Roman B.
Hołyński

Born in Warsaw (Poland) on 9 I 1937. At the age of 15 he became a member of the Polish Entomological Society, and two years later decided to specialize in jewel-beetles (**Coleoptera: Buprestidae**). Influenced by friends he joined them in bird-watching, and in 1960 they (as the "Biology Students' Scientific Circle of the Warsaw University") started the program of bird-migration studies (Baltic Operation, in later years expanded into renowned international enterprise) and one year later launched the ornithological journal "*Notatki Ornitologiczne*". In 1964 he graduated from the Fa-culty of Biology and Earth Sciences, J. Piłsudski University of Warsaw, with the dissertation on beetles ("The distribution of the **Bupre-stidae** in Poland"), but his main interest at that time – and during the next 10 years – was directed to birds. These two fields (taxonomy, zoogeography and evolution of jewel-beetles, and some aspects – especially morphological adaptations of wing and tail – of bird migrations) absorbed him during all his life, though since mid-seventies his attention shifted more and more towards **Buprestidae**, and now he is working almost exclusively on them. During some shorter periods he did also some research on cytogenetics of birds and on taxonomy of feather mites (**Analgoidea**), and recently is increasingly interested in general problems of zoological systematics, biogeography and evolution. In 1978-1979 he attended a two-year course of "Geography of Developing Countries" at the Faculty of Geography of Warsaw Univ. (having finished it with a dissertation on the "Origin and zoogeographical relations of the African fauna"), and in 1999 defended his Ph.D. thesis on the "Taxonomical, zoogeographical and phylogenetical relations among Indo-Pacific *Psiloptera Dej., Dicercomorpha Deyr.*, and related genera (**Coleop-tera: Buprestidae**)"

In 1973 Hungarian ornithologists invited him to help in the organization of the program of bird--migration studies, patterned after Baltic Operation and later known as Operation Hungaria, and so he spent 1-2 months in each of the following 10 years in Hungary, leading the research-camps and introducing the Baltic Operation methods to Hungarian colleagues; this work has later been acknowledged by the Hungarian Ornithological Society with awarding him the status of life-member. From 1986 to 1988 he led the Hungarian Ringing Center. Since the establishment of the Natural Science Foundation at Göd (Hungary) he co-operated with it, and was the initiator and editor of its serial publication *Crystal (series Zoologica)* [unfortunately short-lived due to financial problems]. Supported by the Foundation, he organized the First International Symposium on **Buprestidae** (Visegrád, 1995).

As well in Poland as in Hungary it was very difficult for a biologist to find a job according to the specialization, so he has never been employed as taxonomist or zoogeographer. Entomotaxonomical or zoogeographical studies having never been his "official" duty, he did this work in his free time, at his own cost (in some cases privately sponsored by friends). Under such circumstances the progress was very slow, and his first paper on **Buprestidae** (he had previously published several on birds) appeared only in 1975. Three years later, when he had the opportunity to stay for 5 months in London, he spent all his free time (two-three hours each evening after working day as a porter in hotel) in the British Museum (Natural History) on studying the specimens from South-East Asia and Oceania; the result of this study, later supplemented by the data based on the survey of literature and other collections, amounts to probably the most comprehensive and reliable single source of information about Indo-Pacific **Buprestidae** ever compiled. Each of his several trips to countries between Afghanistan and New Guinea gave new impetus to his research, and he started to work on a comprehensive "Review of the Indo-Pacific Buprestidae", partial result of which is the present book. He is (usually the sole) author of more than 80 publications, *ca.* half of them on **Buprestidae**.