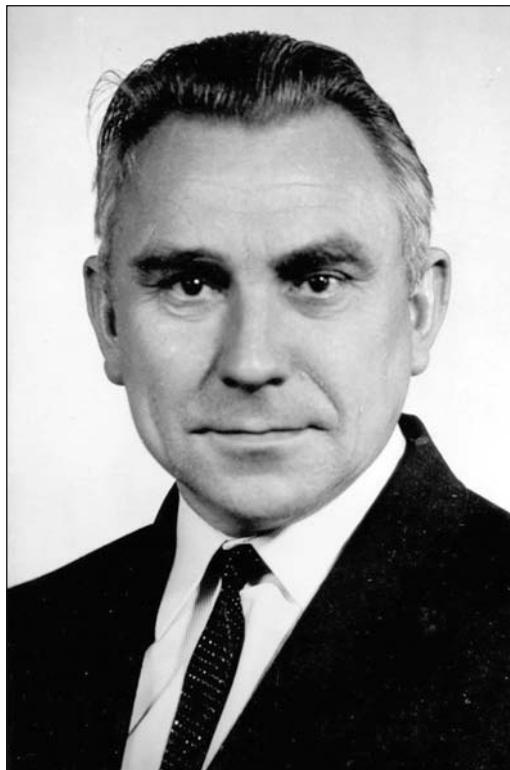


## Valentin Vasilyevich KUZNETSOV (1923 – 2006)

November 27, 2006, **Valentin Vasilyevich Kuznetsov** passed away at the age of 84. He was the first Kazakhstani paleoherpetologist and made a significant contribution to the study of fossil turtles of Kazakhstan and Middle Asia.

Valentin V. Kuznetsov was born May 28, 1923, in Glazanovo village, Ustyansk District Arkhangel'sk Region, Russia. During the Second World War and some time after it he was an aircraft mechanic in Siberia and the Far East. From 1949 to 1954, he was a student of Kazakh State University (Almaty) and then became a postgraduate at the paleozoological laboratory of the Institute of Zoology of Academy of Sciences of Kazakhstan (IZK, Almaty). His dissertation, entitled "Turtles of the Paleogene and Neogene of Turgai and area north to the Aral Sea," was completed in 1963. His formal supervisor was paleontologist V. S. Bazhanov (1907 – 1984), founder of the paleozoological laboratory of IZK, but in fact Kuznetsov's study was actually supervised by the famous herpetologist and fossil turtle expert from Leningrad (now St. Petersburg) State University, L. I. Khosatzky (1913 – 1992). In his dissertation V. V. Kuznetsov described remains of representatives of four turtle families from the Cenozoic deposits of Kazakhstan, including several new species, and analyzed history of development of turtle faunas of Kazakhstan. This work marked the beginning of a new stage in the study of fossil turtles of this region. During the whole period of his scientific activity, V. V. Kuznetsov has established 15 new fossil turtle taxa (14 species and 1 genus) from the Mesozoic and Cenozoic of Kazakhstan and Middle Asia. He also, together with his colleagues from the Institute, discovered more than 80 localities of fossil turtles and other vertebrates. Fossils from these localities regularly filled collections of the IZK and some of them can be seen on display in the museum's exhibits. Kuznetsov authored about 40 publications. Most of his papers present descriptions of new species or findings of fossil turtles. Some of them are made in collaboration with his colleagues L. I. Khosatzky and V. M. Chkhikvadze. The deposited manuscript "Materials on fossil turtles of Kazakhstan" (Kuznetsov, 1978) reviewed data on all species and localities of fossil turtles of Kazakhstan. Another deposited manuscript entitled "Annotated checklist of fossil turtles of Asia" (Kuznetsov, 1984) included information on all fossil turtles of Asia. As a



whole, the works of V. V. Kuznetsov made important contributions to the study of fossil turtles of Asia and to the paleontology of Kazakhstan.

In his private life, V. V. Kuznetsov was fond of photography. He leaves behind his wife, E. I. Kuznetsova, to whom he was married 55 years. Together they had a son, daughter, a grandson, two granddaughters, one great-granddaughter.

During a visit with V. V. Kuznetsov in August 2006, he was pleased to know that his works are important and known to specialists all over the world. He took an interest in the latest news from paleontology and reminisced and joked about his colleagues.

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