



Ornithological collections of the Ornithological Station in Přerov, Czech Republic

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Abstract. Ornithological Station of Comenius Museum in Přerov holds one of the largest bird collections in Czech Republic consisting of 4100 stuffed birds of 700 species, 3600 bird skins and 3670 bird sterna. One of the most important oological collection within Czech Republic holds 12650 eggs of 465 species. Exceptionally unique collection of parasitic worms of birds includes 27000 sections of 500 worm species.

Key words. Bird collection, bird parasites, Comenius Museum, Přerov, Czech Republic.

Ornithological station (ORNIS) of the Comenius Museum in Přerov, Central Moravia, Czech Republic, was built in 1938 by a group of enthusiastic bird lovers, who founded the Moravian Ornithological Society in 1932. Since the beginning, the station was opened for the public and exhibited, among other things, most common local bird species as mounted specimens. The most important period concerning targeted endeavour for creation bird collections and building the library started in 1971 when Jiljí Sitko came as head to the ORNIS. Since this time, many private collections of stuffed birds were purchased, and also two out of three most important egg collections from the Czech Republic were obtained.

Nowadays, the collections of the ORNIS consist of ca. 7,700 stuffed birds (mounts and skins) of nearly 700 species. Among them, there are 480 specimens of 350 species of exotic birds. The majority of these exotic species came from cabinets of Moravian schools. The most important private collections originated as follows:

1972: O. Lipecký – Třebíč region (244 specimens)

1973: V. Sajdl – Svitavy region (315 specimens), J. Řehůřek – Českomoravská vysočina (250 specimens), L. Holub – Chrudim region + exotic species (512 specimens)

1976: Z. Verbirs – Hodonín region (729 specimens)

1978: V. Tichý – Blansko region (187 specimens)

1979: P. Augsten – Šumava region (126 specimens)

1981: J. Kožina – Břeclav region (108 specimens)

- 1983: P. Gregor – Svitavy region (124 specimens), V. Jemelka – Zlín region (75 specimens), P. Matuška – East Bohemia region (201 specimens)
- 1984: E. Pohle – Vyškov region (139 specimens)
- 1985: J. Ptáček – Litomyšl region (80 specimens)
- 1987: O. Plachý – Uherské Hradiště region (122 specimens)
- 1988: O. Chládek – Brno region (43 specimens)
- 2009: L. Brejcha – Zbraslav region (410 specimens); see Chytil (2010).

It is important that professional taxidermists were present at the ORNIS for the nearly whole period since 1971. The majority of skins (3,600) and sterna (3670) were prepared by them.

The oological collection consists currently of 12650 eggs of 465 species. The most important part came from the private collections of Zdeněk Klůz (838 clutches, 3443 eggs; obtained in 1980), Jiří Toufar (1103 clutches, 5230 eggs, obtained in 1983), and Evžen Pohle (162 clutches, 853 eggs).

The collection of parasitic worms includes microscopic and alcohol sections of liver flukes (*Digenea*), tapeworms (*Cestoda*), eelworms (*Nematoda*) and acanthocephalans (*Acanthocephala*). The majority of the material is from the Czech Republic, further specimens are from Poland and especially Cuba, where a large number of specimens were collected by Bohumil Ryšavý (*1921). The collection consists of 500 worm species kept in 17000 microscopic sections (liver flukes – 290 species, tapeworms – 100 species) and 10000 alcohol sections (eelworms – 60 species, acanthocephalans – 18 species). Overviews of the collection have appeared in four monographs (Ryšavý & Sitko 1992, Sitko et al. 2006, Sitko & Okulewicz 2010, Sitko 2011). Altogether 280 species of worms housed in the ORNIS were found for the first time in the Czech Republic and 12 species for the whole Europe. Two new genera and three new species of liver flukes were described as new for science (type specimens are kept at the ornithological station). No other institution in Europe has such a huge collection of parasitic worms from birds.

The collection of stuffed birds is used in different ways. The permanent exhibition “Birds of the Czech Republic” shows 1050 birds of 345 species; other mounted birds and skins are used in different education programmes, often are also lend to other museums for their exhibitions.

There are several important exotic species in the collection, though none of them with exact location and dates of collection. They include Little Spotted Kiwi *Apteryx owenii* Gould, 1847, Red-tailed Black Cockatoo *Calyptorhynchus banksii* (Latham, 1790), Pesquet’s Parrot *Psittrichas fulgidus* (Lesson, 1830), Kakapo *Strigops habroptila* (Gray, 1845), and Resplendent Quetzal *Pharomachrus mocinno* (Orbigny, 1837).

Two species with unique records from the Czech Republic are represented by voucher specimens. They include Greater Yellowlegs *Tringa melanoleuca* (Gmelin, 1789) recorded by Ševčík (1994), and Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima* (Brünnich, 1764) recorded by Šimeček (1998).

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