



Anna Jerzmańska (1928–2003)

Professor Anna Jerzmańska (born Madej) passed away on February 17th, 2003, at the age of 74, as a consequence of a tragically predictable disease. Her death is deeply felt throughout the paleontological community.

Anna Madej was born on July 9th, 1928 in Piotrków Trybunalski, a small town in central Poland, into a merchant's family. Under the Nazi occupation, she attended a secret high school and in 1945–1946 served as a liaison officer in the Polish Underground Army, a successor to the main Polish resistance organisation, the Homeland Army (*Armia Krajowa*), whose members were heavily persecuted after the War by the Stalinist security police. That was also the fate of young Anna Madej, who spent several months in prison.

Anna Madej started her academic career as a junior assistant at the Zoological Museum one year before her graduation. She graduated with a Master's degree (in zoology and comparative anatomy) from the Faculty of Natural Sciences, University of Wrocław, in 1951, and the same year she married Jerzy Jerzmański, a geologist, who ever since assisted her in the field work. From 1953 until her retirement, she worked in the Paleozoological Laboratory of the Department (Institute) of Zoology at the University of Wrocław. She obtained her Ph.D. in 1960 and passed her Habilitation (in Poland, a procedure leading to a tenure) in 1968. Professor Jerzmańska was elected Dean of the Faculty of Natural Science for 1978–1981 and served in the University's Senate, to name just a few among her many University appointments.

Professor Jerzmańska generously served the paleontological and zoological community throughout her career. She was on the boards of the most prestigious research establishments of the Polish Academy of Sciences, including the Institute of Paleobiology in Warsaw and the Institute of Animal Systematics and Evolution in Cracow, and chaired the Board of the former for twelve years (1978–1990). She was elected Vice-President (1975–1979) and then President (1983–1987) of the Polish Zoological Society. Professor Jerzmańska earned Poland's three prestigious honors: the Golden Cross of Merit, the Knight Cross of Polonia Restituta (Poland Restored order), and the Medal of the Commission for National Education.



Anna Jerzmańska was a well known paleoichthyologist. She authored and co-authored over forty original scientific publications, a majority of which dealt with Tertiary and Quaternary ichthyofaunas from Poland and other parts of Europe, including the famous Eocene locality of Geiseltal in Germany. She also published on fossil fishes of Antarctica, Spitsbergen, and the Caucasus. Jerzmańska's faunal studies were accompanied by detailed taxonomic descriptions and

often complemented by taphonomic observations and ingenious biodiversity analyses. She described and co-described six new genera (*Carpathichthys*, *Carpathospinosus*, *Eophycis*, *Kotlarczykia*, *Prohollandia*, and *Marambionella*) and ten new species of fossil fishes. Most importantly, Jerzmańska's extensive faunal studies provided the basis for her work on the biostratigraphy, paleoecology and paleobiogeography of the Oligocene Carpathian Flysch. With merely a handful of fragmentary studies on this subject available by the end of World War II, Jerzmańska and her collaborators created a magnificent edifice of knowledge on fish faunas from the Menilitic Formation of the Tethys Sea.

Among her best known accomplishments is the fish-based biozonation of this formation: she identified a succession of fish assemblages beginning with the lower bathypelagic assemblage (with the luminescent gonostomatids, sternoptychids and myctophids), through the neritic-sublittoral assemblage (with species of *Palaeogadus*, *Glossanodon*, and *Serranus*), to the upper bathypelagic assemblage. The latter contains typical bathypelagic species, as well as a subassemblage with numerous pipefishes (Syngnathidae) and brown algae, which indicate a sargasso-like paleocommunity. Many of Jerzmańska's important works on fossil fishes were done in collaboration with Professor Janusz Kotlarczyk, a geologist at the Academy of Mining and Metallurgy in Cracow. The Jerzmańska-Kotlarczyk team explored the sedimentological concomitants and ramifications of the paleocommunity reconstruction. Jerzmańska also entertained an interest in crustaceans, and published three papers on this group.

Professor Jerzmańska was deeply affected by the premature death of her husband and life companion, Jerzy, and the onset of her terminal illness followed soon after his death. She is survived by her daughter Ewa, son Jan, and three grandchildren.

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