

Evgeniy Nikolaevich Savchenko and his contribution to the knowledge of Palaearctic Tipuloidea

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Abstract

A biography of Evgeniy Savchenko, an outstanding entomologist, who made a considerable contribution to the knowledge of tipuloid dipterans of the Palaearctic. The various stages of his scientific activity are presented. He gave names to a large number of taxa of tipuloids and taniderids, 435 in all.

Key words: Evgeniy Savchenko, biography, scientific contribution, Palaearctic Tipuloidea

*Thus his memory, like some holy light,
Kept alive in our hearts, will improve them,
For worth shall look fairer, and truth more bright,
When we think how he lived but to love them.*

Thomas Moore (1779–1852)

The period of the second half of the XIXth and the early XXth century was marked by a rapid development of research in the natural sciences, in particular, the development of entomology. In the middle of XIX century the entomological societies of the Old and New World were founded—The Entomological Society of America, The Russian Entomological Society (both in 1859), and The Netherlands Entomological Society (founded in 1845). During these years, there was an intensive accumulation of entomological material, an activity that dates from the time of great geographical discoveries. A lot of little-studied taxa of dipteran insects, to which the Tipuloidea belong, awaited their researchers. During this period a new generation of diptera taxonomists, who studied this group, were born. In the USA—C.P. Alexander, in Russia—A.A. Stackelberg, in Holland—F.M. Van der Wulp, in Germany—B. Mannheims, in England—F.W. Edwards, in Czechia—K. Czižek, in Latvia—P. Lackschewitz, etc. Evgeniy Savchenko belongs to this group of outstanding entomologists; he made a considerably larger contribution to the knowledge of palaearctic Tipuloidea (Families Tipulidae, Limoniidae and Pediciidae).

Evgeniy Savchenko (Savtschenko) (Fig. 1) was born on July 12th, 1909 (June 29th according to the old calendar) into a working class family. (It was impossible to find out anything about his parents). After leaving school in 1929 he had to work as a handyman in construction. Since childhood, however, he was actively engaged in entomology, therefore, in 1930 he was accepted as a volunteer laboratory assistant in the Zoological museum of All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences. In 1935 he graduated from the Biological Faculty of Kiev University (now the Taras Shevchenko National University of Kiev) without attending lectures and he got an appointment as the assistant in the All-Union Scientific-Research Institute of Sugar Beets (now the Institute for Sugar Beets).