



Professor Wu Pengcheng: A leading bryologist and respected scholar in China

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As a Chinese bryologist, I am proud that the IAB decided to publish a special issue of *Bryophyte Diversity and Evolution* honoring Professor Wu Pengcheng, from Institute of Botany, The Chinese Academy of Sciences, for his significant contribution to bryology. Professor Wu was born in 1935, and 2025 is the year of his 90th birthday (Figure 1). I am pleased to write a short article about Wu's activity in bryological research and his contribution to bryology based on the personal contacts between Professor Wu and myself since 1983, when I met Prof. Wu at a meeting in Beijing for the first time.

Wu was born in 1935 in Zhejiang Province and grew up in Shanghai. He studied at the Department of Biology of Fudan University (Shanghai) as a Botany Major for 5 years from 1952–1956. After graduating from university, he began his botanical research at the Institute of Botany, The Chinese Academy of Sciences in Beijing in 1956. Then, he was sent by the institute to Nanjing Normal University to study on bryology under guidance of Prof. Chen Pan-Chieh who has been considered the founder of bryological research in China. Since that time, Wu has concentrated on bryological research for more than 60 years and became a leading bryologist in China. He made significant contributions to bryology and the development of bryological research in China.

Professor Wu was Chairman of the Professional Committee of Bryophytes belonging to the Botanical Society of China for 15 years (1983–1998). He has been a member of the editorial committee of the *Cryptogam Flora of China* and responsible for the *Bryoflora of China* since 1983. He was also a co-chair of the International Editorial Committee of the *Moss Flora of China* (English version) representing China from 1990.

Under his organization and efforts, ten volumes (mosses: volumes 1–8, liverworts: volumes 9–10) of the *Bryoflora of China* (in Chinese) have been published. Eight volumes of the *Moss Flora of China* (English version) were also completed and published. Wu was chief editor of volumes 5 (Wu & Jia 2011), 6 (Wu 2002) and 8 (Wu & Jia 2004) of the *Bryoflora of China* (in Chinese) as well as chief editor of volumes 5 (Wu & Crosby 2011), 6 (Wu, Crosby & He 2002) and 8 (Wu & Crosby 2001) of the *Moss Flora of China* (English version). In addition, Wu edited and published several books on bryology, including *Bryological Biology* (Wu 1998), *Bryoflora of Hengduan Mts (Southwest China)* (Wu 2000), *Higher Plants of China Volume 1* (Wu, Jia & Zhang 2012), *A Glossary of Terms and Names of Bryophytes (New Edition)* (Wu, Wang & Jia 2016), *Spore Morphology of Chinese Bryophytes* (Zhang & Wu 2006), *Chinese Illustrated Bryophytes* (Wu & Jia 2018) and *The Secret World of Mosses* (Wu & Shi 2023). In conclusion, Professor Wu's research work has been productive and fruitful.

Over his career, Professor Wu paid special attention to field work and collections of Chinese bryophytes. He organized and joined many field investigations in China, including seven forays with more than 100 bryologists from 20 countries. He has been to Hainan, Yunnan (Xishangbanna), Anhui (Mt. Hang), Zhejiang, Jiangsu, Guangxi, Sichuan, Fujian (Mt. Wuyi), Hubei (Shenongjia) etc. He collected more than 30000 specimens of bryophytes and published just over 140 scientific papers about the bryoflora of some regions and mountains in China, including floristic accounts of Mt. Heduan (Wu 2000), Mt. Huang (Chen & Wu 1965) and Xishangbanna (Wu 1992a), endemic genera of East Asia (Wu 1992b) and the origin and evolution of Bryophytes in China (Wu & Jia 2006; Wu, Jia & Wang 2001, 2002; Wu & Lou 1982; Wu & Magill 1990).

Professor Wu has been active in international cooperation with bryologists. Especially noteworthy are the International Conference of Bryology in Beijing in 1997, the International Symposium for Prof. P.-C. Chen's Centennial Birthday in Nanjing in 2005 and the International Symposium of Lichens and Bryophytes in Hangzhou in 2010.

Owing to his significant contribution to bryology in China, Professor Wu received several rewards from Chinese Academy of Science and National Government. For example, *Genera Muscorum Sinicorum* (two volumes; Chen 1963, 1978) was rewarded the second prize of the Nature Science Award of the Chinese Academy of Science in 1998 and the *Illustrated handbook of Higher Plants in China* (9 volumes, vol.1 Wu 1972) won the first prize of the National Nature Science Award in 1987.

