

Miért csíkos a zebra, és mi a haszna a tehenek tarkafoltosságának?



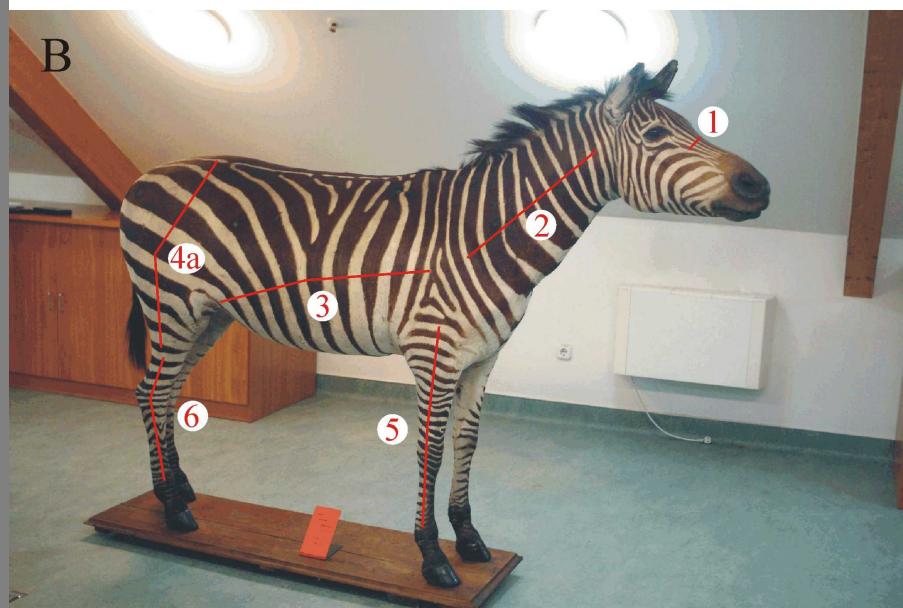
Horváth Gábor
Környezetoptika Laboratórium, Biológiai Fizika Tanszék,
Fizikai Intézet, ELTE, Budapest



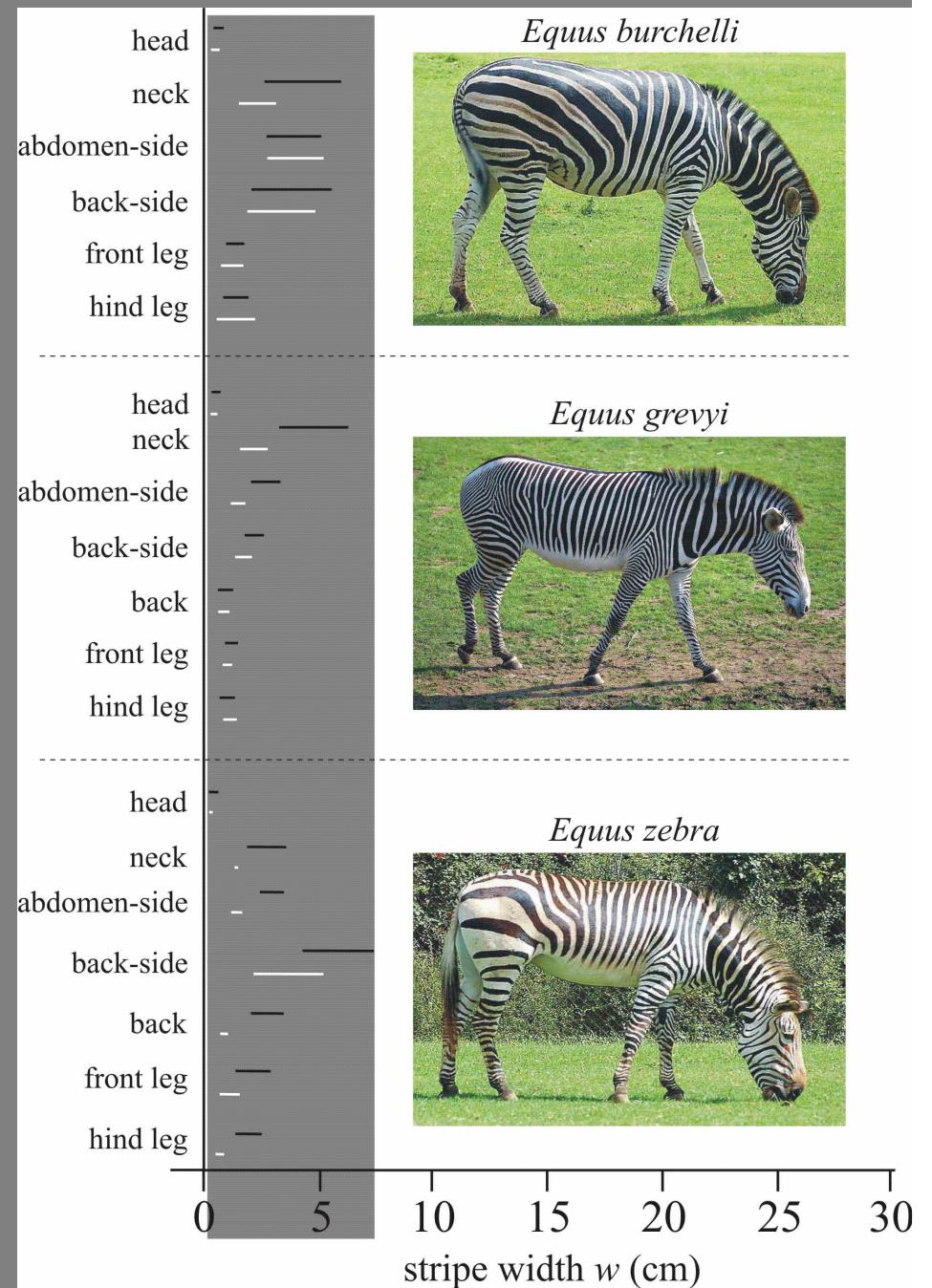
A zebracsíkok feltételezett funkciói

- (1) Látszólagos méretnövekedés (Cott 1966, Cloudsley-Thompson 1984, Vaughan 1986, Morris 1990)
- (2) Gyér fénybeli csökkent láthatóság (Galton 1851, Kipling 1908, Cott 1966, Cloudsley-Thompson 1984, McLeod 1987, Morris 1990)
- (3) Ragadozók mozgó csíkok általi elkápráztatása (Cott 1957, Kruuk 1972, Eltringham 1979, Morris 1990)
- (4) Optikai rejtőzés (Wallace 1867, 1879; Darwin 1871, Thayer 1909, Marler & Hamilton 1968)
- (5) Szociális hasznok az egyedi csíkmintázat miatt (Cloudsley-Thompson 1984, Kingdon 1984, Becker & Ginsberg 1990, Morris 1990, Prothero & Schoch 2003)
- (6) Álomkort terjesztő cecelegyek elleni vizuális védelem (Harris 1930, Vale 1974, Waage 1981, Jordan 1986, Foil 1989, Estes 1992, Gibson 1992)
- (7) Rátermettség vizuális jelzése (Ruxton 2002)
- (8) Hőszabályozás (Cloudsley-Thompson 1984, Kingdon 1984, Morris 1990, Louw 1993)
- (9) A súlyos betegségek kórok között vérszívásukkal terjesztő böglyök elleni védelem
(G. Horváth *et al.* 2011, az egyetlen, kísérletileg bizonyított magyarázat)

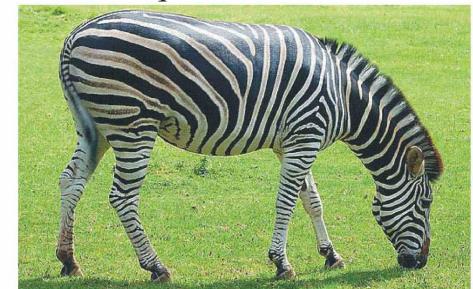
Zebracsíkok mérése



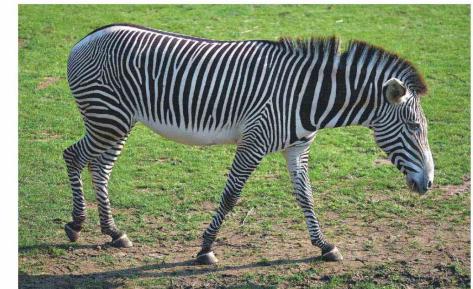
A zebrák csíkszélességének testfelületi eloszlása



Equus burchelli



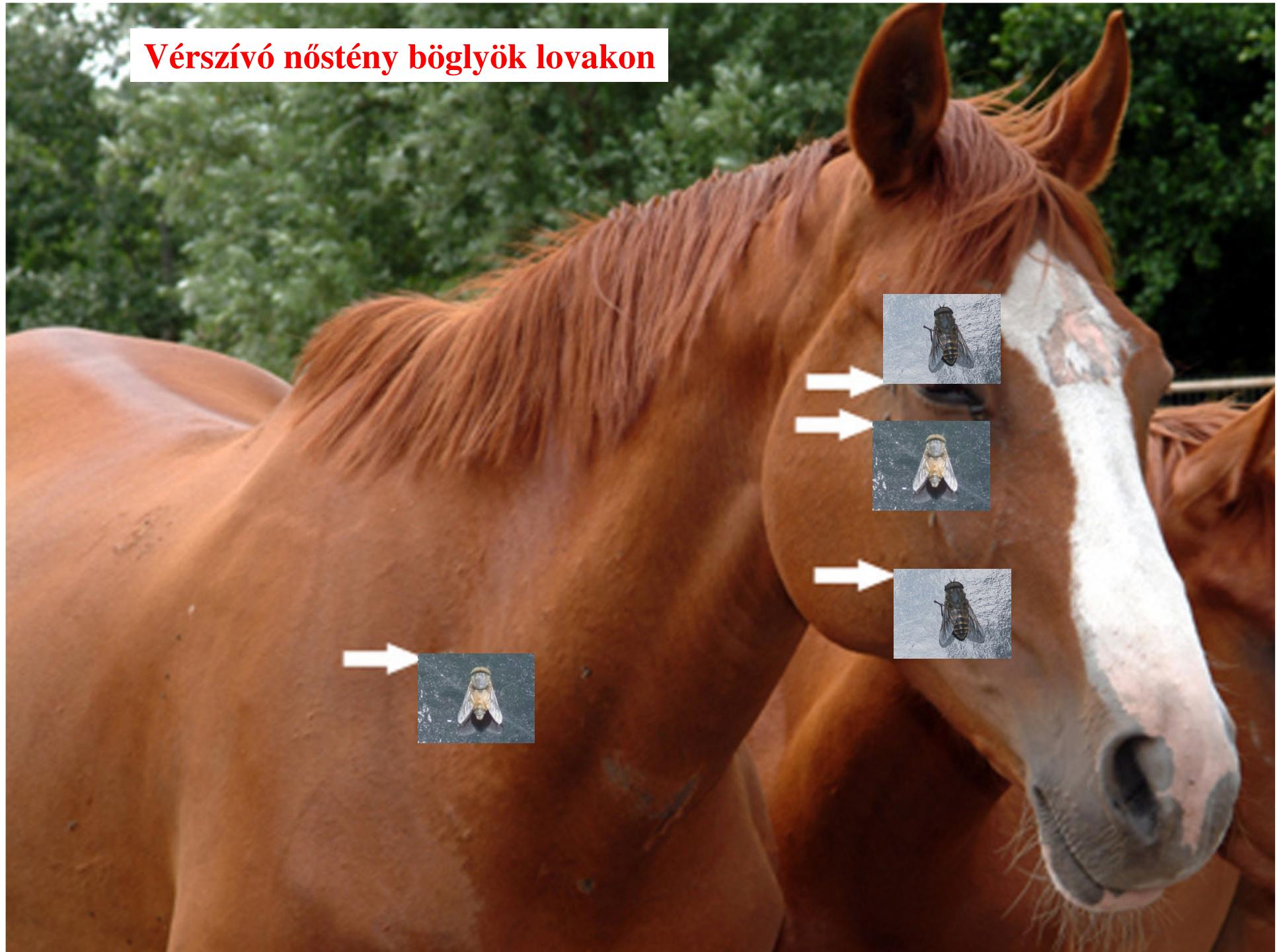
Equus grevyi



Equus zebra



Vérszívó nőstény böglyök lovakon



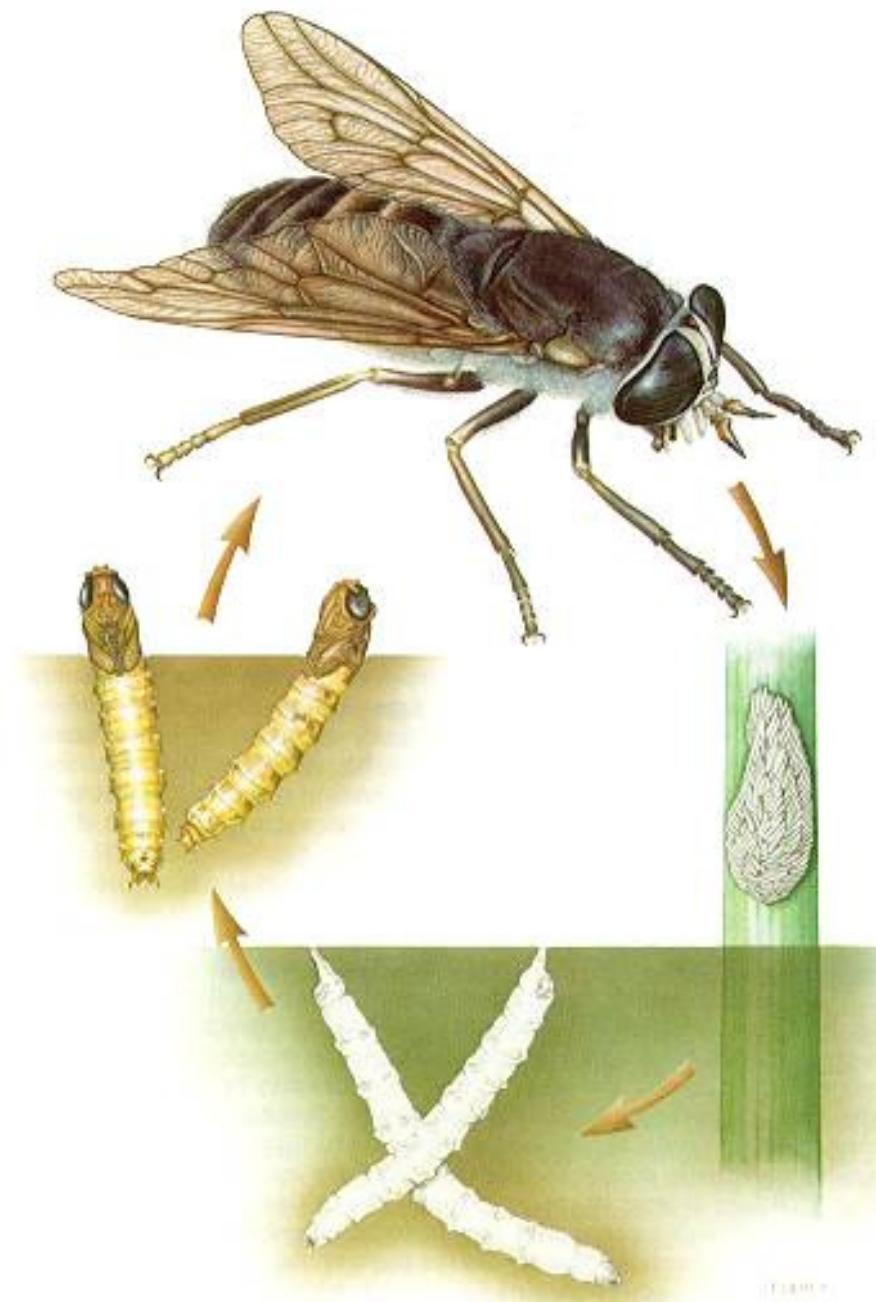


**Lovak tipikus
reakciói a böglyök
támadásáival
szemben**

Egy bögöly (legalul) vérszívásakor legyek csoportosulnak köréje, hogy ők is lakmározhassanak a kicsorduló vércseppből.



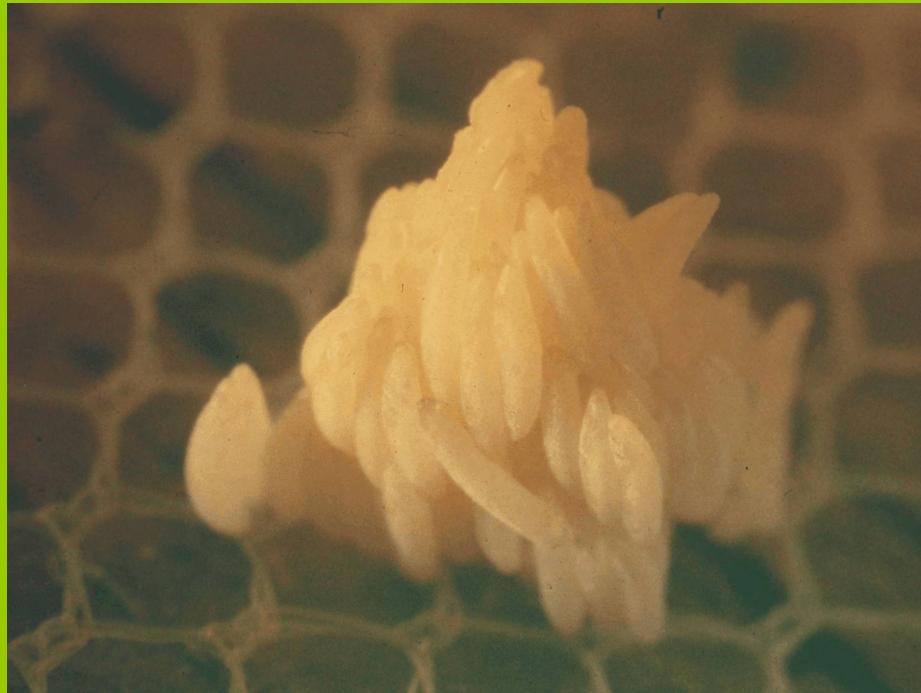
A böglyök vízhez kötődő életciklusa



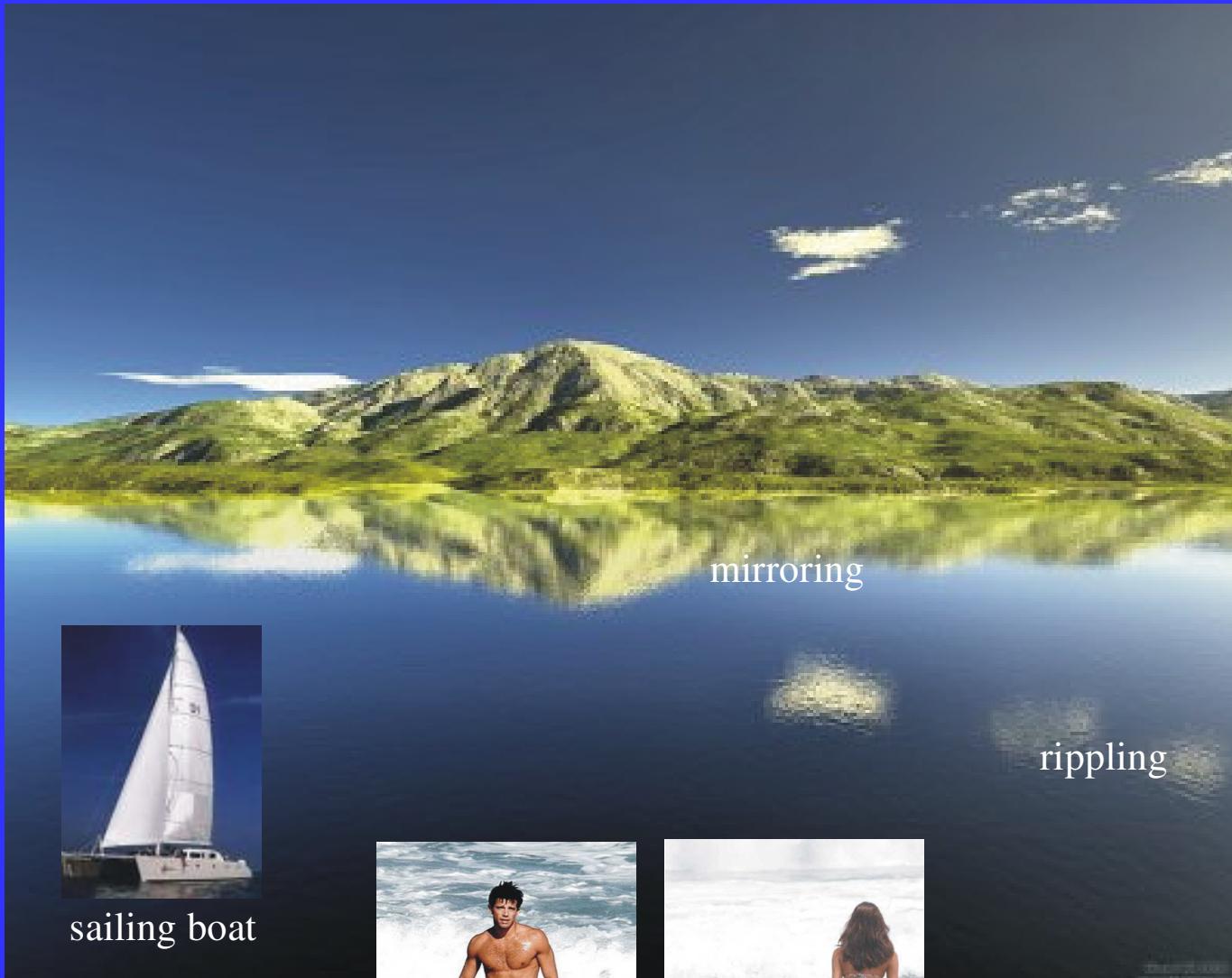
Bögöly petecsomója vízfelszín fölé hajló békabuzogány levelének fonákján.



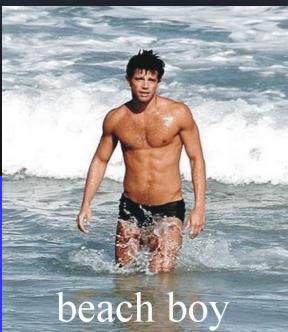
Böglyök petecsomója, lárvája és kifejlett egyedei



Vízfelszín ember általi vizuális érzékelése



sailing boat



beach boy



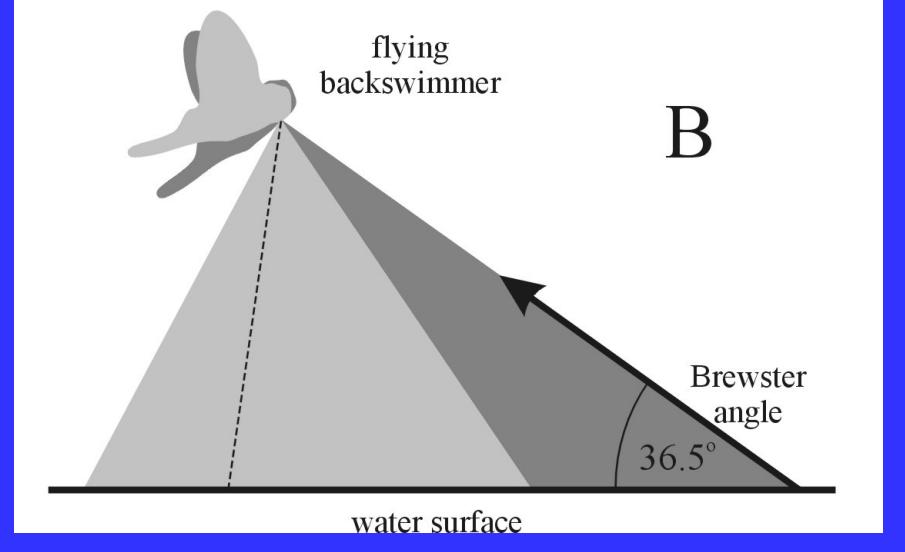
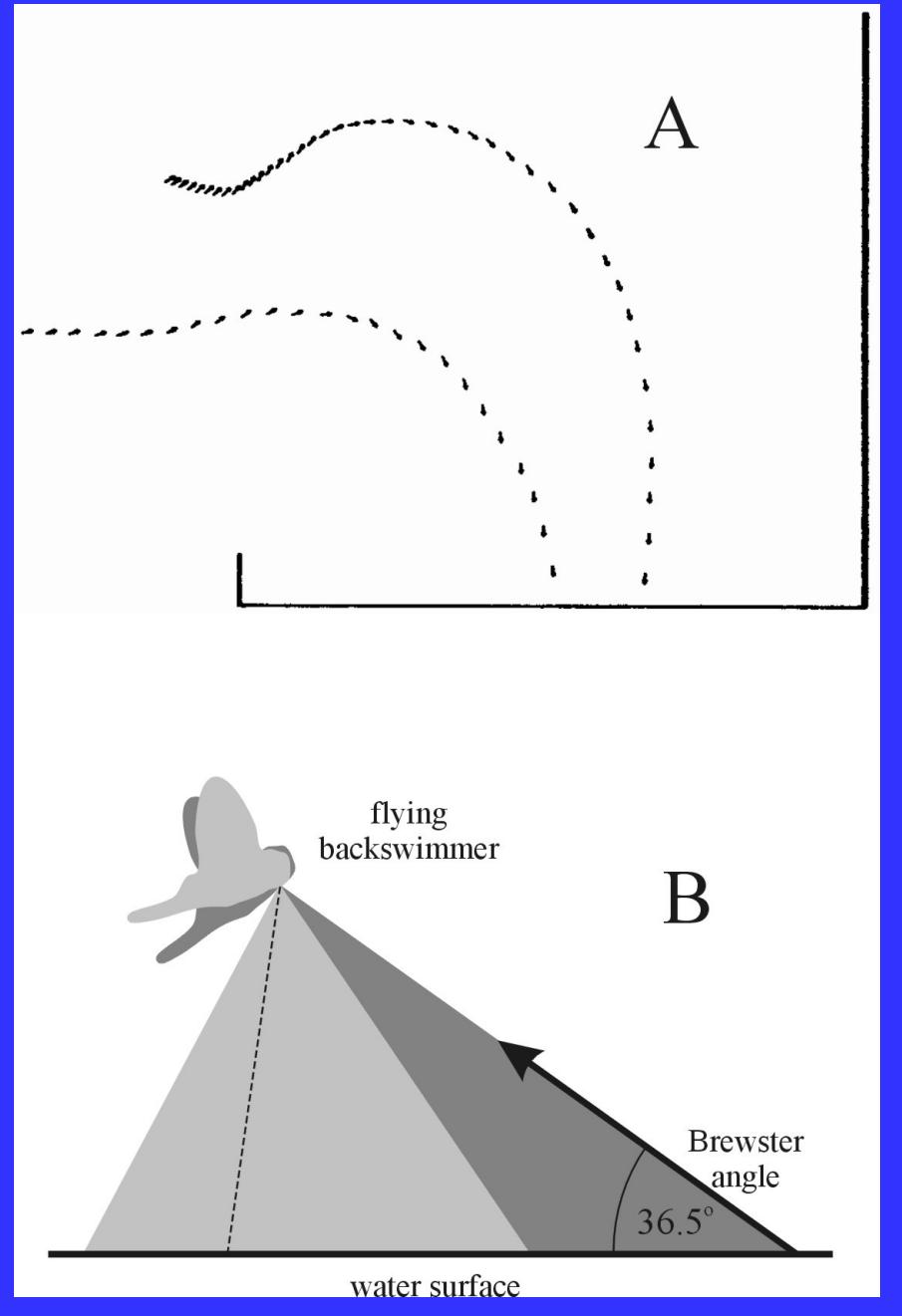
beach girl

