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IN MEMORIAM ENDRE JENEY
16 August 1934, Debrecen – 11 February 2004, Budapest

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Endre Béla Jeney was born in the town of Debrecen on 16th August, 1934 as the eldest child (among three boys) of Katalin Forgách and István Jeney. His father worked at the Wolf-vineyards as the chief gardener. The young Endre studied in the primary school in Debrecen, where his excellent ability in drawing was discovered quite early. From 1949 to 1952 he studied at the Faculty of Plant Cultivation of the Secondary Technical School for Agriculture in Debrecen, where he was regarded as the most talented pupil of his class.

His secondary school teacher, Zoltán Siroki (1906–1987), a renowned local botany professor has created an excellent cultivated plant collection at the technical school. The young Jeney liked to visit the collection – as he used to jokingly say, "*the place where the weeds grow*". In accordance with the profile of the secondary technical school, Z. Siroki taught agrobotany as part of the agricultural biology courses. The kind way he was teaching and introducing plants, and his knowledge of botany, have made Endre Jeney an enthusiastic young botanist. During his studies in the technical school he was preparing for the Kossuth Lajos University also under the direction of Zoltán Siroki. After passing successful exams in 1952 at the secondary school he was admitted to the Kossuth Lajos University. Endre Jeney always regarded Zoltán Siroki, as his mentor – witnessed by a field note written on 24 August 1984 when he remarked, "*I visited professor Siroki, the person who made me love plants*".

As a junior student in the first semester at university, Endre Jeney has successfully passed a difficult exam of plant physiology taught by professor Rezső Soó. According to professor Tibor Simon (communicated at the meeting, held in memoriam Endre Jeney, of the Hungarian Botanical Society lectures, Budapest, 2002), Jeney was among those exceptionally rare students, who got a very good mark from professor Soó. The young student Endre Jeney was already excellent in plant geography and taxonomy.

During his university studies he was an active participant of the informal botanical school around Soó. He took part in many botanical collecting trips along with noted teachers of the Soó school, among them Lajos Felföldy, Gábor Ubrizsy, Attila Borhidi, and Tibor Simon. In 1956 he graduated and became a biology and chemistry teacher. After he finished his studies he worked for the Esze Tamás school in Mátészalka, but shortly afterwards he moved to Karcag, where he taught at the Vasút Street primary school. Meanwhile he served as a professional secretary of the Society for Promoting Scientific Knowledge in Hajdú-Bihar county, followed by another teaching term at a primary school in Várpalota.

From November 1959 he changed position to work as a parasitologist and biologist for the Station of Public Health and Epidemiology. His main tasks were the coordination of mosquito eradication programs in the northern side of Lake Balaton, and fly and tick population surveys in 1960. As he was also interested in epidemiology and entomology, Jeney in 1961 became a member of the Hungarian Entomological Society.

In 1961, his status as a parasitologist was discontinued but took up a new job at the Irinyi János Secondary School in Nyergesújfalu. In August 1981 he became a biology and chemistry teacher and resident assistant teacher at the "Jávorka Sándor" Secondary Technical School for Agriculture in Tata. This period gave him opportunities to lead field practices for secondary school students, and teach agrobotany, and taxonomy of cultivated plants and weeds. He also mentored many talented students during their preparation for natural and human science competitions and was ready to prepare pupils for higher-level exams. Jeney gave his students much more than just biology – he intended to provide a broad intellectual basis for his colleagues and students. He intended to share his general knowledge gained through his travels in and outside the country, and share all he could in the fields of natural and especially agricultural sciences.

(The writer of this article first met him as a secondary school student in 1985. The first question Jeney has asked me when checking my dormitory cabinet, "*What is this, my young friend?*" – and it was my private herbarium ... There were two hundred plant specimens in the cupboard, and this has sparked interest in him: we immediately began identifying these specimens with the Professor at that evening. Among the specimens there was a sample of *Digitalis lanata*. I had to explain where it was collected and

then we set off to the field. I was fortunate enough to join him in a plant collecting excursion – rendered in heavy rain – followed by several field trips alongside the Professor.)

As in case of many botanists (in Hungary and probably elsewhere) who devoted their time and energy to advance their field of research, great figures of plant science are only appreciated after they passed away. Endre Jeney has been among these: he was a collector, a teacher, and also a person who was able to establish a botanical school without formal professorship, but with immense energy and unconditional helpfulness. Jeney was a person willing to help any young botanists and this way he has given much help and advice to Zoltán Barina during for the work on the flora of Gerecse, and István Dancza in studying the ruderal and segetal vegetation in Southwest Transdanubia. Moreover, he was a consultant to many young agricultural experts and botanists among them Lajos Balogh, Sándor Barabás, Norbert Bauer, Marianna Biró, Zsolt Domokos, Sándor Farkas, László Fülöp, Sándor Kocsis, Gábor Matus, János Mészáros, Gyula Pinke, and Eszter Ruprecht.

