



PIRAN HOSTED THE ELITE OF MARINE BIOLOGISTS

What stimulated a British citizen from the small Ascension Island, lost somewhere halfway between southern America and southern Africa, to attend the European Marine Biology Symposium (EMBS), organized in Piran in September 2017? Especially when he already knew that he would have to defeat 10 days of navigation to the Republic of South Africa and then another day or two by air and road transport to reach the venue. And then repeat the same odyssey to return home. He practically spent almost one entire month of trip for 15 minutes of lectures in the congress hall at Grand Hotel Bernardin, on the Slovenian coast. But dr. Andy Richardson is not anyone. He is a lovely British guy who gave up his life in the kingdom to explore the sea around the

remote island. At the symposium he presented the results of several years of research on the Blue marlin, a sword-like fish, living in the central Atlantic. He fascinated the audience with an extraordinary presentation of his work and, of course, his enthusiasm for which there is clearly no limit, not in time nor in distance. And fortunately at the symposium in Piran, dr. Richardson was not the only such enthusiastic researcher, they were plenty.

The Marine Biology Station of the National Institute of Biology of Slovenia organized the 52nd EMBS, the largest of its kind in Europe and one of the largest for biologists in the world. A great week for socializing with European colleagues, and also with researchers from other countries, such as Australia, Canada, South Africa, Israel, China, Brazil, Mexico, USA, Algeria, Turkey, Thailand, Tunisia, Chile, Japan, Taiwan, New Zealand, Saudi Arabia, New Caledonia and Colombia, who proved that science today is a global matter. At the symposium, researchers had the opportunity to become acquainted with current contents, new approaches and techniques, and in particular to establish new cooperation in research, projects and exchanges of students.

The congress was organized in several modern thematic sections, such as marine symbiosis, imaging in marine biology, benthic-pelagic coupling, marine metagenomics, and mesophotic ecosystems. By far the most extensive part was covered by the general section.



Dr. Andy Richardson presenting the results of several years of research on the Blue marlin living in the central Atlantic (photo: Anja Šimon).

It would be too unfair to expose individual researchers, since there were many exceptional presentations.

The participants were received also by the mayor of Piran, Peter Bossman, with a pleasant speech about the beauties of his town and a feast, and he did not forget to promote the visit to the center and to the Sečovlje salt pans. The guests then visited the Sečovlje Salina Nature Park during an organized excursion in the only free afternoon.

The researchers of the Marine Biology Station Piran organized also the traditional Yellow Submarine competition on the beach, where younger generations competed in fun games, such as sampling of marine organisms and sediments, while the older ones cheered aloud. There was also a social dinner at the Vinakoper, where the participants had the opportunity to learn more about the tastes of local gastronomy and oenological peculiarities. This event was also used by the organizers to grant financial awards for the four best poster presentations of young researchers. The winner was a lovely biologist from Saudi Arabia.

At the symposium biologists listened to ideas for new researches, they brought new ties, basics for cooperation, and some of the lecturers also made them laugh out loud. This is the case of the Croatian professor, dr. Peter Kružić, who finished the lecture on coral bleaching in the Adriatic Sea with a photograph of the winning Slovenian national basketball team, triggering a hurricane applause in the hall and warming the heart of Slovenian researchers.

The organization of such symposium is definitely Sisyphus's work. For the first time Slovenia hosted a pan-European congress of this magnitude. For this success, the merits are of a great crowd of people, part of the organizing and scientific committees, which were preparing for the congress for almost a year and a half. Acknowledgment goes also to various local sponsors, who helped the organizers in giving to the participants of the 52nd EMBS nice memories to take home. The Marine Biology Station Piran passed the relay to the next organizer of the EMBS, the Flanders Marine Institute in Oostende, Belgium.

Lovrenc Lipej & Martina Orlando-Bonaca

NIB
NACIONALNI INŠTITUT ZA BIOLOGIJO
MORSKA BIOLOŠKA POSTAJA



LETNO SREČANJE MEDNARODNE ORGANIZACIJE ZA VODNE PTICE THE WATERBIRD SOCIETY (WATERBIRD SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING, REYKJAVIK, ICELAND, AUGUST 8-12 2017)

Od 8. do 12. avgusta 2017 je v Univerzitetnem središču Askja (po istoimenskem vulkanu) v Reykjaviku na Islandiji potekalo mednarodno srečanje strokovnjakov za vodne ptice z naslovom »The Waterbird Society Annual Meeting«. Gre za že 41. Srečanje mednarodne organizacije Waterbird Society s sedežem v ZDA. Organizacija Waterbird Society je mednarodna znanstvena, nevladna organizacija, katere cilj je proučevanje in varovanje vodnih ptic.

Srečanja smo se udeležili sodelavci iz Krajskega parka Sečovljanske soline (KPSS) v okviru Programa Finančnega mehanizma EGP 200-2014 (SI02), CARS-OUT! Okoljsko prijazen obisk zavarovanih območij in Programa Norveškega finančnega mehanizma (SI05).

V treh delovnih dneh je bilo kar 92 predavanj, od tega dve plenarni. Predstavljenih je bilo tudi 24 prispevkov na posterjih, med njimi tudi prispevek I. Škornika »Status, distribution and threats of five breeding species in Sečovlje Salina Nature Park: prescription of biodiversity conservation for the area.«

Predavanja so potekala sočasno v treh dvoranah. Odvijala so se v sklopu simpozija o galebih in simpozija o mormonu. Obenem so potekala tudi druga predavanja na temo prehranjevanja, selitve, oglašanja, kartirnih popisov, populacijskih trendov, telemetrije, itd.

Nadvse poučne so bile strokovne ekskurzije, ki so bile organizirane za udeležence simpozija. Tri ekskurzije so bile krajše, saj smo jih izvedli zgodaj zjutraj pred samim začetkom predavanj, zadnja ekskurzija pa je bila celodnevna. Prvi dan simpozija smo začeli z zgodnje jutranjo ekskurzijo v Alftanes. Drugi dan smo s čolnom odpluli do otoka Puffin Island, kjer smo občudovali kolonijo mormonov (*Fratercula arctica*) in drugih morskih ptic. Zadnja jutranja ekskurzija je bila v Seltjarnarnes, kjer je bilo kljub vetru in mrazu veliko zanimivih vrst. S celodnevno ekskurzijo na polotok Snæfellsnes pa se je končala ornitološka konferenca Waterbirds 2017. Dežela vulkanov je presenetila tudi v ornitološkem pogledu. Tisočere jate pobrežnikov, ki se pripravljajo na svoj odhod, obrežja polna rac, arktične čigre, kolonije triprstih galeb, ki se s svojimi mladiči gnetejo na ozkih skalnih policah strmega klifa tik nad fjordom so le del bogastva, ki smo ga lahko občudovali. Spoznali smo kako se Islandci spopadajo