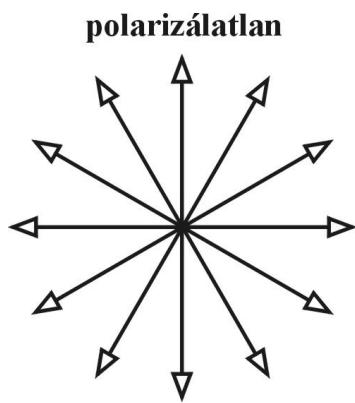
rippling



reeds

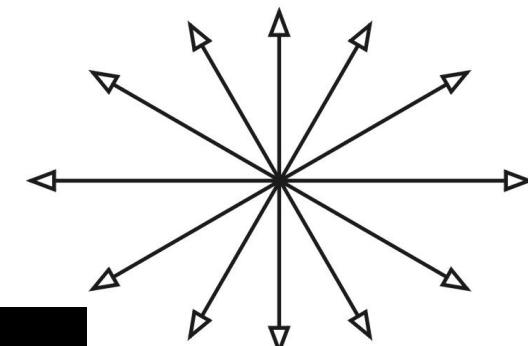
A vízirovarok polarotaktikus vízdetekciója



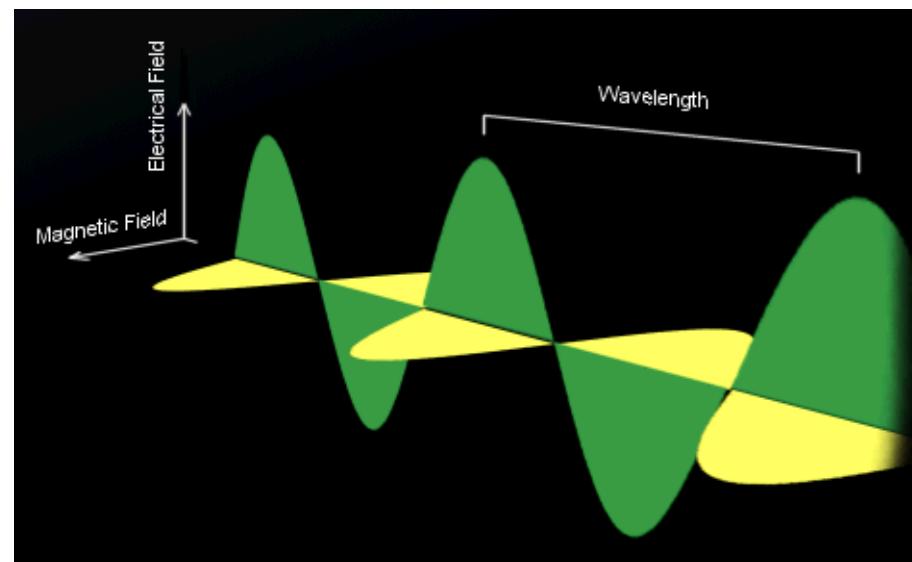
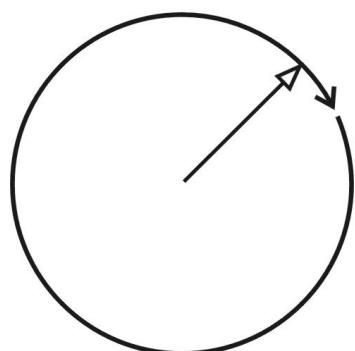


A fény polarizációja

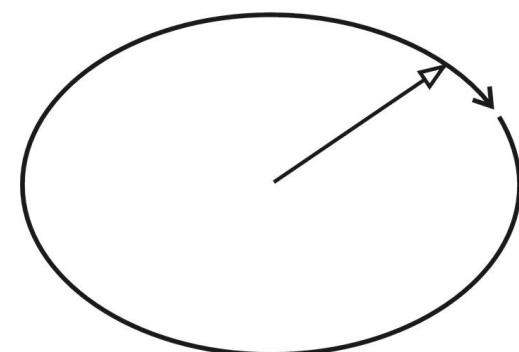
részlegesen lineárisan poláros



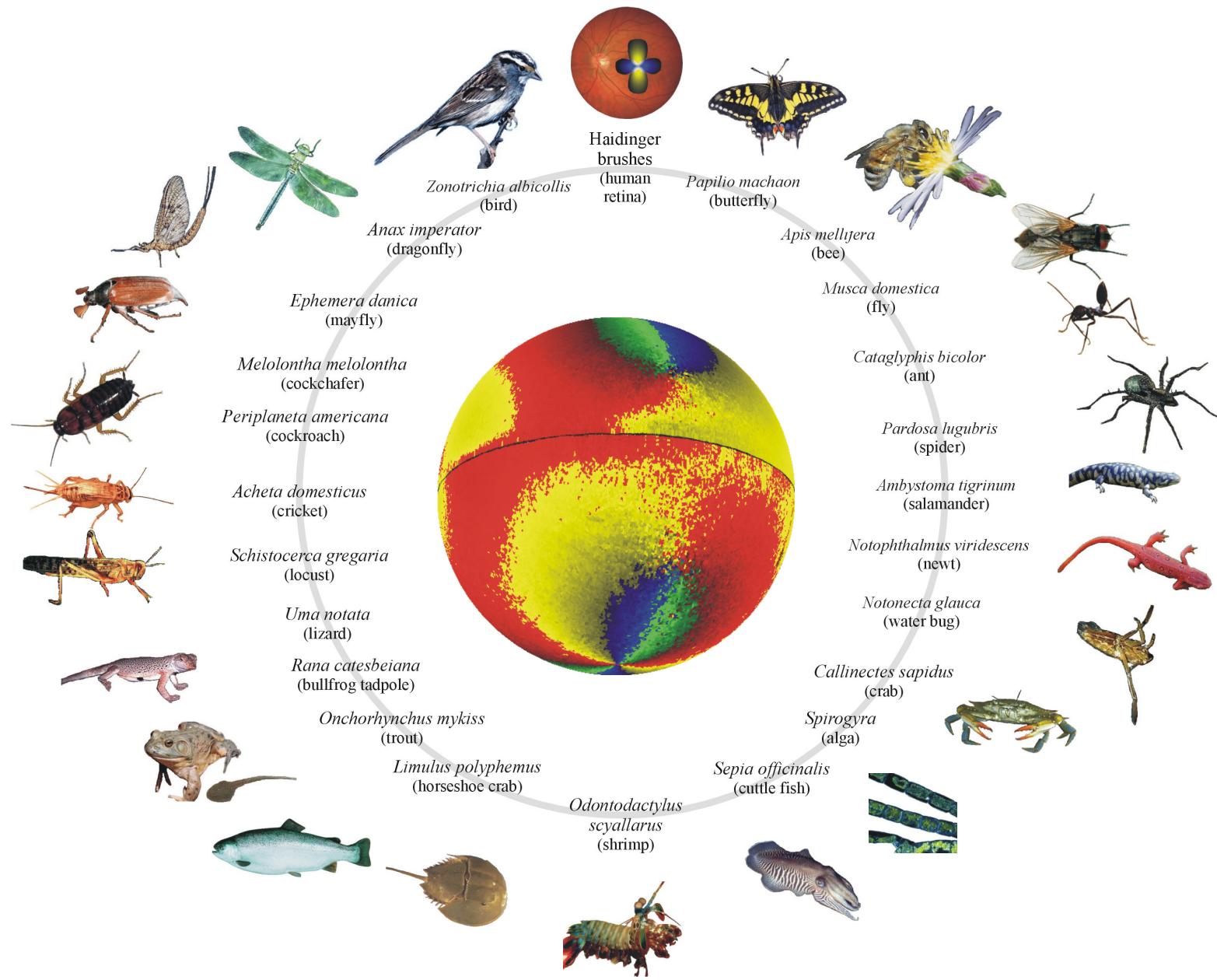
cirkulárisan poláros



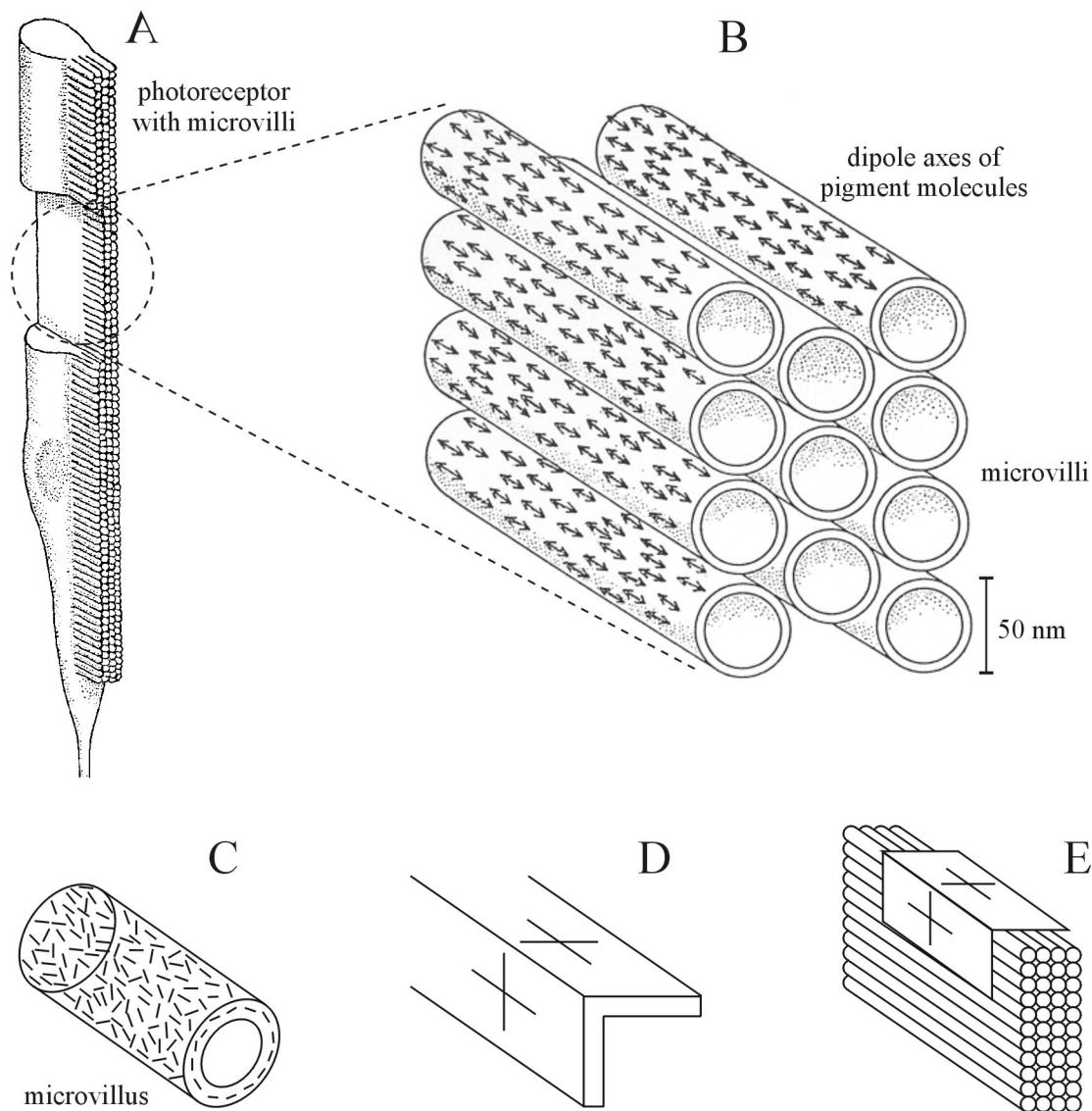
elliptikusan poláros



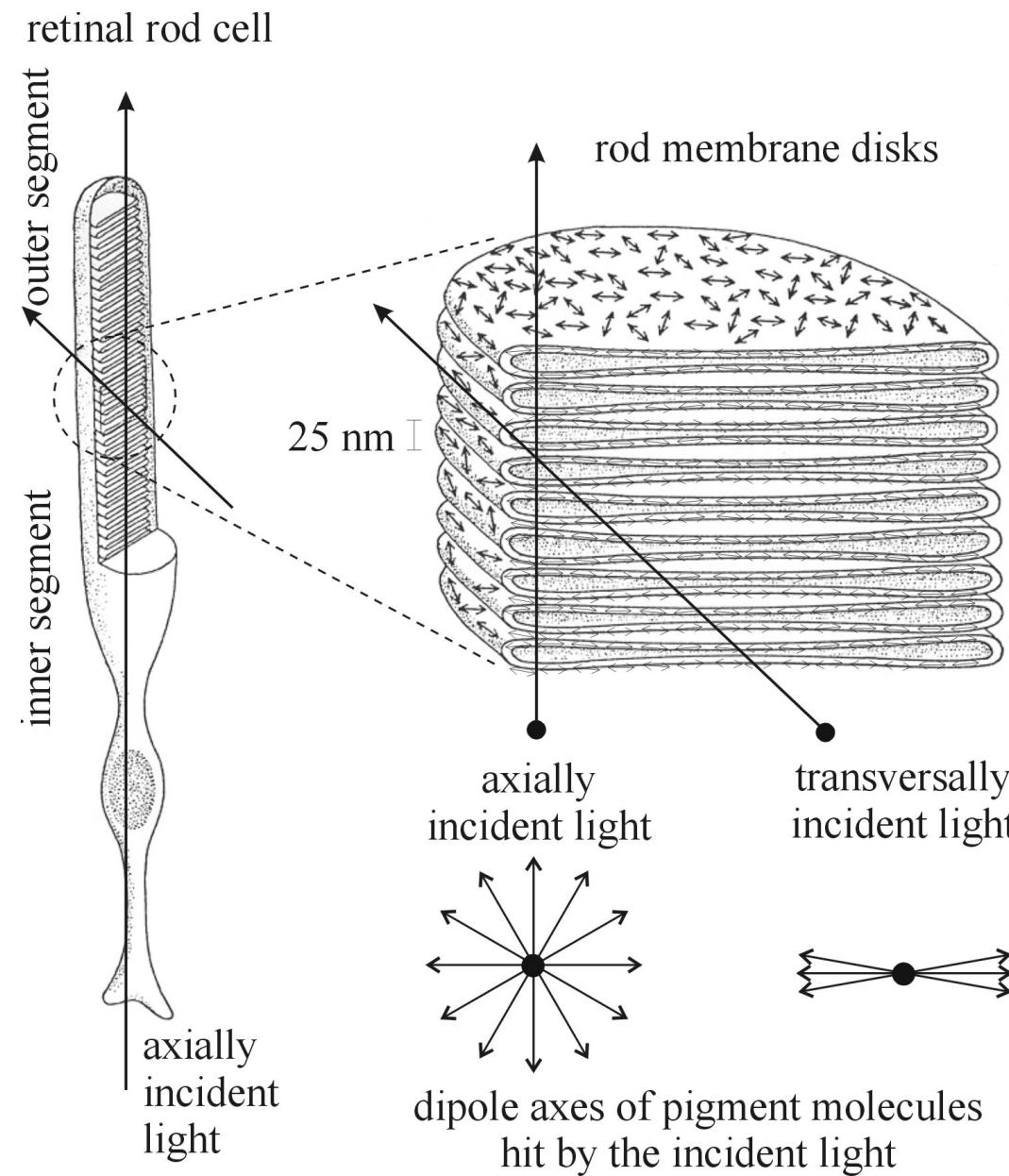
Polarizációtámasztó állatok



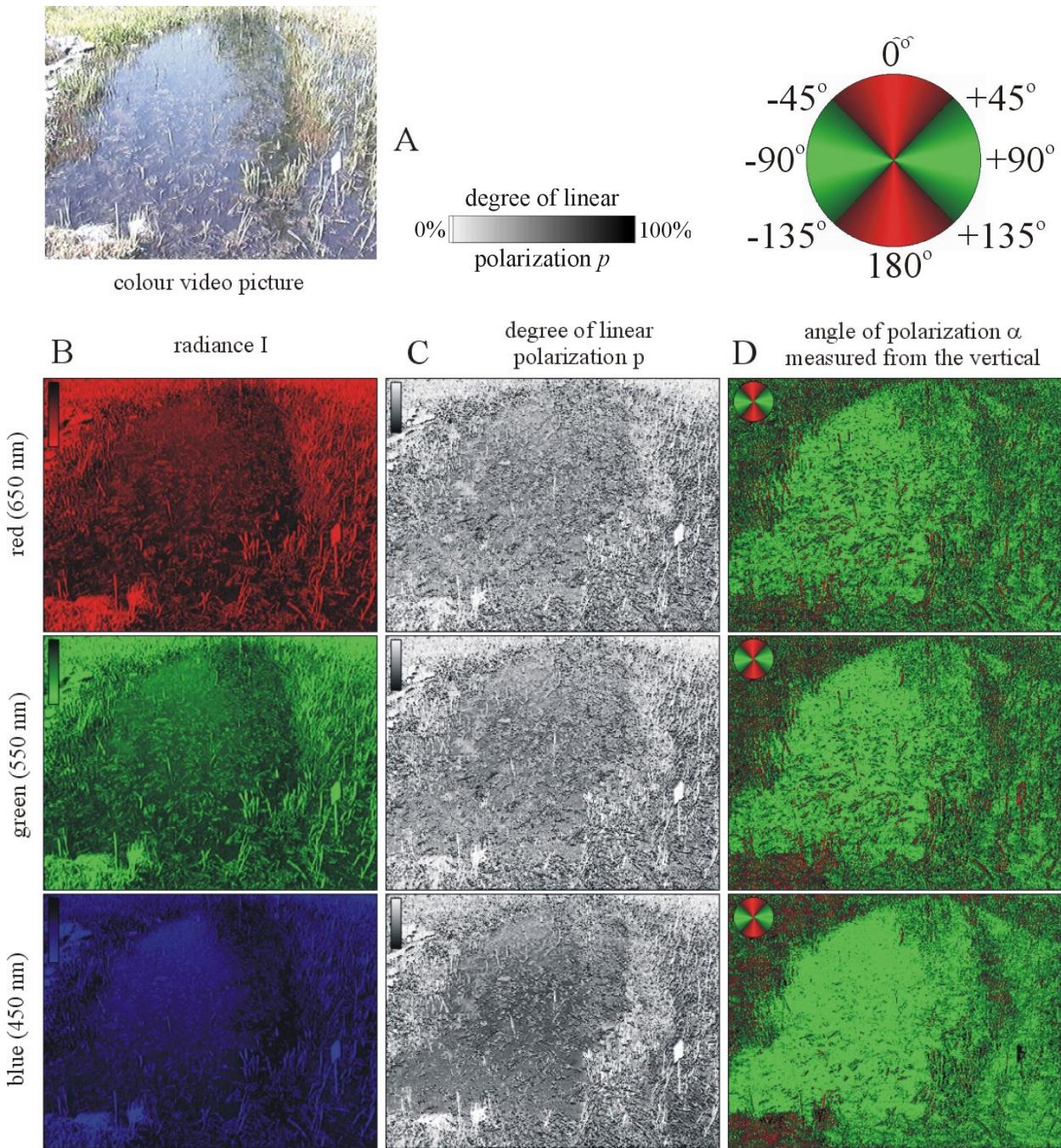
Miért érzékenyek a fénypolarizációra az ízeltlábúak fotoreceptorai?



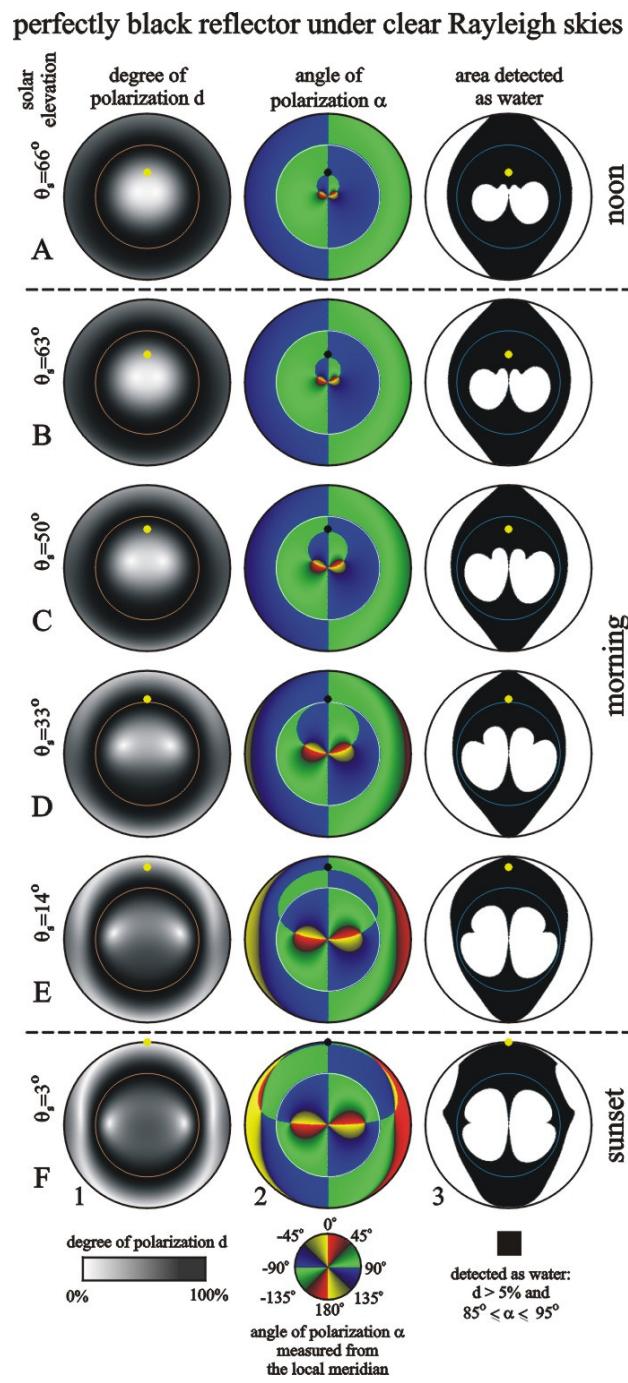
Miért érzéketlenek a fénypolarizációra az emlősök fotoreceptorai?



