

THE ACTIVITIES OF THE ESTONIAN NATURALISTS' SOCIETY IN 2011

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ABSTRACT

The activities of the Estonian Naturalists' Society are described

Key words: *Estonian Naturalists Society*

INTRODUCTION

The Estonian Naturalists' Society (ENS) was founded already in 1853 and though so many wars have swept over Estonia, our society was able to survive and live further through all these long and turbulent years. We started as *Die Dorpater Naturforscher Gesellschaft* at *Der Livländischen gemeinnützigen und ökonomischen Societät*. Since 1998 we are associated with the Estonian Academy of Sciences. This means that the state finances us through the academy. As we own a house, our maintenance expenditure is rather high so we have to earn a substantial part of our expenditures by carrying out different projects at diverse organisations among which the most important is the Centre of Environmental Investments.

Our activities are carried out in 22 subunits by 718 active members. These subunits are relatively autonomous and they present their annual reviews in March of the following year. Some of the subunits work as sections: amateur meteorologists, anthropology, botany, entomology, forestry, geology, theoretical biology. The other subunits are: the Commission of Lakes, the Estonian Society of Malacology, the Estonian Mycological Society, the Estonian Society of Theriology and the Jakob von Uexküll Centre. Commissions with special tasks focus on the history of natural sciences, the library, natural education,

observation networks, terms of ecology and plant names, botanical rarities. In addition, the Society has assemblies of ecology, of honorary members and the round table of nature conservation.

In 2011 we held nine General Assemblies with scientific presentations:

January 27 – Agu Laisk: "Photosynthesis – black and white and colourful".

February 28 – "The Baer day". Presentations by Marina Loskutova, Eduard Koltšinski and Anastassija Fedotova.

March 31 – Kalle Kirsimäe: "Searching for water and life on Mars: new challenges", a review meeting of 2011.

April 28 – Andres Tarand: "Climate change in Estonia".

May 26 – Tarmo Soomere: "On the possibilities of the modern maritime science to understand and protect Estonian seashores".

September 29 – Presentation of the Yearbook of the ENS no 86 "Rarities in Estonian nature" by Tiit Kull. Mirt Gramann: "About the Universe and its evolution".

October 27 – Urve Miller: "Changes in natural environment in vicinity of Stockholm since the last ice age".

November 24 – Mihkel Zilmer: "The life on the waste ground of information".

December 15 – Tõnu Viik: "What are exoplanets and how we discover them?"

The subunits organized their traditional and non-traditional events:

1. Science day dedicated to Karin Mark "Studies of humans using different sources" March 18, Tallinn (together with the Tallinn University Institute of History and the NGO Centre of Archeology);
2. Mushroom practice, Kilingi-Nõmme, May 13–15;
3. Seminar organized by nature conservation round table "If and how the message of nature conservation reaches people?" May 20, the Estonian Naturalists' Society;
4. The Spring School of Theoretical Biology "Biological interactions" May 27–29, on the Ojako farm, the Pärnu county (together with the University of Tartu Institute of Ecology and Geosciences);
5. Gathering of the friends of mosses, May 28–29, in the Marimetsa bog, the Turvalepa broadleaf forest and the Palivere spring fen;
6. The 34th Naturalists' Day Käsmu July 2–3, the Lahemaa National Park;
7. The Summer School of Ecosemiotics together with the Institute of Philosophy and Semiotics of the University of Tartu, July 28–29, Rutja;

8. Gathering of amateur meteorologists and thunder observers July 23, Lelle, the Rapla county;
9. Mushroom practice October 6–9, Kilingi-Nõmme;
10. Conference commemorating Juhan Aul (1897–1994) October 20, Tallinn
11. The Autumn School of Theriology October 23–25, Oonurme;
12. The Autumn School of Geology VII “Resources of the Earth” October 7–9, Taevaskoja, the Põlva county;
13. Exhibition “Snails, mussels and the human” compiled by the people from the Estonian Malacology Society, October 25 – November 25, in the Tartu Environmental Education Centre;
14. Seminar organized by the nature conservation round table “Natural disasters and human psychology” November 3, the Estonian Naturalists’ Society;
15. Meeting of the Mycological society “Actiones” December 10, Tartu, the University of Tartu, the Botany department.

The Society participated in fulfilling the projects funded by the Environmental Investment Centre, the Tallinn Botanic Garden and the Ministry of Environment.

The ENS and the Estonian Environment Information Centre developed the Nature Observation Database. The link to it (as of 2011): <http://loodus.keskkonnainfo.ee/lva/LVA.aspx?type=Artikkel&content=-1936342045>. The commission of plant names continued to complement the database of plant names. During 2011 altogether 398 records were entered. In December 2011 there were 17,376 units in the database. In 2011 nine seminars of the series “From natural scientists to teachers of natural sciences” were held.

Members from different sections compiled expert opinions and held exhibitions (the Commission of botanical rarities made an expertise about the protected species in III category, the Theriology Society passed their opinion about the Saaremaa bridge to decision makers and they were involved in monitoring and inventory work, The Estonian Society of Malacology collected data about invasive species and monitored species, etc.). In 2011 the initiative of the repository of reports and inventories of Estonian nature underwent the first development period and it can be seen at the following address: <http://elurikkus.ut.ee/eluv.php?lang=est>.

In December 2010 there were 162,244 printed items in the ENS library. Within a year the library acquired 184 new books and issues of 169 periodicals.

The publications were exchanged in the reporting year with 54 institutions and organizations in 18 countries.

PUBLICATIONS

1. Kull T., Liira J., Sammul M. (eds.) (2011). Yearbook of Estonian Naturalists' Society 86. Rarities in Estonian nature. 304 pp.
2. Tulva T., Öpik M., Puura I. (eds.) (2011). *Scola Biotheoretica* 36 "Theory of movement". 88 pp. (together with University of Tartu Institute of Ecology and Geosciences and the Natural History Museum).
3. Öpik M., Tulva I., T., Puura I. (eds.) (2011). *Scola Biotheoretica* 37 "Biological interactions". 71 pp. (together with University of Tartu Institute of Ecology and Geosciences and the Natural History Museum).
4. Verš E., Preedon U., Lang L. (eds.) (2011). *Schola Geologica* 7 "Resources of the Earth". 148 pp. (together with University of Tartu institute of ecology and geosciences, Tallinn Technical University Institute of Geology and the Department of Mining).
5. *Folia Cryptogamica Estonica* 48. 158 pp. (with the University of Tartu).
6. Laumets L. (ed.) (2011). Nature of Lahemaa: 34th Naturalists' Day, July 2–3 2011, 63 pp.

INTERNET JOURNAL

Ingerpuu, N., Vellak, K. (eds.) 2010. Friend of mosses 14. 40 pp.
(<http://www.botany.ut.ee/bruulooogia/Samblasober14.pdf>)

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