

In the course of his career, he was an editor and a member of the editorial board of *Proteus*, *Scopolija*, *Varstvo narave*, *Hladnikija*, and *Annales* from Koper. He was the founder and president of the Botanical Society of Slovenia, active member of numerous international associations, his vast bibliography – if we limit ourselves only to scientific and research texts – covers the fields of floristry, taxonomy, history of botany, phytocenology and nature conservation.

When Professor Wraber retired and left the university to live in the countryside in Polhov Gradec, he dedi-

cated himself to plants in his garden, he worked on his unfinished projects, he wrote untiringly as long as the serious disease allowed him. His death left an immense void in Slovenian botany, since there is no one left who could match him in his knowledge and broad mind. The last classical Slovenian botanist, who knew "everything" about plants, left; a patriot, polyglot, conservationist, mountaineer ... May he rest in peace in the home soil that he knew so well and loved so much!

Mitja Kaligarič

#### ŽIGI DOBRAJCU V SLOVO (1979–2010)



Konec julija 2010 nas je razžalostila novica o tragični nesreči našega sodelavca in prijatelja Žige, ki se je udeležil predstavitve potapljanja z uporabo rebreatherjev v Miramaru pri Trstu.

Žige se spominjamo kot tople, odprte osebe, ki je znala hitro navezati stik v družbi. Bil je navdušen košarkar in potapljač. Njegova ljubezen do morja je bila tako močna, da je vpisal študij biologije na ljubljanski

univerzi z željo, da bi se dokopal do poklica, ki bi ga povezal z morjem, mu omogočil raziskovati njegove skrivnosti. In tako se mu je tistega dne, ko ga je njegov prijatelj Borut pripeljal na Morsko biološko postajo, da se dogovori za opravljanje diplomske naloge, začela nasmihati možnost, da uresniči svoje sanje. Idejo, da bi raziskoval favno kriptobentoških rib, je sprejel z odprtimi rokami, saj ga je veselila tako z vidika skrivnostnih rib kot tudi zaradi potapljanja, brez katerega pri nalogi ne bi šlo. Dela se je lotil zelo predano in zavzeto in res, rezultati niso izostali. Skupaj s sodelavci je objavil nekaj znanstvenih prispevkov, tudi v naravoslovnih Analih. Uspelo mu je odkriti nenavadne ribice, o katerih je komajda kaj znanega. Še preden je zaključil z vzorčenjem za diplomsko nalogo, je bil zaradi svojih vrlin sprejet v delovno razmerje na Morski biološki postaji Nacionalnega Inštituta za Biologijo, kjer je osnovne biološke veščine nadgradil s praktičnim delom na raziskovalnih plovilih in v laboratoriju ter na vzorčenjih pod vodo.

Z Žigo so prišle na postajo tudi nekatere povsem nove danosti. V avli postaje je vzpostavil sistem velikih akvarijev, v katere je naselil samoniklo ribjo združbo in mnoge pridnene nevretenčarje. Veliko večino življa je polovil sam, nekatere tudi v številnih nočnih potopih. Seveda so lično urejeni akvariji in pestro življenje v njem, za katerega je zgledno skrbel, postali obvezna točka za obiskovalce iz osnovnih in srednjih šol pri ogledu biološke postaje. Pred kratkim je postal tudi ladjevodja raziskovalnega plovila. Udeležil se je mnogih mednarodnih delavnic na temo podvodnih vzorčenj in raziskovalnih veščin v različnih sredozemskih krajih. Še posebej rad je sodeloval z avstrijskimi kolegi iz raziskovalne skupine dr. Michaela Stachowitscha in jim pomagal pri vzorčenjih v slovenskem morju. Žal ni imel priložnosti, da bi nam uspel pokazati celoten obseg svojega raziskovalnega potenciala.

V zadnjih letih je opravil ogromno število podvodnih vzorčenj, se seznanil z različnimi tehnikami zajemanja vzorcev in postal dober podvodni fotograf. Delo pod vodo ga je najbolj veselilo. Koliko mu je pomenilo, dobro pove odgovor, ki ga je dal v nekem intervjuju: *"Če sem živčen, če kaj ne štima, grem pod vodo, kjer je mir, tišina, morski zvok. Super je, da se malo odklopiš, nazaj prideš kot nov."*

Podvodni snemalec je postal povsem po naključju. Ko je v slovensko morje februarja 2009 zašel trinajst-metrski kit grbavec, si je Žiga brez oklevanja nadel potapljaško obleko in skočil v vodo. Marsikdo bi pred takšnim dejanjem dvakrat premislil, toda ne Žiga. On je živel v skladu s svojo percepcijo življenja, živel je za trenutke. Kot navdušen filmofil bi gotovo citiral Willa Smitha v filmu Hitch: *"Življenje ni število vdihov, ki jih narediš, temveč število trenutkov, ki ti vzamejo sapo"*. In tisti trenutek je vzel sapo ne samo Žigi, ampak tudi drugim, ki smo lahko prisostvovali druženju z grbavcem.