Sötét víztest polarizációs mintázatai



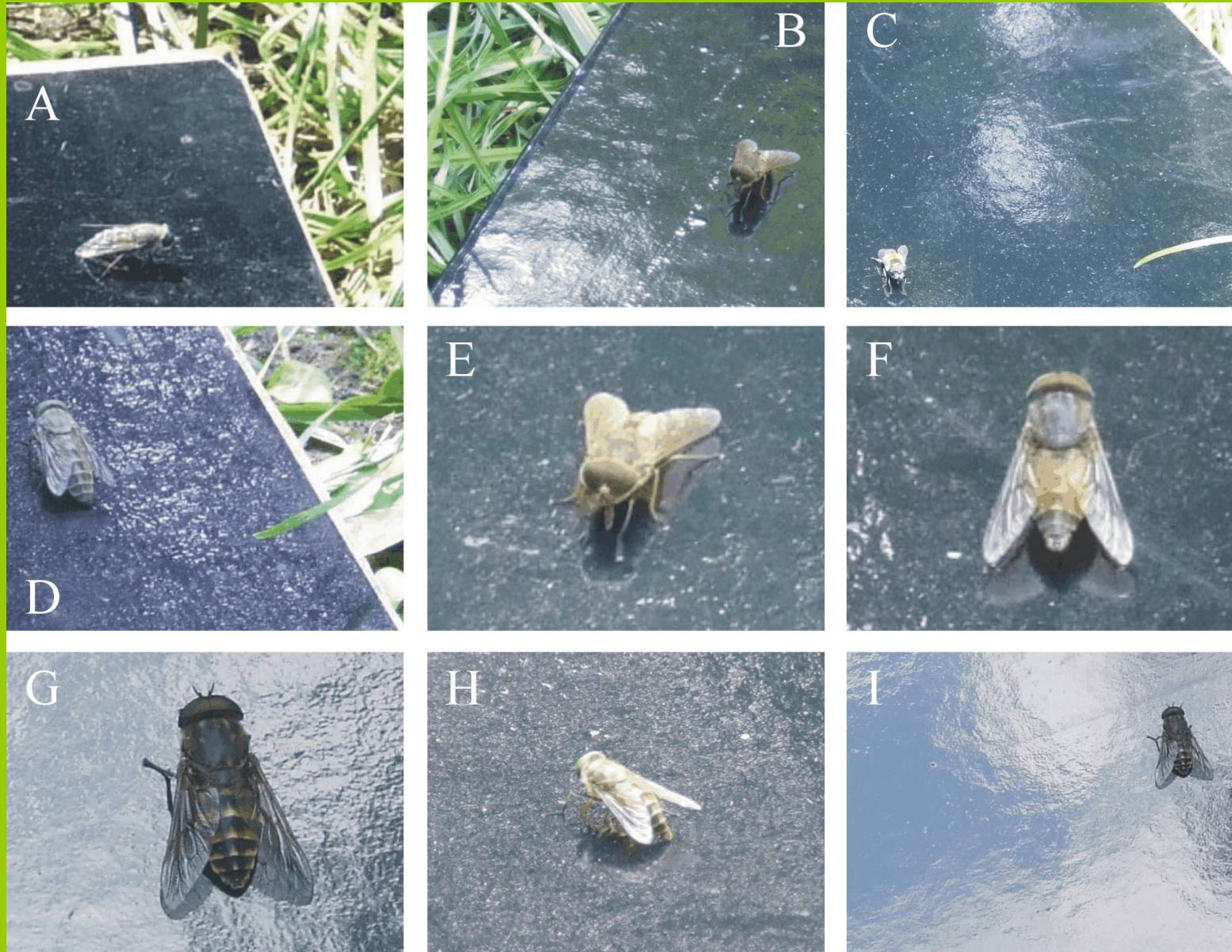
Fekete vizek polarizációs mintázatai



A böglyök pozitív polarotaxisának fölfedezése egy temetőben



Vízszintes sima fekete tesztfelületre leszálló polarotaktikus böglyök

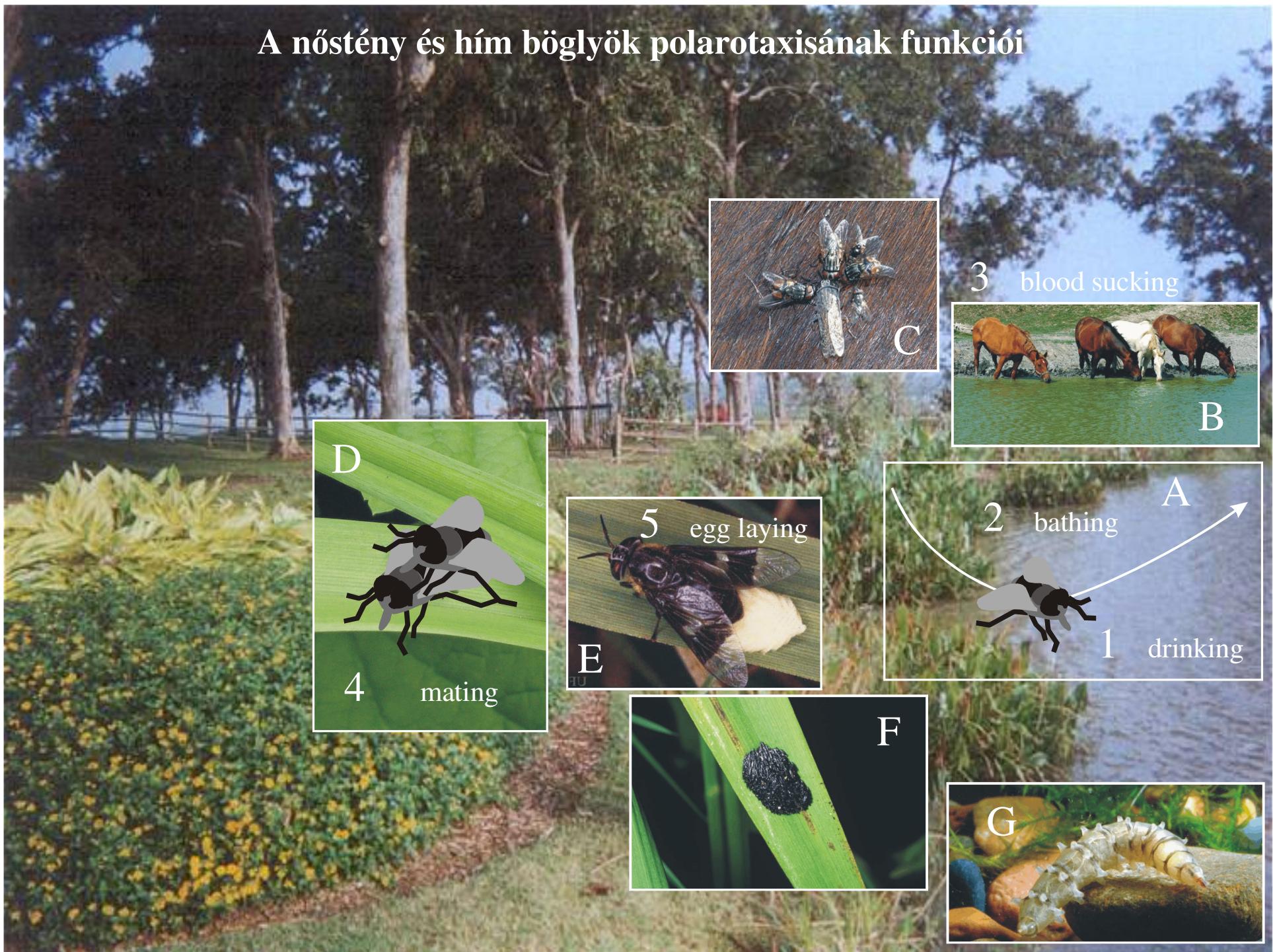


A böglyök polarotaxisának szerepe a gazdaállatok megtalálásában

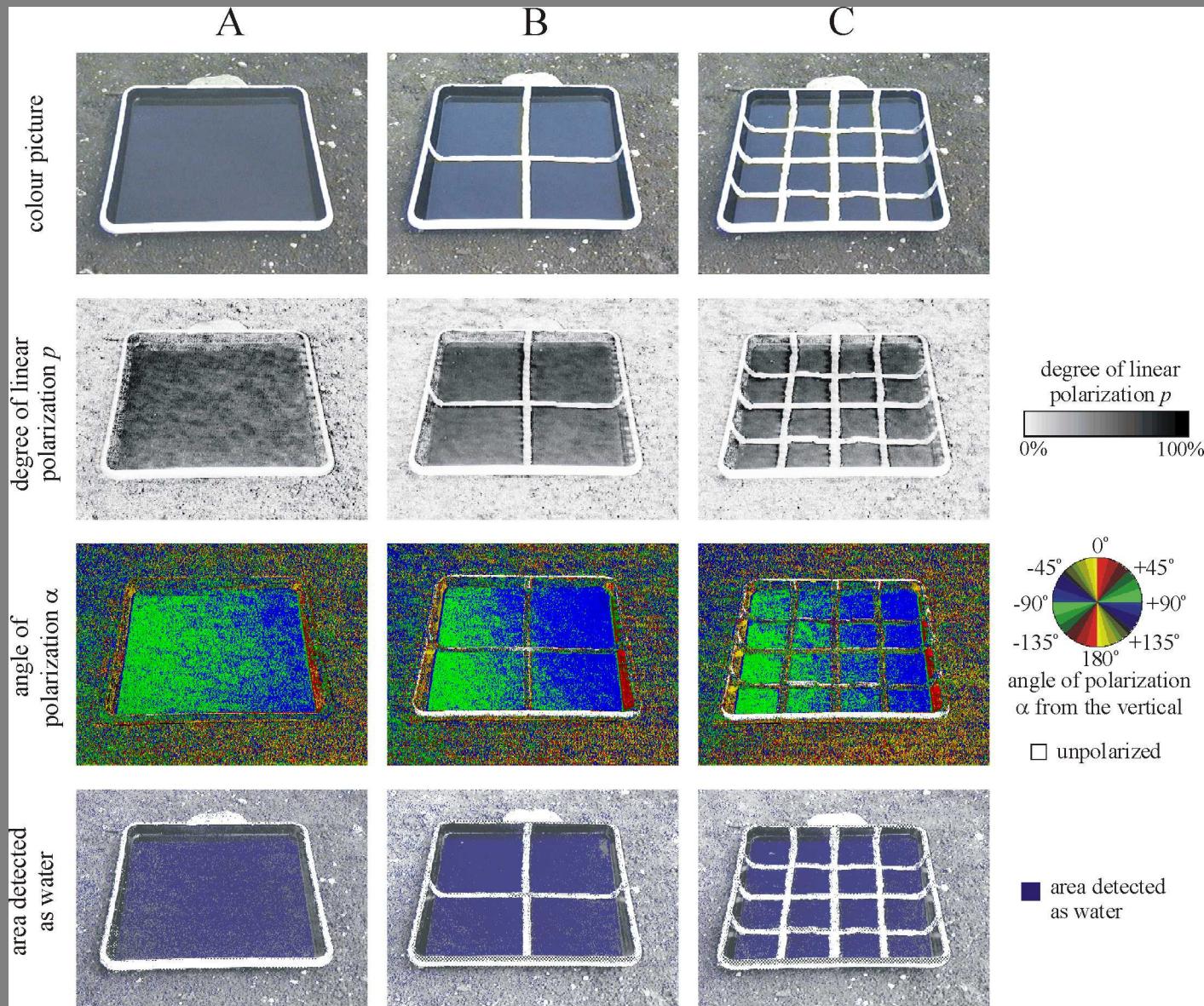


host-seeking
female tabanid fly

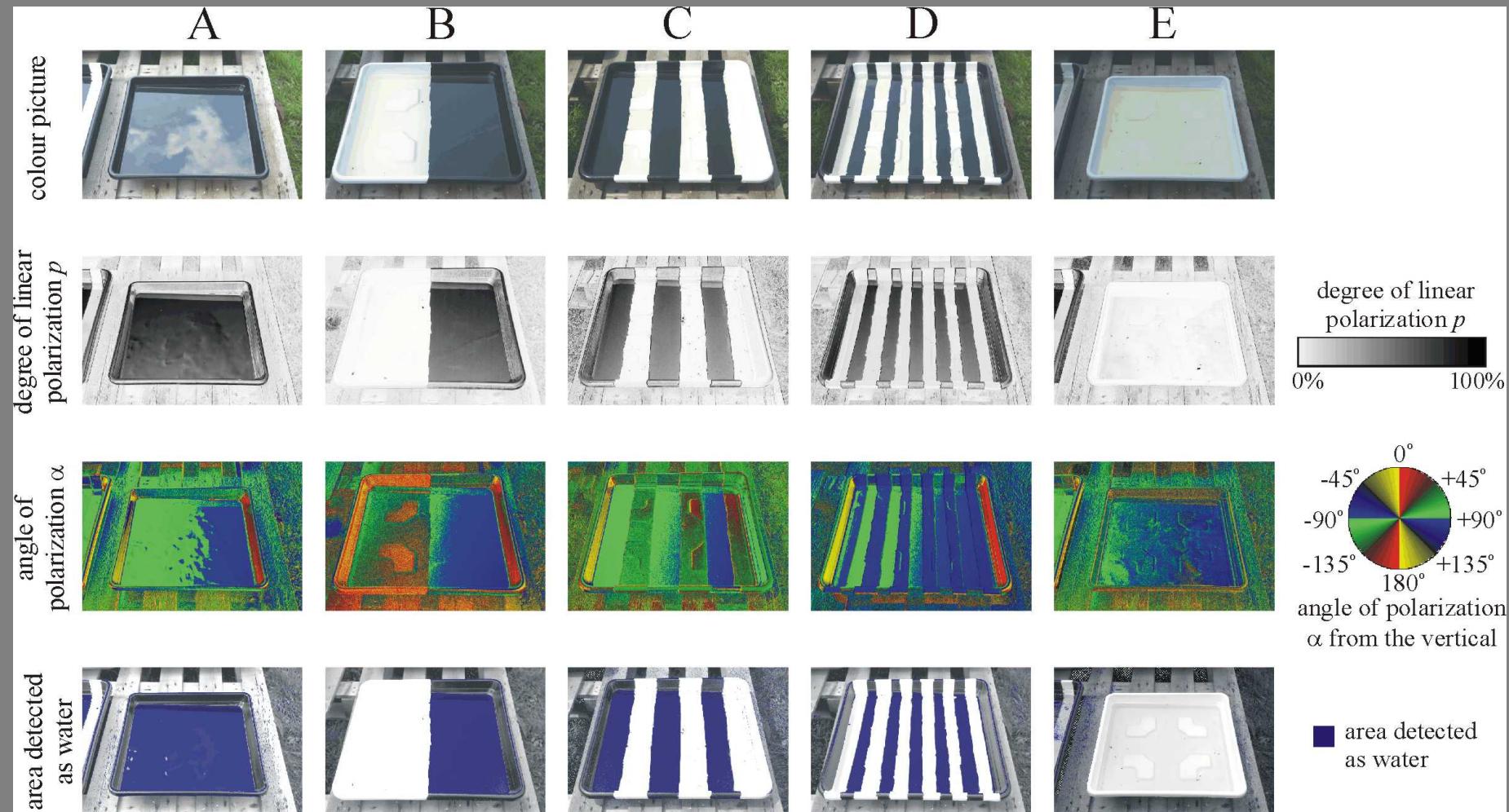
A nőstény és hím böglyök polarotaxisának funkciói



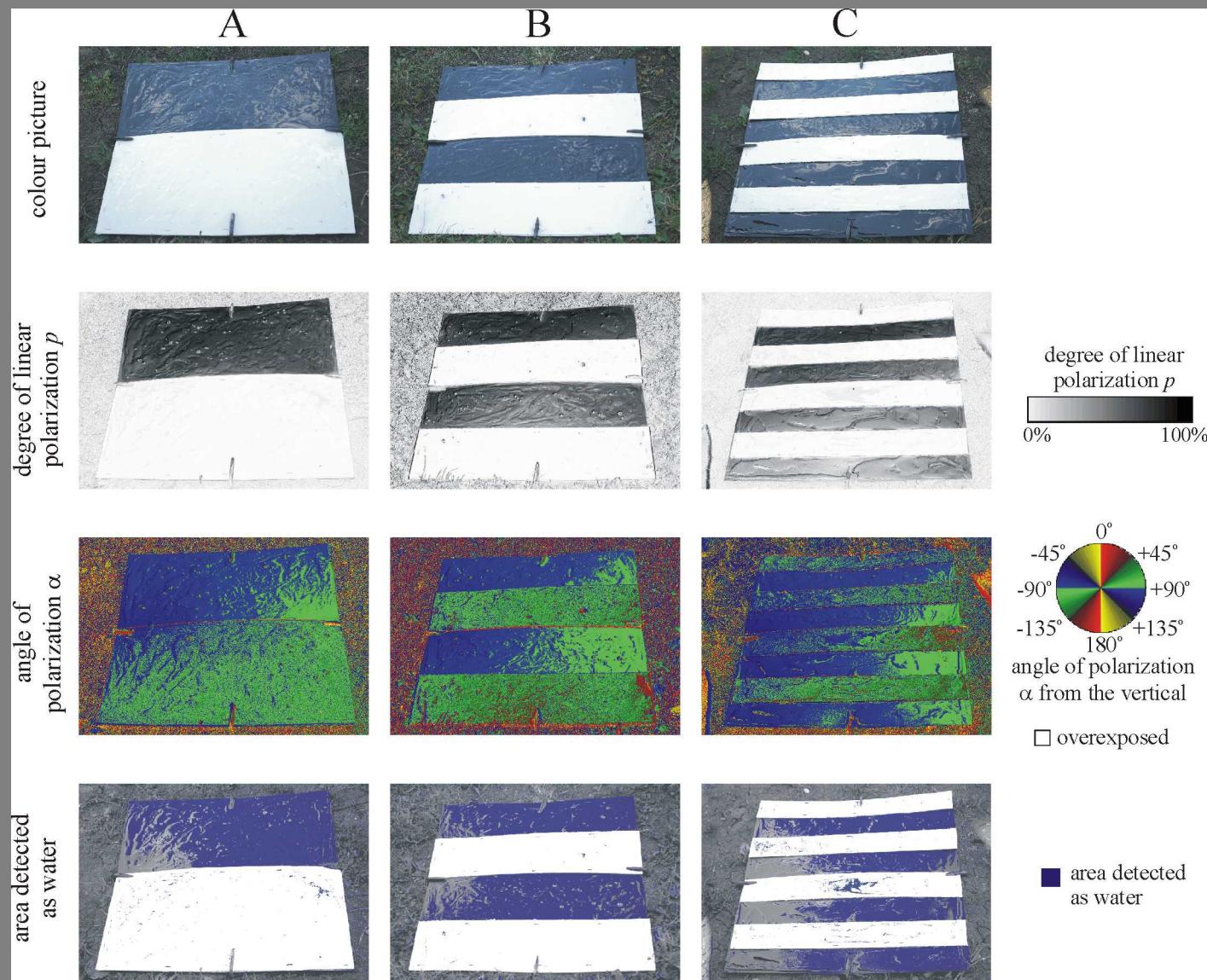
Az 1. kísérlet fehér-rácsos fekete olajtálcáinak polarizációs mintázatai



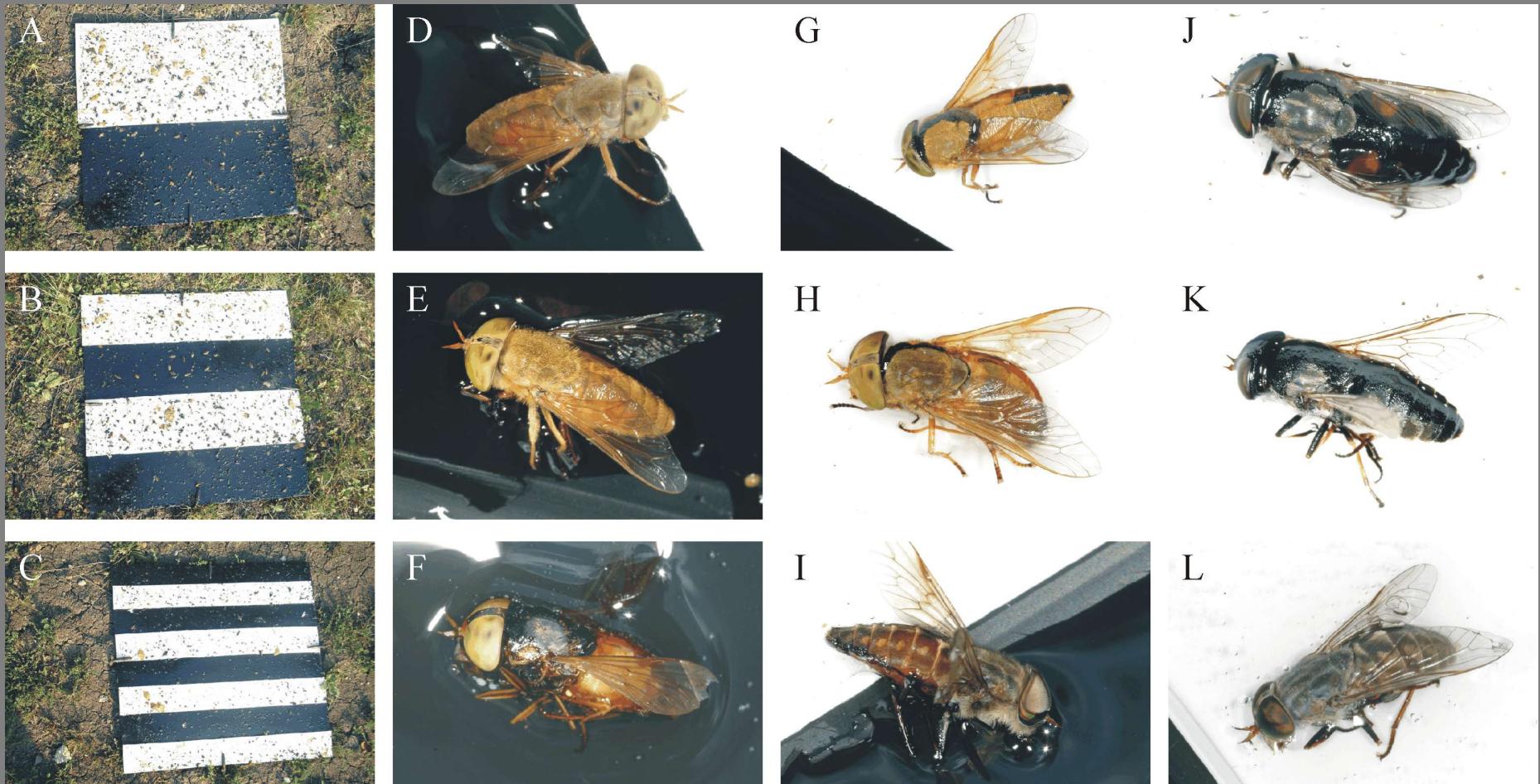
A 2. kísérlet fekete-fehér csíkos olajtálcainak polarizációs mintázatai



A 3. kísérlet fekete-fehér csíkos ragadós tesztfelületeinek polarizációs mintázatai



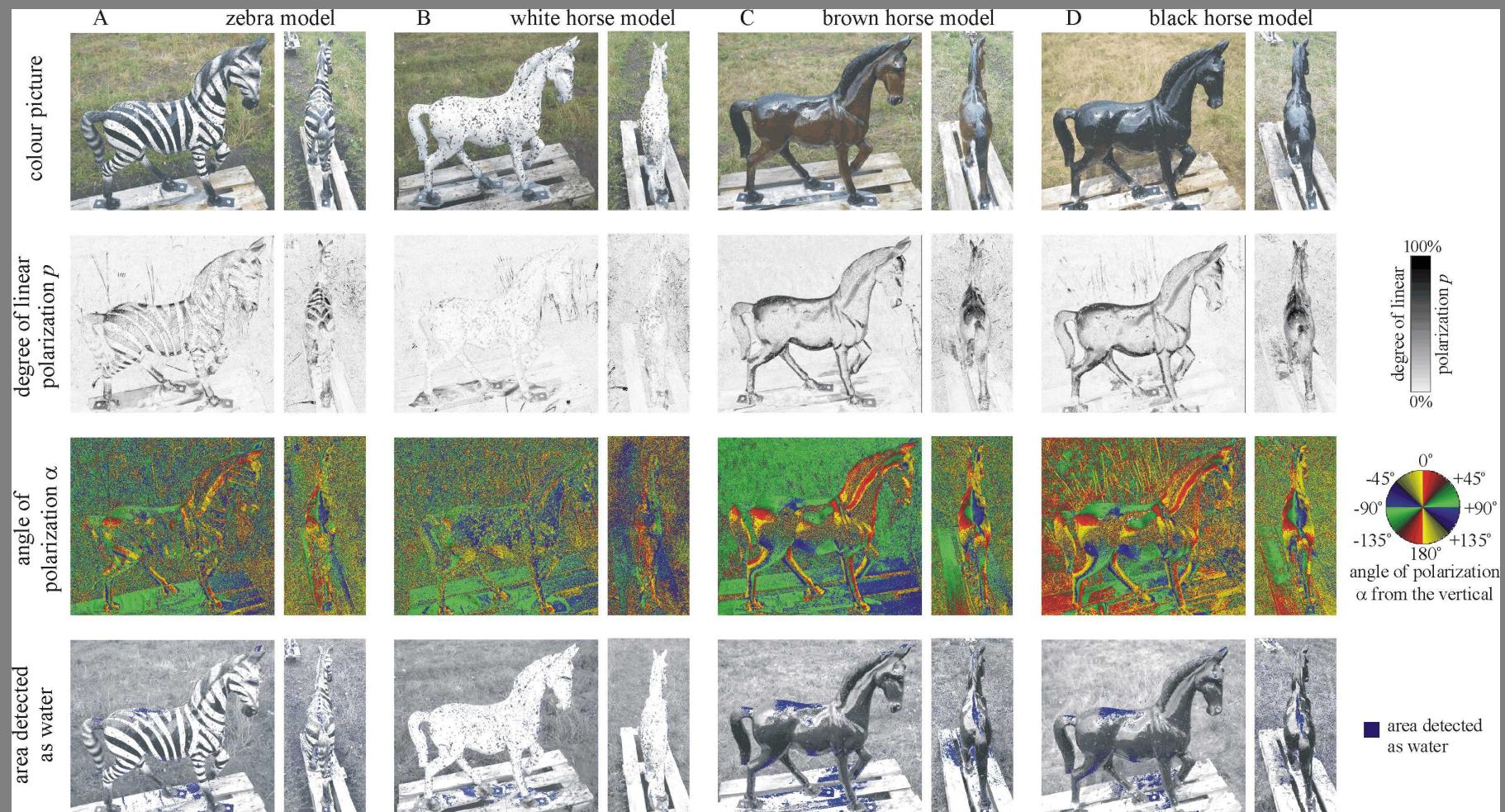
A 3. kísérlet fekete-fehér csíkos tesztfelületeibe ragadt boglyök



4. kísérlet ragadós lómakettekkel



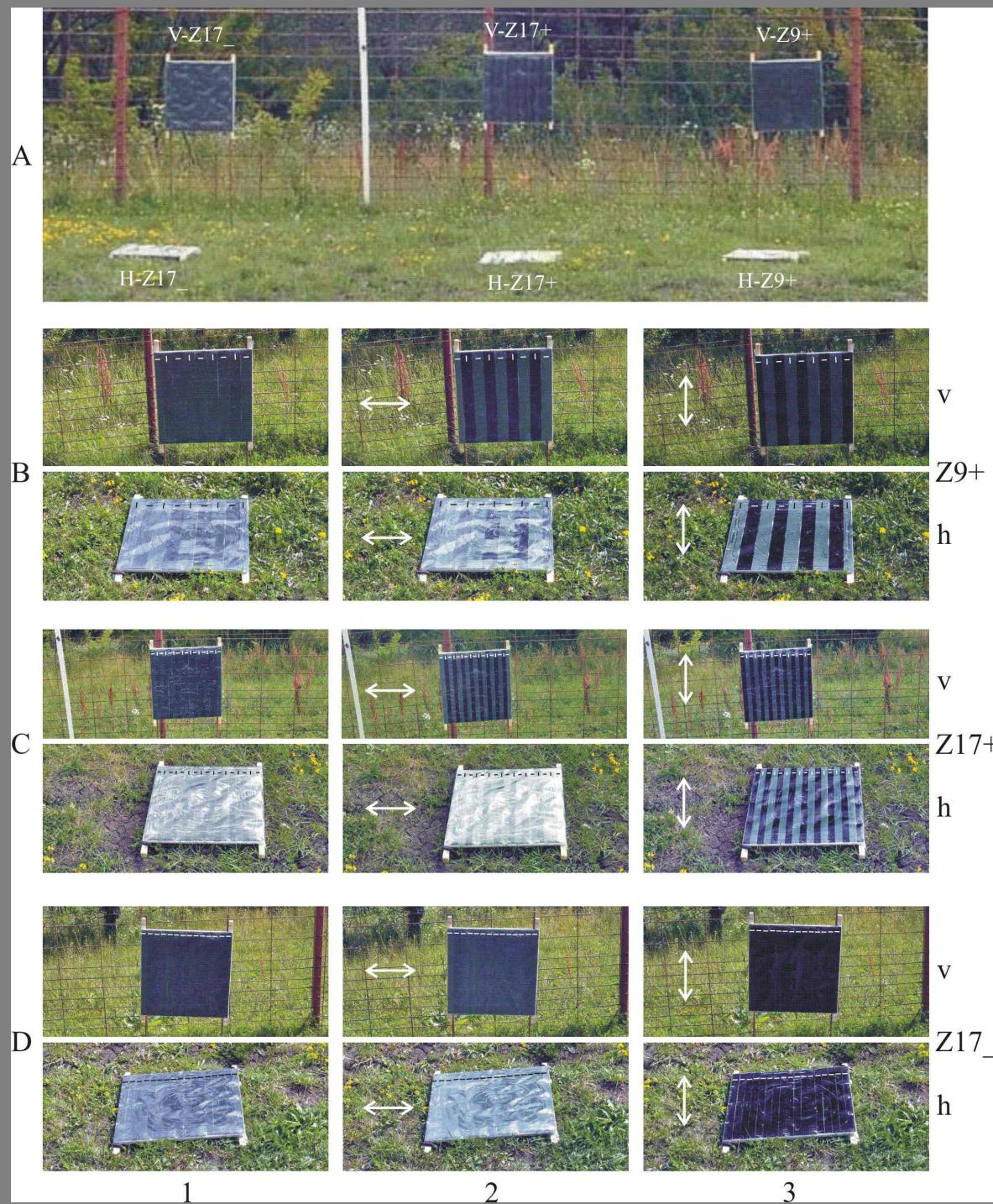
A 4. kísérlet ragadós lómakettjeinek polarizációs mintázatai



