

OBITUARY

AUDFINN TJØNNELAND

A short biography of A. TJØNNELAND (born: August 30, 1924, Stavanger, Norway; died; May 16, 1989, Bergen, Norway; odonatologist, insect ecologist and invertebrate anatomist, university teacher) is followed by a list of his odonatological publications.

On May 16, 1989 Professor Audfinn Tjønneland died in Bergen, Norway after an active life dedicated to research and teaching, principally in Uganda, Ethiopia and Norway.

AUDFINN TJØNNELAND was born in Stavanger, Norway on August 30, 1924. His formal education was rendered difficult and irregular due to the exigencies of the Second World War. He finished his A-level studies in 1943 (during the War) and started his professional education at a time when all such activity in Norway was suspended by the German forces of occupation. Despite this, small groups of students (among whom was Tjønneland) began their studies in secrecy at the Bergen Museum where, under difficult and perilous circumstances, some instructors mounted courses illegally. Such students had to present themselves for examination at the University of Oslo between 1945 and 1948.

As a young student Tjønneland travelled extensively in Norway (with financial support from Museum foundations) during the late 1940s to map and collect dragonflies, at the time a rather poorly known group in Norway. In November 1951 he graduated in zoology at the University of Bergen (founded in 1948) with a thesis on the zoogeography of Norwegian Odonata. His first publication on dragonflies, directed towards the general reader, reviewed Norwegian folklore and aimed to dispel the notion that dragonflies were harmful to humans. The next year saw the publication of his main contribution to odonatology — a compilation of previous records and his own to provide a secure base for future work on the zoogeography of dragonflies in Norway. This monograph remains



essential reading for any serious student of the subject. After this, apart from two quantitative studies of variation in wing characters used for taxonomic diagnosis, his contributions to odonatology were made indirectly, through supervision of research by postgraduate students working under his guidance at the University of Bergen.

After graduating at the University of Bergen, Tjønneland studied insect physiology under Professor (later Sir Vincent) WIGGLESWORTH at the University of Cambridge during 1952 and 1953. It was at this time that he and P.S. CORBET established a friendship that led to fruitful collaborative research on aquatic insects at the East African Freshwater Fisheries Research Organisation, Jinja, Uganda where Corbet was a research scientist between 1954 and 1956 and where Tjønneland worked as a scholarship holder (Norwegian Research Council, 1953-1956) and research scholar (University of Bergen, 1956-1959). After collaborative research on the flight activity of Trichoptera in 1954 and 1955, Tjønneland conducted a major study on the flight activity of Ephemeroptera for which he was awarded the Doctor of Philosophy Degree by the University of Bergen in 1960.

Between 1959 and 1964 Tjønneland held an academic post at the University of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, becoming a full professor of zoology in the Biology Department, in the formation of which he played a major role.

From 1964 until his death he served on the academic staff of the Zoology Laboratory, University of Bergen, being appointed full professor there in 1985. Until his return to Bergen in 1964 Tjønneland's investigations had been almost entirely within ecological entomology. At Bergen his orientation changed and he started a research group focused on the comparative anatomy (mostly micro-anatomy) of arthropods. He also started collaboration with research workers in the Soviet Union, as a result of which some came to study with him in Bergen and he travelled and lectured in the Soviet Union. Several of the students whom he guided in this research group dealt with the micro-structure of Odonata and published reports of interest to odonatologists in 1974 (*Norw. J. Zool.* 22: 105-124; 145-170), 1975 (*Norw. J. Zool.* 23: 17-36), 1976 (*Cell Tissue Res.* 168: 177-191; *Norw. J. Zool.* 24: 175-183) and 1985 (*Zool. Anz.* 214: 25-32).

Tjønneland inclined strongly towards the theoretical aspects of biology and worked hard in the University of Bergen to update and promote the teaching of evolutionary theory. For example, he was a co-founder of the Darwin Society of Bergen and of a centre for theoretical approaches to science and the humanities, also in Bergen. Though modest about his own accomplishments, he possessed a strong personality, speaking frankly and in a lethally sardonic manner in support of principles he espoused; and he was a tireless and formidable advocate for freedom in basic research, being an exciting lecturer and brilliant humorist. He took friendship seriously, exhibiting to an unusual degree the qualities of loyalty, honesty and selflessness. By us, and by his many other colleagues and friends, he will be sorely missed.

ODONATOLOGICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY OF A. TJØNNELAND

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- 1955 The A'/Ac complex of *Enallagma cyathigerum* (Charp.) (Insecta, Odonata). *Årb. Univ. Bergen* (Naturvit.) 1955 (11), 9 pp.
- 1956 Variable A'/Ac ratios in specimens of *Pyrrhosoma nymphula* Sulz. (Insecta, Odonata). *Årb. Univ. Bergen* (Naturvit.) 1956 (1), 9 pp.

The photograph on p. 479 was taken in Bergen on September 17, 1987 by Dr A. NYLUND, to whom we are indebted for its use.

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