

## BREHM'S AND DARWIN'S BOOKS IN ORIGINAL EDITIONS FROM THE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY IN POREČ, CROATIA

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The Historical Library of the Institute of Agriculture and Tourism in Poreč holds an inestimable collection of old books on natural sciences. They represent a great historical heritage. The aim of this article is to present three of these valuable books.

The first is a well preserved and complete sample of one of the most widely known books on zoology of all time, Brehm's *Life of Animals*. It is the original first edition in Italian, published from 1869–1873, complete with all six volumes. It is entitled »*La vita degli animali*« (Life of Animals), illustrated by Kretschmer and translated by Gaetano Branca and Stefano Travella. It is most likely the only copy of this edition in Croatia and Slovenia. There are about 200 copies of this edition in Italian libraries but not many so well preserved and complete (OPAC SBN, Istituto centrale per il catalogo unico, <http://www.sbn.it/opacsbn/opac/iccu/free.jsp>). The book was written by Alfred Edmund Brehm in the 19th century. Brehm was born in 1829 in Unterrenthendorf and died in 1884 in Renthendorf (Germany). Due to his book, originally named *Brehms Tierleben* (Life of Animals), his name became a household word for popular zoological literature (Figure 1 and 2). The first German edition was immediately translated into four languages: Russian, French, Italian and Danish. Charles Darwin in person reviewed some volumes of the zoological encyclopedia. Many editions worldwide have been published in several languages, in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, some also in the form of abridged, one-volume, works. In Croatia so far seven editions have been issued. The first Croatian edition named originally »*Kako žive životinja*« (How Animals Live) was published in 1937 by Minerva from Zagreb and the last edition by Orakul from Zagreb in 2002 under the title »*Život životinja*« (Life of Animals).

The book »*Insectenfressende Pflanzen*« (Insectivorous Plants) (Figures 3 and 4) from 1876 is the first German translation of the original published in 1875 by British naturalist and evolutionary theory pioneer Charles Darwin. This book is a study of carnivorous plants and adaptations that allow them to live in difficult conditions, part of a series of works related to his theory of natural selection. It includes illustrations by Darwin himself, along with drawings by his sons George and Francis Darwin. It was translated in German just one year, and in Italian three years, after the English version. It was never translated in Croatian. Research through European virtual catalogues (Karlsruher Virtual Catalog, <http://www.ubka.uni-karlsruhe>).

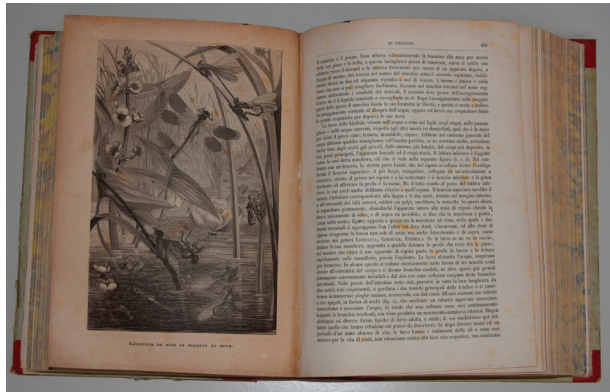
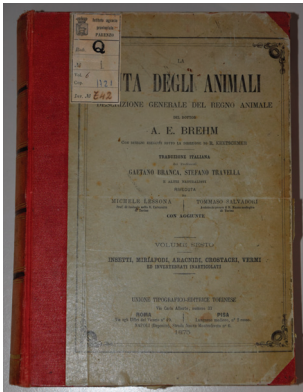


Figure 1 and 2: Brehm's Life of Animals published from 1869–1879, Vol. 6 Cover and book inside

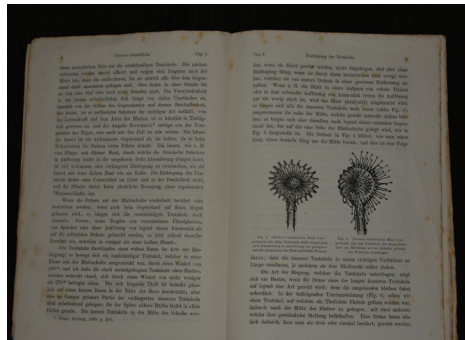
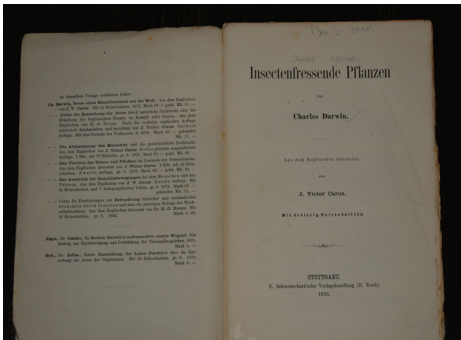


Figure 3 and 4: First page of Darwin's Insectivorous Plants 1876 and Book inside with illustrations by Darwin and his sons George and Francis

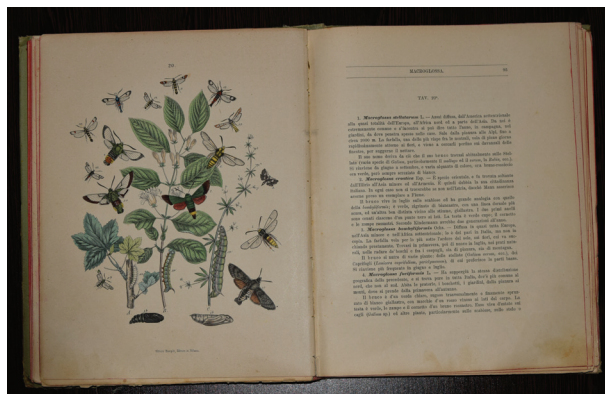


Figure 5 and 6: Entomologic Museum Butterflies – Fernando Sordeli, published in 1885, Book cover and inside

de) revealed that there are not many samples preserved anywhere in Europe. For instance there is just one library in Italy holding this book, one in France, three in Sweden and Britain, 5 in Switzerland, 7 in Austria and 33 in Germany. The Institute's library in Poreč is proud to hold a sample of this prestigious book.

The third book is »*Museo Entomologico Le Farfalle*« (Entomologic Museum Butterflies) of Ferdinando Sordelli, published in 1885 by the Italian publishing house Ulrico Hoepli, Milano. Sordelli was an esteemed naturalist and artist working at the Civic Museum of Natural History in Milan, Italy. The book contains 50 chromolithographic plates and descriptions of the main Lepidoptera of neighboring countries.

It is hoped that these old books and many others from the Institute's library will in the near future be properly preserved and restored, as well as made accessible to the wider public.