

ESTONIAN NATURALISTS' SOCIETY

IVAR OJASTE, OIVE TINN

Associated with
the Estonian Academy of Sciences
23.01.1998

Founded 1853

Membership: 769 active members, 15 honorary members, 631 trustees

Subunits: 22

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The Estonian Naturalists' Society has 22 subunits. The subunits that work as sections are as follows: the Section of Amateur Meteorologists, of Anthropology, of Botany, of Entomology, of Forestry, of Geology and of Theoretical biology; the Commission of Lakes, the Estonian Malacological Society, the Estonian Mycological Society, the Estonian Teriological Society and the Jakob von Uexküll Centre. Commissions with special tasks focus on the history of natural sciences, the library, nature education, observation networks, the terms of ecology and plant names, and botanical rarities. In addition, the Society has assemblies of ecology, of honorary members and the round table of nature conservation.

In 2015 ten General Assemblies with scientific presentations were held:

January 29 – Ivar Ojaste: “Migration of the common cranes”;

February 27 – “Baer Day” seminar with papers delivered by Erki Tammiksaar: “Baer’s Peipus expeditions and their importance in starting ichthyological research in the Russian Empire” and by Raik-Hiio Mikelsaar: “Karl Ernst von Baer at Piibe and in Kaliningrad”;

March 26 – Toomas Kukk: “New atlas of Estonian Flora”;

April 30 – Bellis Kullman: “Life in the realm of Dikarya from the family of Basidiomycota and Ascomycota”, the reporting meeting 2014;

May 28 – Tõnu Pani: “The charm of minerals”;

June 17 – Tõnu Talvi: “The role of biology stations in research of nature, learning it and conservation”;

September 24 – Laurits Leedjärv: “Why are stars so important?”;

October 29 – Kaarel Orviku: “Georadar in science and practice”;

November 26 – Reedik Mägi: “Supra-genome researches of human genome”;

December 17 – Maarja Öpik: “Patterns of proliferation of Mycorrhiza in Estonia and the world”.

The 38th Naturalists’ Day was held at Kehtna in Rapla County on July 4–5. Field trips took place to study plants, lichens, stem decay fungi, snails, butterflies and dragonflies. There were five scientific presentations on nature and history of nature protection in Rapla County. An excursion was organized in the neighbourhood. In total 65 people participated in that event.

The activities of subunits of ENS during 2015 were the following:

SECTION OF GEOLOGY – the XI Geology Autumn School on the theme “195 years of geology in Estonia” in Tartu on 16–18 October. 23 scientific papers were presented. The Society issued the collection *Schola Geologica XI* (152 pp.).

SECTION OF THEORETICAL BIOLOGY – the 41st Spring School on the theme “Theory of boundaries” in Narva-Jõesuu on 22–24 May. 20 scientific papers were presented. The Society issued the collection *Schola Biotheoretica XLI* “Theory of boundaries” (190 pp.).

In the **SECTION OF BOTANY** 4 meetings were held:

- February 18 – Ott Luuk and Marko Peterson “Travel to the Polar Urals” (41 participants);
- April 15 – Liina Saar “Loss of habitats, their disintegration and drop in quality – losers and winners?” and Lauri Laanisto “Patterns of extinction of common plants in Estonia and Great Britain in the second half of the 20th century” (28 participants);

- November 20 – Toomas Kukk “Herbarisation and herbarium”, who presented together with Tiina Kaalep (OÜ Hea Lugu Publishers) the publication *Manual of Herbarium* (40 participants);
- December 9 – Nele Ingerpuu and Kai Vellak “Nature and plant cover of the Tierra del Fuego isles” (38 participants).

May 30–31 – the annual gathering of friends of mosses, attended by 24 friends of mosses visited Kihnu Island. 119 moss species were registered, of them 13 Marchantiophyta and 106 *Funaria hygrometrica*, and two varieties of *Funaria hygrometrica*. Basing on that inventory taking, the first list of Kihnu mosses was compiled (see *Friend of Mosses* 18, pp. 27–28).

