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EDITORIAL NOTE

First evidence of the Ediacaran fauna in Northeastern Brazil, an albino dolphin, and trophic groups of a bird community in Alagoas

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In the last years, the Annals of the Brazilian Academy of Sciences (AABC) has published several interesting papers on paleontology, varying from Quaternary microfossils (Utida et al. 2012), Argentinean woods from Santa Cruz (Vera and Césari 2012), Cretaceous lizards (Simões 2012), and turtle eggs from China (Wang et al. 2013), just to mention a few. On the same lines, the present issue of the AABC presents another exciting contribution: the first evidence of the Ediacaran fauna in the Northeastern part of Brazil.

Regarded as the earliest multicellular organism, remains attributed to the Ediacaran fauna have been reported in several regions around the world (Shen et al. 2008), as well as in Brazil (e.g., Babcock et al. 2005) but not from the Northeastern part of the country. The new material, recovered from the region around Pacujá in the state of Ceará, is quite numerous and diverse as indicated by Francisco R. G. Barroso (Universidade Federal de Pernambuco) and colleagues. All together, nine species have been identified with different shapes and structures. According to the authors, this deposit is regarded as representing the Pacujá Formation which has been deposited under fluviomarine conditions some 535 million years ago (Barroso et al. 2014). The present study demonstrates a high potential for new findings in the Northeast of Brazil, contributing to a better understanding of the distribution of these first multicellular organisms around the world.

Another study published here is the first record of a white franciscana dolphin (*Pontoporia blainvillei*) in the Babitonga Bay, southern Brazil. During a study of populations made by Marta J. Cremer (Universidade da Região de Joinville) and colleagues, they spotted a small individual, probably a juvenile, along with two adults (Cremer et al. 2014). The larger individuals show the typical brownish to dark gray color of this species (e.g., Jefferson et al. 2008). The white color of this young calf lead the author to conclude that it was an albino individual, a quite rare occurrence, particularly in marine mammals.

Lastly, I would like to highlight the contribution by Guilherme S. Toledo-Lima (Universidade Federal do Alagoas) and colleagues about an avian community found in Pernambuco, Northeast Brazil. The number of endangered species is increasing quite rapidly in this country, affecting all environments (e.g., Chaves et al. 2013). Therefore, it has become paramount to focus on distinct aspects on how to mitigate this problem (e.g., Licarião et al. 2013). Toledo-Lima et al. (2014) have established the composition and trophic groups

of an avian fauna present in fragments of the Atlantic Forest situated in the municipality of Tanque d´Arca in central Alagoas, northeastern Brazil. Slightly over 110 species were recognized, 76 of which only in some areas with was is left from the Atlantic Forest, including several taxa that are regarded as endangered.

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