



Prof. Edith Fanta (1943–2008)

The date 7 May 2008 will be sadly remembered for the death of Prof. Edith Fanta following a courageous fight against cancer. She will be very much missed by her family, Joana, André and Pedro, friends, colleagues and the scientific community to which she belonged and gave the utmost of her knowledge and personality.

Edith obtained her Masters and PhD degrees in Zoology at the University of São Paulo. She carried out post-doctoral research on fish behaviour, respiration and water quality at the Institute of Radiation and Environment in Munich, Germany, and at the University of Bristol in the UK. She took up a position at the Fisheries Institute, Department of Aquatic Biology of the Agricultural Secretary of São Paulo State, before moving to the Federal University of Paraná State (UFPR) to become a Professor in the Center of Marine Studies, later joining the Department of Cell Biology.

She participated in the Brazilian Antarctic Program from its inception in 1983, including attending the ceremony of inauguration of the Commander Ferraz Brazilian Antarctic Station on King George Island. In 1984 she assembled a research group that established the laboratories, and initiated biological research activities, within the aims of the Brazilian Antarctic Program. Since then Edith carried out research on Antarctic fish, mostly in fish behaviour, physiology and morphology, coordinating a research group on integrative fish biology and environmental impact. In these activities, in addition to the research she carried out in collaboration with her group, she was directly responsible for the orientation of 103 undergraduate students in scientific initiation, as well as 30 post-graduate Masters degree students and 8 doctoral-level candidates.

During her scientific career she published 58 peer-reviewed papers and 295 abstracts in the different symposia she participated in. In the course of her research and other academic activities, through her participation in the Graduate Programs in Zoology, Cell Morphology and Ecology at Federal University of Paraná and in the Veterinarian Sciences Graduate Program at Pontifical Catholic University of Paraná, she developed a high profile in Brazil and globally as a leader in the field of Antarctic science.

She became Chair of the Scientific Committee of the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) in 2005 and was re-elected to serve a second two-year term in 2006. She will always be remembered within CCAMLR for her dedication to science-based conservation and management of Antarctic marine resources as well as her careful, considerate and very successful chairing of the Scientific Committee. She also represented Brazil in the SCAR Life Sciences Standing Scientific Group (formerly SCAR-Biology), operated as secretary of its Evolution in the Antarctic (EVOLANTA), and was latterly a member of the SCAR Evolution and Biodiversity in the Antarctic program.

As we remember our much-loved friend and recall her benevolence, enthusiasm and tenderness, we feel a deep sense of loss but are confident that through the research she initiated and the students she mentored, her legacy will live long into the future.

Helena Gonçalves Kawall
Centro Universitário Campos de Andrade
Cidade Universitária – Núcleo de Pesquisa
R. João Scuissiato, 1
CEP: 80310-310 Curitiba, PR, Brazil

Metry Bacila
Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Paraná
Centro de Ciências Biológicas e da Saúde
Rua Imaculada Conceição, 1155
CEP: 80215-901 Curitiba, PR, Brazil

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