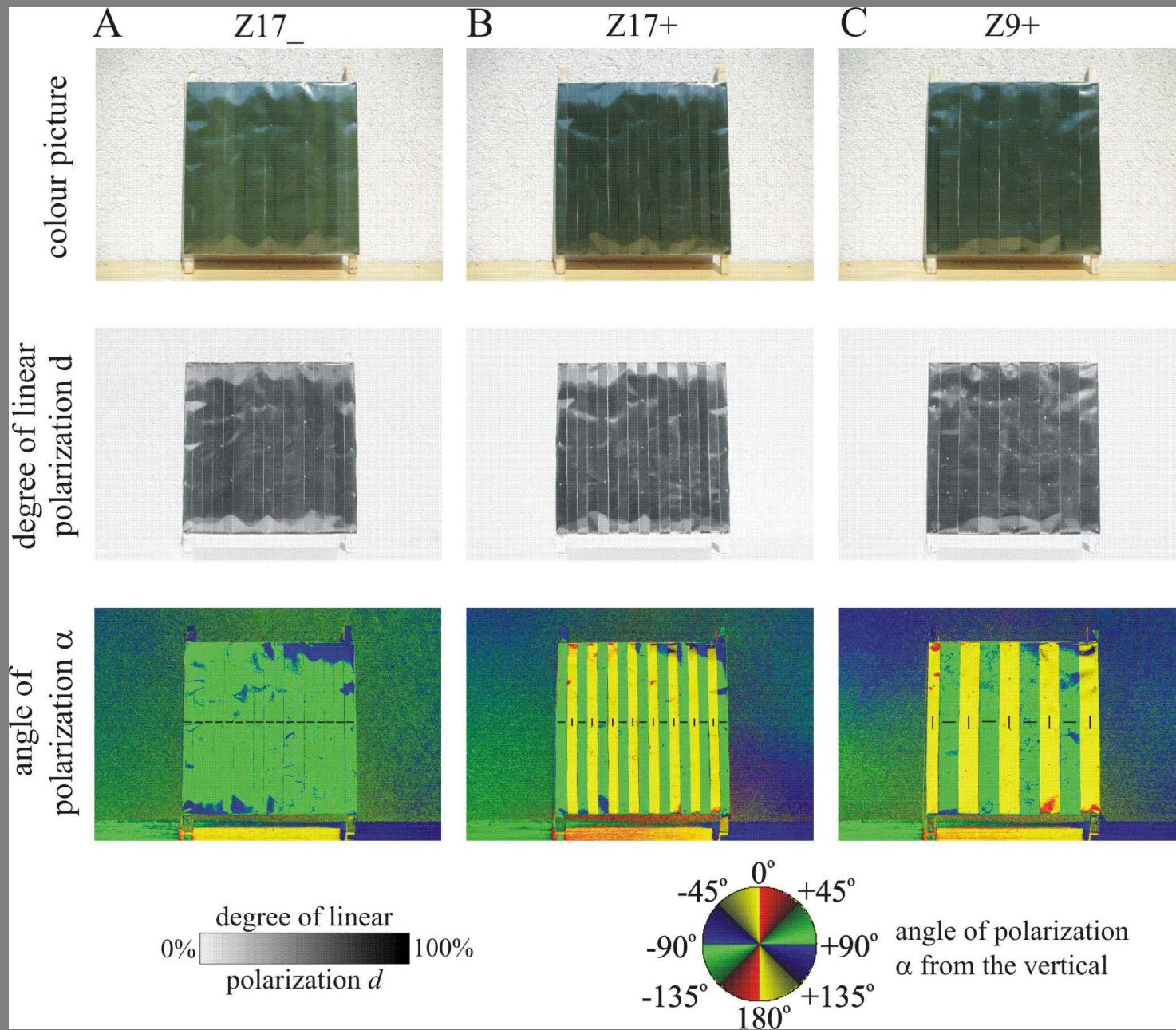


5. kísérlet fekete-fehér csíkos ragadós tesztfelületekkel

6. kísérlet csíkos lineáris polárszűrős ragadós tesztfelületekkel



A 6. kísérlet csíkos lineáris polárszűrős tesztfelületeinek polarizációs mintázatai



Terepkísérletek csíkos tesztfelületekkel és polarotaktikus böglyökkel



■ 1st experiment



● 2nd experiment



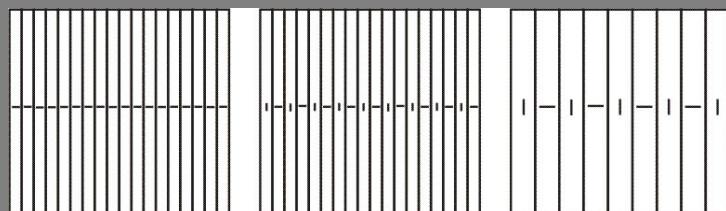
▲ 3rd experiment



--- 4th experiment



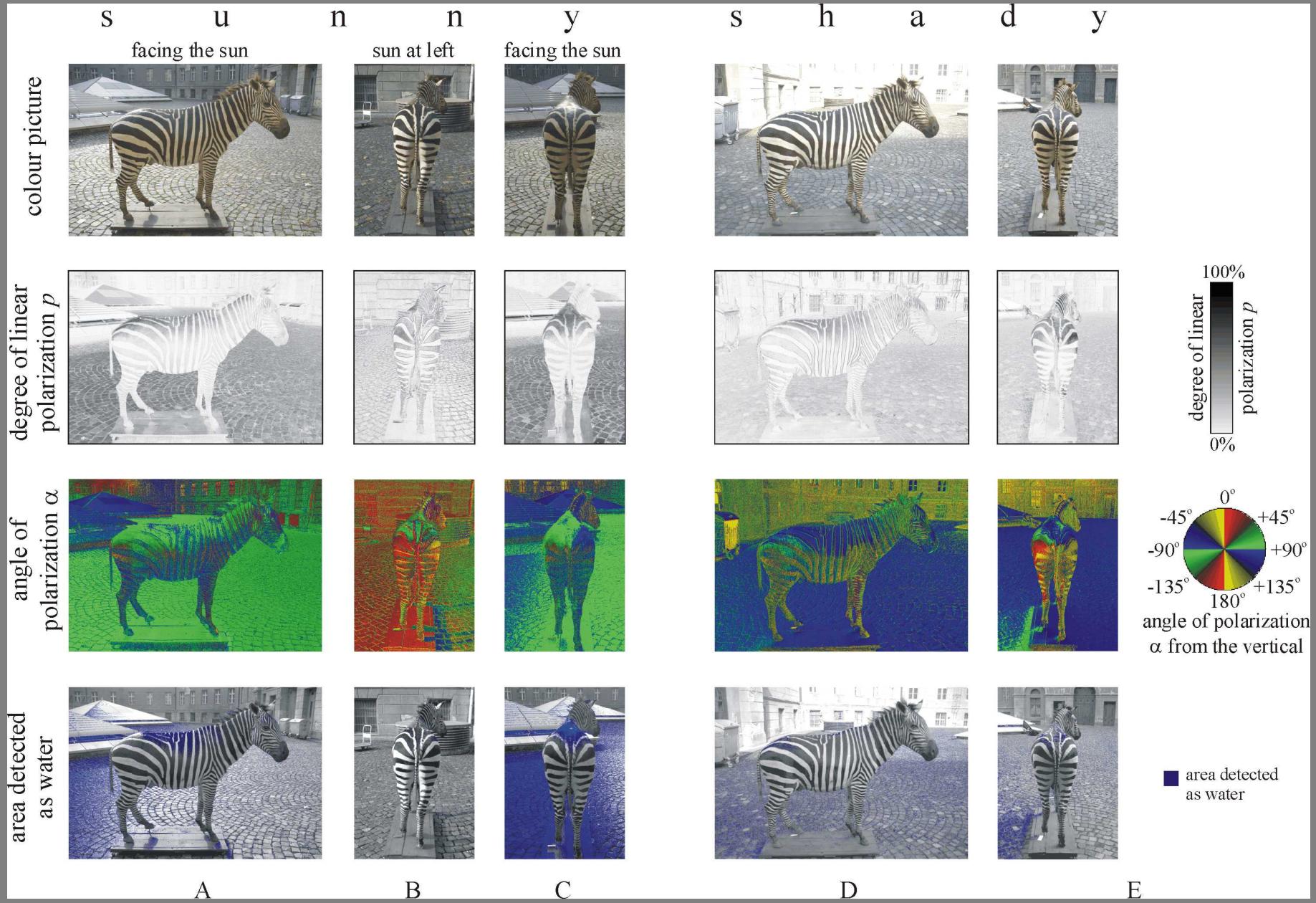
◆ 5th experiment



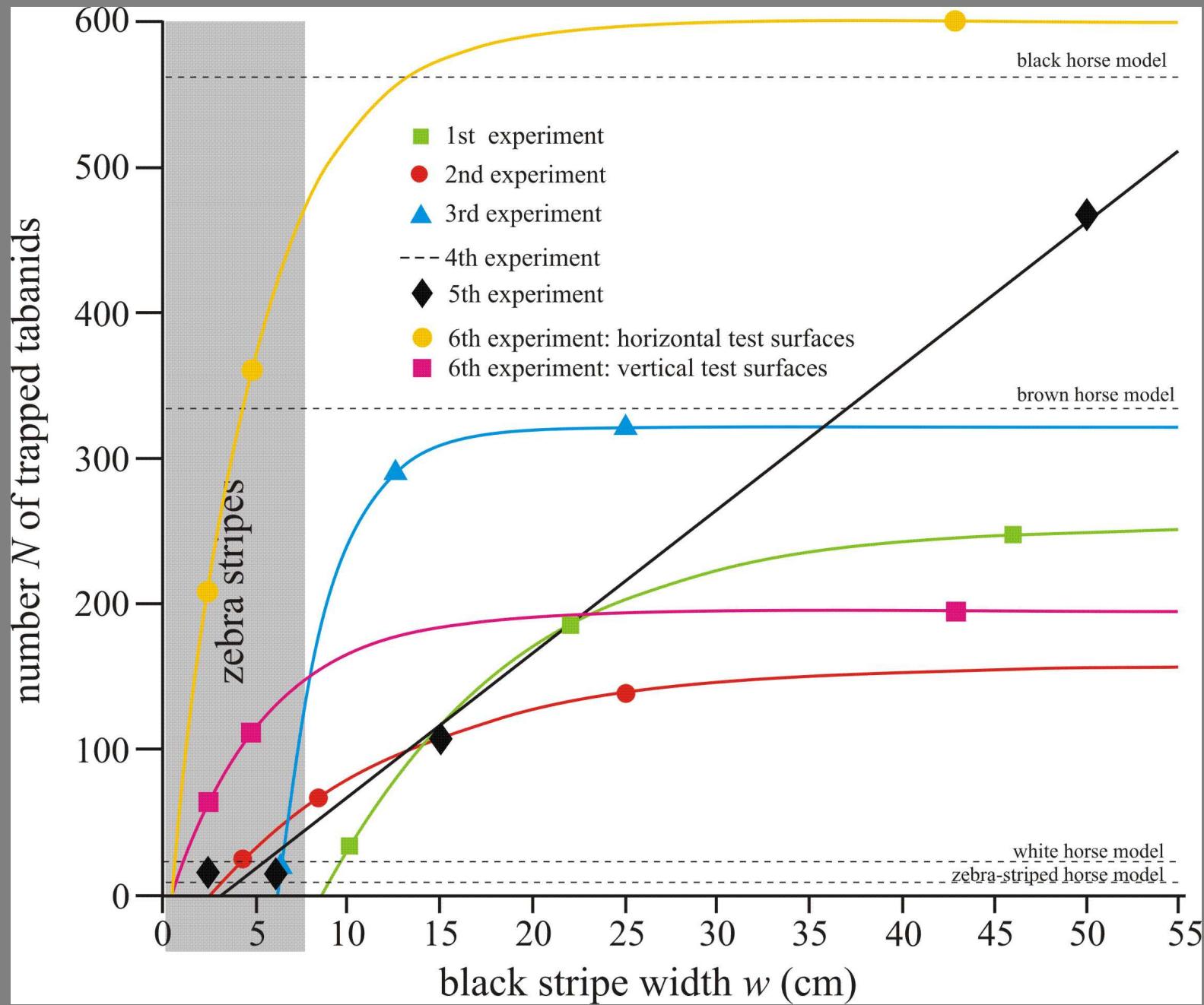
○ 6th experiment: horizontal test surfaces

□ 6th experiment: vertical test surfaces

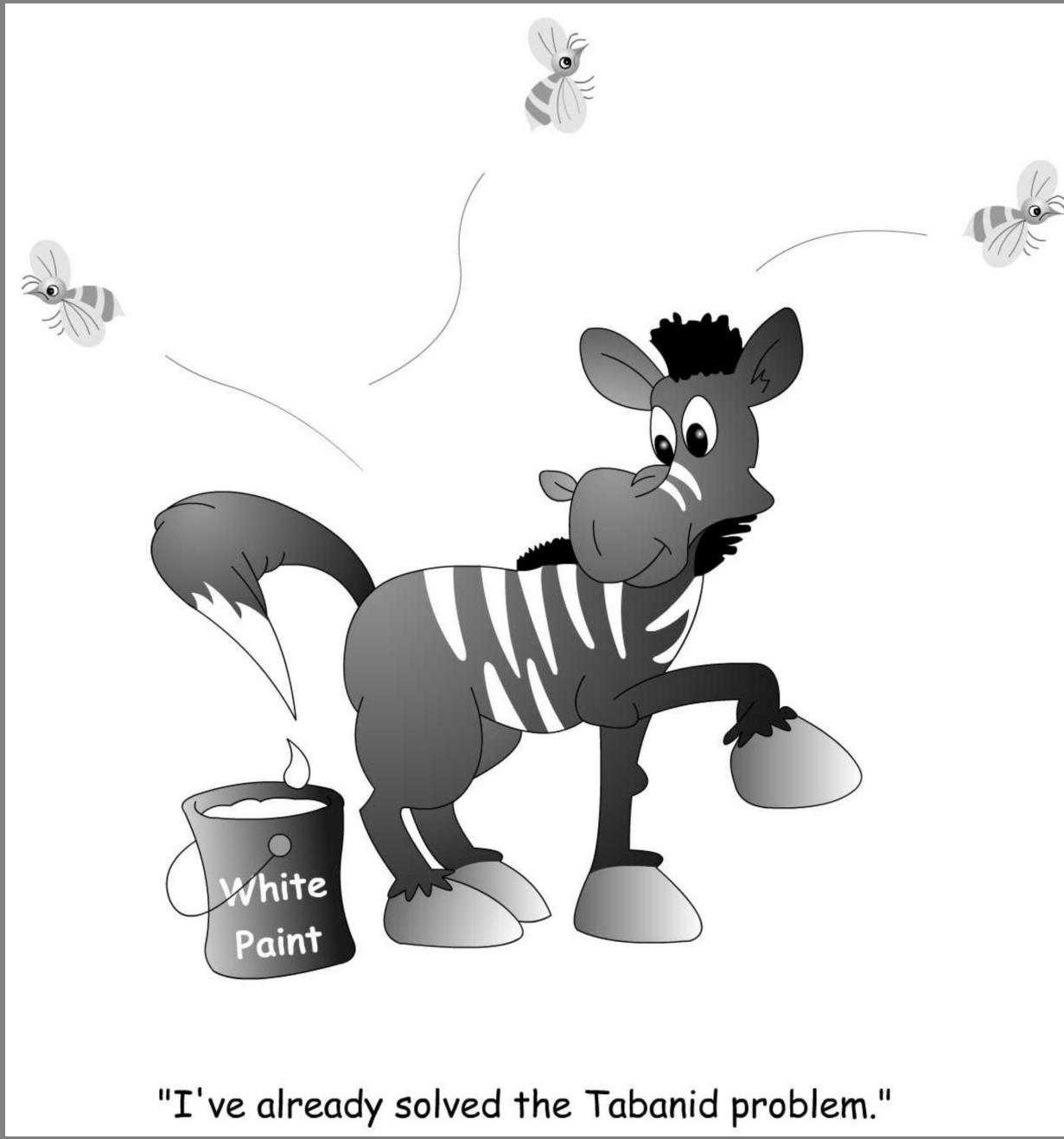
Egy zebra polarizációs mintázatai



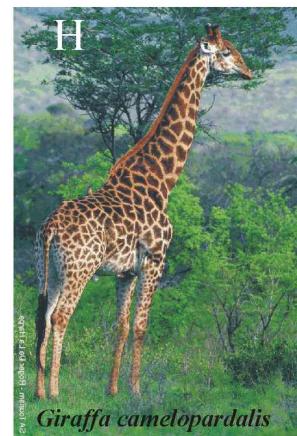
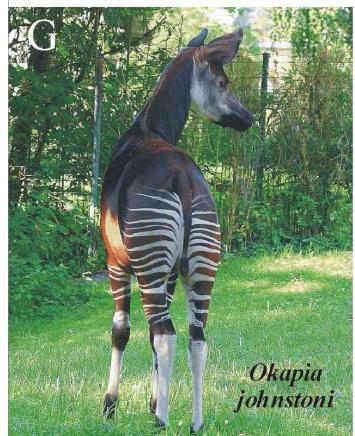
A terepkísérletek eredményei



Az ŏszebra sötét színű volt, fehér csíkjai később fejlődtek ki



"I've already solved the Tabanid problem."

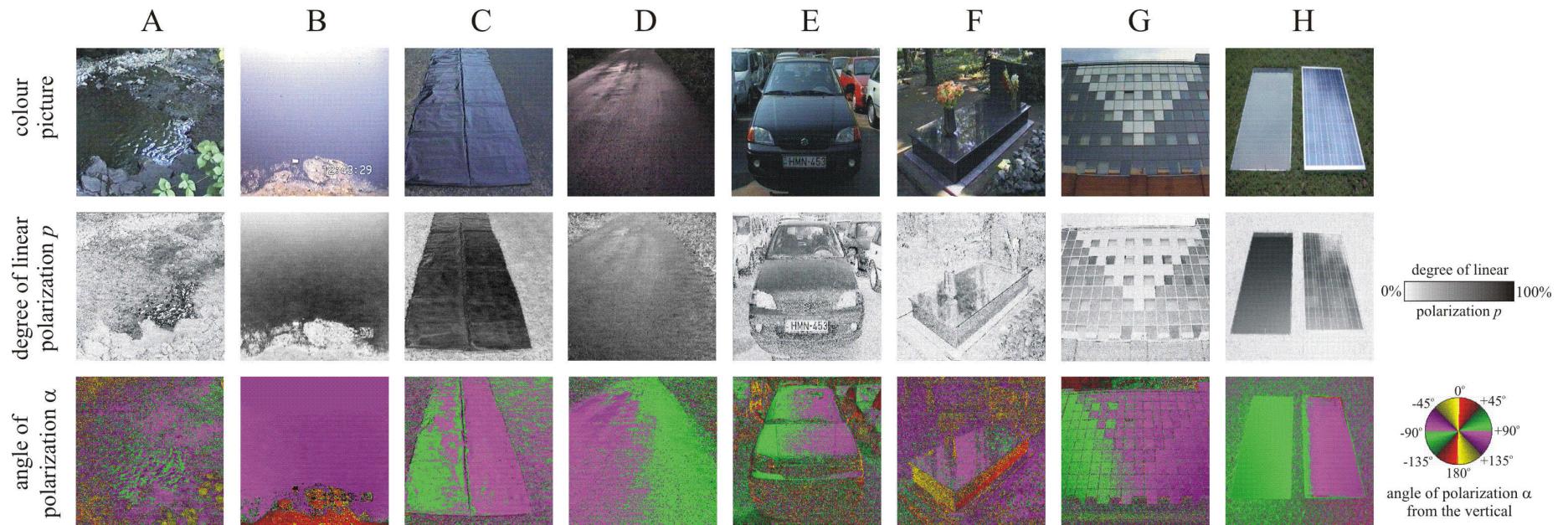


A csíkos kültakaró az emlősök körében elterjedt

Afrikai törzsek (zebra)csíkos testfestése



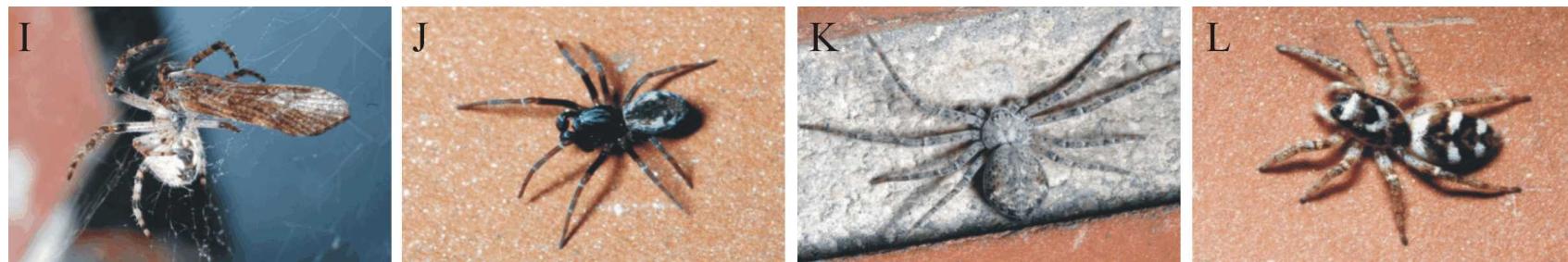
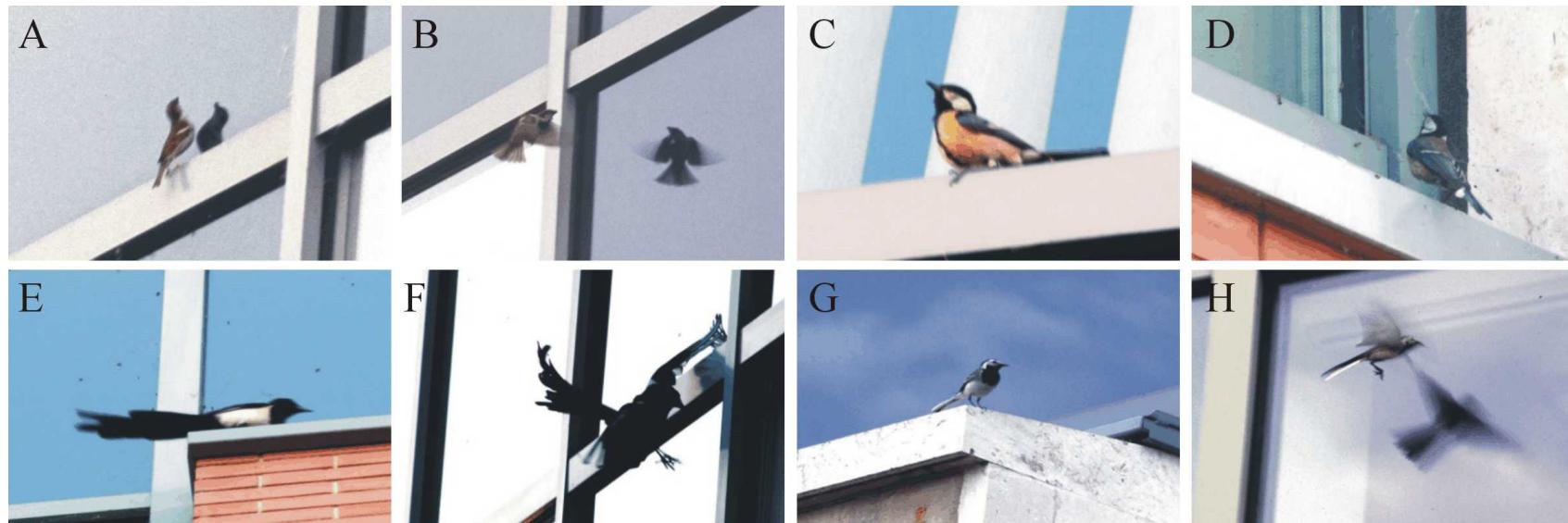
Poláros fényszennyező források



