

## OBITUARY

FRANTIČEK JOSEF TURČEK (in his first publications he spelled his name Turcsek) was born in Béd, northern Hungary (today Badice, Czechoslovakia) on 3 December 1915. His father was a Hungarian schoolteacher. Turček earned a degree in forestry and was employed, as a forester at the Count Apponyi estates, in Kistapolcsány in Slovakia, 1939–1945, his last employer there having been the Queen of Albania, a Countess Apponyi. During this time he began to publish faunistic notes, first in Slovakia's game magazines, later in the Hungarian ornithological yearbook *Aquila*, which published 12 of his scientific reports between 1939 and 1969.

After the ravages of World War II Turček joined in 1946 the State Forest Research Institute at Banská Štiavnica in Slovakia, of which later he became the scientific leader. This town had housed the Hungarian Forestry University before World War I and had a long tradition of being the center of forest biological research and education of the region of the Northern Carpathian Mountains. Under Turček's direction, the institute emphasized the ecology of birds and mammals, especially as they affect the forest community, but also considered the roles of insects and land snails. His ecological endeavors brought him in contact, through lively correspondence, with scientists of similar inclination abroad, such as Leon Kelso, S. Charles Kendeigh, and Margaret M. Nice in the United States. Their work, by his own cognizance, inspired him toward initiating studies after the pattern of American ecologists. During the late 1940s he issued many pamphlets—in Slovakian—on the ecology of game birds and mammals, and scientific reports on bird and mammal censusing in the lowlands and foothills of the Slovakian Carpathians. All these topics were of a pioneering nature, and the methods novel, at the time and place he accomplished them. One of these studies, on the impact of birds upon a Gypsy Moth outbreak, resulted in his first U.S.A. publication (1948 *Amer. Midl. Natur.* 40: 391); many more followed.

During the 1950s Turček expanded these studies to encompass all forest types of his country, from floodplain groves to montane coniferous woods. As a true naturalist, Turček carried notes about all activities of his charges as they affected the forest community. Tree-ringing by woodpeckers, acorn planting by jays, seed consumption by forest mice, tree buds or gall insects consumed by birds, even faunistic zoogeography were covered in the resulting papers. In many of these the observational accounts were followed by experimental data about the subject, others give new insight into the role of ecological situations in the life of birds and mammals; e.g. his 1966 papers on "The Zoological significance of ecological and geographical borderlands" (*Acta Zool. Acad. Sci. Hung.* 12: 193). The culmination of his work during these years was reached in two books written in German: on vertebrate census methods in a handbook of synecology (pp. 418–449 in Balogh, J. (ed.) *Synecology*, Budapest 1958) and on the ecological relations of birds and trees (*Okologische Beziehungen der Vögel und Gehölze*, 1961, reviewed in *Auk* 79: 284).

By the early 1960s Turček had widely published abroad, in American, British, Finnish, German, Hungarian, Indian, Japanese, Polish, and Swedish scientific and forestry periodicals, mostly in German and in English. He was elected a Corresponding Member of the A.O.U. At last recognition from within his country also came: in 1964 the Slovakian Academy of Sciences founded a Research Station in Banská Štiavnica and Turček was invited to become its leader and organizer, which he remained until his untimely death. After having published a new book on ecological relations of forest plants and mammals, in 1967 he won the diploma of Candidate of Biological Sciences at the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences at Prague—a very distinguished doctoral degree.

During the ensuing 10 years Turček's scientific contributions continued, though more and more hampered by ill health: his son's tragic death broke him, then a field accident, and, terminally, lymph cancer. He died on 4 March 1977. Altogether he published more than 400 items, among them 13 books, 250 scientific contributions and, in addition, hundreds of reviews of papers written in the languages of Eastern and Central Europe (published in *Auk*, *Ibis*, and *Ornith. Mitteilungen*) as well as western papers, published for the Czechoslovakian scientific community. His passing is a great loss to the ornithological community.—ANDREW KEVE.

## REVIEWERS FOR *THE AUK*, 1977–78

The scientific and scholarly quality of a journal results largely from the efforts of the many individuals who serve as reviewers of manuscripts. During the past year as editor, I have continued to welcome their counsel and to enjoy many fruitful interactions with them. Listing these individuals below only hints at the extent of my gratitude to them; many authors, even some whose manuscripts have not been accepted for publication, have also indicated how much they appreciate the perceptive and fair reviews their efforts have received.