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## **Supervisor's assessment of Ľuboš Hrivniak's Ph.D. thesis**

### **Diversity and speciation of mayflies (Ephemeroptera) from the Caucasus and adjacent areas**

Mgr. Ľuboš Hrivniak joined our lab to conduct a Ph.D. study on Caucasian mayflies just over 4 years ago. His model group was the subgenus *Caucasiron*, representing a remarkable component of Caucasian mayfly fauna. Despite this group contains large and charismatic animals, very little was known about them when Ľuboš started his study.

Taking into account that Ľuboš did not just extend his master thesis but started with a brand new topic for a Ph.D., I consider his achievements as truly remarkable. He basically elevated *Caucasiron* from a hardly known obscure group to possibly one of the most comprehensively studied in the whole Palaearctic.

During his study, Ľuboš proved himself to be a very talented, independent and reliable researcher. I highly appreciate the outstanding breadth of Ľuboš's expertise. He is able to perform virtually everything, from field sampling in sometimes challenging conditions, to molecular lab work, running complicated phylogenetic analyses, and at the same time to actually know the animals he is working with.

The crucial part of his thesis consists of five published papers and one manuscript. In my opinion, truly exceptional is that Ľuboš had a major contribution on all these papers, and none of them would have been published without his efforts.

Ľuboš has always been a very enthusiastic about his research and it is clear from his thesis that he actually enjoyed his time as a Ph.D. student, which I consider as an equally important part as are the results achieved. His communication skills, easy-going personality and ability to work in a team would make him a highly valuable member of any research group internationally.

From my point of view, our cooperation has been very enjoyable throughout all those last four years and I highly value Ľuboš both professionally and personally. I would like to conclude this assessment with expressing a firm belief that our common work will continue in the future.

Finally, I recommend the dissertation thesis of Ľuboš Hrivniak for defense.

České Budějovice, 19.8.2020

RNDr. Pavel Sroka, Ph.D.