



## OBITUARY

### **Professor Abraham Fahn (1916 - 2012)**

Prof. Abraham Fahn passed away in February 2012. He was a recognized authority and one of the world's best specialists on the anatomy of plants. Dr. Fahn studied structure and ultrastructure of plant tissues in relation to function, focusing on secretory tissues, wood anatomy, and desert plant adaptations. He wrote four leading anatomy books: *Plant Anatomy* (translated to a few languages); *Secretory Tissues in Plants*; *Xerophytes*; *Wood Anatomy and Identification of Trees and Shrubs from Israel and Adjacent Regions* (see references). For his remarkable scientific achievements, Dr. Fahn received the Israel Prize in 1963, which is the highest award of the State of Israel.

Abraham Fahn was born in 1916 in Vienna, Austria. He emigrated to the Mandate Palestine (now Israel) and studied at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, receiving a PhD in 1948. In 1952, he joined the Department of Botany at the Hebrew University. He became a full professor in 1965. Dr. Fahn served as the Dean of the Faculty of Science (1964 to 1966) and the Pro-Rector of the Hebrew University (1969 to 1970). He also served for many years as Head of the Forestry Department at the Volcani Institute of Agricultural Research and also the Director of the botanical gardens of the Hebrew University. In 1985 Dr. Fahn became Professor Emeritus.

Abraham Fahn was honored by colleagues all over the world, choosing him a Fellow of the International Academy of Wood Science, a Corresponding Member of the American Botanical Society, Foreign Member of the Linnéan

Society of London, and elected him Vice President of the International Society of Plant Morphologists (1995-1999).

From 1952 to 1953, he was a Research Fellow in the Jodrell Lab in Kew and at the University of Cambridge, in 1956 a Bullard Research Fellow at Harvard University, from 1972 to 1973 a Visiting Brittingham Professor at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and in 1981 a Visiting Professor in the ETH, Zurich.

Dr. Fahn was the mentor of many students, who were grateful for his encyclopedic knowledge, excellent advice and warm personality. He was always willing to help students. Abraham Fahn was devoted to his family and is survived by his wife, two daughters and six grandchildren. All those who knew him miss him. I feel I have lost both my knowledgeable mentor and a good friend.

### ***Roni Aloni***

The Department of Molecular Biology and Ecology of Plants, Tel Aviv University

### **References**

- Fahn A (1979) Secretory Tissues in Plants. Academic Press, London.  
Fahn A (1990) Plant Anatomy. 4th ed. Pergamon Press, Oxford.  
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