For the website of the nature observation database, an information table on protected species and Red Book species was prepared. Mare Leis participated in the work on compiling and verification of the section “moss species”. The table will become a helpmate for amateur nature watchers and those interested.

There was a contest of photos on mosses, with E. Johannes and A. Hendrikson winning. Their photos can be seen in the latest issue of *Friend of Mosses*.

The new issue of the internet journal *Friend of mosses*, 18 was compiled (<http://www.botany.ut.ee/bruuloogia/Samblasober18.pdf>).

Further, members of the Section of Botany participated in field work for compiling the new atlas of plants, participated in field work in Svalbard (Spitsbergen), in planned monitoring work, in research of the input of the development plan for adaptation to climate change in the domain of natural environment, in IUCN experts' training (certificates were granted to members of the Section Karin Kaljund, Nele Ingerpuu, Ülle Reier and Kai Vellak); they were engaged in the activities of the Estonian Seminatural Community Conservation Association (ESCCA) and the Orchid Protection Club.

The observers' network in the **SECTION OF AMATEUR METEOROLOGISTS** continued their work. Jõgeva hobby weather centre received data from 45 amateur points and 12 departmental automatic weather stations. 16 amateur observation points measured precipitation only in the warm half of the year; part of the others also did snow observations in winter. The weather data (minimum and maximum air temperature, quantity of precipitation, snow thickness and extent of snow cover in the area, atmospheric phenomena) were verified, recorded in the computer, compared and pre-processed. Based on the data collected, important agrometeorological indicators were derived, which were used to update the former time-series of observation points. The data were used, combined with the data of the observation network of the National Weather

Service, for composing the maps on distribution of precipitation, minimum air temperature, snow thickness and other meteorological indicators. Those maps are available in agrometeorological reviews on the Estonian Crop Research Institute website www.etki.ee. At the end of year, the weather review together with figures and data received from the observation network on hazardous phenomena will be transferred to the library of the Estonian Naturalists' Society. The observers received, at the end of the year together with Christmas greetings and observation book, the synopsis of the weather in 2015.

January 28 – a meeting of activists of the Section in Tartu in the house of the Society.

March 23 – a meeting of anchors of the Section in Tallinn in Weather Service, discussing the plan of events and undertakings for 2015 and the summer gathering of amateur weather observers.

September 2 – members of the Section discussed the problems related to moving of the archives of the Jõgeva-based amateur weather observers' centre and agrometeorological archives, as the house they used was transferred into private ownership.

The Jõgeva amateur weather observers' centre is engaged, in cooperation with the NGO Miinus 43.5, in holding the traditional winter Icicle-Winter Festivals at Jõgeva. Besides entertainment and that event also offers knowledge about weather and climate.

A gathering of amateur meteorologists and thunder observers (72 people participated) took place at, in the hall of Jõgeva Basic School on 18 July. The gathering included a conference where 10 papers were presented, followed by an excursion to view the experiments of the Estonian Crop Research Institute and an exchange of ideas in the amateur weather observers' centre. The participants visited the exhibition “50 years of agrometeorological observations at Jõgeva and the work of the amateur weather observers' network”. The gathering of the amateur weather observers was nominated as one of the ten keynote events held in Jõgeva in 2015.

THE ESTONIAN TERIOLOGICAL SOCIETY had active contacts with the Forest Department of the Environmental Board in connection with the plan to remove the invasive species of deer *Cervus nippon* and *Dama dama*. The Teriological Society presented its opinion, formed with the participation of Peep Männil, Tiit Randveer, Tiit Maran and Jaanus Remm (and the external member of the working group Karli Ligi) on 13 January 2015.

The annual meeting of the Teriological Society was held in the Hall of the Estonian Naturalists' Society in Tartu on 31 March. The meeting discussed the organisation of work, the plan for the year and the activities. Themes: The Teriology Autumn School, atlas of distribution of mammals, statute and organisational structure.

