

## Pavel Lizoň fifty years old

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Pavel Lizoň was born in Trenčín, Slovakia on 2 October 1945 and he spent his childhood and most of his professional life in Bratislava. He graduated from high school in 1963 and in September he entered Komenský University in Bratislava. After two years he followed his studies at Charles University in Prague. Under the supervision of Karel Cejp he completed his dissertation on "Fagicolous Discomycetes in Slovakia" and graduated in 1969. He finished his thesis on the genus *Hymenoscyphus* (Discomycetes) during his stay at Cornell University with Richard P. Korf and received his CSc (PhD) in 1992 under the direction of Cyprián Paulech at the Institute of Botany of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, Bratislava.

Pavel returned from Prague to Bratislava and in August 1968 he accepted a position at the Slovak National Museum, Museum of Natural History. Over the years he advanced from Curator of Fungi and Research Associate to Research Fellow, Senior Research Scientist and Chairman of the Department of Botany. He retired from his position in the Museum in October 1992. Currently Pavel is an A. E. Jenkins Visiting Fellow in the Department of Plant Pathology, Cornell University, USA.

While a student Pavel held summer jobs at the Slovak National Museum collecting vascular plants in the region where the gigantic Danube dam was later built, and working in museum collections. The lichenologist Ivan Pišút, later his colleague and friend, focused his interest on fungi and persuaded him to study at Charles University in Prague. His years in Prague gave him an introduction to Czech mycological community at research institutions and the Czechoslovak Scientific Society for Mycology and helped him build a wide spectrum of background knowledge and accumulate experience.



*Photo Kent Loeffler*

Pavel's interest in collections began while he was a student and worked in the National Museum. Under his curatorship mycological collections became very active in new acquisitions (grew to over 70,000 specimens) and services to researchers all over the world. He was deeply interested in management of collections and published the first (and still the only) index of herbaria in Slovakia (1983) and co-authored the last Czechoslovak list of herbaria (1992).

Pavel was very active in museum public services and the popularization of mycology. He gave many mycological lectures for the general public and for students, installed a permanent exhibition on fungi (1974) and organized annual shows of fresh mushrooms. In 1971 he started museum advisory and identification services for the public. He published, in addition to scientific papers, about two hundred popular articles and papers on mushrooms, biographies, bibliographies, books, encyclopaedia sections, pamphlets and posters. His *Malý atlas húb* (Small picture book of mushrooms) with excellent water color paintings by Aurel Dermek was well received and was published in two editions (1980: 60,000 copies, 1985: 59,810 copies). He was consulted in mushroom poisoning cases for mushroom identification by medical centers all over Slovakia.

Above all, he is a field mycologist. Pavel's goals have been to investigate and inventory the mycoflora of Slovakia. His collecting and research Slovakia was focused on floristics, distribution and mapping, and the ecology of macrofungi. He recognized the lack of data for a basic inventory of fungal biodiversity in Slovakia and the need for help in collecting current information. Pavel won volunteers, amateur mycologists and mushroomers for the project in his early museum years. This resulted in wide co-operation and the museum became a center for research on macrofungi. With that enthusiastic group of co-workers he started an investigation of the succession of ectomycorrhizal fungi in Norway spruce stands in Central Slovakia in 1989. This long-term project is now supervised by the author of this article. In the seventies Pavel became interested in changes and the decline of fungi. He gathered information on selected endangered species and proposed a list of macrofungi for legal protection under regulation No. 211 and published a Redlist of Slovak macrofungi (1995). All this time he kept in touch with his beloved Discomycetes, studying them and publishing the results of his investigations. Later, Pavel worked on the genus *Hymenoscyphus*, preparing a thesis on the genus and publishing a monograph (1992). Recently, he has been continuing his studies on the biosystematics of *Hymenoscyphus* and its segregates, including participating in the Discomycete Flora of Macaronesia project at Cornell University with Richard "Dick" Korf. In 1993 he started an investigation of the biodiversity of macrofungi of Andros island in Greece and he continues to be involved in the project dealing with ectomycorrhizal fungi in Slovakia. Pavel has published about 100 scientific papers, congress and conference abstracts, book reviews and chapters in books.

Pavel's service to the mycological community included serving on the Executive Board of the Czechoslovak Scientific Society for Mycology (1982-1992), on the Slovak Regional Committee (1986-1988, Vice-President: 1988-1992), the Special Committee for Protection of Fungi (1988-1990; Chair: 1990-1992), the Special Committee for Mycotoxicology (1985-1992), and on the Mycological Society of America Advisory Committee on Nomenclature (from 1994). In 1986 he co-founded and chaired (1986-1992) the Special Committee and working group for protection of fungi of the Slovak Union of Environmental Protectionists (1986-1992). Pavel founded, organized or co-organized Slovak Mycological Forays in Bratislava (1975), Zvolen (1979), Skýcov (1983) and Čingov (1986). He was the editor of the taxonomic journal *Annotationes zoologicae et botanicae* and in 1973 he founded and for 9 years edited the information bulletin *Správy hubárskej poradne* (News of the mushroom advisory service). His professional honors include Czechoslovak Scientific Society for Mycology Distinguished Membership (1982), A. E. Jenkins visiting professorship (1990) and fellowships (1991, 1992-present), and the Mycological Society of America Travel Award (1994). A Discomycete (*Belonidium lizonii*) was named in his honor by Mirko Svrček.

Pavel is a good friend and companion, and he values and maintains friendships from his university years and many with comrades in the pursuit of knowledge of fungi. He delights in discussion with colleagues, sometimes taking the unpopular side, but never loses his sense of humor. On behalf of his friends and former and current co-workers I wish him good health and lots of fun with fungi over the next fifty years.

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