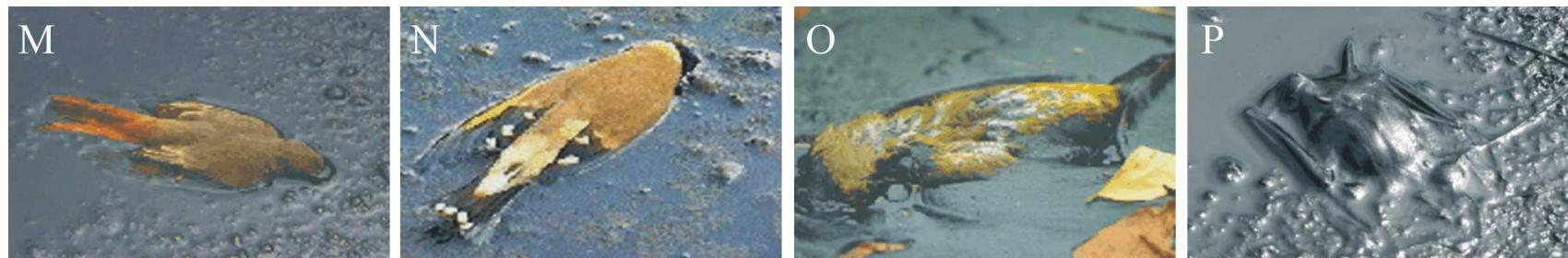
A poláros fényszennyezés áldozatai

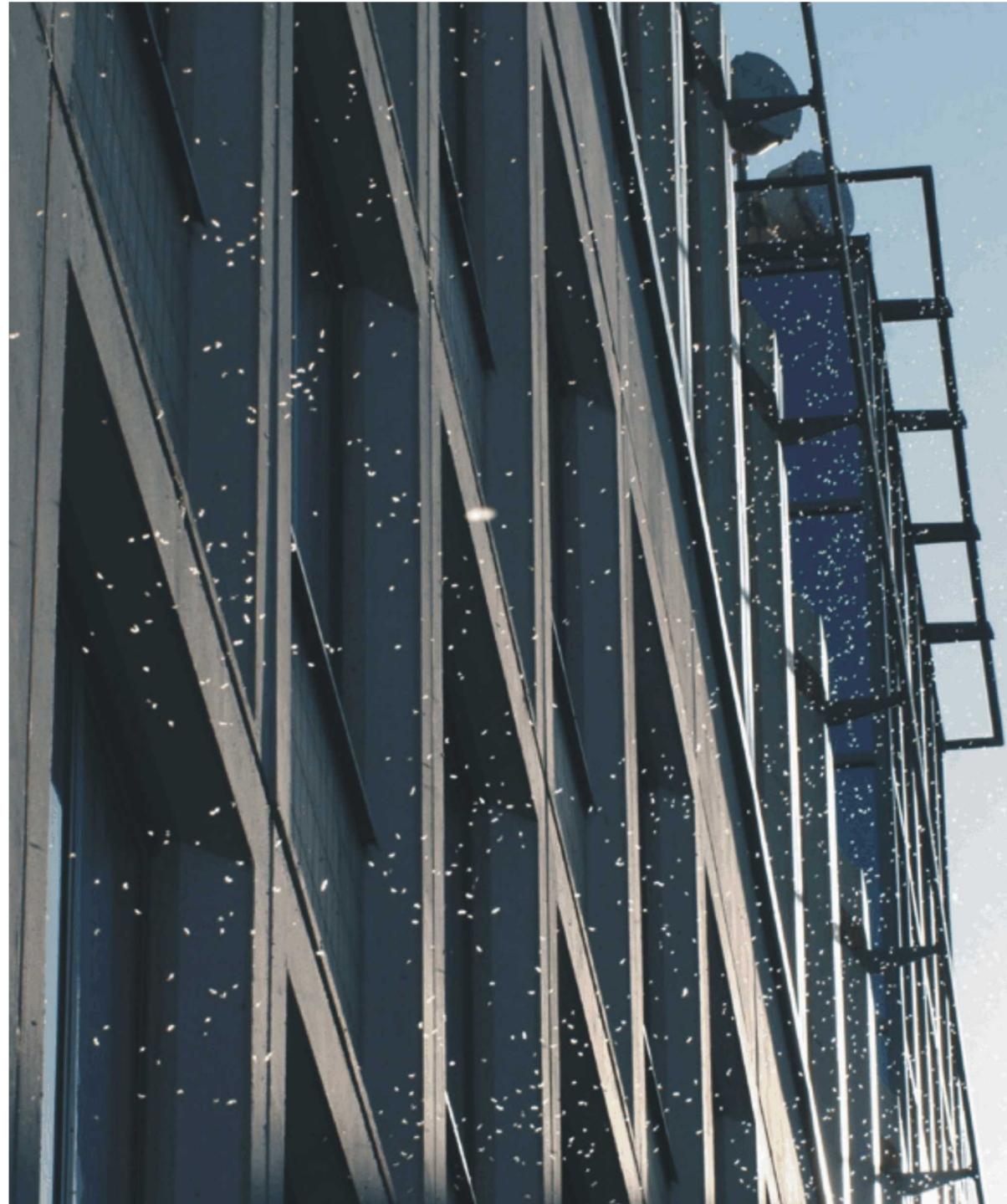


A poláros fényszennyezés haszonélvezői



A poláros fényszennyezés haszonélvezői majd áldozatai





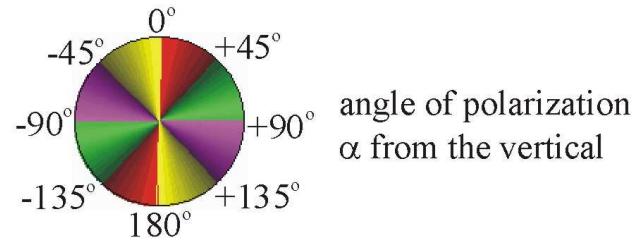
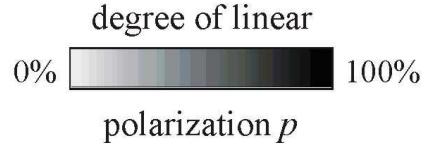
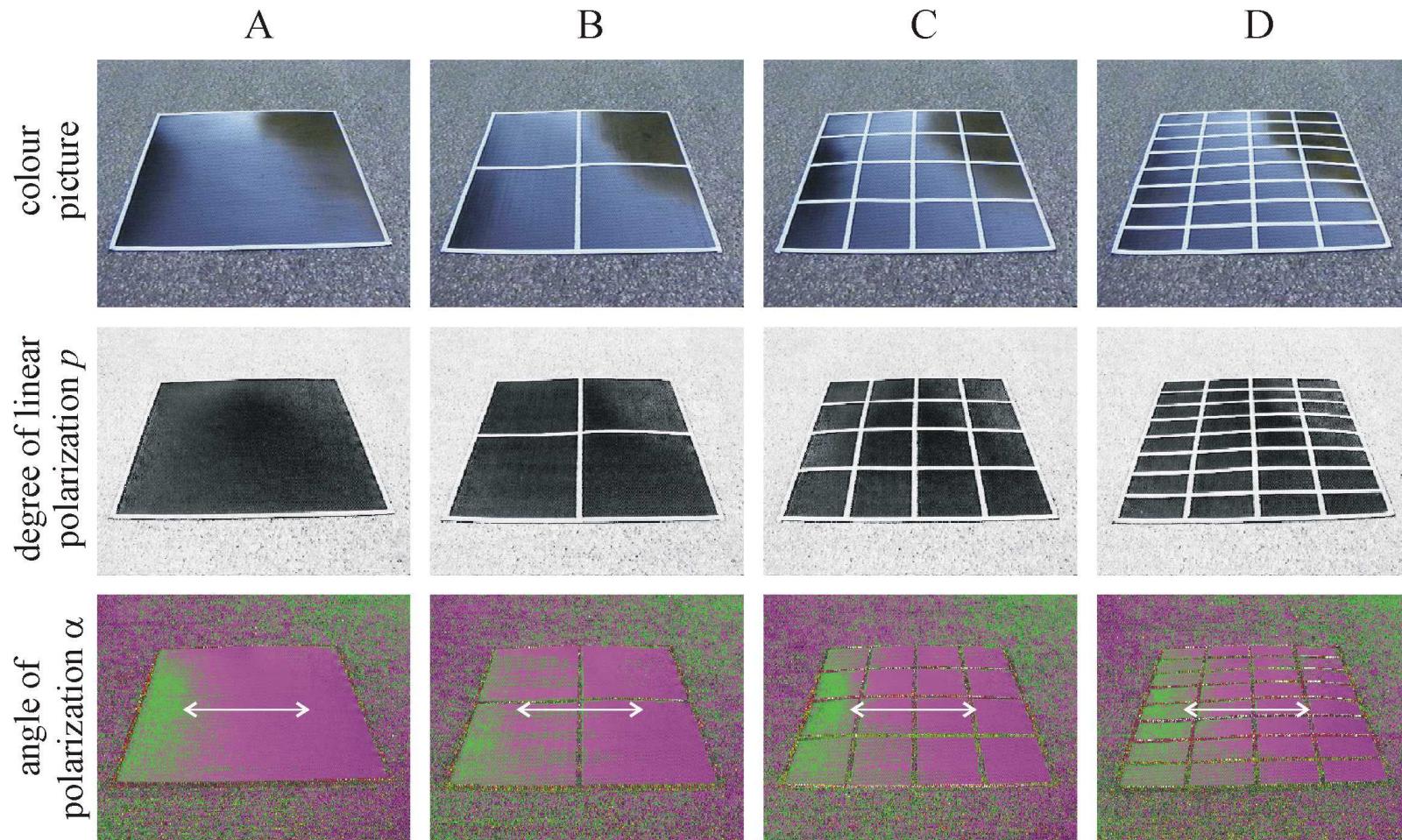
**Polarotaktikus dunai
tömegtegzesek rajzása az
ELTE duna-parti poláros
fényszennyező
üvegépületénél**

Gyakran súlyos probléma a poláros fényszennyezés

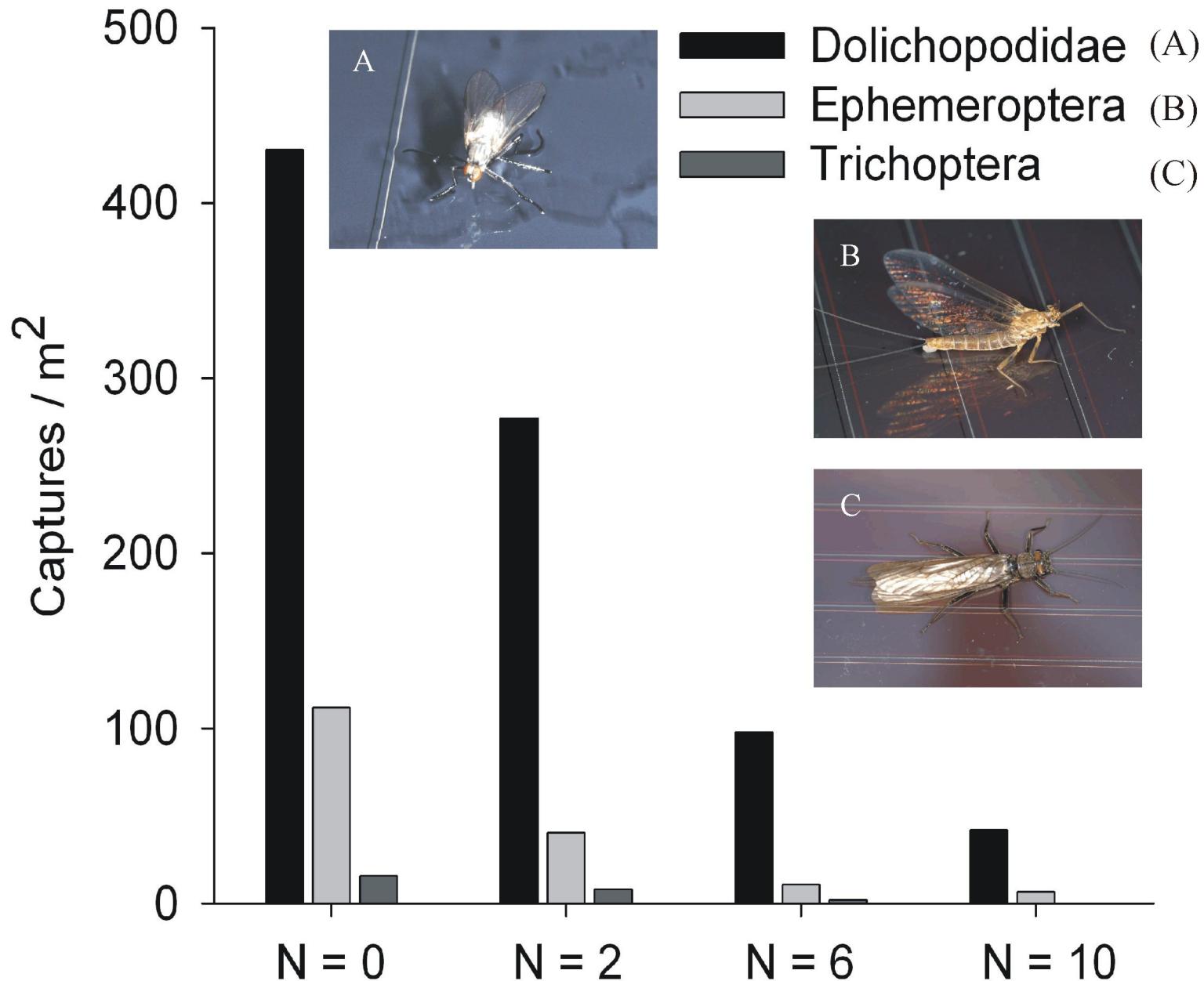


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Fehér csíkos, fekete csíllogó felületek polarizációs mintázatai



Fehér csíkok védő szerepe: a poláros fényszennyezés csökkentésének egyik módja



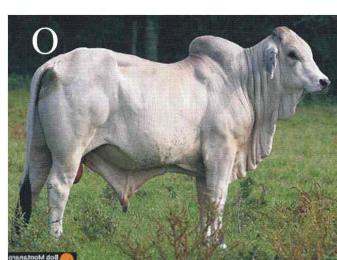
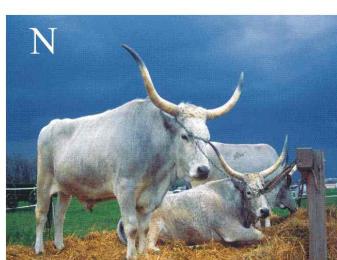
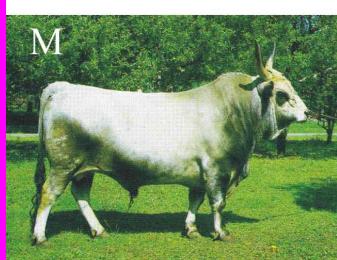
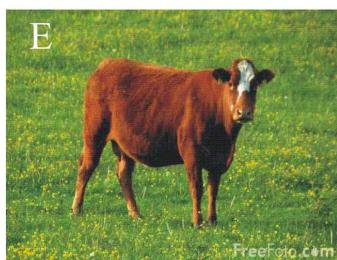
Vérszívó nőstény böglyök szarvasmarhákon



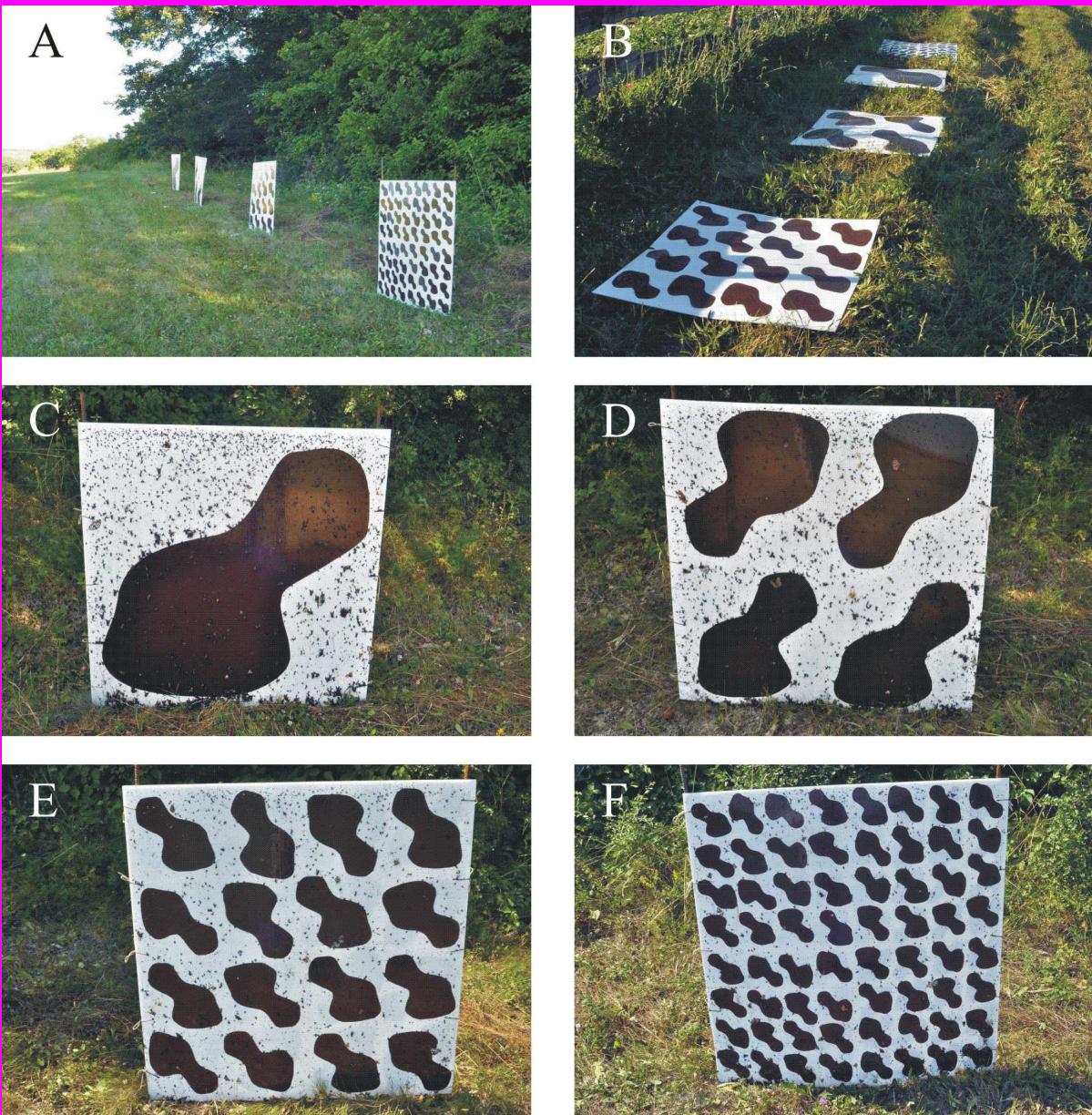
Vérszívó nőstény bogolyök szarvasmarhákon



A szarvasmarhák kültakarójának különböző színmintázatai



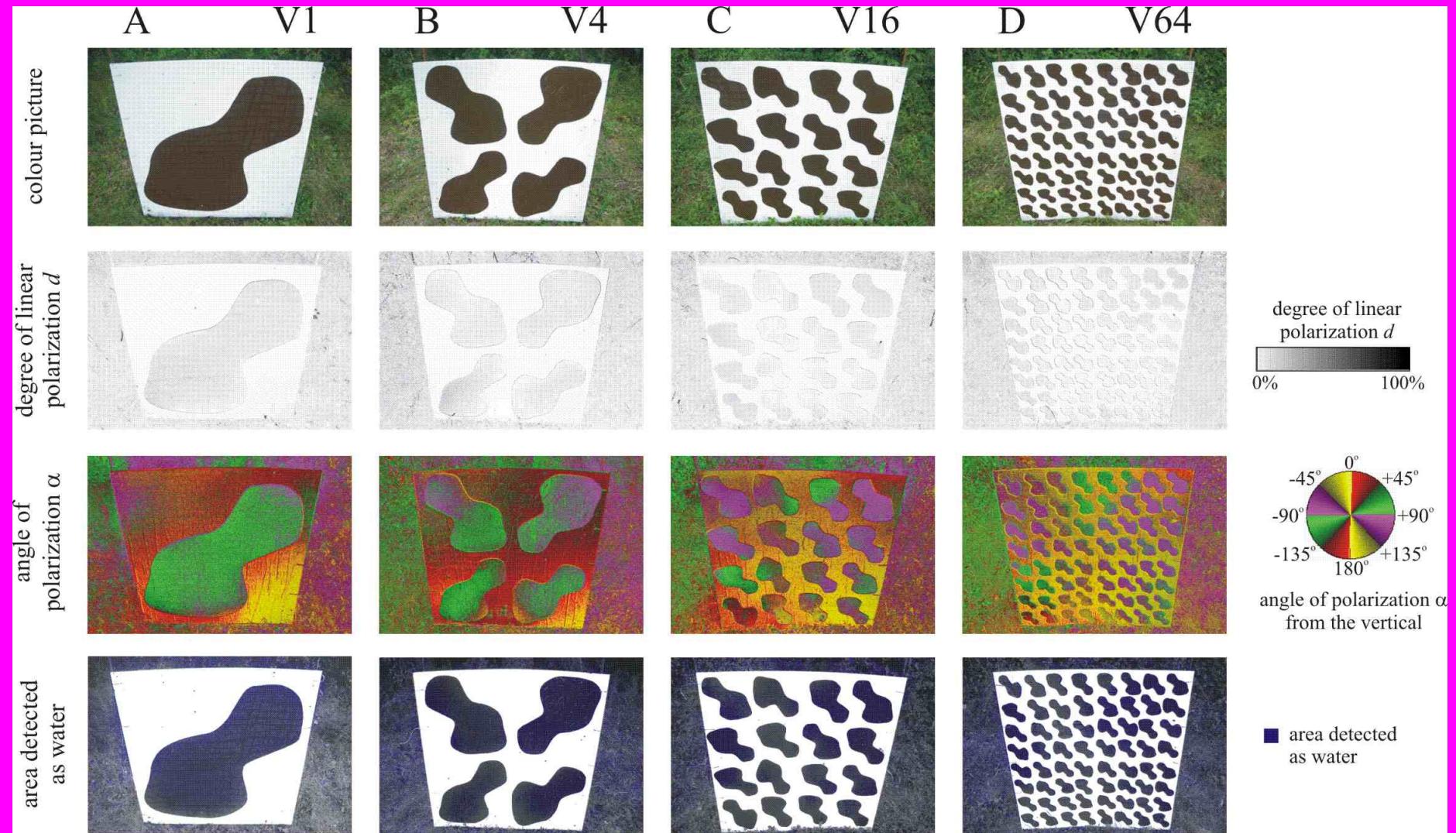
1. kísérlet barnafoltos ragadós tesztfelületekkel



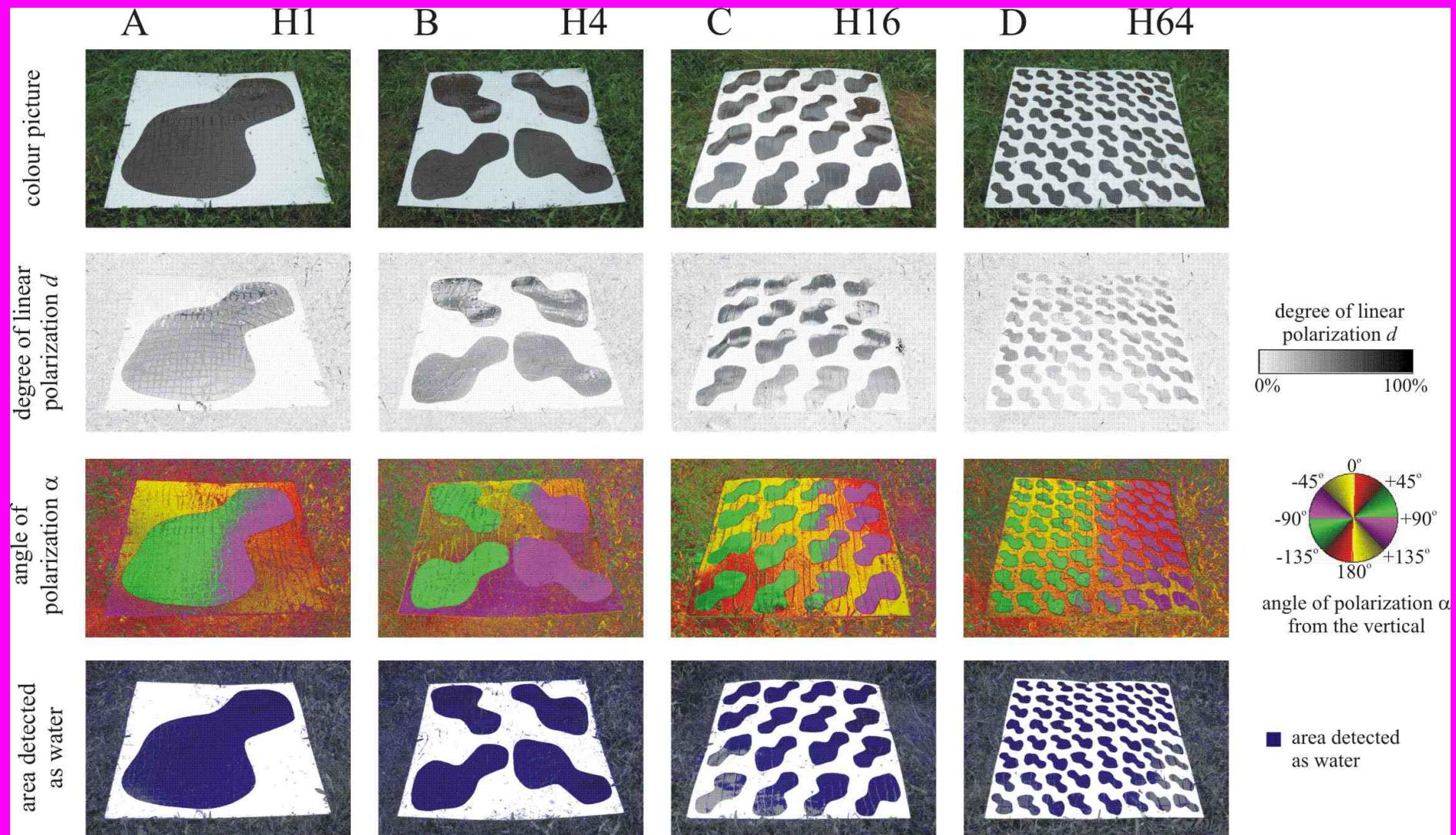
Az 1. kísérlet barnafoltos tesztfelületeibe ragadt böglyök



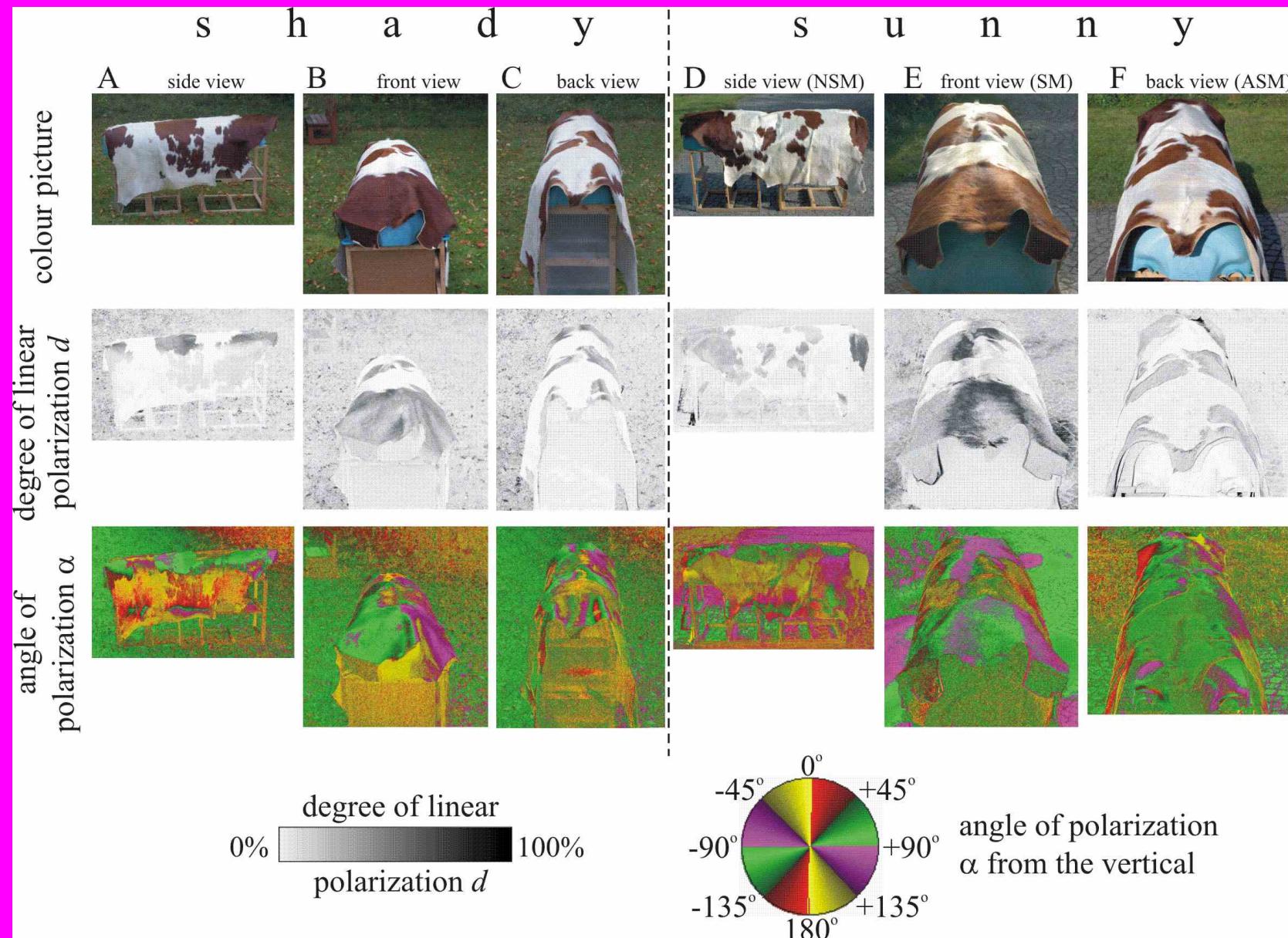
Az 1. kísérlet függőleges barnafoltos ragadós tesztfelületeinek polarizációs mintázatai



