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| <i>In memoriam</i> FLORICA PORUMB (<i>Nicolae C. Papadopol</i>) | “Cercetări Marine” Issue no. 48 Pages 202-210 | 2018 |
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***In memoriam* FLORICA PORUMB**
(27.11.1928 - 7.06.2018)



Earlier this summer, on June 7, 2018, Dr. Florica PORUMB, a researcher of great professional prestige, well-known in the Black Sea and Mediterranean area, sadly passed away.

We lost a wonderful person, an example of dedication to knowing the marine fauna, 7 years after the death of her beloved husband, the reputed ichthyologist Dr. Ioan PORUMB (1925-2011), with whom she made a couple of great value in the historiography of the Romanian marine research.

She was born, 90 years ago, on 27 November 27 1928, in Caracal. She attended the general school in Caracal and Piatra Olt, and then the high school in Craiova, at the reputed "Elena Cuza" highschool, which she graduated in 1947. She later studied in Cluj, at the "Babeş-Bolyai" University, Faculty of Biology, specializing in zoology, a faculty that she graduated in 1952, with a diploma of merit.

Her excellent results as a student allowed her to access a post in higher education at the Faculty of Fishing - Fisheries in Constanta, a newly established university institution.

In 1953, in Constanta, she married her colleague, then assistant professor Ioan PORUMB.

Since 1953, she joined the researchers of Marine Zoological Station - Agigea / "Al. I. Cuza" University of Iasi, together with her husband, until 30 March 1970, the moment of establishment of the Romanian Marine Research Institute - Constanta, by merging the pre-existing marine research institutes, where she continued her activity.

In 1986, according to the law, she retired, but remained, together with her husband the beneficiaries of a special office reserved in the institute, where they continued their scientific work until the year 2000, when they finally retired, becoming casual guests of the great family of marine research.

Florica PORUMB's entire professional activity was devoted to the in-depth knowledge of the Black Sea zooplankton, with incursions into the Mediterranean Sea, but also to the West Indies in the waters of the Mozambican sector.

Her good knowledge of the secondary level of the Pontic ecosystem, by

excellence of the productive trophic base, of high importance in the life cycle of gregarious pelagic fish, object of the fishery exploitation, allowed her to elaborate and support a documented doctoral thesis, entitled "Research on the seasonal dynamics and nictimeral variations of the of the main species of pelagic copepods in the Romanian Black Sea waters". The thesis was defended in 1975, awarding her the title of Doctor in Biological Sciences.

The scientific coordination of the dissertation was provided by the academician prof. dr. Mihai BĂCESCU, eminent trainer of the Romanian Marine Ecology School, well acquainted with the world of marine crustaceans.

Her doctoral thesis, as well as her husband's, the reputed ichthyologist Ioan PORUMB, was presented by the academician Mihai BĂESCESCU, as well as the merits of their in-depth research, the fruit of a sustained research activity, of continuity and a sound scientific background.

Throughout her career, Dr. Florica PORUMB occupied a series of hierarchical positions, which we synthesize below:

- 1952-1953, **chief junior lecturer** at the Faculty of Fishing and Fisheries of Constanta, Department of Biology, Subject Hydrobiology;
- 1953-1956, **university lecturer**, "Prof. I. Borcea" Marine Zoological Station - Agigea / "Al. I. Cuza" University - Iași;
- 1955-1956, **scientific researcher**, cumulative function at the Hydrobiology Commission of the Romanian Academy;
- 1956-1961, **scientific researcher**, "Prof. I. Borcea" Marine Zoological Station - Agigea / "Al. I. Cuza" University - Iași;
- 1961-1962, **senior scientific researcher**, "Prof. I. Borcea" Marine Zoological Station - Agigea / "Al. I. Cuza" University - Iași;
- 1962-1970, **head of the plankton research department**, "Prof. I. Borcea" Marine Zoological Station - Agigea / "Al. I. Cuza" University - Iași;
- 1970-1975, **scientific researcher**, Romanian Marine Research Institute Constanța;
- 1975-1987, **senior scientific researcher**, Romanian Marine Research Institute Constanța.

Throughout her activity at RMRI, she led the implementation of programs, projects and research objectives, she was member of the Scientific Council, and in 1977-1979 she served as **Head of the Ecology, Cultures and Acclimation Laboratory**.

We must mention that after 1953 the collaboration with the Faculty of Fishing and Fisheries ceased due to its relocation to Galati, within the local Polytechnic Institute, which will later become the "Lower Danube" University.

The transition to the Romanian Marine Research Institute of Constanta in 1970 caused, by bureaucratic resettlement operations, the return to the position of scientific researcher and later, in 1975, she was advanced as senior scientific researcher on the basis of a competition examination. It was a relatively late, but well-deserved repairing act, which also benefited her husband.

Researcher with vocation, with an encyclopaedic training in the field of marine sciences, Mrs. Florica PORUMB became, through perseverance, continuity

and exceptional work force, one of Romania's best specialists in the knowledge of marine zooplankton.

She carefully studied the evolution of zooplankton's structure and productivity, the secondary level of organization of the Pontic ecosystem, in relation to the dynamics of the environmental conditions, phytoplankton status, seasonal and day-to-night changes, from one climatic year to another.