Eden zadnjih takih trenutkov je bil še pred nekaj tedni, ko smo se po opravljenem vzorčenju podružili s trojico delfinov blizu oceanografske boje.

Odiseja strastnega zaljubljenca v morje se je tragično zaključila v Miramaru, kamor ga je prignala želja po izpopolnjevanju v potapljaških veščinah. Danes akvariji samevajo, terenska vzorčenja so turobna in tiha ... V naših srcih ostajajo lepi spomini na vedrega in marljivega sodelavca in prijatelja!

V imenu sodelavcev Morske biološke postaje NIB  
**Lovrenc Lipej**

#### IN THE MEMORY OF ŽIGA DOBRAJC (1979–2010)

At the end of July 2010, we learned the sad news about the tragic accident of our colleague and friend Žiga, who attended the presentation of rebreather diving at Miramar near Trieste.

We will remember Žiga as a warm, open and sociable person. He was an enthusiastic basketball player and diver. His love for the sea was so strong that he enrolled at the Faculty of Biology at the University of Ljubljana in the hope of a profession which would connect him to the sea and enable him to search through its secrets. And so one day his friend Borut brought him to the Marine Biology Station to arrange his diploma thesis and Žiga came closer to fulfilling his dream. He grabbed the opportunity to do a research on the cryptobenthic fish fauna with both hands, not only because of the mysterious fish but also the diving, which was required. He was enthusiastic and devoted to his work, and soon the results were there to prove it. In cooperation with his colleagues, he published a few articles, also in Annales Series Historia Naturalis. He managed to discover unusual and hardly known fish. Before finishing his sampling for the thesis, the Marine Biology Station of the National Institute of Biology employed him due to his excellent qualities. He upgraded his core biological skills with field work on research vessels and in laboratory and with underwater sampling.

Žiga added many novelties to the Marine Biology Station; in the station lobby he set up a system of large tanks, and filled them with an indigenous fish assemblage and numerous benthic invertebrates. He caught most of the animals himself, some also while night diving. Needless to say that the tanks and the vivid life in them, which he meticulously cared for, drew attention of the elementary and secondary school visitors to the marine station. Not long ago, Žiga was appointed the head of the research vessel. He attended numerous

international workshops on underwater sampling and research skills in various Mediterranean towns. He especially liked working with our Austrian colleagues from Dr. Michael Stachowitsch's research team, helping them with sampling in the Slovenian sea. Unfortunately, he never had a chance to show us the full spectre of his research potential.

In the course of the last few years, he did a large number of underwater samplings, got acquainted with various sampling techniques and became an excellent underwater photographer. Work under water was the thing he enjoyed most. How much it meant to him is illustrated in the following answer from one of the interviews: *"If I'm nervous, if there's something wrong, I go under water where there is peace and quiet and the sound of the sea. It's great to relax, you come back a new man."*

He started working as an underwater photographer purely by chance. When in February 2009, a 13-meter-long humpback whale found itself in the Slovenian sea, Žiga put on his diving suit without hesitation and

jumped into the sea. A lot of other people would think twice before doing something like that, but not Žiga. He lived according to his own rules, he lived for the moments. As an enthusiastic film buff he would surely quote Will Smith in Hitch: *"Life is not measured by the breaths you take, but by the moments that take your breath away."* And that moment didn't take only Žiga's breath away; all of us who came close to the whale were speechless. One of these moments, the last one, happened only a few weeks ago when we were socializing with three dolphins after finishing sampling near an oceanographic buoy.

The journey of a passionate sea lover ended tragically at Miramare, in his pursuit to improve his diving skills. Today the aquarium tanks are empty; field samplings are gloomy and quiet... In our hearts we keep the memories of a joyful and diligent colleague and friend!

On behalf of all the Marine Biology Station NIB staff  
**Lovrenc Lipej**