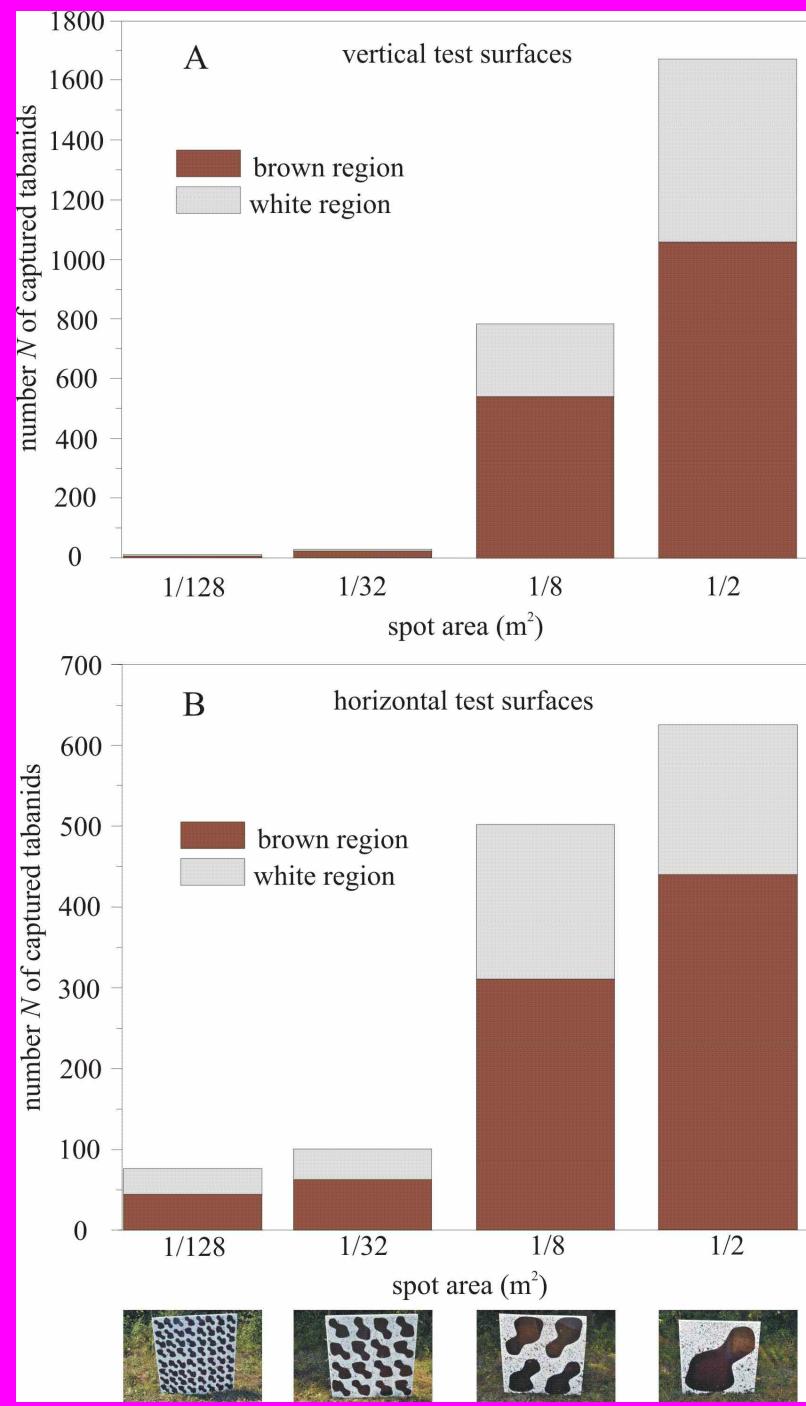
Az 1. kísérlet vízsintes barnafoltos ragadós tesztfelületeinek polarizációs mintázatai



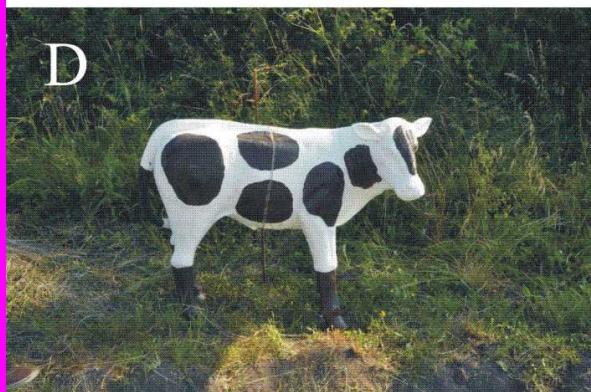
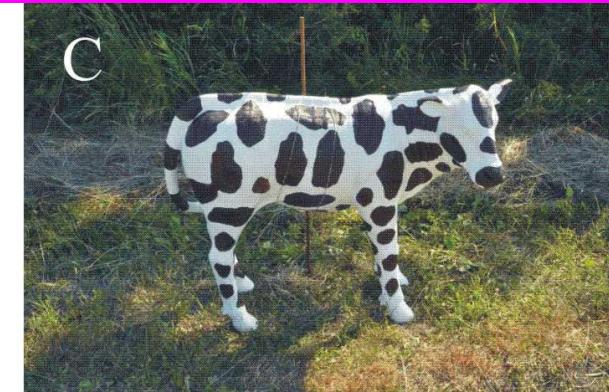
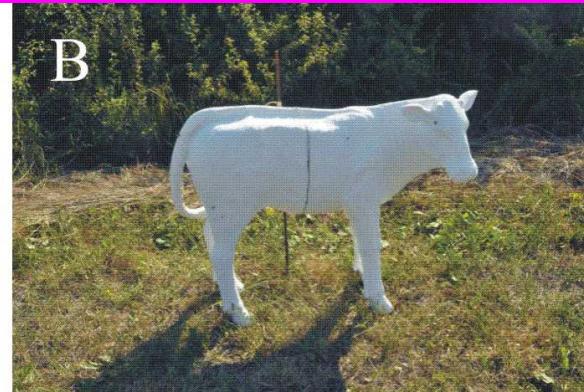
Egy szarvasmarha tarkafoltos bőrének polarizációs mintázatai



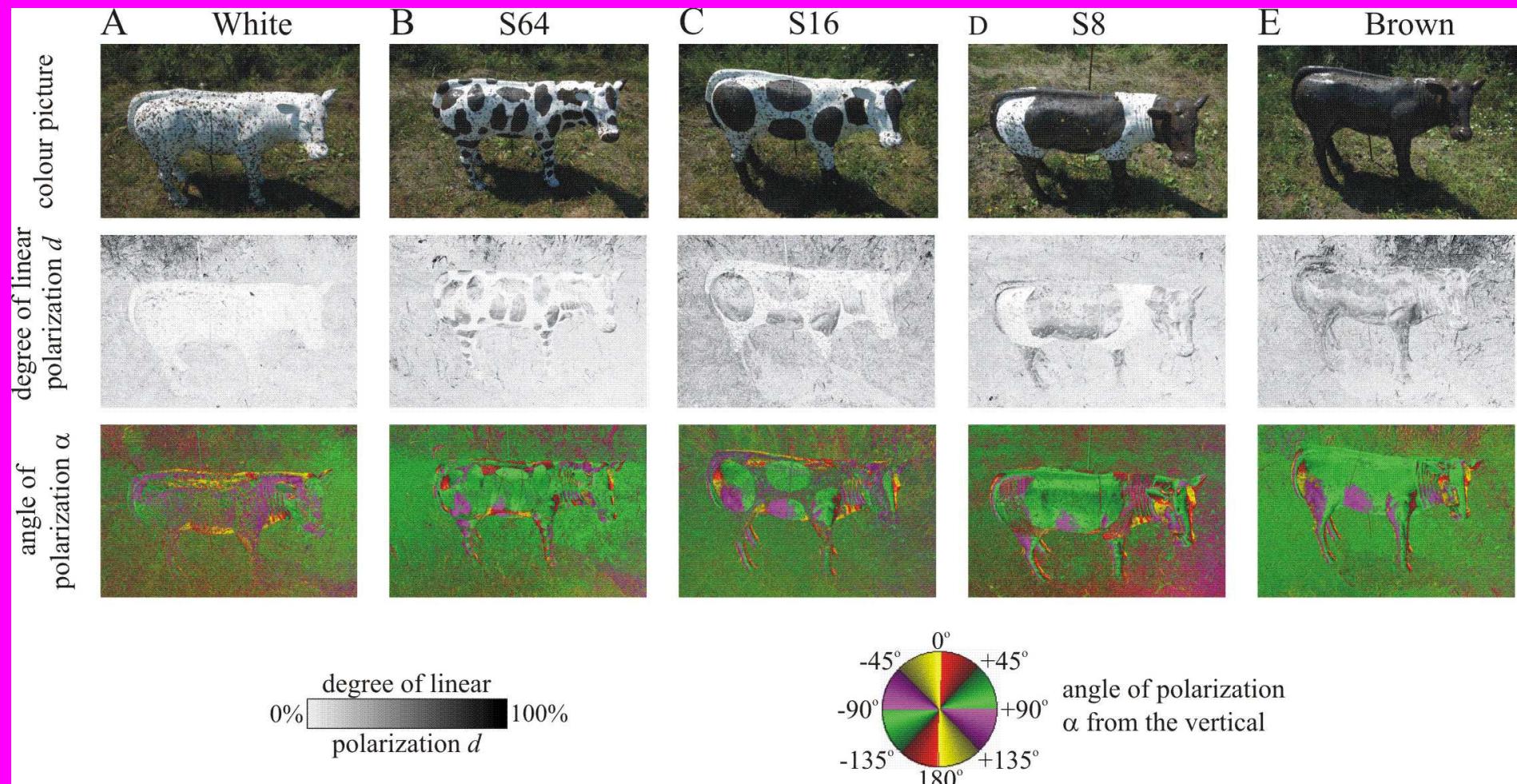
Az 1. kísérletben csapdázott böglyök száma



2. kísérlet ragadós foltos tehénmakettekkel



A 2. kísérlet ragadós foltos tehénmakettjeinek polarizációs mintázatai



Szarvasmarhák polarizációs mintázatai

A sun
at left

sunny

B

shady

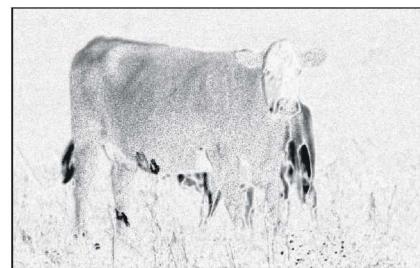
C sun
at left

sunny

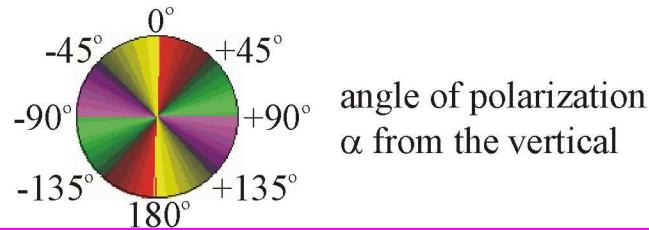
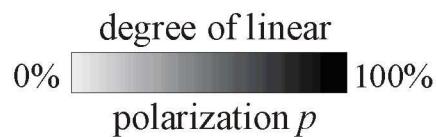
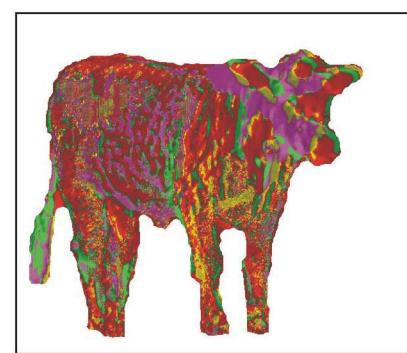
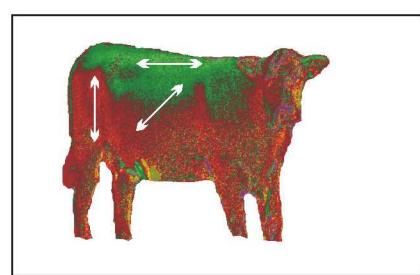
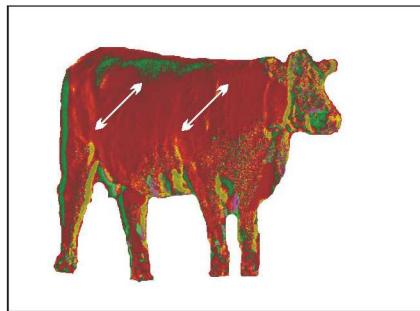
colour picture



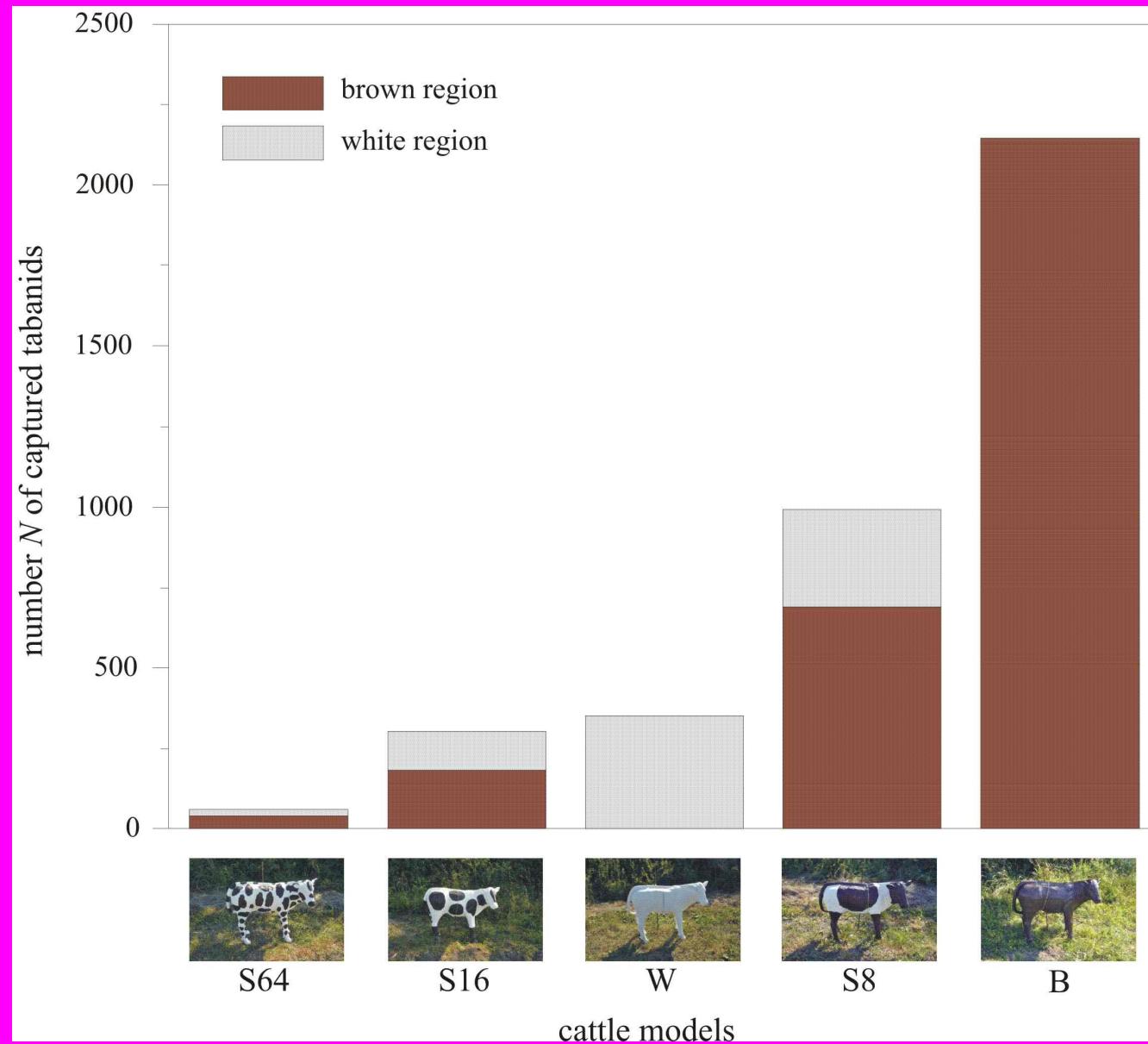
degree of linear
polarization p



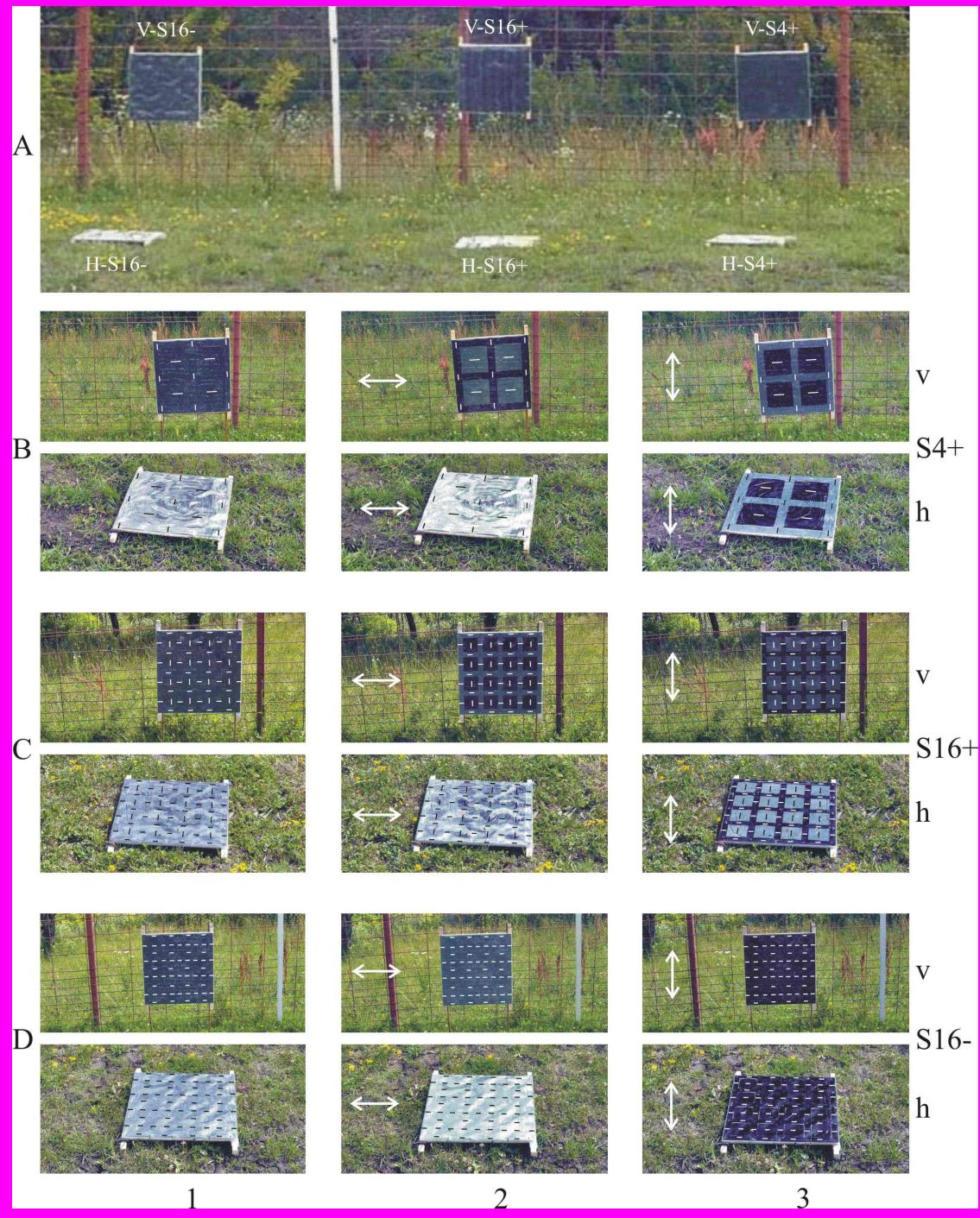
angle of
polarization α



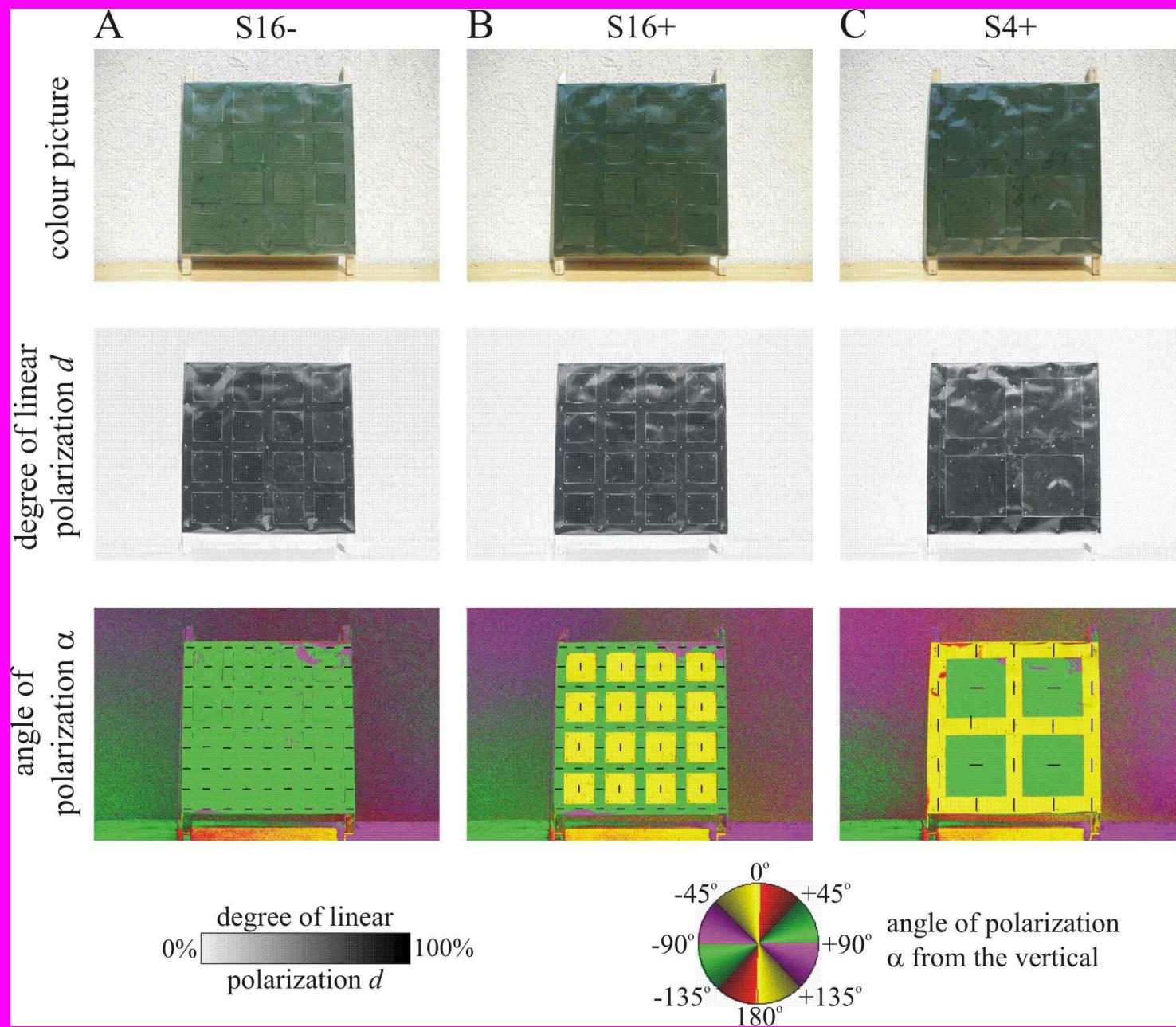
A 2. kísérletben csapdázott böglyök száma