The Teriology Autumn School "Nature's aid in crisis" was held on September 18–20 at Särghaua, in Pärnu County. There were lectures, workshops, discussions, nature hikes, altogether 27 items on the agenda. The event was attended by more than 60 school and university students, researchers, hunters, environmental activists, officials and nature lovers. The event was covered in lecture videos on the website of the autumn school (www.terio.ee and www.facebook.com/sygiskool), and two articles appeared in the magazine *Estonian Hunter*.

There was active communication in the Teriological Society e-mail list, featuring more than 100 members. The opinions most often expressed concerned foreign and alien species, endangered species and nature conservation, science news, treatment of animals and maintenance of populations.

THE SECTION OF ANTHROPOLOGY organised, jointly with the Physical Anthropology Centre of the University of Tartu, the "Aul Day" on 22 October where four reports were presented with 22 scientists attending.

THE ESTONIAN MYCOLOGICAL SOCIETY completed its website (mukoloo-giauhing.ut.ee/avaleht). on April 1. It organised two training courses on identification of mushroom species in Saaremaa and Muhumaa: the spring camp on 7–10 May and the autumn camp on 24–27 September.

The annual meeting of the Mycological Society "Actions" took place on 12 December in the study halls of the Natural History Museum of the University of Tartu with 29 participants. The meeting heard 5 papers: Külli Kalamees "Mycological Society anno 2015", Kessy Abarenkov "Amateur science on PlutoF platform", Jaanus Putting and Andrean Razumovski "Growing cultured mushrooms", Eveli Otsing "Tuber rufum, T. maculatum, T. puberulum, T. rapaeodorum and T. foetidum and their distribution in Estonia" and Kadri Runnel "Whether and which pore fungi (stem decay fungi) are suitable as primeval forest indicators?"

The journal *Folia Cryptogamica Estonica* 51 and, in cooperation with the University of Tartu, its online version (www.ut.ee/ial5/fce/index.html) were published.

THE SECTION OF FORESTRY had four scientific seminars:

- 26 January – Lecturer Andres Jäärats delivered a paper “Current situation of Estonian forest plant growing”;
- 8 April – Priit Põllumäe presented the results of his doctoral thesis “Analysis of cooperation between Estonian private forest owners”;
- 28 May – Polish colleagues Arkadiusz Grushala and Michal Zasada spoke on the theme “Forests and forestry in Poland”;
- December 14 – doctoral student Marek Irdla spoke on the theme “Analysis of wood crushing and transportation cost using different machinery”.

THE COMMISSION OF LAKES published Henn Timm’s book *Large invertebrates in Estonian inland water*.

Members of **ESTONIAN MALACOLOGICAL SOCIETY** fulfilled the national monitoring sub-programme “Field guide to snails on mainland”.

THE COMMITTEE OF ESTONIAN PLANT NAMES organised five meetings: on 28 January, 26 February, 25 March, 25 November and 16 December. The meetings were attended by all 8 members (Erich Kukk, Toomas Kukk, Urmas Laansoo, Ott Luuk, Sirje Mäearu, Ülle Reier, Sulev Savisaar, Kersti Tambets).

At the end 2014, the database of plant names (www.ut.ee/taimenimed) featured 18 757 name series, at the end 2015, however, 19 138. As a result of the work of the Committee, the database was replenished by 381 new name series. The number of name series approved at meetings (changes, additions and also deletions in name series) was 764 in 2015.

LIBRARY

In December 2015 there were 163 264 printed items in ENS library. Within the year the Library acquired 150 books and items of 236 periodicals. Publications were exchanged in the reporting year with 36 institutions and organisations from 14 countries.

PUBLICATIONS IN 2015

Niklus, M. (translation and preface), Tinn, O., Laanisto, L., Viikmaa, M. (ed). Darwin, C. The Descent of Man. Estonian Naturalists’ Society, 2015, 805 pp. (Classics in natural history).

Folia Cryptogamica Estonica, 52. Estonian Naturalists’ Society, 2015, 130 pp. (in cooperation with the University of Tartu).