

8th INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON FOSSIL ALGAE AT GRANADA, SPAIN

The 8th International Symposium on Fossil Algae (ISFA) was organized by the Department of Stratigraphy and Palaeontology, University of Granada, Granada, Spain from 18 September to 22 September, 2003. Dr. Juan C. Braga and Dr. Julio Aguirre of the Department of Stratigraphy and Palaeontology, University of Granada were respectively the President and Secretary of this symposium.

The ISFA is quadrennial symposium that provides a platform for palaeontologists of different parts of the world to meet and exchange views on various aspects of recent developments in extinct as well as extant algae. The commencement of organization of ISFA was started at



Prof. Kundal (centre) with Prof. Juan C. Braga (left) and Dr. J. Aguirre of the Department of Stratigraphy and Palaeontology at the University of Granada, Spain during the Symposium.

Erlangen, Germany in 1975 where the 1st ISFA was held. The subsequent meets were at Paris, France in 1979; at Denver, USA in 1983; at Cardiff, UK in 1987; at Capri, Italy in 1991; at Ankara, Turkey in 1995 and at Nanjing, China in 1999.

As many as 45 delegates from 24 countries participated in the 8th ISFA. The maximum number of participants, i.e. 10 were from the host nation, Spain while five participants were from France, three from Italy, two each from Portugal, Romania, Australia, UK and Belgium and one from Israel, Germany, Switzerland, Canada, USA, Croatia, Saudi Arabia, Japan, Poland, Iran, Russia, Austria, China and India. The author of the note represented India at this international meet.

There were seven scientific sessions and 42 papers were presented covering important topics of algae such as

evolutionary history of fresh water algae, charophytes, algal biozones, halimeda banks, fossil corallines, dasycladacean algae from various ages, relationship between algae and environment, cyanobacteria on modern and ancient carbonate platform, Cretaceous lacustrine stromatolites etc. during the Symposium. Also, there was a poster session in which ten posters were displayed. In addition to presentations of papers, two key lectures, one by Dr. M.T. Gonzalez-Munoz of University of Granada, Granada, Spain on "Biomineralization of Myxobacteria: findings and perspectives" and other by Dr. W.J. Woelkerling of La Trobe University, Australia on "Molecules and Morphology in Algal Taxonomy and Phytoeny" were presented. Dr. Gonzalez-Munoz highlighted the production of phosphates, carbonates and sulphates by myxobacteria and he opined that the myxobacteria in different kinds of bioremediation may be among the most interesting of these micro-organisms in terms of capabilities. Dr. Woelkerling emphasized the need for more of structural and molecular studies in understanding evolutionary relationship within various groups of algae. He cautioned that such studies have affected taxonomic thinking and felt the need to revise the classification of various forms of algae

The 8th ISFA was preceded by a pre-symposium field trip during 16-17 September, 2003 when the gathered palaeontologists studied the Lower Cretaceous algae of Iberian and Prebetic Chains and Cretaceous calcareous algae and microbial carbonates from the Prebetic Zone under the leadership of Drs. Carles Martin-Closas of Spain and Bruno Granier of France. Similarly, under the leadership of Drs. J.C. Braga, J. Aguirre and J.M. Martin of Spain, R. Riding of UK and C. Betzler of Germany, a post-symposium field trip was organized from 21-22 September 2003 during which the palaeontologists visited Messinian halimeds and stromatolites of Sorbas Basin and coralline algal assemblages in the Lower Pliocene temperate carbonates in the Carboneras Basin.

In the assembly of 8th ISFA it was decided that the 9th ISFA would be held at Zagreb, Croatia under the Presidentship of Dr. T. Grgasovic.

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