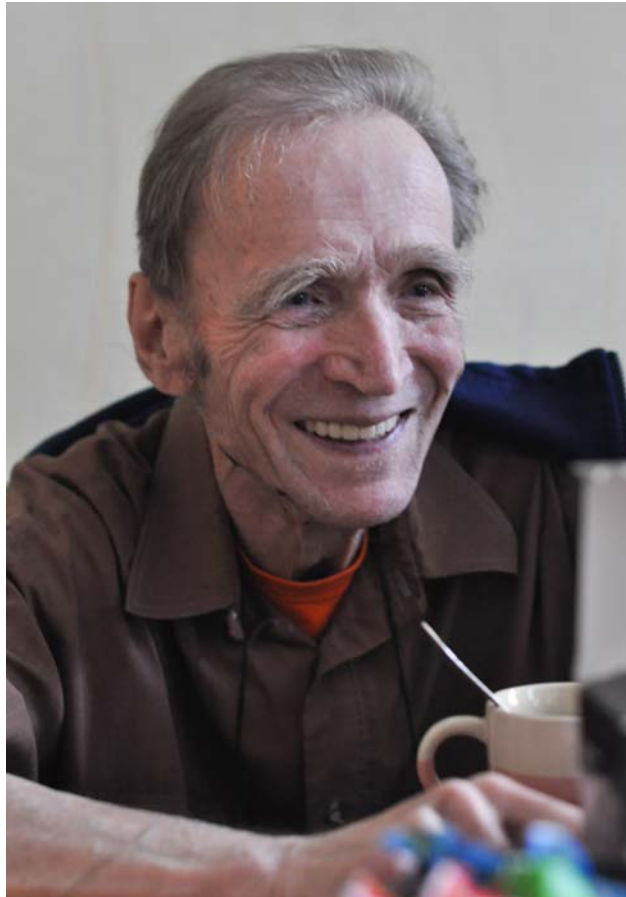


Obituary



Petr Petrovich Strelkov (1931–2012)

On December 7, 2012 renowned specialist on bats Petr Petrovich Strelkov passed away in Saint-Petersburg on his 82-nd year. During semicentenary period of his work he became the part of the history not only of Zoological Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences but of all theriology of the former Soviet countries.

Strelkov Petr Petrovich was born on 26 October 1931 in Leningrad (now Saint-Petersburg). His mother — Mariya Efimovna Krol' was physician-microbiologist, father — Petr Georgievich Strelkov, scientific researcher, physics. He did not live with family from 1934. All his life Petr Petrovich lived in Leningrad. He left the city only during the siege in the years of Second World War, when he together with his mother was evacuated first to Sverdlovsk (now Ekaterinburg) and then to Samarkand (Uzbekistan). He returned to Leningrad in 1944. In autumn of 1949 Strelkov entered Biology Faculty of Leningrad State University. First he specialized at the Department of invertebrate zoology and at higher grades at the Department of vertebrate

zoology, which he graduated in 1954. In the autumn of the same year he passed exams to postgraduate courses at the Zoological Institute of USSR Academy of Sciences and in December 1957 was hired as junior researcher in the Department of vertebrate zoology. Since that and up to his retirement in March 2003, he worked in the Laboratory of theriology of Zoological Institute.

Within his long and bright life he participated in many zoological expeditions in European part of Russia, at Caucasus, Middle Asia, and Siberia. Great attention he paid to the study of wintering of bats in the caves of European part of former USSR (Strelkov, 1958, 1970, 1971 and others). In 1965, he successfully defended his PhD thesis “Winterings of bats (Chiroptera, Vespertilionidae) in central and northern zones of the European part of USSR.”

Petr Petrovich became a leading specialist in the field of systematics and ecology of bats at the whole post-Soviet territory. He was a key figure at all scientific conferences on Chiroptera, from 1989 up to 1999 he

was a chairman of Commission on chiropterans at the All-Union (then All-Russian) Theriological Society, editor of the central within the former Soviet countries professional periodical journal "Plecotus et al." founded by this Commission in 1998. The scientific publications of Strelkov are well known outside Russia, his works were cited more than 746 times (according to 9.12.2012). Above his scientific works he is also known for his scientific-popular papers and books, particular popularity gained "In the search of bats" (2007a) and "The value of a trophy" (2007b).

Petr Petrovich all his life studied very complex group - chiropterans. This group is complicated in both aspects as taking in account its very poor extent of study and very secret mode of life. However Strelkov was interested not only in systematics and morphological variation, these aspects were in the focus of attention of many researchers. Strelkov was interested in a number of difficult for the study issues of biogeography, geographic variation, migrations, life histories of these little nocturnal creatures.

With his capital works and friendly attitude to colleagues Petr Petrovich significantly influenced the development of chiropterological studies in all countries of the former Soviet Union and adjacent countries, in fact within the range of chiropteran fauna of Palearctic. Many bats researchers consider him their teacher.

Petr Petrovich was zoologist of classical school. He combined a talent and intuition of systematic, impeccability of collector, hawk-eyed of a hunter-naturalist, inexhaustibility and impressionability of a traveler, highest qualification of scientific editor and almost overage general culture of our outstanding predecessors. As he was original, temperamental, severe and all-arounder man it was not always easy but always interesting to work with him and be nearby.

As Petr Petrovich likes to repeat the longevity of life of a person determines by the time during which he is kept in memory. Not retouched image of Petr Petrovich will not fade away in memory of colleagues, relatives and friends and his clan will be continued by numerous and splendid offspring.

N.I. Abramson

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