Following his retirement he regularly attended the meetings of the Hungarian Botanical Society; from 1998 he participated in nine meetings, and commented the presentations on twelve occasions.

In the winter of 2000–2001 he actively participated in the formulation and development of the "Intensive Botanical Data Collection Programme" organised by the Ecological and Botanical Research Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Vácrátót. For this programme he contributed important data from 143 little-researched localities in Hungary. In May 2001 he guided a field trip to study the vegetation and landscape use along the borders of Hungary – and he was accompanied by young botanists Marianna Biró, Lajos Balogh, Sándor Barabás, Zoltán Botta-Dukát, István Dancza, Gyula Pinke, and Eszter Ruprecht.

PLANT COLLECTING TRIPS

Professor Jeney's plant collecting trips are well documented by accurate field diaries and collecting books. He spent 1,114 days in the field, most of these (1,014) in Hungary and 100 days abroad.

In Hungary the most frequently visited places were the following (number of days in parentheses): Tata (173), Nyergesújfalu (78), Debrecen (46), Dunaalmás (32), Kocs (27), Naszály (20), Császár (19), Tatabánya (13), Esztergom (10), Gyöngyös (10) and Karcag (10). Most of his collecting trips outside Hungary were made in Transylvania and the Partium (Romania), with some additional collections in western and southern Europe (Figs 1–2). From the number and location of the field trips, it is clear that most of the cases he documented the surroundings of the places where he lived: such areas include the Gerecse Mts and Bársonyos Hills. He was often accompanied by his school colleagues Eszter Horváth, Zoltánné Szentkirályi and András Liszt, secondary school teachers, and Ferenc Hartmann, herbologist, in the surroundings of Tata. When abroad, in the early years of his career he usually travelled and collected alone, later as the guide of secondary school classes.

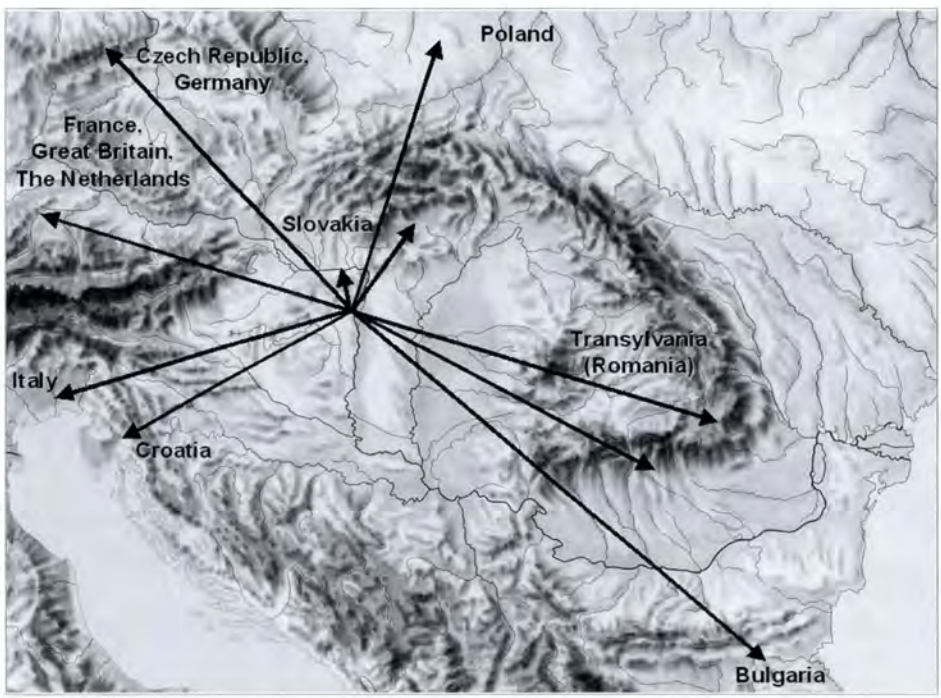


Fig. 1. Map of Jeney's plant collecting trips abroad.

He was familiar with the flora of a wide range of habitats from open rocky grasslands, to fens or the monoculture of cornfields. Sometimes he fearlessly collected plants on rocky walls or swampy areas. His collecting activity was characterised by exceptional precision and at the same time with an intention of collecting as many specimens as possible. He processed the specimens as good as possible in the given circumstances, and he liked the well-prepared ones. As he used to jokingly say to his peers, "*I grabbed them*" and that "*They (the plant samples) will admit their names to me at home*".

