

פרס מפעל חיים ניתן השנה לפרופסור לב פישלזון

Professor Lev Fishelson (LF) – summary written by A. Abelson.

From the onset of his scientific activity at the Margolin Biology Center at the University Institute of Zoology at Abu Kabir, and later in the Department of Zoology at Tel Aviv University, LF believed that, as a Zionist scientist, his duties should focus not only on academic affairs, but also on outreach to the people of his country. With this belief in mind, he began to publish popular papers in Hebrew, present talks on the radio and publish books on Israeli nature. Examples of these are his books "Life around the Dead Sea", "The Mysteries of the Red Sea", "Animal Corner in the School" and "Aquariums in School". Thus, in addition to his peer-reviewed scientific publications (which today number more than 200, including five papers in Nature and one in Science), LF has published over 100 "popular" papers in Hebrew (in "Teva v' Aretz", "Adam v'Svivato" and "Sade") as well as numerous publications in newspapers, all aimed to popularize nature and to protect the nature and biological assets of Israel.

In conjunction with his academic activities at the University, LF presented the first radio-transmitted University Course on marine biology as organized by ZAHAL, and has been teaching zoology and anatomy once a week for 14 years at the Kibbutzim Teacher's Seminar. LF was among the establishers of The Israel Ecological Society, the umbrella organization "Adam v'Hasviva" (Man and Environment), the Society of Underwater Activity, and acted as an Editor of Encyclopedia L'hai v'Lazomeach (Animal and Plant Encyclopedia) that brought Israel's nature to some 60,000 homes. Other extracurricular outreach activities include serving for many years on the Board of the Hevra l'Haganat Hateva (Society for the Protection of Nature) and the Israel Ecological and Zoological Societies. LF has provided professional advice to many government offices including that of Shimon Peres (then Minister of Transportation) on the ecology of littorals, to Roni Milo (first Minister of Environment), the Ministry of Education for establishment of the Underwater Observatory, and to the Ministry of Tourism and Education for establishment of the Dolphin Reef in Eilat, and he was a member of the committee for the new biological curriculum for reform in schools (1973). In his academic capacity, LF was responsible for the education of many undergraduate and graduate students including now established professors such as Yossi Loya, Menachem Goren and Zvi Lifshitz (TAU), Ehud Spanier (Haifa U), and Muki Spigel (BGU). Prof. Fishelson's activities earned him many honors around the world including: Honorary Member of the Israeli Ecological Society (1989), Doctor Honoris Causa of the University in Johannesburg (1989), Magen of the

Minister of Eichut haSviva (1997), Member of the Academy of Science in Erfurt, Germany (1995), Honorary Member of the Israeli Zoological Society (1994), a special recognition by the Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin for contribution to Israeli culture 1987, and an honorary fellow of IIO, Eilat (1996).

Amongst the many Pioneering studies LF investigated are:

- Grasshoppers as users of plant toxins to produce defense mechanisms (1966-1968);
Social control of sex-change in coral reef fishes - this opened the way for a new topic in fish studies (1970);
- First study to describe the communities of soft bottom habitats in the Red Sea (1972);
- Hybridization of Tilapias as a new mean for aquaculture (1965-1972) - today the established world-wide method in this field;
- Aquaculture in the Negev and Arava with use of subterranean brackish waters - developing a branch of desert fish farming;
- Discovery and description of a mega-bacterium symbiotic relations in guts of surgeon fishes;
- The first attempt to study pollution effects in a total environment - Akko Shoreline and another invited study for the Ashdod region.