

PROFESSOR Dr KAZUO SAITOH (1927-1998)

After a short disease, professor Saitoh departed from us on 25 November 1998, at the age of 71. He was one of the most prolific insect chromosome workers in Japan.

Kazuo Saitoh was born on 10 February 1927, at Hirosaki, Aomori prefecture, Hokkaido, Japan. In March 1951 he graduated at the Department of Zoology, Faculty of Science, Hokkaido University, and was awarded the Doctorate of Science, by the

same University, in 1960.

Throughout his professional career he was associated with the university of his native city: Assistant (1951-1965; with an interruption, 1961-1963, when he worked at the Gibbs Laboratories, Yale University, USA), Lecturer (1965), Assistant Professor (1965-1973), Full Professor at the Faculty of Science (1973-1992; Director of Science Education Department since 1976). After his retirement, he was awarded an emeritate professorship at the Department of Biological Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, Aomori University (1992-1998), and continued his research at his Hirosaki home almost until the very last day of his life.

During a quarter of a century a number of Japanese professional organisations enjoyed Professor Saitoh's services. He served as Vice-President of the Lepidopterists's Society (1964-1965), Executive Member of the Tohoku Branch of the Japan Society of Entomology (1966-1972), Councillor of the Japan Society of Lepidoptero-logy (since 1975), Member of the Executive of the Society of Chromosome Research (since 1975; Chairman in 1988), President of the Aomori Prefecture Biological Society (1979-1983), and as a Councillor of the Society of Animal Taxonomy (1984-1986). Since the early 1970s, he was rendering much help to various members of the International Odonatological Society (S.I.O.), particularly so in terms of dragonfly specimen sendings and with copies of not easily available odonatological literature.

Dr Saitoh's working days were long, and there were 7 in a week. Since his residence was but 2 km from the University, he invariably arrived by bicycle (or walking in winter), at anything like 09 a.m. After a brief lunch break at noon he stayed in the Department until about midnight. His Sunday and holiday schedule was not different. Whenever a research project was completed, he organized a small party at the Department, where he often served home-made pastry and cookies. He was a superb amateur-baker.

His Department was a Mekka for cyto-taxonomists. His research interests covered several

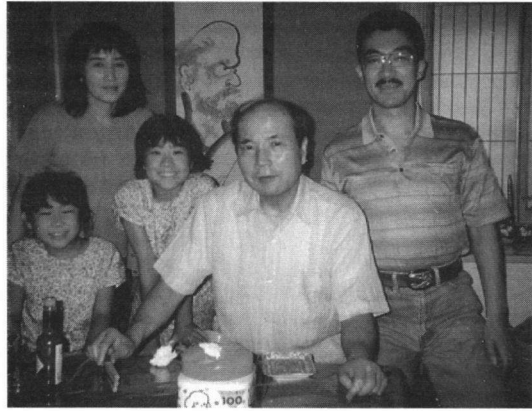


Fig. 1. Professor K. Saitoh, with the family of his former student, Dr Tersuya Tanaka; – August 1998.

insect orders, with emphasis on butterflies. He was mainly, but not solely, concerned with the Japanese taxa. For example, his papers on cytotaxonomy of the Himalayan Rhopalocera (1969-1970) have attracted much attention worldwide. His huge bibliography contains also many non-cytology titles, including papers on e.g. Blattodea and Cerambycidae (Coleoptera), many directed at the general readership.

Dr Saitoh developed active research interest in dragonflies rather late in his career, and published 6 papers in this field, viz.:

- 1988 (SUZUKI, K. & –) Germ-line chromosomes of two species of *Davidius*, with special reference to the sex chromosomes (Anisoptera: Gomphidae). *Odonatologica* 17(3): 275-280.
- 1990a (SUZUKI, K.-J. & –) A revised chromosome study of Japanese odonates, 1: chromosomes of 14 species belonging to 9 families. *Sci. Rep. Hirosaki Univ.* 37(1): 38-49. – [Jap., with Engl. s.]
- 1990b (SUZUKI, K.-J. & –) A revised chromosome study of Japanese odonates, 2: chromosomes of 13 species belonging to two families. *Sci. Rep. Hirosaki Univ.* 37(2): 111-123. – [Jap., with Engl. s.]
- 1991 (SUZUKI, K.-J., – & J. SAWANO) Male germ-line chromosomes of *Orthetrum poecilops miyajimaensis* Yuki et Doi, 1938 (Libellulidae: Odonata). *Tombo* 34(1/4):

- 29-30. – [Jap., with Engl. s.]
- 1992 (SUZUKI, K.-J., – & J. SAWANO) Male germ-line chromosomes of *Davidius moiwanus sawanoi* Asahina et Inoue, 1973 (Anisoptera: Gomphidae). *Tombo* 35(1/4): 31-32. – [Jap., with Engl. s.]
- 1997 (SUZUKI, K.-J., – & J. SAWANO) Male germ-line chromosomes of *Davidius moiwanus taruii* Asahina et Inoue, 1973 (Anisoptera: Gomphidae). *Tombo* 40(1/4): 12-14. – [Jap., with Engl. s.]
- On 23 October 1990 he wrote to Dr B. Kiauta: “... Kataya (1987) observed $2n=25(m)$; $n=13(m)$ in *Crocothemis servilia* males from Ishigaki-shima, Okinawa-ken, and $n=12$ (neo-XY) in those from Osakafu and Aichi-ken. Our chromosomal findings on *C. s. mariannae* from Aomori-ken are consistent

with your results published. We will soon complete the preparation of our paper on their C-banded karyotypes.” Unfortunately, that paper has never been published, but Saitoh’s observations were confirmed by K. HIGASHI & H. KAYANO, 1993, *Jap. J. Ent.* 61(1): 1-10.

Throughout his life, Dr Saitoh enjoyed good health. It is fortunate he departed without a prolonged suffering. On 8 October 1998 he had a fatal stroke, from which he could not recover. Many of his research projects will have to remain unattended, but he will remain unforgettable for his numerous friends, colleagues, students and odonate cytotaxonomists at home and abroad.

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