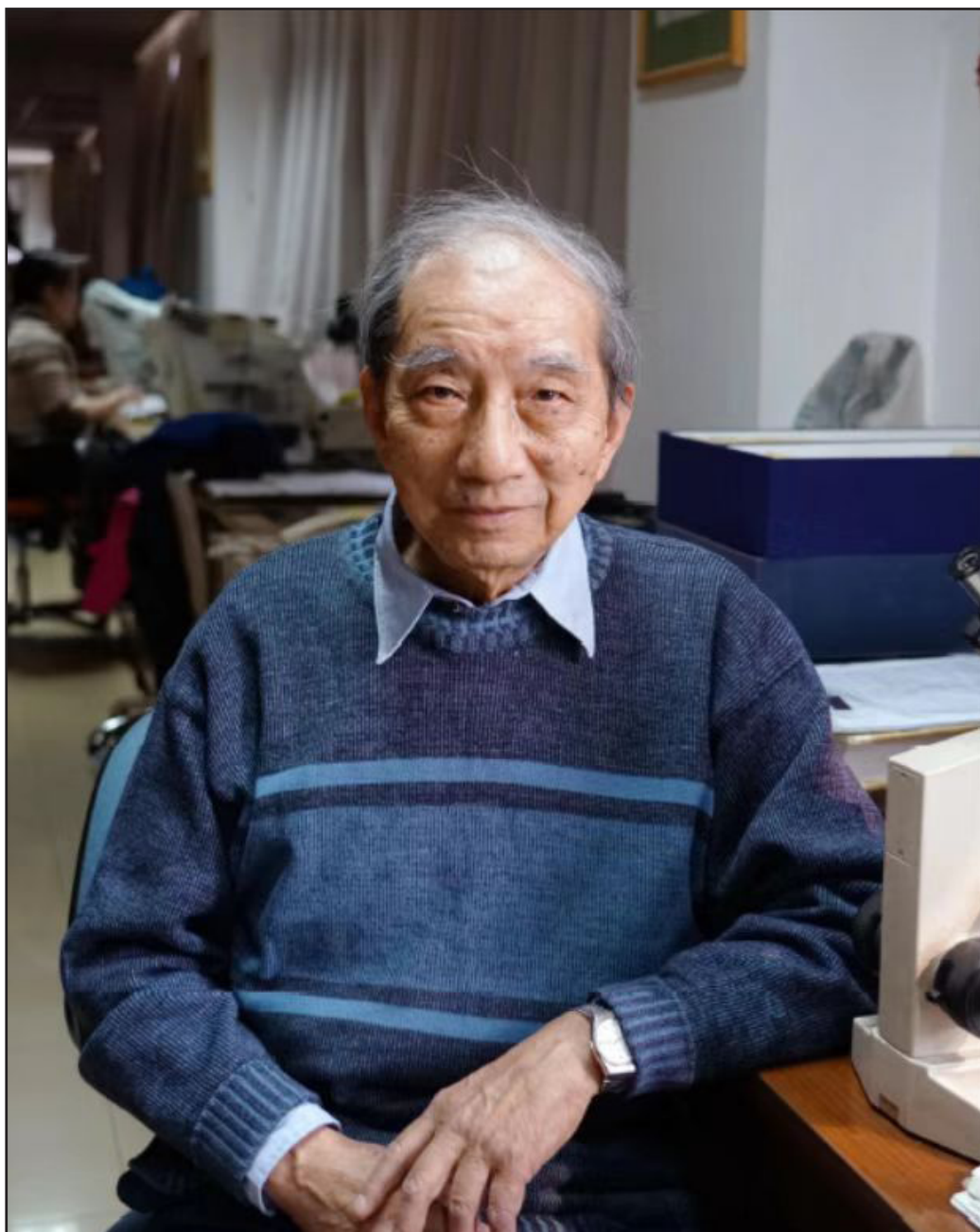


FIGURE 1. 90 years old Professor Wu Pengcheng.

Professor Wu has become 90 year old this year and still remains active in his bryological study. He takes the regular bus to his institute every morning. As chief editor, Professor Wu is working on the last two volumes (11, 12) that comprise liverworts and hornworts for the Bryoflora of China. He checks specimens, reviews the literature, writes the manuscript and draws line-figures in the lab or herbarium every day. He hopes that volume 11 will be published by the end of 2025 and volume 12 will be published as soon as possible. After his long dedicated career, Professor Wu remains a respected scholar. I wish Prof. Wu good health and making more contributions to the development of bryology in China.

Acknowledgements

I appreciate Dale Vitt, Southern Illinois University U.S.A. for his revising the English manuscript and suggestions.

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