

## **A Dedication to the Seventieth Anniversary of Prof. Khorloogiin Munkhbayar**

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Khorloogiin Munkhbayar, one of the outstanding and senior biologists in the field of zoology and ecology in Mongolia is reaching the 70th year of his life. He is one of the scientists who made major contribution to the development of modern biological sciences in Mongolia through his research and teaching activities. His activities are limited not only to investigate the fauna of Mongolia, but also he is one of the enormous teachers to educate young generations of biologists in the country.

Kh. Munkhbayar was born in 1940 in Gashuuny Gol area of the Matad district of Dornod province, eastern Mongolia in the family of a nomadic herdsman. Having completed the primary and secondary school courses in the center of Dornod province, in 1959 he entered the Mongolian State University (currently National University of Mongolia), the Faculty of Natural Sciences.

Being a first-year student, Kh. Munkhbayar became interested in study of unique fauna of Mongolia, especially vertebrate animals, such as reptiles, amphibians, birds etc. Actually his

fascination with the wild animals was started earlier, even when he was very young, and his sighting of various wildlife species and their enormous populations in the vast plain steppe of eastern Mongolia. During his student period, he attended several large expeditions together his supervisors, and as herpetofauna of Mongolia was almost unexplored at that time, he chose amphibians and reptiles as the fields of his future research.

In 1963 Kh. Munkhbayar graduated from the university majoring in biology-zoology, and as his academic competence was very good, he appointed immediately as a lecturer at the State Pedagogical University (currently Mongolian State University of Education), where he spent his whole teaching and research career, which is continuing almost a half century.

While teaching at the university, he started to investigate the amphibians and reptiles of Mongolia, and intensively explored the fauna during several expeditions to the different regions of Mongolia together with his supervisors and coworkers, namely Prof. O. Shagdarsuren, A. Dashdorj, A. Tsendsuren, V. E. Sokolov, P. D. Gunin, V. F. Orlova, N. B. Ananieva, L. Ya. Borkin, N. L. Orlov, D. V. Semenov, S. L. Kuzmin, A. Bold, A. Dulmaa, S. Dulamtseren etc., and of course, many of his students. Upon his return from the field survey, Kh. Mnkhubayar made an analysis of the data on taxonomy, ecology, distributional patterns and population structure of different species of amphibians and reptiles, which became the foundation of his dissertation research.

Since 1970 he studied at the Tashkent State University as a postgraduate student, where his scientific advisors were Prof. T. Z. Zahidov and Prof. O. Shagdarsuren. As their student, Munkhbayar always highly esteems and gratitude for them, and for his university teachers, Prof. O. Shagdarsuren, A. Dashdorj and A. Tsendsuren, who drew his attention to herpetology. In 1973 he defended his thesis