

OBITUARY OF BEATA MARIA POKRYSZKO (1956–2022)

Beata Pokryszko (Fig. 1), well-known to many of us in Britain and Ireland, died on 5th June, 2022, at the tragically young age of 65 after a period of ill health and unsuccessful surgery. She was born on 21 October 1956 in Wrocław. After graduating from the 5th Secondary School in Gliwice in 1975, she completed her bachelor's and master's degrees in biology at the University of Wrocław. After receiving her master's degree, she started working at the Museum of Natural History of the University of Wrocław in 1980. Here she obtained further academic degrees – PhD degree in 1986 on the basis of the doctoral dissertation “Taxonomic revision of Vertiginidae of Poland (Gastropoda: Pulmonata: Pupilloidea)”, prepared under supervision of prof. dr hab. Andrzej Wiktor, and doctor habilitatus in 1997 on the basis of scientific achievements and the habilitation dissertation “*Lyropupa* Pilsbry, 1900. Systematics, evolution and dispersal (Gastropoda: Pulmonata: Pupilloidea)”. In 2008, she received the academic title of professor. Her whole career was based at the Museum of Natural History in Wrocław. While still a student, in the years 1979–1980, she worked as a technical assistant, and then as an assistant (1980–1983), senior assistant (1983–1988), assistant professor (1988–2001) and associate professor (from 2001). After retiring in 2020, she worked as a volunteer at the museum.

Beata Pokryszko devoted her research to molluscs, more specifically to terrestrial gastropods, starting with faunistic papers on the molluscan fauna of the Kaczawskie Mountains and Foothills at an early stage of her professional career, followed by taxonomic papers mainly on snails in the Pupilloidea, then extended by research on their ecology and life cycles, and finally to undertake research in the field of biogeography and evolution of land snail communities. She has published over 160 different types of scientific papers (see note below), including 35 papers published in international journals such as *Journal of Molluscan Studies*, *Malacologia*, *Biological Journal of the Linnean Society*, *Zoological Journal of the Linnean Society*, *PLoS ONE*, *Journal of Conchology*), as well as nearly 40 papers in other journals. It is a tribute to her reputation and spirit of collaborative working that she published papers jointly with co-authors from at least 18 countries. She



Figure 1 Beata Pokryszko at Borjomi, Georgia, 2008.

also published chapters in academic textbooks, reviews, popular science papers, translations and book reviews, notes and other publications. She described independently or with co-authors 30 species new for science (see below).

Among her many achievements, she was a pioneer in the use of cladistic methods, including internal characters, to verify and revise the phylogeny and nomenclature of many species within the Pupilloidea, mainly in the genera *Vertigo*, *Leiostyla*, *Lyropupa* and *Gastrocopta*. As a result of those studies, she also explored the occurrence of aphally in the Vertiginidae, and its impact on their reproductive biology. This led her into more general studies of life cycles and population dynamics of land snail species.

Alongside these studies, she was a partner in many biogeographic and macroecological studies, not only in Poland, but in England, Transylvania, Crimea, the Caucasus, Madeira, the Azores and Australia. Other papers concerned the evolution and functions of apertural denticles and lamellae

in the shell mouth, the occurrence of parallel evolution in Pupilloidea and the description of some of the earliest land snails from Eocene amber. She made significant contributions to the study of shell colour and banding polymorphism in *Cepaea*, and helped construct an accessible database for Polish populations of the genus.

Her service to the malacological community both in Poland and internationally was outstanding. She attended and presented papers at many conferences, including several UNITAS congresses, and had many periods abroad on internships or as a participant in international research programmes. An inspired teacher and supervisor, she oversaw 17 master's and six doctoral theses, as well as examining or reviewing many more. Within Poland, she was a member of the Zoology Committee of the Polish Academy of Sciences from 1996 to 2022, and she was a founder member of the Association of Polish Malacologists, organising many of their meetings. She attended all but the last two before her untimely death, prevented by serious ill-health. Notably, it was she who wrote the account of many such meetings, accounts laced with a sardonic but never hurtful humour.