The approximately 18,000 specimens of the Jeney herbarium were acquired by the Hungarian Natural History Museum in 2006. Zoltán Barina began inventory and revisionary work in 2006.



Fig. 2. Endre Jeney on a field trip near Egyes-kő (Piatra Singuratica) in the Hagymás Mts (Muntii Haghimas) in Transylvania (Romania) in August 1994 (photo by István Dancza).

THE SCIENTIFIC WORK OF JENEY

E. Jeney was among those who did not publish much. His publications and manuscripts are mostly from the 1970s and 1980s, and coincide with the modern era when syntaxonomy and phytotaxonomy were pushed in the background. When his colleagues and students asked him, why did not publish his results, he said that – "*I am a teacher and my main task is education, and I feel it is more useful to spend my free time with keeping and revising my herbarium material in the long winter days*".

The writer of this article is aware of the existence of a few very carefully compiled scientific manuscripts. Among these is a report in 1973 to the Hungarian Academy of the Sciences, Department of Nature Sciences, on the subject "*The structure of plant communities and the utilisation of solar energy*". The quality of this work was such, according to Imre Horváth, that it could have been submitted as a dissertation for "candidate's degree".

He presented botanical lectures on two occasions. In October 2000 he made one entitled "*Floristic studies in the Bársonyos Hills*" during the fourth conference entitled "Actual floristical and vegetation research in the Carpathian Basin" at Jósvafő. In March 2002 he made his presentation "*Lycopodiums in the Bakony Mts*" at the fifth conference on the "Actual floristical and vegetation research in the Carpathian Basin" conference at Pécs, southern Hungary.

Soon after this he became ill and following a long illness. Jeney, father of four adult children (Hajnalka, Zsolt, Attila and Csaba), died in Budapest on 11th February, 2004.

PUBLICATIONS OF ENDRE JENEY

Article published in scientific journal

HARTMANN, F. and JENEY, E. (1991): A gyomkender (Cannabis sativa L. ssp. spontanea Serebr. 1940) terjedése és társulás-viszonyainak vizsgálata Komárom-Esztergom megyében. [Study of the presence and spread of the wild hemp (Cannabis sativa L. ssp. spontanea Serebr. 1940) in plant communities in Komárom-Esztergom county.] – *Növényvédelem* **27**(1): 4–7. [in Hungarian with English summary].

Scientific lectures

JENEY, E. (2000): Florisztikai vizsgálatok a Bársonyosi-dombvidéken. [Actual floristical studies in the Bársonyos Hills.] – Aktuális flóra- és vegetációkutatás a Kárpát-medencében IV. [Fourth conference on the Actual floristical and vegetation research in the Carpathian Basin], 13–15 October 2000, Jósvafő.

JENEY, E. (2002): Lycopodiumok a Bakonyban. [Lycopodiums in the Bakony Mts.] Aktuális flóra- és vegetációkutatás a Kárpát-medencében V. [Fifth conference on the Actual floristical and vegetation research in the Carpathian Basin], 8–10 March 2002, Pécs.

Reviewed scientific work

JENEY, E. (1973): Növényállományok szerkezetének hatása a fényenergia hasznosítására. Az MTA Természettudományi II. Főosztályának díjazott pályaműve. [The structure of plant communities and the utilisation of solar energy]. It was submitted to the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Department of Nature Sciences [in Hungarian].

Manuscripts

Nyergesújfalu község belterületének ruderális gyomnövény társulásai. [Ruderal plant associations within the town of Nyergesújfalu.] [in Hungarian].

Mezőgazdasági terület gyomosságának felmérése, összehasonlítása a kultúra és a művelés szerint. [Comparative weed survey of agricultural areas from the viewpoint of the culture and cultivation.] [in Hungarian].

A Tatai-medence és környékének növényzete. [Flora and vegetation of the Tata basin.] [in Hungarian].

Florisztikai vizsgálatok a Bársonyosi-dombvidéken. [Floristical studies in the Bársonyos Hills.] [in Hungarian].

Lycopodiumok a Bakonyban. [Lycopodiums in the Upper Bakony Mts.] [in Hungarian].

Scientific programme

Intenzív Botanikai Adatgyűjtési Program (IBOA-Atlasz 1.0.) [Intensive Botanic Data Collection Programme (IBOA-Atlas 1.0.] – MTA Ökológiai és Botanikai Kutatóintézete, Vácrátót (2000–2001) Adatgyűjtés során adatközlés 143 darab pontról. [Records are published from 143 places.]

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