

OBITUARY

Renato Contin Marinoni (26.03.1939 – 29.06.2011)

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Professor Renato was born on March 26th, 1939, in the city of Curitiba, Paraná state. He always had a passion for Nature and this naturally led him to study Natural History (Fig. 1).

He started his scientific career as a laboratory technician in the Zoology Department of Universidade Federal do Paraná (UFPR), in 1963, at the invitation of Father Jesus Santiago Moure. At this time, he was a colleague of Prof. Hans Jacob, from Erlangen University, Germany, who was his supervisor in the study of the Systematics and Ecology of the Harpacticoidea (Crustacea). Soon afterwards, he acted as a volunteer Higher Education Instructor and became a Teaching Assistant in 1966. After 1971, he began to study the Cerambycidae and they were the subject of his Masters and Doctorate degrees in Biological Sciences (Entomology) from the UFPR. From this time on, he was a university lecturer until his retirement, when he stayed on as a senior lecturer.

He taught various subjects in the university, including Invertebrates, Insect Diversity, Evolution and Speciation, Ecology and Numerical Taxonomy, which he continued to offer to students in the graduate programs of Zoology, Entomology and Botany.

From 1981 to 1984, he coordinated the CNPq/Polonoroeste program in the Zoology Department. His enterprising vision in 1982 resulted in the creation of the “Centro de Identificação de Insetos Fitófagos – CIIF”, with the aim of expanding the Father J.S. Moure Entomology Collection, of giving recognition to the work of taxonomists and also helping to maintain students of the programs. Thanks to his persistence, the CIIF received financial support from FINEP and, consequently, the Department and the Collection were recognized both nationally and internationally. International agreements were made through which researchers, such as Drs. Gerard Scherer, of the G. Frey Museum, Munich, Germany and Robert D. Gordon, John Kingsolver and Lloyd Knutson, of the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, U.S.A., stayed for short visits at UFPR to study specimens belonging to diverse taxonomic groups, as well as to supervise master and doctoral students.

In 1980, Prof. Renato worked with a group of researchers to implement the National Zoology Program (PNZ), supported by the National Council of Scientific and Technological De-

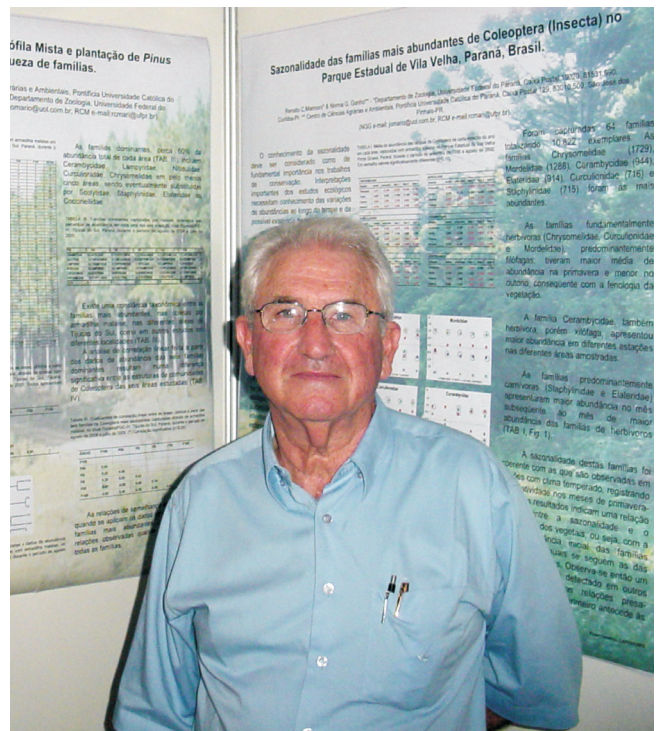


Fig. 1 Renato Contin Marinoni, on February 13th 2006, poster presentation session at XXVI Congresso Brasileiro de Zoologia, Londrina, PR.

velopment (CNPq). Thus, between 1981 and 1984, various Special Systematic Zoology Courses were offered, in which Prof. Renato taught Taxonomy.

In 1986, the Survey of the Entomological Fauna of Paraná – PROFAUPAR was initiated with the aim of surveying the entomofauna of the state. This project involved collections from eight different sites on the three plateaus of the state, using malaise and light traps. At this time, Prof. Renato began his diversity and ecology studies, areas which he was always enthusiastic about and liked to study. Continuing with faunal surveys, he worked on the Survey of the Entomological Fauna in the Vila Velha State Park, Ponta Grossa, Paraná state – PROVIVE, where studies in areas with different levels of plant succession were conducted. He was also active in the Survey of the Entomological Fauna of the Vivat Eco-

logical Park, Tijucas do Sul, Paraná state – PROVIVAT. All these projects resulted in various papers on different insect groups and with a varied subject matter. A large number of species were described by various researchers and this greatly enriched the Zoology Department collection.

His affinity with numerical data and softwares resulted in the development of various studies. One of the most relevant data banks was the Directory of Zoological Taxonomists, published in 1996, but begun when he was president of the “Sociedade Brasileira de Zoologia – SBZ”. As the sixth president of the Society (1988/1990), he increased the membership and created 41 study nuclei in Zoology throughout Brazil. During his term of office, he worked for the indication of a Brazilian taxonomist to the International Commission of Zoological Nomenclature. He also worked with the Brazilian government’s Environmental Institute (IBAMA) to set up a working group to elaborate a list of Brazilian animal species threatened with extinction. At this time, he also lobbied for a government norm on the Collection of Zoological material for teaching or scientific purposes, which was published by IBAMA in 1990.

He took part in various congresses and symposia, both to expand his knowledge and lecture on his research in the Coleoptera. He also was a member of various professional and scientific bodies.

In the last few years, Prof. Renato had been dedicating his time to a data bank of Cerambycidae type material. His objective was to catalogue and digitize the type material slides obtained by Father Moure during his trips to various national and foreign collections. This project seemed never-ending to him because it involved a review of the original notes made

by Father Moure. He was also worried about the taxonomic status of species and with the form and quality of the data presented. The aim of this project was to make all the images and data of the type material available, principally the Cerambycidae, through the web portal Taxonline – Network of Biological Collections in the State of Paraná.

During his university career, Prof. Renato supervised more than 40 students for Doctorates, Masters and Scientific Beginners, in various areas of knowledge. He published more than 60 scientific articles, book chapters and books.

He had been a CNPq researcher since 1965 and received various tributes, including honor merits, species names and in 2009, during the celebrations of the 40th anniversary of UFPR’s Graduate Program in Entomology, the Insect Rearing Laboratory of the Zoology Department was named in his honor.

His hobby was breeding race horses, which although absorbed a lot of his time gave him considerable pleasure. He was also very close to his brother and cousins and enjoyed himself in the wine tastings they organized. He appreciated good food, especially Italian dishes, and always ordered a dessert, often ice-cream or chocolate. Family trips also brought him a lot of happiness and during the last Christmas-New Year period he made a very enjoyable visit to the U.S.A with his wife, daughters, son-in-laws and grandchildren. He had planned to return to Italy, the land of his forbears and which he had visited previously, to meet relatives.

Professor Renato Contin Marinoni will always be remembered for his hard work and agreeable conversation, when he often lost count of the time explaining doubts and discussing his favorite subjects. He will be sadly missed by the small group of Brazilian researchers dedicated to studying beetles.