Obituary

In Memoriam: Yuri Svirezhev

It is with deep sorrow that we have learned about the sudden death of our good colleague, friend and teacher, Yuri Svirezhev. Yuri may be considered one of the founders of the theory of mathematical ecology. His research in ecological modeling, systems analysis, mathematical genetics and thermodynamics is recognized around the world.

A student of Professor N.V. Timofeev-Resovsky, Yuri was equally knowledgeable in mathematics and biology. In fact, he was a truly encyclopedically educated scholar with amazing knowledge from a variety of fields, including physics, biology, evolution theory, history, etc. With Timofeev-Resovsky they produced a series of classical works on population genetics, which won the Academia Leopoldina Award in 1967.

In 1977 he became a Professor of Mathematics in the Mathematics and Mechanics Department at Moscow State University. In 1976 he was appointed to head the new Laboratory of Mathematical Ecology of the USSR Academy of Sciences. In 1989 he was invited by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences to organize the International Ecological Modeling Group. The group concentrated on systems analysis of Hungarian agriculture. As a result, the theory of climate risk assessment was developed. In 1991 Professor Svirezhev was awarded the Szecseny Medal of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

In 1992 Professor Svirezhev was invited to Germany as Head of Department for Integrated Systems Analysis in the new Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research. Since then he has been living and working in Germany. In 1993 he was awarded the Timofeev-Resovsky Medal by the Russian Academy of Sciences. He was a member of the Editorial Boards of “Ecological Modeling” and several other scientific journals.

He published more than 250 scientific papers and books in the fields of control theory, theory of stability, mathematical genetics and evolution, mathematical ecology, ecological modeling, global modeling, agricultural modeling, medical data processing, and thermodynamics. Yuri’s students can be found around the world, in Hungary, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Russia, Germany, USA, UK, Japan and many other countries. They will always remember Yuri as an amazing, inspiring person, always full of exciting ideas, always ready to share and lead in his on-going quest for scientific knowledge. He was a true workaholic, even after his retirement. He died late at night on his way home from the office from a sudden heart attack.

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