



III Latin American symposium of polychaetes (III SILPOLY, Isla Margarita, Venezuela)

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In 2006, some Latin-American researchers materialized a project that was propounded a while ago as a diffusion event, and contact alternative between researchers and students dedicated to the study of the biology, ecology, biotechnology and/or phylogenetic of polychaetes. This initiative, named SIMPÓSIO LATINO-AMERICANO DE POLYCHAETA (SILPOLY), allowed maximizing encounter possibilities between them because it reduced the complicated logistics of assisting to international conferences that are held every four years at several countries around the world. This project allowed the exchange of knowledge and opinions in a more accurate way with other colleagues involved in those research areas, as well as tightening friendship bonds between the participants. Up to date, three editions of the SILPOLY have been organized.

The I SILPOLY was held that same year, 2006, in Brazil, at Centro de Biologia Marinha (CEBIMar/USP, Universidade de Sao Paulo at São Sebastião, Sao Paulo), organized by Cecilia Zacagnini Amaral (IB/UNICAMP), Paulo da Cunha Lana (CEM/UFPR) and Alvaro Esteves Migotto (CEBIMar/USP). In this event 65 studies were presented by researchers representing 8 countries: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, United States, Mexico, Wales, Russia and Venezuela. Within this event, a "Phylogenetic Systematic" course was dictated by

Dr. Kirk Fitzhugh and Dr. André Garraffoni, and magistral conferences were given by Dr. Kristian Faulchald and Dr. Edmundo Nonato.

Three years later, in 2009, the II Symposium was organized at Mar del Plata, Argentina, by Rodolfo Elias (UNMdP), Claudia Bremec (INIDEP), Sandra Obenat (UNMdP) and Eduardo Vallarino (UNMdP). In this occasion 84 investigations were presented, from countries such as Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Russia, Spain, United States, Uruguay and Venezuela.

Motivated by the results obtained from these symposia, that allowed the establishment of background and updated information exchange between different researchers from Latin-American countries, the idea to organize the III SILPOLY in Venezuela raised. This event was held in 2012 at Margarita Island, in which 75 studies were presented, by colleagues representing 7 countries: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Spain, Uruguay and Venezuela. In this occasion the event was organized by three researchers of different national universities from Venezuela: Carmen Rodríguez (Universidad de Carabobo, FACYT-Biología), Oscar Díaz Díaz (Instituto Oceanográfico de Venezuela - Universidad de Oriente) and David Bone (Universidad Simón Bolívar). Seventy-one contributions were presented, including oral and poster presentarions, and lectures at the beginning of

each day were given by prominent researchers. During this III SILPOLY two pre-conference courses were offered: "Pollution Biological Markers in Polychaetes: Basis and Enforcements" by Edgar Zapata Vivenes, from the Escuela de Ciencias-Universidad de Oriente, Venezuela and "Bioindicators: organisms use as pollution indicators", by Rodolfo Elías, from Instituto de Investigaciones Marinas y Costeras (IIMCyC), Departamento de Ciencias Marinas, Mar del Plata, Argentina.

One of the main achievements of the Venezuelan event is represented by the present volume of PANAMJAS, in which 8 scientific contributions are published, all of them presented and discussed at the symposium. Another achievement was the unification of the two Latin American networks of specialists dedicated to the

study of this zoological group of invertebrates (Polychaeta, from Brazil and Poly-America, from Mexico), now unified as Poly-America. This will definitely expand the exchange of literature and information among colleagues, and promote the collaboration between research teams from different countries.

The fourth edition of SILPOLY is scheduled for 2015 at Monterrey, Mexico, which will be organized by Jesús Ángel de León González (Facultad de Ciencias Biológicas, Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León) and colleagues. We all hope that the already established links will motivate the addition and assistance of new researchers to future events, stressing their importance, as much more research is needed in this Marine Ecology area that has so much potential in our American continent.

