ecology of Coccinellidae* (1996) and *Ecology and Behaviour of the Ladybird Beetles (Coccinellidae)* (2012) of which Ivo was always the senior author. These books were milestones in “coccinellidology” research, with each being a complete review of the literature and synthesis of the knowledge at the time. The subject matter covered in the chapters in all the editions of this compendium is the same and thus provides an interesting comparison of the increase in knowledge and understanding in particular areas over time.

Ivo further extended his interests in coccinellid hibernation to insect dormancy in general by studying several aspects of the hibernation biology of species of phytophagous Heteroptera that are easier to rear than predators. The main insect used in these studies was the firebug *Pyrrhocoris apterus* and much of this work was and is continuing to be done in close collaboration with his wife, Magdalena, a world expert in insect endocrinology. His early studies focused on the development of insect dormancy under natural conditions, temporal course of dormancy induction, development

and termination and maintenance of photoperiodic sensitivity during post-diapause development, and was an important contribution to the knowledge of adult diapause. Their recent studies deal with many aspects of the humoral and sensory control of diapause and include studies on other Heteroptera, in particular species of the genera *Aelia*, *Eurygaster* and *Dolycoris*. An important feature of Ivo's work is his emphasis on syntheses based on rich experimental experience and extensive knowledge of the literature. His many review articles concern both general aspects of biological control and more specialist topics like the biology of particular species (*Coccinella septempunctata*) or effects of environmental factors on insects, mainly coccinellids.

Many entomologists are indebted to Ivo for his organizational activities: He initiated and organized a series of symposia on the biology of aphidophagous insects generally named "Aphidophaga" symposia, which started with the meeting at Liblice in 1965 and has continued until now (Aphidophaga 13, Freising 2016). He impeccably accomplished the duties of a scientific group leader, which was particularly difficult in the communist period. He taught ecophysiology courses in foreign (Tours, Wageningen) and Czech universities (Charles University) and initiated and supervised many MSc and PhD studies. He was a meticulous librarian and mainly responsible for

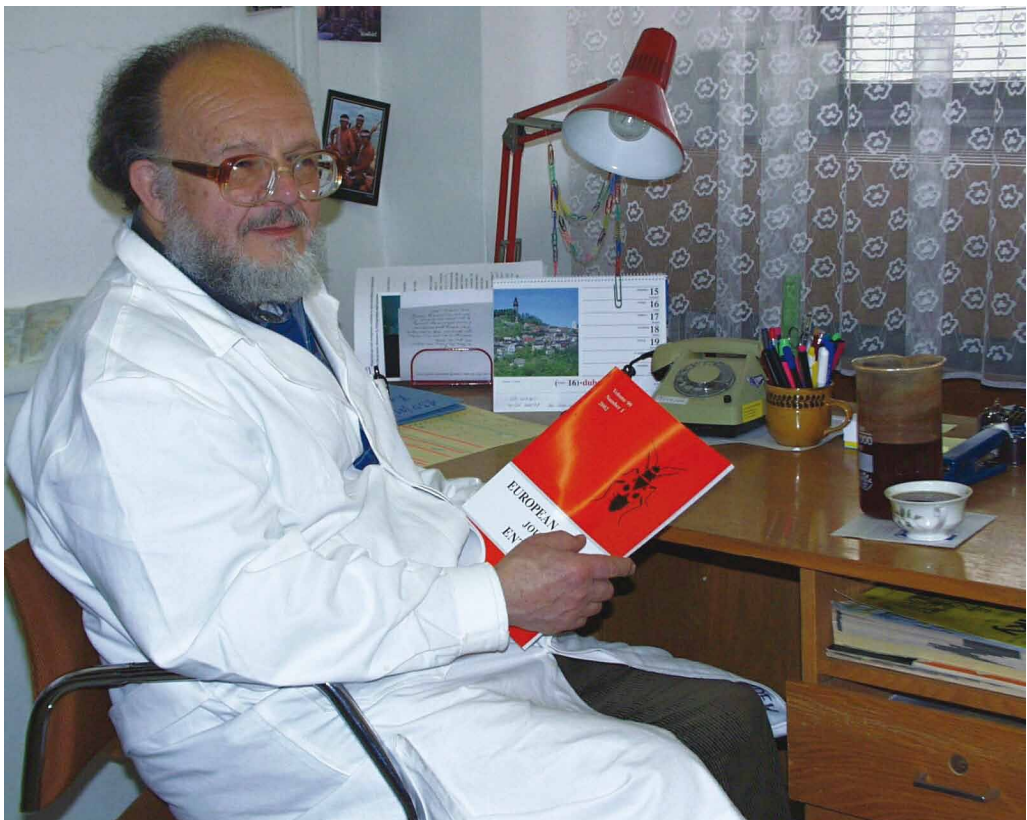


Fig. 1. Ivo Hodek in his laboratory in the Institute of Entomology in České Budějovice (photo from the archives of the Institute of Entomology).

the development of rich periodical and book collections of two leading entomology libraries, those of the Entomological and Zoological Societies. For a long time he was an Editor and Executive Editor of the European Journal of Entomology, during which he made substantial contributions to its development and high scientific standard. He also served as an Editor of several scientific journals, including *Entomologia Experimentalis et Applicata*, *Biocontrol Science and Technology*, *Ekologia Polska* and *Acta Societatis Zoologicae Bohemicae*. He was a very helpful reviewer and contributed to the scientific content of innumerable papers published in a wide range of periodicals and participated in the administration of several scientific societies.

Lastly the authors would like to share some personal reminiscences. The senior author (AH) is indebted to Ivo for much of his own personal scientific development during which he became, so to speak, an imperfect copy of Ivo's scientific personality. Ivo was not only my leader and supervisor of my master and PhD studies, but also a cordial friend throughout my scientific career. I am indebted to him for many things from his pedagogy realized more by good example than admonition: the view that experimental and observational investigation of nature should be combined with an in depth rather than a superficial study of the literature. I remember our many discussions, study excursions to Slovakia and constructive comments on publications. Many of my interests have followed those of Ivo's: coccinellids, firebugs and others.

Ivo first contacted, visited and then invited the junior author (AFGD) to visit what was then Czechoslovakia in the 1950s, which because of the political situation was a very difficult time for cultural exchanges between the East and West. This resulted in us becoming close and long lasting friends and meeting and having long discussions on many occasions since. For me Ivo is a Tolstoyian figure, not only in appearance, but also in his breadth and level of understanding of an extremely wide range of topics, not to mention his fluency in several languages. He introduced me to his beloved Prague, Bohemian lands and Czech history and culture, which continue to fascinate me, and he of course inspired me by his infectious enthusiasm for ladybirds. I am also extremely grateful to him too for introducing me to other Czech scientists who have also been important in shaping my ideas.

Our enumeration and evaluation of Ivo's activities may not be more than modest. On behalf of all his collaborators and wide society of entomologist friends we wish Ivo much joy and success and vitality, not only in his professional career, but also in his personal life.

Alois Honěk & Anthony F. G. Dixon

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