

## Zlatko Kvaček octogenarian

It is unbelievable, how fast the time has flown. I am sitting with my laptop trying to succinctly recapitulate what all has happened during the last ten years in the life of Zlatko Kvaček, who is turning eighty years old. For me personally, not much has changed over that interval, and I still have the opportunity to meet with Zlatko, almost every day, as he sits hunched over his cluttered desk in his cluttered office at the Faculty of Science of Charles University, typing into his slow and antiquated computer yet another leading article in palaeobotany, all the while claiming that it is surely his last one, that he no longer is up to the work, and that it is time to pass the torch to the younger generation, his students and colleagues.

During this last decade, Zlatko's output has been quite extensive, and from 2007 through 2017 he published a total of 65 articles, dealing primarily with revisions of flora and vegetation of central and western Europe. Probably the most difficult publication, dealing with Kučlín flora began in 2011, during his long convalescence after a bout of Lyme borreliosis, which he likely brought back as an unwanted souvenir from his trip around southern China. During this difficult time, when Zlatko practically had to learn to walk again, we were all quite concerned about him, but he did not disappoint us. He tackled the reality of his situation in his customary fashion, and did not give up until he had worked himself back into proper health, to the delight and relief of all his friends and family. Unfortunately, in 2013 his long-time colleague and friend Harald Walther passed away. Harald was one of his professional collaborators, and the two men with their wives often visited each other socially. In recent years, Zlatko Kvaček has been collaborating with Heinrich Winterscheid and Thomas Denk on a revision of the Pliocene flora of Germany. As can be seen from the included list of literature and the afore-mentioned "publication score", Zlatko Kvaček still ranks among prolific authors in the field. Despite his advanced age, he does not neglect teaching students at the Faculty of Science of Charles University,

and also devotes himself to getting youngsters in their teens on a good start in the field of palaeobotany. Beginning in 2012, Zlatko Kvaček has widened his field of activities outside the university, and regularly visits the National Museum, where he is currently helping organize and classify the museum's fossil plant collections from the Paleogene and Neogene of the entire world. His expertise was especially important following the acquisition of a large collection of Tertiary plant fossils from Zdeněk Dvořák and the Severočeské doly a.s. from the area of Bílina, Kučlín, Roudníky and Holý Kluk. An important part of his scientific work is and always has been his international collaborations with foreign colleagues and researchers, which almost always eventually progressed to become personal friendships. I mention here a few: Steven Manchester, Johanna Kovar-Eder, Edoardo Martinetto, Lutz Kunzmann, Hans Jochen Gregor, Josef Bogner, Lilla Hably, Boglarka Erdei, Grzegorz and Elżbieta Worobiec, David Ferguson, Volker Wilde. I could continue in the same vein with domestic colleagues. Most current Czech palaeobotanists are his former students. Zlatko Kvaček has also had considerable influence on the education of numerous palynologists, like Jiřina Dašková, Mariana Kováčová, Nela Doláková. Additionally, there are many professionals and amateurs alike with whom he has close ties, such as Jakub Prokop, Zdeněk Dvořák, Karel Mach, Jaromír Váňa and others.

Zlatko, in closing this woefully inadequate accounting of your accomplishments, and on behalf of all named and unnamed colleagues, I wish you only the best in the coming years, continuing creative strength and energy in your scientific work, and a satisfying life with your extended family, which has greatly aided you in all your works that we so admire.



**Prof. RNDr. Zlatko Kvaček, DrSc. in summer 2018**  
(photo by J. Kvaček)

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