Among her many services to the Association, her role as an editor of *Folia Malacologica* was outstanding, not only for its scientific rigor, but for her perfect command of the English language. The latter skill was called upon by many other journals. Until the last days of her life, she carried on these duties with dedication. Internationally, she was a long-standing member of Unitas Malacologica, and served for thirty years on the Mollusca Specialist Group of IUCN.

On a personal note, it was my privilege to assist her at the last Association of Polish Malacologists that she was able to attend in Szczecin in 2019, at which she was awarded Honorary Membership of the Association in a moving and well-merited ceremony. My last collaboration with her, sampling *Cepaea* in what was once her home town of Gliwice in August of that year, summed up all the courage and humour that was in her; fieldwork conducted mostly from a wheelchair. The Covid virus prevented further visits. The last years of her life would be enough to break a weaker spirit; Ataman, to her students (chief or leader), I received cheerful messages even from what was to be her last visit to hospital.

I have lost a dear friend and colleague, but the greater loss is to malacology, both in her own country and elsewhere. There will be many members of the Conchological Society who will feel that loss of a congenial colleague up for any adventure.

Robert Cameron

Note: This obituary is based on that written by Professor Andrzej Lesicki:

LESICKI, A 2022 Beata Maria Pokryszko (1956–2022), Obituary. *Folia Malacologica*, 30 (4): 189–210.

This provides more detail and a full list of her publications, and of the graduate students she supervised or examined. I am grateful to Professor Lesicki for permission to use his account. Below, for the record, is a list of species described by her, sometimes in conjunction with others.

**TAXA DESCRIBED BY B. M. POKRYSZKO OR
B. M. POKRYSZKO WITH CO-AUTHORS**

Species:

- Boysidia tamtouriana* Pokryszko et Auffenberg, 2009
- Columella nymphaepratensis* Hlaváč et Pokryszko, 2009
- Discula cameroni* Pokryszko, Groh et Teixeira, 2019
- Gastrocopta nostra* Pokryszko et Stworzewicz, 2003
- Gastrocopta soleorum* Pokryszko, 1996
- Gastrocopta stupefaciens* Pokryszko, 1996
- Helix goderdziana* Mumladze, Tarkhnishvili et Pokryszko, 2008
- Leiostyla adolfi* Pokryszko, 1991
- Leiostyla castanheiraensis* Groh et Pokryszko, 2019 †
- Leiostyla cooki* Cameron et Pokryszko, 2019 †
- Lyropupa adeps* Pokryszko, 1997
- Lyropupa captiosa* Pokryszko, 1997
- Lyropupa dissimulator* Pokryszko, 1997
- Lyropupa hybrida* Pokryszko, 1997
- Lyropupa ingrata* Pokryszko, 1997
- Lyropupa lulualeiensis* Pokryszko, 1997
- Lyropupa micra continua* Pokryszko, 1997
- Lyropupa societatis* Pokryszko, 1997
- Propupa hoffeinsorum* † Stworzewicz et Pokryszko, 2006
- Ptychalaea mystica* † Stworzewicz et Pokryszko, 2015

Pupilla khunjerabica Auffenberg et Pokryszko, 2009

Pupilla paraturcmenica Hlaváč et Pokryszko, 2009

Pupilla satparanica Pokryszko et Auffenberg, 2009

Pupilla ziaratana Pokryszko et Auffenberg, 2009

Truncatellina ayubiana Auffenberg et Pokryszko, 2009

Truncatellina babusarica Auffenberg et Pokryszko, 2009

Truncatellina cameroni Triantis et Pokryszko, 2004

Vertigo nangaparbatensis Pokryszko et Hlaváč, 2009

Vertigo superstriata Pokryszko et Auffenberg, 2009

Vertigo botanicorum Horsák et Pokryszko, 2010

Genus:

Propupa † Stworzewicz et Pokryszko, 2006

† *extinct taxa*

