



In Honour of Leonid Kolodochka's 80th Birthday

On 31 July 2026, the well-known zoologist and acarologist Leonid Oleksandrovykh Kolodochka — Head of the Department of Acarology at the I.I. Schmalhausen Institute of Zoology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine and Vice-President of the Ukrainian Entomological Society — celebrates his 80th birthday.

Kolodochka was born on 31 July 1946 in Novorossiysk, into a military family that moved frequently between postings. After finishing the ninth grade, he went to work as a laboratory assistant in a sanitary-epidemiological laboratory in the town of Sovetskaya Gavan, completing his secondary education at the same time at an evening school, which he finished in 1963. That same year, he entered the Faculty of Biology of Kyiv State University, graduating in 1968 with a specialisation from the Department of Invertebrate Zoology.

The whole of his subsequent life has been bound up with the Schmalhausen Institute of Zoology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, where — after postgraduate study interrupted for a year by service in the Baltic Fleet — he began work in 1974 as a Junior Research Scientist. That same year he defended his dissertation for the degree of Candidate of Biological Sciences. He rose steadily through the ranks at the Institute — Senior Research Scientist from 1979, then Head of the Laboratory of Acariphages from 1990 — and, following the award of his doctorate in 1996, became Leading Research Scientist; today he effectively heads the Department of Acarology.

His research interests are centred on the fauna, taxonomy, morphology, ecology, and evolution of mites, above all the family Phytoseiidae (Mesostigmata), predators of exceptional importance for the biological control of plant pests. He described 60 new species of mites, 33 of which were found in Ukraine. His culminating 2006 monograph, “Клещи-фитосейиды Палеарктики: фаунистика, систематика, экоморфология, эволюция” [Phytoseiid Mites of the Palearctic: Faunistics, Sys-

tematics, Ecomorphology, Evolution], remains to this day a foundational work for the systematics and evolution of the group, while a multi-part revision of the predatory mites of the fauna of Ukraine, begun more recently and published in the journal *Zoodiversity* (2022–2024), has become something of a summation of decades of faunistic research. In total, he has published close to two hundred scientific publications devoted to the study of phytoseiid mites and other acariphages; for many years he has also led a research group studying this group of mites.

His scientific achievements were recognised early in his career, with a Prize for Young Scientists in 1978. No less significant is his contribution to training the next generation of researchers: under his scientific supervision, three Candidate of Sciences dissertations have been successfully defended, each continuing and building upon the acarological tradition he established. Since 2010, he has served on the editorial board of the *Ukrainian Entomological Journal*, and since 2023 he has been Vice-President of the *Ukrainian Entomological Society*.

Those who have worked alongside Kolodochka for decades describe him as a scientist whose precision and rigour in his work are matched only by the meticulousness of his own hand-drawn scientific illustrations: a man who is unfailingly conscientious, exceptionally thorough, discerning, and erudite, while at the same time even-tempered, tactful, benevolent, and always ready to help a colleague. Outside the laboratory, he is known as a wonderful storyteller, the owner of a fine baritone voice, and the keeper of an ever-present guitar on expeditions and at institute gatherings alike. It is precisely this rare combination of scientific rigour, human warmth, and a kind, unfailing wit — carried by him through more than half a century of unceasing work — that has earned him the deep respect and genuine affection of his colleagues throughout his career.

His colleagues at the Institute of Zoology and the wider Ukrainian acarological and entomological community warmly congratulate Leonid Oleksandrovych Kolodochka on his 80th birthday. We mark this occasion by paying tribute to his lifelong devotion to the study of mites and his enduring contribution to the development of Ukrainian and world acarology.

Main scientific publications of L. O. Kolodochka

- Kolodochka, L. A. & Gwiazdowicz, D. J. 2024, September. New Record of the Rare Phytoseiid Mite (Parasitiformes: Phytoseiidae) from Poland and Description of Unknown Male. *In: Annales Zoologici*, **74** (3), 405–409). Museum and Institute of Zoology, Polish Academy of Sciences.
- Kolodochka, L. A., 2024. Predatory Mites (Phytoseiidae, Parasitiformes) of the fauna of Ukraine: redescriptions of the species of *Amblyseiella* and *Chelaseius*, with resurrection of the genus status for *Amblyseiulus*. *Zoodiversity*, **58** (2), 103–128.
- Kolodochka, L. A. 2023 a. The predatory mites (Phytoseiidae, Parasitiformes) in the fauna of Ukraine: of the genera *Paragigagnatus*, *Carinoseius*, *Kampimodromus*, *Eharius*, *Typhlodromips*, and *Euseius*. *Zoodiversity*, **57** (6), 477–506.
- Kolodochka, L. 2023 b. The predatory mites (Parasitiformes, Phytoseiidae) in the fauna of Ukraine: a review with a key to species and new combinations in the genus *Transeius*. *Zoodiversity*, **57** (3), 191–214.
- Kolodochka, L. A. 2022. The predatory mites (Phytoseiidae, Parasitiformes) in the fauna of Ukraine: a new species and a new subgenus of the genus *Graminaseius*. *Zoodiversity*, **56** (6), 463–472.

- Kolodochka, L. A. & Gwiazdowicz, D. J. 2014. A new species of predaceous mite of the genus *Neoseiulus* Hughes (Acari, Phytoseiidae), with redescrptions of *N. magnanalis* (Thor) and *N. ellesmerei* (Chant & Hansell), from Svalbard, High Arctic. *Zootaxa*, **3793** (4), 441–452.
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- Kolodochka, L. A. & Denmark, H. A. 1996. Revision of the genus *Okiseius* Ehara (Acari: Phytoseiidae). *International Journal of Acarology*, **22** (4), 231–251.
- Denmark, H. A. & Kolodochka, L. A. 1993. Revision of the genus *Indoseiulus* Ehara (Acari: Phytoseiidae). *International Journal of Acarology*, **19** (3), 249–257.
- Denmark, H. A. & Kolodochka, L. A. 1990. Revision of the genus *Chelaseius* Muma and Denmark (Acari: Phytoseiidae). *International Journal of Acarology*, **16** (4), 219–233.