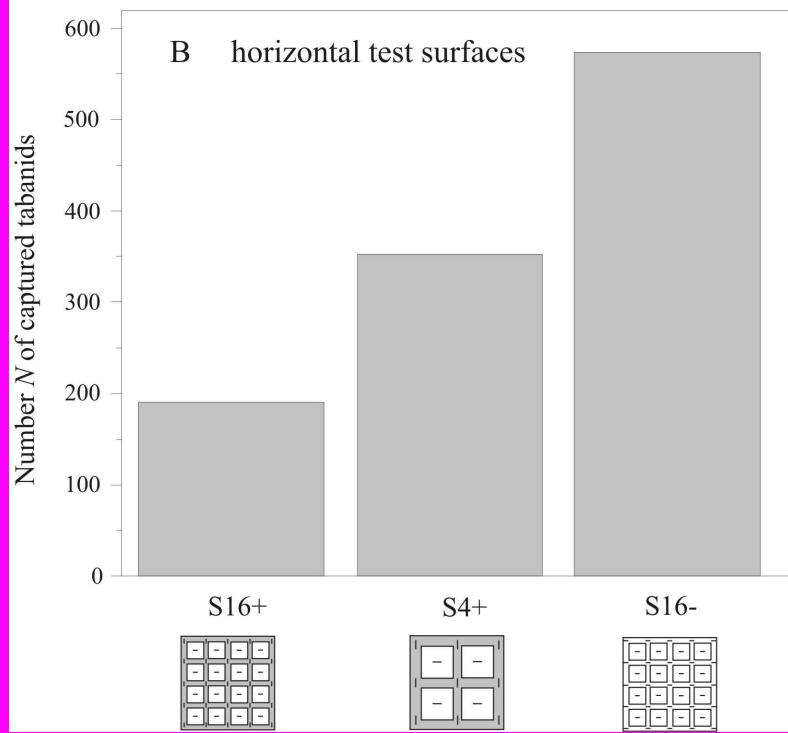
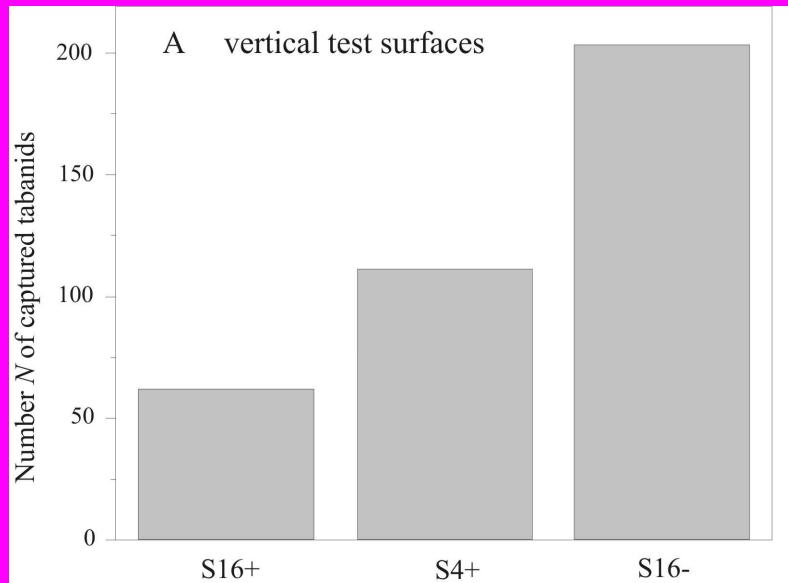


3. kísérlet foltos lineáris polárszűrős ragadós tesztfelületekkel

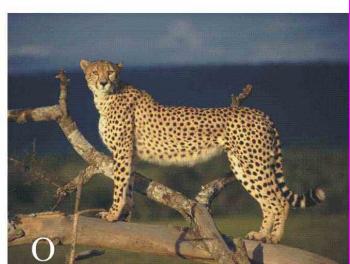
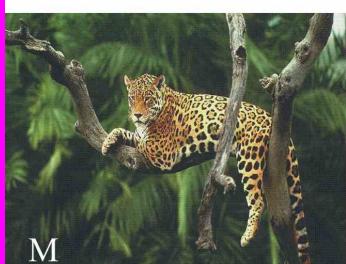
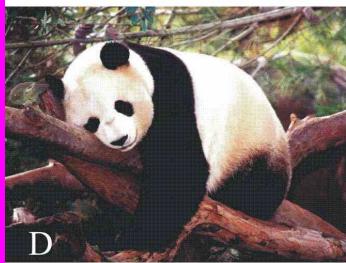


A 3. kísérlet foltos lineáris polárszűrős tesztfelületeinek polarizációs mintázatai





A 3. kísérletben csapdázott böglyök száma



A foltos kültakaró az emlősök
körében elterjedt

Új típusú, polarizációs bogölypapír

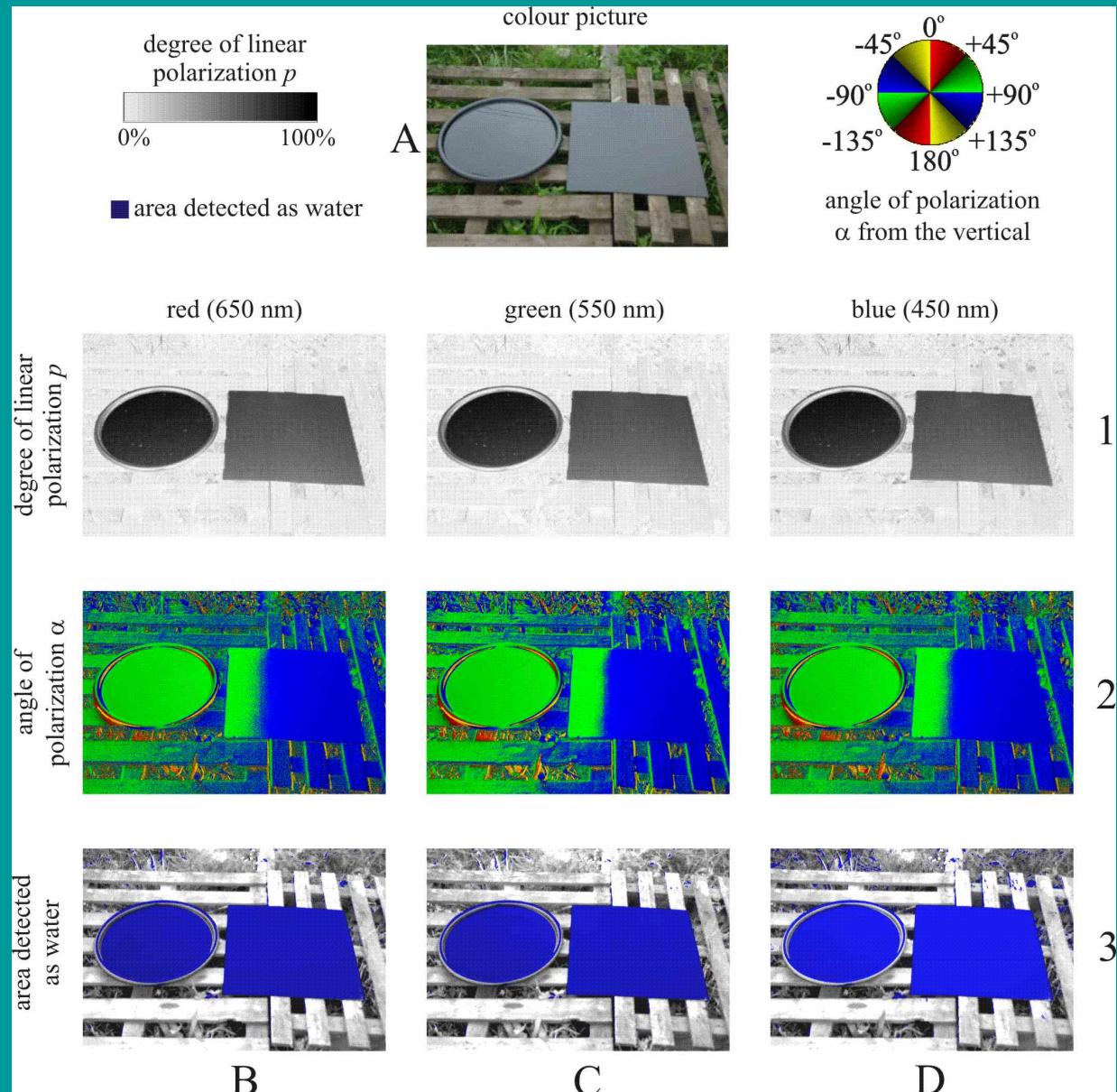
- 1) fekete, 2) vízszintes, 3) földön fekszik, 4) megfelelően nagy felületű



Polarizációs vizes-olajos böglyocsapda



Az új bögölycsapdák polarizációs mintázatai



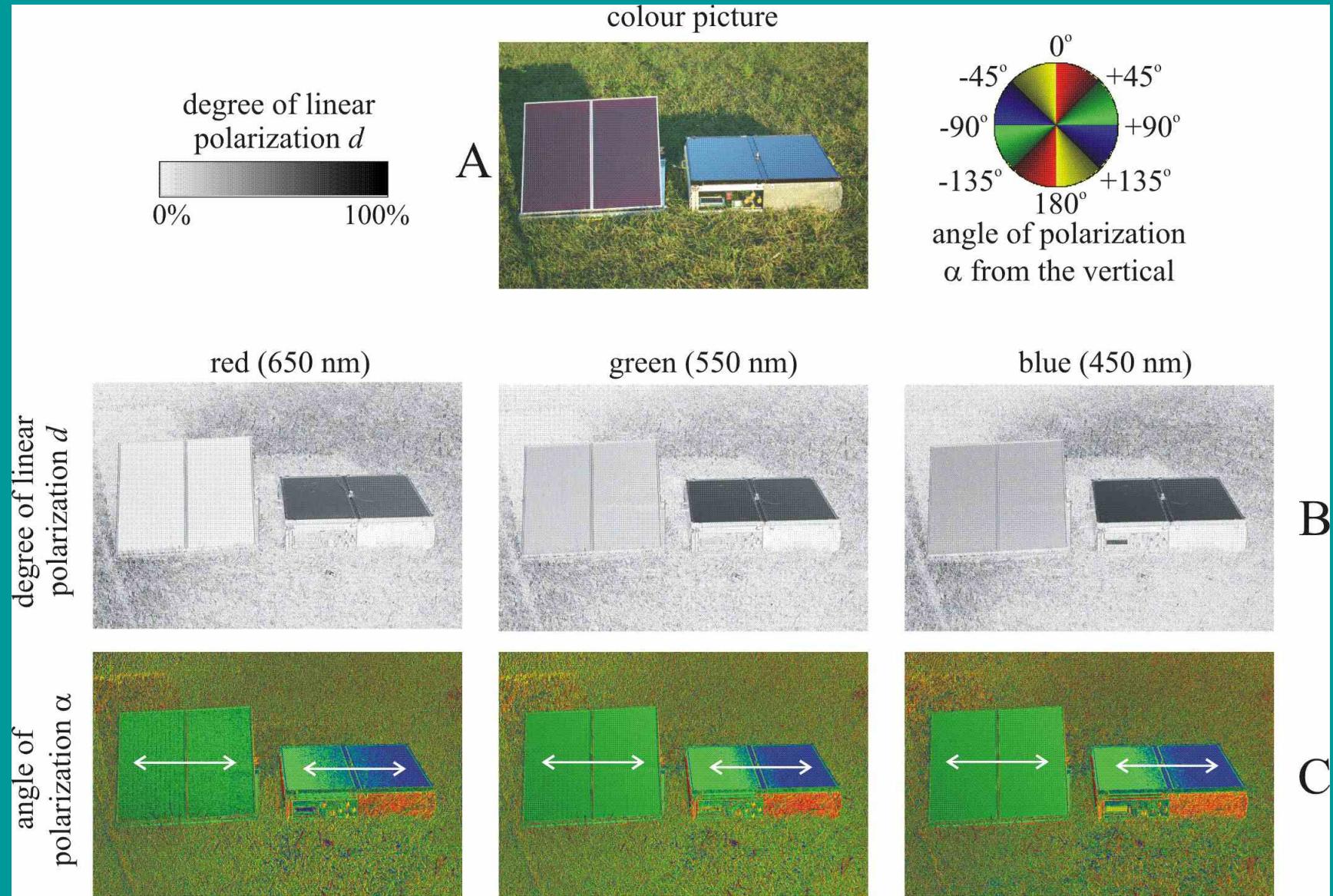
Napelemtáblákra szálló böglyök



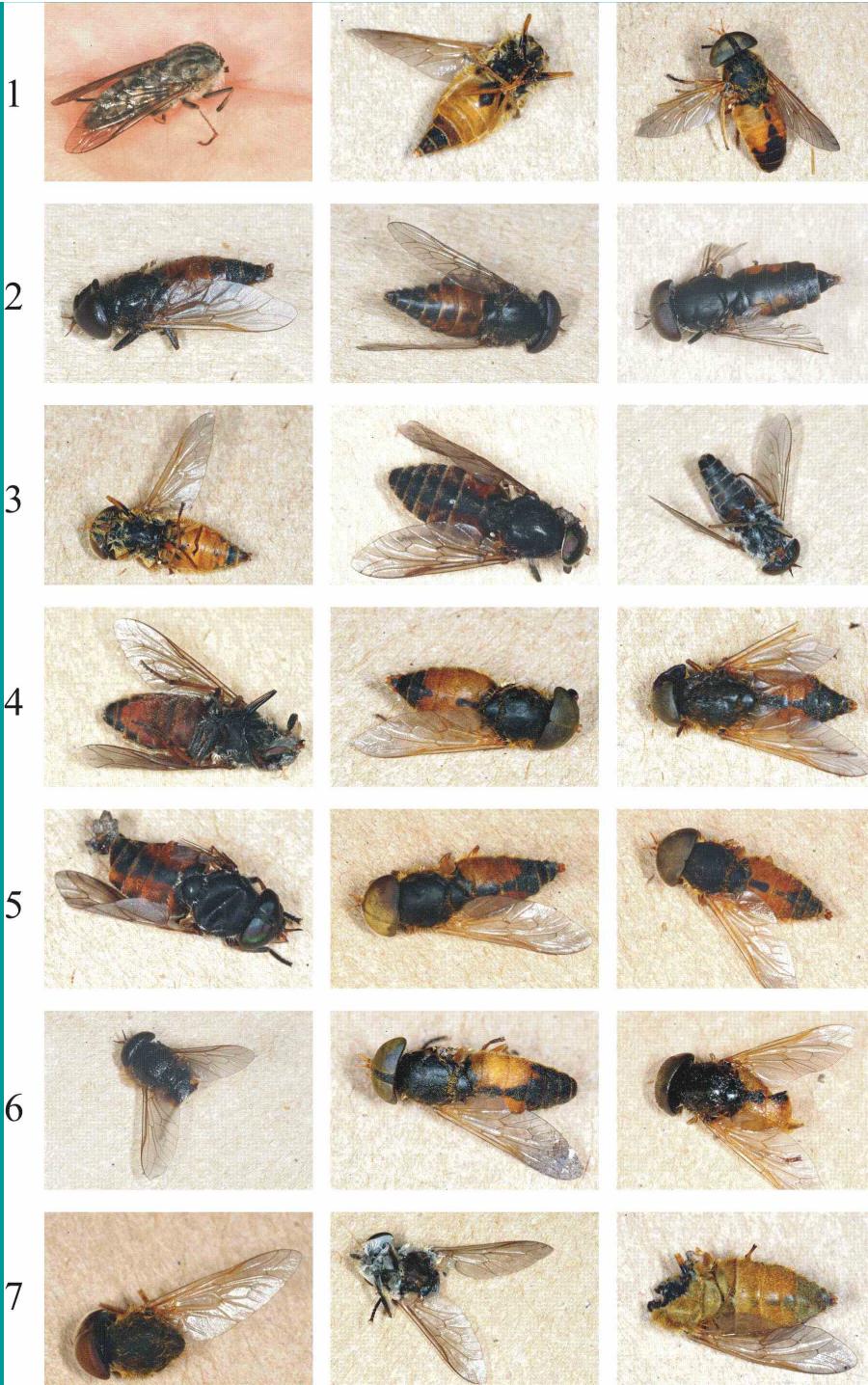
Napelemes, forgódrótós böglyocsapda



Napelemes, forgódrótós böglyocsapda polarizációs mintázatai



Napelemes, forgódrótos böglyocsapda által elpusztított böglyök tetemei



Research for the Development of TabaNOid Technology

Funded by the European Commission under the 7th Framework Programme



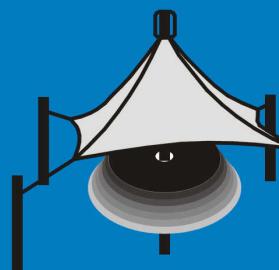
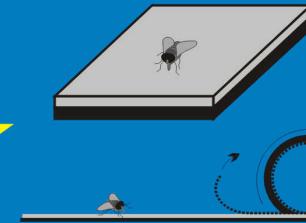
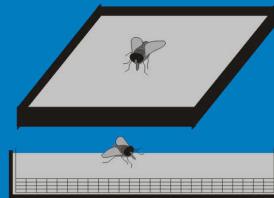
Grant no.: 232366

Project acronym: TabaNOid

TabaNOid

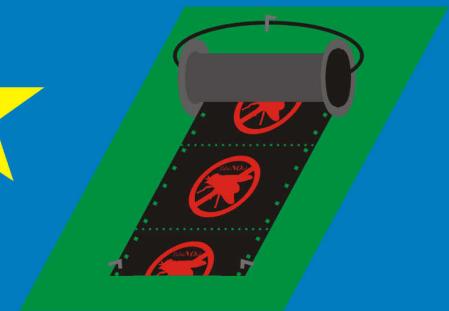
Grant type: Research for the Benefit of Small
and Medium Enterprises

Title: Trap for the novel control of
horse-flies on open-air fields



Senior researcher: György Kriska (PhD)

Eötvös University, Faculty of Natural Sciences,
Biological Institute, Department of Anthropology,
Group for Methodology in Biology Teaching



Project leader: Gábor Horváth (habil, PhD, CSc, DSc)

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An unexpected benefit in horses: the stripes have a defensive role

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White horses frequently suffer from negative effects due to the ultraviolet solar radiation. In contrast, dark individuals because they are white horses have been highly appreciated by blood-sucking tabanid flies, more than dark horses. We also demonstrate that white horses are more attractive to tabanids as a signal to find a host. The attraction is positive polarotaxis. As the host's coat has a strong influence on the parasitism of the horse interaction, our results can provide new insights into the reflection-polarization characteristics of the species-dependent.

Keywords: horses; tabanid flies

1. INTRODUCTION

In nature, light grey, or albino (termed 'white' in this work) ungulates (e.g. horses) are rare, their great vulnerability. They have a high sensitivity to solar radiation often leading to malignant and deficiency of the visual system (Pie 2008). A white-coated animal is easily detected by predators, thus individuals with white coats have been excluded from wild populations during evolution. On the other hand, humans have bred a blood-line of 'white' just because of their rarity in the wild. To be a white horse became an icon for dignity, a symbol of demonstrating wealth (Tresidder 2005).

In this work, we show that white horses are more attractive to blood-sucking tabanid flies compared to horses. Our hypothesis is that this phenomenon partly be explained by the polarization vision of tabanids discovered recently (Ishii 2008): tabanids are strongly attracted to artificial sources of horizontally polarized light, while other mammals suffer considerably from tabanids, the tabanid-proof feature of host animals is advantageous in two respects: on the one hand, blood-sucking flies are vectors of serious diseases and annoy their hosts so strongly that they cannot graze, thus the health of the hosts is drastically reduced. Consequently, a tabanid-resistant coat with appropriate brightness, colour and pattern is advantageous for the host. Spotty coats are widespread among mammals, especially in cattle (*Bos primigenius*). In field experiments we studied the influence of the size and number of spots on the attractiveness of test surfaces to tabanids that are attracted to linearly polarized light. We measured the reflection-polarization characteristics of living cattle, spotty cattle coats and the used test surfaces. We show here that the smaller and the more numerous the spots, the less attractive the target (host) is to tabanids. We demonstrate that the attractiveness of spotty patterns to tabanids is also reduced if the target exhibits spottiness only in the angle of polarization pattern, while being homogeneous grey with a constant high degree of polarization. Tabanid flies respond strongly to linearly polarized light, and we show that bright and dark parts of cattle coats reflect light with different degrees and angles of polarization that in combination with dark spots on a bright coat surface disrupt the attractiveness to tabanids. This could be one of the possible evolutionary benefits that explains why spotty coat patterns are so widespread in mammals, especially in ungulates, many species of which are tabanid hosts.

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The Journal of Experimental Biology 215, 736–745
© 2012. Published by The Company of Biologists Ltd
doi:10.1242/jeb.065540

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Polarotactic tabanids find striped patterns more attractive than modulation least attractive

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Accepted

The characteristic striped appearance of zebras has probably evolved, but experimental evidence is scarce. Here, we demonstrate that either homogeneous black, brown, grey or white have considerable fitness impact on potential mammalian hosts. This protection is the polarization of reflected light from the tabanids is also reduced if only polarization modulations occur in horizontal or vertical homogeneous grey surfaces. Light, and we demonstrate here that the light and dark stripes that disrupts the attractiveness to tabanids. We show that light and dark stripes below a certain size are effective in not allowing tabanids to fall in a range where the striped pattern is most attractive. This work provides an experimentally selective advantage of a black-and-white striped coat pattern.

Supplementary material available online at <http://jeb.biologists.org>.
Key words: zebra, tabanid fly, horsefly, striped pattern, protection from tabanids

INTRODUCTION

The most characteristic aspects of zebras are the bold black-and-white striped patterns on their body surface (Fig. 1). Embryological evidence (Prothero and Schoch, 2003) has shown that the background colour of zebras is black, and the white stripes appear only in a later embryonic developmental stage. The reason for the striped coat pattern in zebras has long been debated; Wallace suggested that zebras evolved striped coats as camouflage against carnivores in tall grass (Wallace, 1867; Wallace, 1875). Darwin, however, who had closely studied the inheritance of colours and stripes in horses and zebras, criticized this hypothesis as an explanation (Darwin, 1871), as zebras do not occur in areas with dense vegetation but rather prefer open savannah habitats with short grass.

Since the 19th century, a number of alternative hypotheses (Waage, 1981; Ruxton, 2002; Lehane, 2005; Caro, 2009) have been proposed to explain the striped pattern of zebras, including predation avoidance, social interaction, indication of physical condition, thermoregulation, and protection from tsetse flies (a more detailed account is given in the Appendix). These and more explanations

OPEN ACCESS Freely available online



Spottier Targets Are Less Attractive to Tabanid Flies: On the Tabanid-Repellency of Spotty Fur Patterns

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Abstract

During blood-sucking, female members of the family Tabanidae transmit pathogens of serious diseases and annoy their host animals so strongly that they cannot graze, thus the health of the hosts is drastically reduced. Consequently, a tabanid-resistant coat with appropriate brightness, colour and pattern is advantageous for the host. Spotty coats are widespread among mammals, especially in cattle (*Bos primigenius*). In field experiments we studied the influence of the size and number of spots on the attractiveness of test surfaces to tabanids that are attracted to linearly polarized light. We measured the reflection-polarization characteristics of living cattle, spotty cattle coats and the used test surfaces. We show here that the smaller and the more numerous the spots, the less attractive the target (host) is to tabanids. We demonstrate that the attractiveness of spotty patterns to tabanids is also reduced if the target exhibits spottiness only in the angle of polarization pattern, while being homogeneous grey with a constant high degree of polarization. Tabanid flies respond strongly to linearly polarized light, and we show that bright and dark parts of cattle coats reflect light with different degrees and angles of polarization that in combination with dark spots on a bright coat surface disrupt the attractiveness to tabanids. This could be one of the possible evolutionary benefits that explains why spotty coat patterns are so widespread in mammals, especially in ungulates, many species of which are tabanid hosts.

Citation: Blahó M, Egri A, Bahidszki L, Kriska G, Hegedus R, et al. (2012) Spottier Targets Are Less Attractive to Tabanid Flies: On the Tabanid-Repellency of Spotty Fur Patterns. PLOS ONE 7(8): e41138. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0041138

Editor: Michel Renou, INRA-UPMC, France

Received February 10, 2012; Accepted June 18, 2012; Published August 2, 2012

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Funding: This work was supported by the grant OTKA K-68462 from the Hungarian Science Foundation, and the grant TabaNOid 232366 funded by the European Commission under the 7th Framework Programme received by G. Horváth and G. Kriska. Gábor Horváth thanks the German Alexander von Humboldt Foundation for its equipment donation. Susanne Åkesson is supported by a project grant from the Swedish Research Council and Lund University. Ramón Hegedus is a Marie Curie IEF fellow and is grateful for the support of the European Commission. The authors are grateful to Dr. Robert Parkas and Mónika Gyurkovszky (Department of Parasitology and Zoology, Faculty of Veterinary Science, Szent István University, Budapest) for the taxonomical determination of the captured tabanids. The funders had no role in study design, data collection and analysis, decision to publish, or preparation of the manuscript.

Competing interests: The authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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Introduction

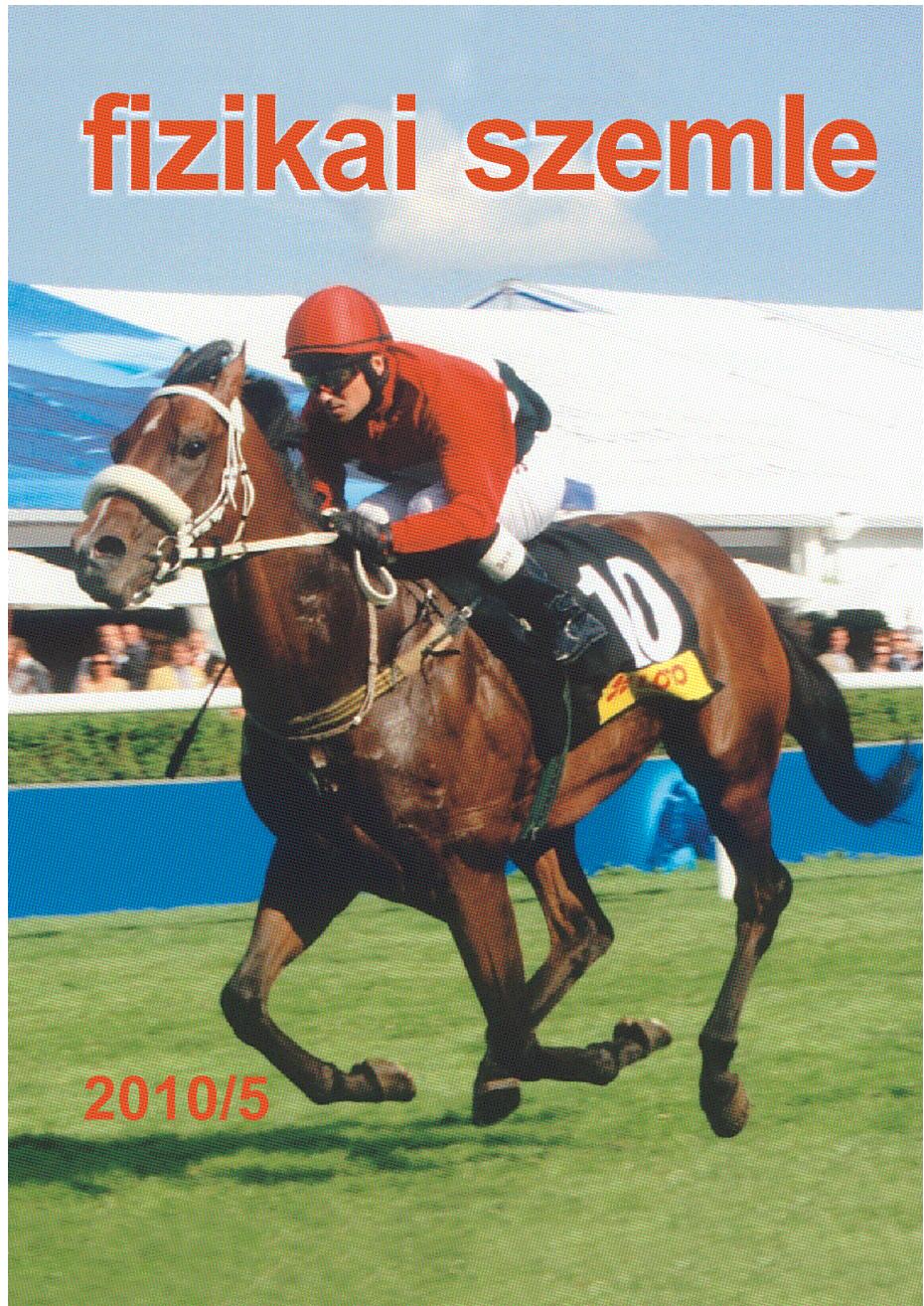
The coat pattern of cattle (*Bos primigenius*) has a remarkably large diversity ranging from homogeneous black and brown, through brown-white or black-white spotty, to homogeneous grey or white. These coat patterns are specific to species and races, and are the result of domestic breeding. The different coat patterns have some trivial advantages and disadvantages. The darkness of the coat influences the thermoregulation of the animal [1,2], for example: black or brown coats absorb sunlight much more than white or grey ones. The visibility of the animal depends strongly on the brightness and colour of the coat in contrast to the background. At a given background the coat pattern also influences the visual detectability such that a spotty coat makes the animal conspicuous against a homogeneous background, but can endow with camouflaging at a structured background, for instance, similar to what has been shown by a classical experiment in the moth *Biston betularia* [3,4]. During breeding the brightness, colour and spottiness of the coat in cattle and horses are usually of marginal importance and are the by-product of cross-breeding aiming to

maximize other economically more important characteristics of the animal, e.g. the milk or meat production, weather-proofness, or the shape or size of the animals.

