

A word from the Guest Editor

Dear readers

It is my great pleasure to introduce this volume of *Acta Botanica Croatica* dedicated to the 8th Central European Diatom Meeting (8th CEDM). The 8th CEDM was organized by Croatian Botanical Society and held from April 10 to April 13, 2014, at the University of Zagreb. As guest editor of this volume, I would like to express my gratitude to the authors who supported the volume with their contributions, as well as to the referees who applied their professional expertise to review those contributions. The results of this excellent and stimulating collaboration are presented in this volume.

It was at the 6th Central European Diatom Meeting in Innsbruck, 2012 that Professor Eugen Rott suggested to Dr Nenad Jasprica that the Algology Section of Croatian Botanical Society should host a symposium. I would like to thank Dr Nenad Jasprica for accepting this invitation and suggesting to the Algology group, Faculty of Science, University of Zagreb and the Croatian Botanical Society that it should host the symposium. We were honoured to obtain this opportunity. The organization of an international symposium is extremely challenging, and I would like especially to thank Dr Nenad Jasprica and Dr Regine Jahn for sharing their experience and expertise in leading the organization committee, as well for being there through all the challenges. Without their help the symposium would not have been so successful. I would also like to thank the group from the Ruđer Bošković Institute, Laboratory for Processes in the Marine Ecosystem, Rovinj for accepting the invitation to join the organizing committee and for their devotion to the process. Together we created a great team and without the help of each one of us, it would not have been possible. Thank you all for this adventure through which all of us have grown as scientists, group members and leaders.

The 8th CEDM was organized at the University of Zagreb, to which we are grateful for support with all the facilities and for being such great hosts. At the opening ceremony the participants were welcomed with opening remarks by Dean Amir Hamzić, Faculty of Science, University of Zagreb, Rector Aleksa Bjeliš, University of Zagreb, Staša Skenzić, Head of the Office for International Cooperation at Ministry of Science, Education and Sports of the Republic of Croatia and the Mayor of Zagreb Milan Bandić. I had, as Symposium Chair, the honour to declare the symposium open.

A total of 72 participants representing 17 countries, mostly European, but also from the USA, Japan and Mexico attended the 8th CEDM and contributed with 4 plenary lectures, 17 oral and 38 poster presentations. Presentations were assigned to two categories – the morphology, taxonomy and phylogeny of diatoms and the ecology, paleoecology and use of diatoms in monitoring. During the symposium, a round table entitled »A cellular model of ecosystem functioning (Probing aquatic ecosystems)« was moderated by Dr Martin Pfannkuchen from the Ruđer Bošković Institute, CIM, Rovinj. Added value was imparted to the symposium by the microscope and book exhibitions of the sponsors. On the last day of the symposium an excursion to the Plitvice Lakes National Park was organized; the participants had the pleasure not just to enjoy the amazing beauty of nature, but also the chance to investigate the diatoms of the National Park.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to the sponsors of the symposium: the Croatian Ministry of Science and Sports; the Zagreb Tourist Board; the Croatian Environmental Protection and Energy Efficiency Fund; NP Plitvice Lakes; the University of Zagreb, Faculty of Science, Department of Biology; Koeltz Scientific Books, Koenigstein, Germany; Zeiss; Inel; Algoritam; ETS Medical and Microlux.



Special thanks are due to Mirela Gašpar and her team from PBZ Card travel agency, the official partner of the symposium, for their excellent and highly professional support.

Thanks to Renata Horvat for setting up and maintaining the official web page, as well as for the technical support that she provided. It was highly appreciated. Many thanks to Adam Maguire for designed the symposium logo.

A warm thank you goes to all the members of organization committee and Symposium support group, colleagues from the Algae group from the University of Zagreb, Faculty of Science, Ruđer Bošković Institute, Laboratory for Processes in the Marine Ecosystem, CIM, Rovinj and the Institute for Marine and Coastal Research in Dubrovnik, as well as to the students from University of Zagreb, Faculty of Science for their support, team work and devotion to the main goal. The 8th CEDM organization was a joint project and because of the great team work and devotion the symposium was a big success. I do hope that all the participants enjoyed not only the scientific part of the symposium, but also all the warm welcome to Zagreb through social events.

The 8th Central European Diatom Meeting included 3 very intensive days, with excellent lectures and poster presentations as well as discussions and a less formal day at the Plitvice Lakes National Park. New collaboration was established and previous relationships extended. I hope that this volume of Acta Botanica Croatica will not only have scientific value but be a fitting and pleasant reminder of the 8th CEDM.

Zrinka Ljubešić

Chair of the 8th Central European Diatom Meeting
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