

## ***In memoriam***

**Valentin M. Alekseev  
(1937-2012)**

On 2 May 2012, the prominent biologist and nematologist, well-known specialist in the area of freshwater nematode taxonomy and ecology, Associate Professor Valentin Michailovich Alekseev died at age of 75.

He was born on May 27, 1937, in Yaroslavl. From 1954 to 1959 he was a student of the Primorsky Agricultural State Institute. In 1959, Valentin Michailovich was invited to take up the position of Assistant Professor at the Zoology Department in the Far Eastern University. He continued his education at the Far Eastern University and was awarded his Ph.D. degree in 1965. For his dissertation he studied helminths of geese in Primorye and in the course of the research discovered 116 species of helminths.

From the beginning, Valentin Michailovich actively joined pedagogical, scientific and social activities at the Department. In 1965, he became an Associate Professor. He lectured on general parasitology, nematology and systematic zoology, encouraging and stimulating new generations of students.

For a long time, he had been a leader of research projects on biology, ecology and taxonomy of freshwater nematodes of the Russian Far East. His great erudition and pedagogical skills made him a favourite lecturer and popular supervisor of student research. Over 40 students prepared their degree theses under his supervision, and over 60 trainees from almost all republics of the former USSR undertook his study courses.

Working as taxonomist, Dr Valentin Michailovich Alekseev had described twenty-five new species, made check-lists of species for different areas of the Russian Far East, especially Lake Khanka, and identification keys to the genera *Leptolaimus*, *Paraphanolaimus* and *Alaimus* of the world fauna. He had proposed the hypothesis of supplementary organs in *Leptolaimus* originating from the glands of ventral hypodermal chords.

His contributions in the field of freshwater nematology covered taxonomy, morphology, biogeography and evolution. Dr Alekseev was a great authority for his Russian colleagues for his knowledge, enthusiasm and human qualities. Colleagues valued his opinion on many aspects of nematology. Many species of nematodes were named in his honour.

During 48 years of scientific and teaching work, Dr. Alekseev published 70 papers in Russian journals as well as more than 10 handbooks on methodology and manuals on techniques. These became valuable reference books, not only to practitioners but also to researchers. His final work was a textbook on *Soil Biology* for high school.

A desire for creativity was always an essential part of his life. Having a literary gift, Valentin Michailovich wrote poems, short stories and fairy-tales for his grandchildren.

We will always remember Valentin Michailovich Alekseev as a nice, active, open and friendly person, who was a hard-worker for Russian nematology.



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