It has been demonstrated that the tabanid load of horses can be reduced by a homogeneously bright (white or grey) coat [5]. The study demonstrated that white horses attract much less blood-sucking female members of the family Tabanidae (tabanids henceforward) than dark (black or brown) horses. This phenomenon was partly explained by the polarizing capacity of the horse's coat and the positive polarotaxis of tabanids. Tabanids lay their eggs onto plants or mud near water, and thus must find water for oviposition. Like aquatic insects in general [6,7,8,9,10], tabanids detect water by means of the horizontal polarization of light reflected from the water surface, thus they are attracted to horizontally polarized light [11]. The higher the degree of horizontal polarization of reflected light, the more polarotactic tabanids are attracted [12]. In [13] it was showed that female and male tabanids find water by the horizontally polarized water-reflected light, while the polarotaxis of female tabanids that serves

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Received 2 December 2009
Accepted 13 January 2010



Fizikai Szemle

MAGYAR FIZIKAI FOLYÓIRAT

A Matematikai és Természettudományi Értesítőt az Akadémia 1882-ben indította
A Matematikai és Physikai Lapokat Eötvös Loránd 1891-ben alapította

LX. évfolyam

5. szám

2010. május

A LOVAK FEHÉRSÉGÉNEK EGY NEM VÁRT ELŐNYE

A leginkább „böglyálló” ló depolarizáló fehér szőrű,
a fekete ló pedig szenvedi polarizáló szőrét

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Hegedűs Rámón, Gironai Egyetem, Számítógépes Látás és Robotika Csoport, Girona, Spanyolország
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Gerics Balázs, Szent István Egyetem, Anatómiai és Szövettani Tanszék, Budapest
Farkas Róbert, Szent István Egyetem, Parazitológiai és Állattani Tanszék, Budapest
Susanne Åkesson, Lundi Egyetem, Biológia Tanszék, Lund, Svédország

A febér lovak gyakran szenvednek az ultraibolya napsugárzással szembeni nagy érzékenységükkel fakadó rosszindulatú bőrrákban és látórendszeri betegségekben. Ráadásul a vadon elő febér lovakat a ragadozók könnyebben elejtik, mert febérsgük miatt kevésbé tudnak rejtőzködni, mint többet színtő fajtársuk. Nagyobb sebezhetőségek ellenére a febér lovakat az emberek évezredek óta nagybecsben tartják, éppen a természetben ritkásaknak miatt. Cikkünkben megmutatjuk, hogy a böglyök kevésbé vonzognak a febér lovakhoz, mint a többi színűekhez. A böglyök számos egészségügyi és gazdasági problémái okoznak az embereknek és állatoknak egyaránt, mivel nőstények betegségek körözött terjesztik miközött a gerincesek vérért szívják. Az így bizonyítuk, hogy a böglyök a vörzesszívre alkalmas gazdaállatot részben az annak testfelületéről visszavári poláros fény segítségével találják meg. A böglyök főként fekete és barna szőrű lovakhoz való vonzódása a pozitív polarotaxisukkal, vagyis az erősen és visszintesen poláros fénybe való vonzódásukkal magyarázható. Mivel a gazdaállat színe meghatározza a böglyöknek kifejezett vonzerejét is, ezáltal kibővíti a gazdaállat köröközök általi megterítődésére is. Habár kizárolag a böglyök és lovak közti vizuális kölcsönhatást vizsgáltuk, a jelentős nemzetközi visszhangot kiváltó eredményeink őrvényesek lehetnek a polarotaktikus böglyök más gazdaállataira is.

BLAHÓ M., HORVÁTH G., HEGEDŰS R., KRISKA GY., GERICS B., FARKAS R., S. ÅKESSON: A LOVAK FEHÉRSÉGÉNEK EGY NEM VÁRT ELŐNYE 145

Miért csíkos a zebra?

A poláros fényszennyezés csökkentésének trükkje

[3, 4] látott még napvilágot arra vonatkozóan, hogy milyen funkciói és esetleges evolúciós előnyei lehetnek a zebrák fekete-fehér csíkos mintázatainak:

- Látszólagos mérenővekedés. A csíkok, egy vizuális illúzió révén, nagyobbak láthatóak a zebráit a valóságos méreténél, ami könnyt jelenthet a ragadozókkal szembeni védekezés során.

- Láthatatlan csökkentési gyér fényszennyező. Gyengébb megvilágítási kölönnyek között (alkonyatkor, napjánban, holdfénnyen) a csíkok megnéhezethetik, hogy a zebraikat a ragadozók fölismejk.

- A mozgó csíkok látványára elkiáprázthatja a ragadozókat. A csordában menekülő zebraik ide-oda mozgó csíkjai megnéhezethetik a ragadozók számára a zebraegyedek elkülönítését.

- Rejtőzködés. Az csíkos kultakaró lehetővé teheti a zebraiknak, hogy észrevétele nem maradjanak természetes környezetükben a test határának nehezebb felfedezhetősége miatt. Az egyébként nem csíkos mintázú patás fajok többségével és a keifejezett nőstényeknél is megfigyelhető a hatékonyabb álcázást biztosító csíkos testmonstrum.

- Szociális előnyök. Mivel a csíkos kultakaró egyedi jellegzetességeket mutat, mint az emberi ujjlenyomat, a zebraik esetleg azonosítani tudják őket mintazáson alapján. E képesség különösen fontos lehet az anyával és csíkjaival kapcsolatban, vagy udvarláskor a hinek és nőstények közti kommunikációban.

- Az fizikai állapot jelzése. A sebesülések, sérülések vagy valamelyen körös elváltozás miatt kiakadó szabálytalanságok a csíkos mintázatban vizuálisan jelezhetők az egyetlenkorábban fizikai állapot (fim-szé), ami hatással lehet a párválasztásra.

- Hőszabályozás. A bőr általi zsírozás és a fekete csíkok elhelyezkedés összhangban áll egymással, miáltal a zsírszövetszökök egyfajta hőtároló szervének működtetme, ami szerepet játszik a test hőszabályozásában. Márásra, a fekete és a fehér csíkok eltérő mértékű fölmelegedése miatt a kultakaró fölött apró fél- és leszálló légiáramok alkulhatnak ki, melyeket fokozhat a hőleadás.

- Védelem a cecelyegek ellen. Egyes megfigyelések szerint a zebraik lehetővé teszik a vészről legyőzhetőeket a fehér csíkok mintázata. A cecelyegek vészválsákkal súlyos betegségek, többek közt az afrikai állatkörök körözötőjei tejetnek.

Roxton [3] és Caro [4] arra a következtetésre jutottak, hogy a hipotézis többséget semmiféle kísérleti adat nem támogatja át, miáltal még ma sem tudjuk, hogy miért alkalú ki a zebraik csíkos mintázata. Mindazonáltal, a legelőfordulóbb magyarázás szerint a csíkok védelmeknek a cecelyegek ellen.

Bögölyök és lovak

A nőstény bögölyöknek petéik érdeleséhez emlősök vérére van szükségek. Vérszívásukkal (2. ábra) számos veszélyes körözöző hordozói és



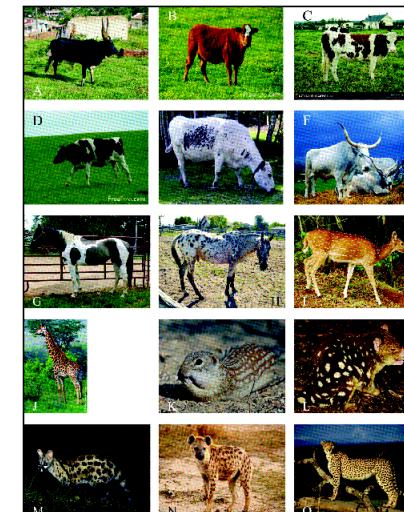
2. ábra. Barna ló vérét szívó nőstény bögöly (b) és a kibugyánó vérből lakkározó más legyek (c).

terjesszeti, emellett vérvázesést okoznak, fájdalmat és csipészüket pedig zaklik a legelő lovakat és szarvasmarhákat, ami jelentős gazdasági kárral (lassabb testförmén gyarapodással, csökkenettel tejszíntermeléssel) jár. Attól független, hogy a különböző bögölyfajoknak milyen a földrajzi eloszlása Afrika-szerte, e verszívó legek súlyos állatgeszteség-ügyi problémákat jelenthetnek a zebraiknak is.

A bögölyfajok vizel közelében rakják le pete-csomókat, lárvaik vízben vagy nedves talajban fejlődnek. Emiatt a kifejezett nőstények és hinek vonzódnak a vizszerzős poláros fényhez, mert a vízről viszavároddal ilyen fény alapján találják meg a vizet [6]. A bögölyök pozitív polarizációsának őt fontos funkciója van. (i) A nőstények száma kisebbül a jó petekő helyet, ahol a lárva a vízbe jutnál. (ii) Nagyobb eséllyel találnak a nőstények gazdálkodót, hiszen a társas nővényevők gyakran megtalálhatók az édesvíz mellett, hiszen a hőmérsékleten és a vízszinten is a hőmérséklet és a hőhatás is meghatározó faktor. (iii) Utaztatja a nőstények a vízelőhelyeket, ahol ihannak és hűtnek magukat. (iv) Mindekket nemről olyan helyre irányítja, ahol nagy vaksziniséggel egymásra találnak és pársozhatnak. (v) A bögölyök kevésbé vonzódnak a fehér, mint a sötét (fehér, barna) színű emberekkel, továbbá a szörzetről viszavároddal fény polarizációjára. Ez lehet az egyik oka annak, hogy a kultakaró foltos és csíkos mintázatai az emlősök körében meglehetősen elterjedtek, különösen a patásoknál, melyek többsége a bögölyök gazdálkodálat köztartozik.

A foltos kultakaró előnye

A szarvasmarhák kultakarójának mintázata változatos. Az általátenyészítők elsődleges célja a marhafajták gazdaságilag fontos tulajdon-színainak, mint a tej- és húshozam vagy a parazitákkal, vagy időjárásral szembeni ellenálló-képesség maximalizálása, miáltal a színezés színe és mintázata csak másodlagos szempont. Vérszívás közben a nőstény bögölyök súlyos betegségek körözötői vithetik át a gazdaállataikba, továbbá annyira zaklatják azokat, hogy nem tudnak legelnél, így a tej- és hústermelések drasztikusan csökkennek. Egy megfelelő színű és mintázatú kultakaró azonban minimalizálhatja a bögölyök támadásait, s ezáltal a gazdaállatot bizonyos előnyökhez juttathatja. Terepkísérletekben a foltok méretének s nagyságának és bögölyök gyakorolt vonzóképességének a kapcsolatát vizsgálták. Kiemutatjuk, hogy minden kisebbek a foltok és minél több van belőlük, annál kevésbé vonzó a foltos gazdálkálat a bögölyök számára, s mindebben nagy szerepet játszik a kultakaróról viszavároddal fény polarizációjá is. Ez lehet az egyik oka annak, hogy a kultakaró foltos és csíkos mintázatai az emlősök körében meglehetősen elterjedtek, különösen a patásoknál, melyek többsége a bögölyök gazdálkodálat köztartozik.



RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

Why horses wear white

Proc. R. Soc. B doi:10.1098/rspb.2009.2202 (2010)

White horses are more susceptible to skin cancer and predation than their darker kin, but their coats seem to protect them from another danger: pathogen-bearing horseflies.

Gábor Horváth at Eötvös University in Budapest and his colleagues tracked the landing frequency of horseflies on horses of different colours. The flies preferred black and brown horses. When the team covered horse models in transparent glue, more than 15 times as many horseflies stuck to dark models as to white ones.

The authors found that, unlike white horses, dark-coloured horses reflect polarized light, which horseflies can detect. A brown matt cloth attracted horseflies only if it was covered by a transparent, light-polarizing sheet, demonstrating that polarized light, not dark colour, draws the flies.



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Bug repellent. White horses have a tough time in the wild. They're prone to skin cancer, and they stick out to predators. But they do have one advantage: They attract far fewer blood-sucking horseflies than do brown or black horses. The reason has to do with physics, researchers report online 3 February in the *Proceedings of the Royal Society B*. The flies home in on polarized light—light whose electric field vibrates in a single direction—which a horse's glossy coat reflects in abundance. But a white horse's pale hide and hair also reflect large amounts of non-polarized light, scrambling the signal that otherwise says "I'm tasty" to hungry horseflies. (Photo: Photos.com)



If there was a 'Just So' story for how the zebra got its stripes, I'm sure that Rudyard Kipling would have come up with an amusing and entertaining camouflage explanation. But would he have come up with the explanation that Gábor Horváth and colleagues from Hungary and Sweden have: that zebra's stripes stave off blood-sucking insects (p. 736)?

Horseflies (tabanids) deliver nasty bites, carry disease and distract grazing animals from feeding. According to Horváth, these insects are attracted to horizontally polarized light because reflections from water are horizontally polarized and aquatic insects use this phenomenon to identify stretches of water where they can mate and lay eggs. However, blood-sucking female tabanids are also guided to victims by linearly polarized light reflected from their hides. Explaining that horseflies are more attracted to dark horses than to white horses, the team also points out that developing zebra embryos start out with a dark skin, but go on to

develop white stripes before birth. The team wondered whether the zebra's stripy hide might have evolved to disrupt these attractive dark skins and make them less appealing to voracious bloodsuckers, such as tabanids.

Travelling to a horsefly-infested horse farm near Budapest, the team tested how attractive these blood-sucking insects found black and white striped patterns by varying the width, density and angle of the stripes and the direction of polarization of the light that they reflected. Trapping attracted insects with oil and glue, the team found that the patterns attracted fewer flies as the stripes became narrower, with the narrowest stripes attracting the fewest tabanids.

The team then tested the attractiveness of white, dark and striped horse models. Suspecting that the striped horse would attract an intermediate number of flies between the white and dark models, the team was surprised to find that the striped model was the least attractive of all.

Finally, when the team measured the stripe widths and polarization patterns of light reflected from real zebra hides, they found that the zebra's pattern correlated well with the patterns that were least attractive to horseflies.

'We conclude that zebras have evolved a coat pattern in which the stripes are narrow enough to ensure minimum attractiveness to tabanid flies', says the team and they add, 'The selection pressure for striped coat patterns as a response to blood-sucking dipteran parasites is probably high in this region [Africa].'

10.1242/jeb.070880

Egri, Á., Blahó, M., Kriska, G., Farkas, R., Gyurkovszky, M., Åkesson, S. and Horváth, G. (2012). Polarotactic tabanids find striped patterns with brightness and/or polarization modulation least attractive: an advantage of zebra stripes. *J. Exp. Biol.* **215**, 738–745.

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Zoologger: Don't bite – how the zebra got its stripes

12:56 09 February 2012 by Wendy Zukerman
For similar stories, visit the Zoologger Topic Guide

Zoologger is our weekly column highlighting extraordinary animals – and occasionally other organisms – from around the world

Species: *Equus burchelli*, *E. grevyi*, *E. zebra*

Habitat: Open grassland areas and woodlands

Zebras are quite the communists. They graze together, groom each other and stay in packs to protect themselves from predators. And while some herds reportedly contain harems, a recent study observed peaceful and equal interactions amongst the sexes.

But it's not their egalitarian habits that define them, it's their distinctive black and white stripes, which for centuries have puzzled biologists. Now Adam Egri at Eötvös University in Budapest, Hungary, and colleagues have an answer: they believe zebras evolved stripes to protect themselves from blood-sucking insects.

The zebra is completely black as an early embryo, and white stripes only appear in a later embryonic stage, when the production of dark pigmentation is blocked. Each zebra has subtly different stripes, acting like nature's own barcode.

Charles Darwin wondered what purpose they served. A popular theory, both in the 19th century and today, is that zebras evolved striped coats as camouflage in tall grass. But, as Darwin noted, "the stripes cannot afford any protection in the open plains of South Africa".

Social stripes

More recently, biologists have observed that zebras don't attempt to conceal themselves by freezing in response to predators. Zoologist Desmond Morris wrote in his *Animal watching: A field guide to animal behaviour* that "compared to many hooved animals on the plains of Africa, they are remarkably mobile and noisy and never attempt to hide in cover".

Darwin suggested that zebras developed their unique stripes to recognise each other, which could be particularly important for male and female courtship. "A female zebra would not admit the advances of a male ass until he was painted so as to resemble a zebra," Darwin wrote.

Marlin How at the University of Queensland, Australia, agrees that the stripes have an obvious social function. "But it's possible they appeared for another reason and the social benefits came later."

How says he has unpublished evidence suggesting that the stripes evolved to confuse predators, giving zebras crucial time to escape. He analysed videos of zebras with a motion detection program that mimics how movement is encoded in the animal brain. Their stripe pattern generated a range of optical illusions which would baffle a predator, he says. This effect was particularly strong when the animals moved together as a herd.

Dark horse

Another suggestion is that the stripes create a visual illusion, which makes the zebra look bigger than it is. Or perhaps the stripes assist with thermoregulation. But there is little evidence to support these claims, so the evolutionary explanation for the zebra's stripes has remained murky.

Egri's team picked up on a theory first proposed in 1930 and backed up in 1981, when it was demonstrated that *biting tsetse flies* were least attracted to striped animal models, when compared to black or white models.



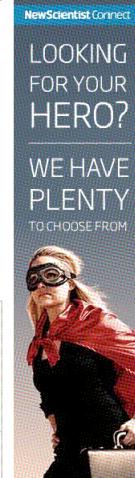
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16 February 2012

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Zebra Stripes Evolved to Repel Bloodsuckers?

National Geographic Daily News

Zebra Stripes Evolved to Repel Bloodsuckers?

To scientists' surprise, pattern optimally scramble vision.



Thin stripes—especially repellent to horseflies—protect zebras' delicate facial skin (file pic)

Photograph by Chris Gray, My Shot

Rachel Kaufman

for National Geographic News

Published February 9, 2012

Conventional wisdom says a zebra's black-and-white stripes help the animal in tall grass—the better to evade the colorblind predators. A new study says the pattern scrambles the vision of a tinier bloodsucking horsefly.

Horseflies, the females of which feed on blood, are attracted to polarized light—l oriented in a particular direction and that we experience as glare. This glare lures likely because it resembles light reflected off water, where they lay their eggs.

On horses, black fur reflects polarized light better than brown or white, as evolutionist Susanne Åkesson and colleagues found in a previous study.

The researchers therefore assumed that zebra coats, with their mixtures of light and dark stripes, help zebras to avoid being eaten by predators.

BBC
NATURE

Wednesday 29 July 2009 | Issue 2153

Zebra stripes evolved to keep bay

By Victoria Gill
Science reporter, BBC News



"A team of the sleek, noisy herds was by instinct told very quickly when their characteristically black-and-white stripes made them the subject of a visual hunt, sending anxiety up the reptiles' tails and causing a 'herd panic' to save their hides."

The notion, they say, can lead about as many ways as looking!

They report in the journal of Experimental Biology that after Africa's famous zebra 'herd panic' to the lion, they may have been in the lead to develop stripes.

Not all stripes are the same, though. Some are vertical, some are horizontal, some are zig-zag, some are broken, some are continuous, others are more like dashed lines.

Now, biologists at the University of Exeter say they can characterize patterns like this which make it easier to distinguish between different types of stripes.

It's because the first step in the evolution of stripes is to identify what makes them visually distinct from each other.

For example, with the exception of the world's last coal, and, thanks to levers in the brain, the zebra's stripes are very clearly defined. They are horizontal, they are continuous, they are black and white, they have a very low density of stripes.

Others are much more difficult to identify. For example, in the case of the zebra's stripes, they are vertical, they are broken, they are irregular, they are black and white, they have a very high density of stripes.

There is a whole host of other patterns, though, which are not as clear cut. Some are horizontal, some are vertical, some are zig-zag, some are broken, some are continuous, others are more like dashed lines.

And, as the researchers found, the more visually similar two patterns are, the less likely it is that one will be able to distinguish between them.

Using a computer program which would mimic the eye of a lion, the team tested whether different stripe patterns could be distinguished.

They found that the most visually similar patterns were those with the highest density of stripes, and several bands of stripes - a 'zebra-like' stripe and one of the fields of horse patterns, for example.

Not just the size of the bands and counted the number of times that each stripe 'won' a competition.

For each pattern tested, the team also noted how many times it was beaten by another pattern, and then calculated the percentage of times that a pattern lost to another.

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"We've got a greater chance of survival if we're not confused by other patterns," says Dr Mathieu Goriely, who led the research. "This is what we call 'the cost of being confused'.

What they found was that, even without the stripes, the best approach they used to identify them, was to look at the stripes, and then compare them with other stripes.

They used this method to identify a zebra-like pattern, the zebra-like stripe and one of the fields of horse patterns, for example, and one black-and-white striped, like a zebra.

The researchers found that the higher the density of stripes, and the more horizontal they were, the more likely it was that the stripes would be seen as zebra-like.

Dr Mathieu Goriely, an ecological biologist from the University of Exeter, doesn't know for sure why stripes are better than other patterns for the fastest predators. "Fewer less than the usual number of stripes, or a different proportion of light and dark areas," he said.

"We've got a greater chance of survival if we're not confused by other patterns," says Dr Mathieu Goriely, who led the research. "This is what we call 'the cost of being confused'.

The results of the study, which involved 100 different patterns, are published in the journal *Experimental Biology*.

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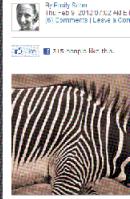
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Discovery News - Animal News - How the Zebra Got Its Stripes

HOW THE ZEBRA GOT ITS STRIPES

Dole black and white stripes might help zebras evade disease-carrying flies but that's not the only benefit.



A zebra's bold pattern of black and white stripes reflects light in a way that may help it evade disease-carrying flies.

The GIST

- Zebras' black and white stripes help to evade the bites of disease-carrying flies.
- Disease can help explain stripes by color-coding animals and people from insects that are attracted to polarized light.
- Researchers believe the way flies are attracted to bright light provides evidence for the theory of stripes.

For more than a century, Rudyard Kipling's "Just So" stories have captivated children (and adults) with the fantastical explanations of how animals came to look the way they do.

While Kipling addressed the zebra's coat and the camel's hump, he never explained the zebra's stripes. A team of researchers from Lund University in Sweden, however, has come up with a scientific explanation for why stripes can form on the zebra if the could be.

"We have been breeding animals at a basic level for thousands of years, but we still don't understand the mechanisms of coat colors or patterns," said Gustavsson. As an evolutionary biologist at Lund University in Sweden, Gustavsson studies the development of stripes in zebra. He believes that stripes can form on the zebra if the could be.

Since then, there have been individual zebra stripe researchers, who have been looking for a common denominator, color against lions who can't pick out an individual zebra in a field of stripes, or predators who can't see them as the patterned ones. But, until now, no one has been able to explain exactly what makes stripes.

According to Gustavsson, insects, like flies, when looking at a zebra's coat, see alternating black and white stripes as a series of horizontal bands. This is because the stripes are oriented vertically, which makes it difficult for the insects to see the stripes.

Insects, like flies, are attracted to a kind of linear polarized light, which causes them to change their orientation when they are exposed to it. This is why, for example, when you sit in front of a television screen, you can't see the image clearly.

Since zebras are both dark and light, the researchers found that these insects prefer vertical light to horizontal light. They are also very well adapted to flies. In fact, they produce a series of chemicals with so-called "triglycerides" that cover the zebra's coat and zebra-like plastic models that were black or brown, white or beige.

Every day for a few weeks during the summer at a Norwegian horse farm, they drew to their pasture color patterns on the ground, allowing the flies to land on them. The results showed that the insects avoided the stripes.

According to Gustavsson, the researchers have found that flies can't land on the black stripes on the dorsal side of a zebra's coat, while hundreds were on the black objects in some cases. Surprisingly, the insects often preferred to land on the white stripes, even though they were more numerous. More than the number of flies. Many flies landed on black stripes than on white stripes.

When the researchers made the black stripes wider than a zebra's leg, insects attracted more flies. Researchers confirmed that the most polarized surface attracted the most insects.

NEWS: History of the "WINE Child"

Given the importance of stripes, it's not surprising that zebras get by avoiding fly bites that could kill them before they even hatch. A recent paper offers a strong argument that stripes developed to protect the embryo against insects, insects and dust mites.

As safe as the new idea is, though, the story is far from over. Tim Caro, a behavioral ecologist at the University of California, Davis, thinks that when we look at individual flies, we might find other factors.

If stripes are so helpful, for example, why aren't European horses striped? According to Caro, studies have yet to consider the environment in which the horse is born. If a zebra is born in a coastal area, it's more likely to be black and white.

Zebra stripes are not unique to zebras. They are found on the coats of other animals, including giraffes, lions, and the bongo antelope, among others, that escaped my list of "Zazzle Canada's" "Giraffe With Stripes" SRL statuette. It's interesting to note that a zebra's stripes are very faint in early life, as they develop a distinct and sharp pattern.

There's a zebra border and instant confirmation badge to this kind of research! Can I? And can I? We've become increasingly banal, and computer-focused rather than talking values in the words of Sunday afternoon. After all, these horses clearly you can capture them in Instagrams are going to be as simple as peanut butter.

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