

Report on the project "Evolutionary biology in the modern world".

The funds were used to present a seminar about the history of evolutionary thinking in Eastern Kazakhstan, where few resources on evolutionary biology currently exist. Arguably one of the most advanced schools of the area was chosen as a prospective place to carry out such activity (Nazarbaev Intellectual School in Ust-Kamenogorsk). In this school biology for the last grade pupils is taught in English by English speaking teachers. The seminar took place 9.09.2014. There were more than 50 pupils of the last grade, their teachers and everyone interested. The school manager prepared everything in advance and the seminar replaced an ordinary lesson for the pupils. It lasted for about 45 minutes and it was highly anticipated. I first gave a lecture on the history of evolutionary biology for about 15 minutes. In the lecture I have also presented short biographies of some of the scientists behind the ideas of evolutionary biology. The lecture was followed by a movie, which was developed in collaboration with local teachers. We decided to focus on parasitism as an example of evolution in action with particular interest on host-parasite interactions as a good base to explain core concepts in evolutionary biology. The movie (in Russian) is available online, so that teachers and the public have continued access to it. After the movie we had questions' session which was extremely lively as the pupils were very motivated and asked plenty of interesting and not obvious questions. It seemed that the lecture and the movie were of a great interest and choosing parasites as a main topic was an easy concept to grasp and to understand. The project went smoothly and I was asked to give more lectures next year, which I will most likely do at my own costs.