

MAGDALENA SZAROWSKA (1952–2013) – OBITUARY

Our colleague, Magdalena Szarowska, passed away on the 11th of June 2013 in Cracow after a long illness. She was a well-known and outstanding malacologist, frequently publishing her papers on the pages of the *Folia Malacologica*. Her great achievements and her large contribution to malacology, especially to the knowledge of the Balkan Rissooidea, place her in the history of this scientific discipline. She was a widely respected expert in the rissooid genetic structure, phylogeny and evolution. We would like to honour her memory with this commemorative obituary recalling her life and achievements.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Magdalena Szarowska was born on the 28th of May 1952 in Sosnowiec. After finishing a local elementary school, she continued her education at the Emilia Plater High School in Sosnowiec, graduating in 1971. She then studied biology at the Faculty of Biology and Earth Sciences of Jagiellonian University in 1971–1976. She specialised in zoology at the Department of Hydrobiology where she defended her master's thesis on oligochaetes of the Biała Przemsza River basin. After graduation, Magdalena began her professional career as a trainee and, soon after, as a specialist at the Experimental Station of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Gołysz-Zaborze (Bielskie voivodeship). While she was employed there, she studied the benthos of fish ponds and its nutritional value for carp, however, at the same time she also participated – outside working hours and without payment – in the research on earthworms conducted by the Department of Hydrobiology of Jagiellonian University. She returned to the University in 1978, to start Ph. D. studies at the Faculty of Biology and Earth Sciences under supervision of Professor Ryszard Sowa. She defended her doctoral thesis „*Ekologia skąposzczetów rzeki Białej Przemszy na stanowiskach w różnym stopniu zmienionych w efekcie antropopresji [Ecology of oligochaetes of the Biała Przemsza River at localities variously changed under anthropopressure]*”, obtaining her doctor's degree on the 23rd of October 1985.



Before her Ph. D., Magdalena Szarowska completed an internship at the Institute of Plant Protection in Poznań. Then for a brief period she worked at the Cracow branch of the Institute of Environmental Engineering (October 1982–April 1983) and at the Primary School no. 32 in Cracow (September–November 1983), and subsequently as a teacher at the Private Secondary School of Piarist in Cracow, where she was employed till 1988. In 1988–1992 she was employed at the Publishing House of AGH University of Science and Technology in Cracow and then, in 1992, returned to Jagiellonian University. As a curator she worked at the Zoological Museum to get a position of adjunct [associate professor] at the Department of Malacology when it was established in 1997. The organisation of the ex-

hibition of the shell collection, donated to Jagiellonian University by Bolesław Rączka from Canada, became her great success and achievement, for which in 1993 she was given an award by the Rector of the University. The exhibition was next organised at the Zoological Museum. Dr. Szarowska organised also a laboratory of molecular techniques within the Department of Malacology. She got the scientific degree of doctor habilitatus on the 29th of May 2009, based on the dissertation “Molecular phylogeny, systematics and morphological character evolution in the Balkan Risssooidea (Caenogastropoda)”, published in the *Folia Malacologica* 14(3): 99–168, 2006.

Dr. hab. Magdalena Szarowska was in charge of two scientific projects granted by the State Committee for Scientific Research (Ministry of Science and Higher Education) and was the main contractor in another eight. Based on the students’ survey of teaching quality, she was awarded the highest ranking teacher’s prize by the Rector of Jagiellonian University.

SCIENTIFIC ACHIEVEMENTS

Dr. hab. Magdalena Szarowska produced over 100 scientific papers, mainly original, published in scientific journals (77), among which 22 were on the list of Journal Citation Reports, others – in the main malacological journals. She participated in many malacological congresses and conferences, so the list of her publications includes also several abstracts of conference presentations (23).

Magdalena’s first studies concerned oligochaetes and therefore her first papers dealt with oligochaete life cycles and faunistics. Since 1990, most of her publications were devoted to different aspects of malacology. In the beginning she dealt with shell structure, but soon her research focused on genetic structure and taxonomy with the use of electrophoretic analyses of allozymes. Among other topics, it dealt with the metapopulation structure and gene flow in *Arianta arbustorum*, *Chondrina clienta*, *Bradybaena fruticum* and *Clausilia parvula*. She participated in research of the genetic structure and species distinctness within the genus *Melanopsis* in Israel. A series of papers devoted to Viviparidae, published in 1995–1997 in the *Malakologische Abhandlungen des Staatlichen Museum der Tierkunde Dresden* and in the *Journal of Zoological Systematics and Evolutionary Research*, was of special

significance since the papers were among the few Polish publications cited in the monographs of Viviparidae, published world-wide. Most of Magdalena’s articles, published in 1997–2013, dealt with molecular genetics and phylogeny, systematics, species diversity and variation. They mostly concerned the taxonomy of Risssooidea, mainly from the Balkans. No less than 20 of Magdalena’s papers concern taxonomic and phylogenetic problems of the genus *Bythinella*. She discovered a differentiation quite different from that expected and generally recognised (suggesting a stepping-stone model, as opposed to infinite island). Her habilitation thesis dealt with molecular phylogeny, systematics and evolution in the Balkan Risssooidea. Based on the parallel use of morphological and molecular characters, Dr. hab. Magdalena Szarowska obtained reliable data on the relationships of these incredibly diverse snails, which are very difficult to study because of their small size. She examined molecularly nearly all of the 33 genera of the superfamily. Moreover, she analysed the morphology of their shell, both embryonic and teleoconch, the variation of the colour pattern on the body, the internal organ structure (with particular emphasis on the structure of reproductive systems). Due to her comprehensive studies, Magdalena verified the taxonomic value of morphological characters against the results of molecular studies. Based on the obtained results, she suggested several variants of phylogenetic relationships among the studied genera, shedding new light on the phylogeny of Risssooidea. These studies were later expanded and developed in a number further publications from 2007–2013.

Dr. hab. Magdalena Szarowska only rarely participated in our annual malacological seminars. However, her contributions were always very important. We remember her as a quiet person who nevertheless always spoke passionately about her research. She was a nice, friendly colleague. Her death makes us very sad and we shall always miss her.

The members of the editorial board of the *Folia Malacologica* express their deepest sympathy to Professor ANDRZEJ FALNIOWSKI. We also thank Professor FALNIOWSKI for sharing materials which enabled us to prepare this obituary.

Editor-in-chief
on behalf of the editors

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1979

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1985

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1987

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1990

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1991

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1992

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1993

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1995

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1997

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- FALNIOWSKI A., **SZAROWSKA M.** A new species of *Daphniola* Radoman, 1973 (Gastropoda: Hydrobiidae) from Greece. Folia Malacol. 8: 181–188.
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2006

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TAXA DESCRIBED BY MAGDALENA SZAROWSKA OR MAGDALENA SZAROWSKA WITH CO-AUTHORS

GENERA:

Agrafia Szarowska et Falniowski, 2011

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Radomaniola Szarowska, 2006 (replacement name for *Orientalina* Radoman, 1978)

SPECIES:

Agrafia wiktoria Falniowski et Szarowska, 2011

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Bythinella viseuiana Falniowski, Szarowska et Sirbu, 2009

Daphniola louisi Falniowski et Szarowska, 2000

Graecoarganiella parnassiana Falniowski et Szarowska, 2011

TAXA DEDICATED TO MAGDALENA SZAROWSKA

Bythinella szarowskiae Glöer, 2013