Her research mainly concerned the productive zooplankton, as the trophic base for the tertiary level, of gregarious pelagic fish populations, but she was also interested in other zooplankton components, including jellyfish and benthic invertebrates.

Together with her husband, Dr. Ioan PORUMB, she developed a methodology for the investigation of trophic relations at the level of fish species of interest in exploitation, field in which they elaborated reference works.

This latter aspect enabled the development of fishery forecasts and many of these researches were found in the materials developed for the use of the Black Sea fishing fleet.

In this regard, she paid particular attention to the exceptional development of the marine plankton during 1970 - 1985, the causes that induced this development and the effects felt by the ecosystem.

The close monitoring of the zooplankton allowed the identification of 4 new species of Monstrillidae for the Romanian marine waters, two new species of jellyfish, namely *Rathkea octopunctata* and *Sarsia tubulosa*. Her works document the presence of *Verruca* larvae (pedunculate cirripeds), two new species of copepods, *Modiolicola insignis* and *Septosa cuenoti*, both in the paleal cavity of the mussel, along with the adults of *Saculina carcinii*, parasites on decapod crustaceans.

Dr. Florica PORUMB's research was extended throughout the area of national maritime competence, from the coastal zone to the broader offshore area, bounded to the east by the isobath of 200 m.

Due to the prestige she enjoyed in the scientific world, her seriousness and professional competence, her encyclopaedic formation, she was often requested as part of multidisciplinary research.

In this respect, she collaborated with the team led by Dr. Octavian ȘERBĂNESCU, a team specialized in the surveillance and prevention of marine pollution. These collaborations allowed her to highlight the impact of detritus generated by the excessive development of phytoplankton, of the species *Noctiluca scintillans*, some bacteria and microscopic fungi.

Her professional skills and the good knowledge of the Mediterranean zooplankton determined her presence, together with her husband, on board the B22 "Danube Delta" research vessel during a cruise held in 1975-1976 in the Libyan maritime space, along with a strong research team of the institute.

Personally, I had the opportunity to collaborate directly with Dr. Florica PORUMB in processing and interpreting the data of the research mission carried out in 1980-1981 by the B22 "Negoiu" vessel in Western India (FAO 51), in the Mozambican area of competence. This collaboration allowed me a series of pertinent conclusions about the trophic base accessible to the copepod species in the region, with the difficulties induced in the physiology of fish stocks marked by food

shortages, in the formation and maintenance of the fish agglomerations, confirming once again the valences and the seriousness of the research performed by Dr. Florica PORUMB.

Dr. Florica PORUMB has always been a researcher with a thorough knowledge of the specialized literature, well-known nationally, but also abroad, in the Pontic and Mediterranean areas, often quoted in the literature.

A skilled user of information resources and owner, along with Dr. Ioan PORUMB, of an important bibliographic base, together with her lifetime experience in the world of marine investigations, all this allowed her to draw up one of her most valuable works, namely the history of marine research in Romania, at the Black Sea, a great bibliographical contribution, published in 2000, in a special issue of the journal "Recherches Marines"/NIMRD.

Above all, Dr. Florica PORUMB was a genuine francophone intellectual, with a remarkable fluency in speech, with elevated, elegant, colorful phrases.

I had the opportunity to witness some of her meetings with French-speaking guests and I was deeply impressed by her skills in French, which she spoke in a prominent academic manner.

She started her career as a lecturer at the Faculty of Fishing and Fisheries in 1952-1953 and continued this vocation in a friendly environment at the "Prof. I. Borcea" Marine Zoological Station - Agigea, guiding the groups of students who came to the summer practice or for the dissertations in the field, activities that continued throughout her stay in Agigea until 1980.

Classic, elegant in her professional language, slightly pedantic, she imposed herself in front of the audience, during her lectures and participating in conferences, workshops, paper sessions etc.

She was a member of the International Committee for the Exploration of the Mediterranean, the Plankton Commission, since 1959.

In Romania, Dr. Florica PORUMB was member of the Romanian Academy of Scientists, an honorary member of the Romanian Naval League, with a rich publishing activity in the pages of the "Marea Noastra" journal/RNL.

For the above mentioned scientific achievements, she was mentioned with the insertion of a short professional remember note in the "Dictionary of Personalities from Dobrogea", published in 2004 by the Constanta County Library and the "Ovidius" University of Constanta.

Above all, Dr. Florica PORUMB was an exemplary wife, a good and close collaborator of her husband, but also a very dedicated mother.

I deeply thank her son, Eng. Dan PORUMB, for all the information provided. I have always felt close to the PORUMB family, always with me for the good, but also when bad times put me to the test. I thank Dr. Florica PORUMB for having always been with me with a warm, parenting telephone call, as long as the evolution of her personal physical state has allowed it.

I wish Dr. Florica PORUMB a good and well deserved eternal rest together with her husband. Dr. Ioan PORUMB and Dr. Florica PORUMB have left behind the venerable, revered memory of an exceptional team of Romanian bio-oceanography experts, two people completely dedicated to the SEA.

May God rest them in peace!

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