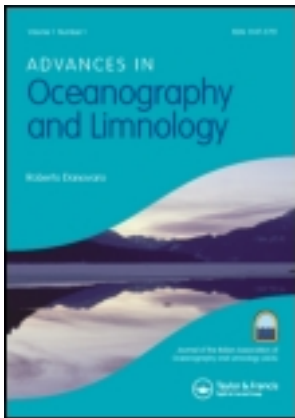


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Obituary: Norberto Della Croce (1926-2011)

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Obituary: Norberto Della Croce (1926–2011)



Prof. Norberto Della Croce in 2002 on board the RV Abate Molina during the Juan Fernandez expedition.

Prof. N. Della Croce, founder and former president for three mandates of the Italian Association of Limnology and Oceanography, died Monday, June 6, 2011 in Rapallo, after a brief but tenacious struggle with cancer. He was 85 years old.

Prof. N. Della Croce was born in Monte Rosso, a small and nice town on the eastern coast of the Ligurian Sea, homeland of rough but generous men. N. Della Croce was indeed a bright “example” of such a Ligurian man: serious, tough, growler but, honest and fair. During the Second World War he was very young but collaborated with the partisans against the fascists and later he received honours from the Italian Republic. He received his graduation in Natural Sciences cum laude from the University of Genoa (Italy) in 1951. In 1953 he participated in several oceanographic cruises carried out by the Italian Navy, then moved to the Italian Institute of Hydrobiology (1953–1955). From 1955 to 1956 he acted as a project assistant at the University of Wisconsin (USA) and later, for two years, he had a grant at the A. Dohrn Zoological Station in Naples. From 1952 to 1961 he was an assistant professor at the Zoology and Comparative Anatomy at the University of Genoa. In 1961 he received the tenure in Zoology at the University of Genoa (Italy) and during the following ten years he held the Oceanography Chair. In 1971 he became the full Professor in Hydrobiology and Aquaculture, he retired in 1998. N. Della Croce was a visiting scientist at the Columbia University Sandy Hook Marine Laboratory, at the Institute of

Environmental Medicine of the New York University Medical Center, and at the Indian Ocean Biological Center of the UNESCO in Cochin.

During the 50 years of his academic career N. Della Croce investigated the dynamics and ecology of marine and freshwater zooplankton. He carried out several expeditions in all the oceans and spent many years investigating the relationships between Cladocerans and hydrological conditions. Despite his declared aversion for taxonomy, he created a team of expert taxonomists and became the most renowned expert in the world on the biology and ecology of the cladoceran *Penilia avirostris*.

N. Della Croce was the initiator of biological oceanography in Italy, and was the Italian scientific representative in most international organizations, including the UN, ICES, CIESM, MAP, UNEP and the IOC. Since the 1980s N. Della Croce expanded his investigations on the fisheries of small pelagics and the impacts of marine pollution. In the 1990s he established the first team of Italian researchers with interests in hadal ecology. He was the chief scientist in the Oceanographic Italian Programme within the International Geophysical Year; in the US Biological Programme in the frame of the International Indian Ocean Expedition; in the Atacama Trench International Expedition of the University of Genoa in the Pacific Ocean; in the “Oceanic and Coastal Chilean Islands Project” research program between the Europe-Latin America Center of the University of Concepción and the Dipartimento per lo studio del Territorio e delle sue Risorse of the University of Genoa (Isla Mocha, Isla S. Maria and Archipelago Juan Fernández); and in an international research programme on marine meiofauna in the Galapagos Islands.

He was the founder of several scientific associations, including the Italian Association of Limnology and Oceanography, for which he acted as the President for three mandates (1975–76, 1991–92 and 1993–94), the Italian Society of Marine Biology and the Italian Society of Ecology.

N. Della Croce was a member of the Editorial Board of “Chemistry and Ecology”, the “Journal of Plankton Research” and “Memorie Istituto Italiano di Idrobiologia”. Norberto Della Croce was author or co-author of about 200 scientific papers (see [1–53] below). After he retired he continued planning expeditions to the most remote and extreme marine ecosystems on Earth and began a productive career as a writer of novels and short romances. He left all of his possessions to the missionaries in Chile to aid the poor children of the region that he loved investigating during his long life as a scientist.

A selection of scientific papers illustrating the topics investigated by Norberto Della Croce

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