

THE ACTIVITIES OF THE ESTONIAN NATURALISTS' SOCIETY IN 2011

Tõnu Viik, Silja Kana

Estonian Naturalists' Society
Tartu
Estonia 51003

Running headline: Estonian Naturalists' Society

Keywords: naturalists, society

Abstract

The activities of the Estonian Naturalists' Society are described

Introduction

The Estonian Naturalists' Society (ENS) was founded already in 1853 and though so many wars have swept over Estonia, our society was able to survive and live further through all these long and turbulent years. We started as *Die Dorpater Naturforscher Gesellschaft* at *Der Livländischen gemeinnützigen und ökonomischen Societät*. Since 1998 we are associated with the Estonian Academy of Sciences. This means that the state finances us through the academy. As we own a house our maintenance expenditure is rather high so we have to earn a substantial part of our expenditures by carrying out

different projects at diverse organisations among which the most important is the Centre of Environmental Investments.

Our activities are carried out in 22 subunits by 718 active members. These subunits are relatively autonomous and they present their annual reviews in March of the following year. Some of the subunits work as sections: amateur meteorologists, anthropology, botany, entomology, forestry, geology, theoretical biology. The other subunits are: the Commission of Lakes, the Estonian Society of Malacology, the Estonian Mycological Society, the Estonian Society of Theriology and the Jakob von Uexküll Centre. Commissions with special tasks focus on the history of natural sciences, the library, natural education, observation networks, terms of ecology and plant names, botanical rarities. In addition, the Society has assemblies of ecology, of honorary members and the round table of nature conservation.

In 2011 we held nine General Assemblies with scientific presentations:

January 27 – Agu Laisk: ”Photosynthesis – black and white and colourful”.

February 28 – “The Baer day”. Presentations by Marina Loskutova, Eduard Koltšinski and Anastassija Fedotova.

March 31 – Kalle Kirsimäe: "Searching for water and life on Mars: new challenges", review meeting of 2011.

April 28 – Andres Tarand: "Climate change in Estonia"

May 26 – Tarmo Soomere: "On the possibilities of the modern maritime science to understand and protect Estonian seashores”

September 29 – Presentation of Yearbook of ENS no 86 “Rarities in Estonian nature” by Tiiu Kull. Mirt Gramann: "About the Universe and its evolution".

October 27 – Urve Miller: "Changes in natural environment in vicinity of Stockholm since the last ice age"

November 24 – Mihkel Zilmer: "The life on the waste ground of information”

December 15 – Tõnu Viik: "What are exoplanets and how we discover them?"

The subunits organized their traditional and non-traditional events:

- ♣ Science day dedicated to Karin Mark “Studies of humans using different sources” March 18, Tallinn (together with the Tallinn University Institute of History and NGO Centre of Archeology);
- ♣ Mushroom practice, Kilingi-Nõmme, May 13–15;
- ♣ Seminar organized by nature conservation round table „If and how the message of nature conservation reaches people?“ May 20, Estonian Naturalists’ Society;
- ♣ The Spring School of Theoretical Biology „Biological interactions“ May 27-29, in Ojako farm, Pärnu county (together with the University of Tartu Institute of Ecology and Geosciences);
- ♣ Gathering of the friends of mosses, May 28-29, in Marimetsa bog, Turvalepa broadleaf forest and Palivere spring fen;
- ♣ The 34th Naturalists’ Day Käsmu July 2-3, Lahemaa National Park;
- ♣ The Summer School of Ecosemiotics together with the Institute of Philosophy and Semiotics of the University of Tartu, July 28-29, Rutja;
- ♣ Gathering of amateur meteorologists and thunder observers July 23, Lelle, Rapla county;
- ♣ Mushroom practice October 6-9, Kilingi-Nõmme;
- ♣ Conference commemorating Juhan Aul (1897-1994) October 20, Tallinn
- ♣ The Autumn School of Theriology October 23 –25, Oonurme;
- ♣ The Autumn School of Geology VII “Resources of the Earth” October 7-9, Taevaskoja, Põlva county;

- ⤴ Exhibition “Snails, mussels and human” compiled by people from Estonian Malacology Society, October 25 – November 25, in Tartu Environmental Education Centre;
- ⤴ Seminar organized by nature conservation round table „Natural disasters and human psychology“ November 3, Estonian Naturalists’ Society;
- ⤴ Meeting of Mycological society “Actiones” December 10, Tartu, University of Tartu, Botany department.

The Society participated in fulfilling the projects funded by the Environmental Investment Centre, Tallinn Botanic Garden and the Ministry of Environment.

ENS and The Estonian Environment Information Centre developed the Nature Observation Database. The link to it (as of 2011): <http://loodus.keskkonnainfo.ee/lva/LVA.aspx?type=Artikkel&content=-1936342045>. The commission of plant names continued to complement the database of plant names. During the 2011 altogether 398 records were entered (In December 2011 there were 17 376 units in the database). In 2011 nine seminars of the series ”From natural scientists to teachers of natural sciences” were held.

Members from different sections compiled expert opinions and exhibitions (Commission of botanical rarities made an expertise about the protected species in III category, Theriology Society passed their opinion about the Saaremaa bridge to decision makers and they were involved in monitoring and inventory work, The Estonian Society of Malacology collected data about invasive species and monitored species etc.). In 2011 the initiative of repository of reports and inventories of Estonian nature underwent the first development period and it can be seen at the following address: <http://elurikkus.ut.ee/eluv.php?lang=est>.

In December 2010 there were 162 244 printed items in ENS library. Within a year library acquired 184 new books and issues of 169 periodicals. The publications were exchanged in the reporting year with 54 institutions and organizations in 18 countries.

Publications:

1. Kull, T., Liira, J., Sammul, M. (eds.) 2011. Yearbook of Estonian Naturalists' Society 86. Rarities in Estonian nature. 304 pp.
2. Tulva, T., Öpik, M., Puura, I. (eds.) 2011. Scola Biotheoretica 36 „Theory of movement“. 88 pp. (together with University of Tartu Institute of Ecology and Geosciences and the Natural History Museum).
3. Öpik, M., Tulva, I., T., Puura, I. (eds.) 2011. Scola Biotheoretica 37 „Biological interactions“. 71 pp. (together with University of Tartu Institute of Ecology and Geosciences and the Natural History Museum).
4. Verš, E., Preeden, U., Lang, L. (eds.) 2011. Schola Geologica 7 „Resources of the Earth“. 148 pp. (together with University of Tartu institute of ecology and geosciences, Tallinn Technical University Institute of Geology and the Department of Mining).
5. Folia Cryptogamica Estonica 48. 158 pp. (with the University of Tartu).
6. Laumets, L. (ed.) 2011. **Nature of Lahemaa: 34th Naturalists' Day, July 2-3 2011, 63 pp.**

Internet journal:

- Ingerpuu, N., Vellak, K. (eds.) 2010. Friend of mosses 14. 40 pp. (<http://www.botany.ut.ee/bruuloogia/Samblasober14.pdf>)