

In memoriam

Professor Vera Budak, PhD
(1934–2017)



Dr Vera Budak was born on December 4, 1934 in Vranje. She finished her elementary and high school in Novi Sad. In 1962 she graduated from the Teachers' College in Novi Sad, group Biology and Chemistry. She started her Biology studies at the University of Skopje, and continued them at the Faculty of Sciences and Mathematics, University of Novi Sad, graduating in 1973 from the Biology Department. After graduation from the Teachers' College, she worked as a biology teacher in several elementary schools in Zrenjanin, as well as in the elementary school "Ivan Gundulić" in Novi Sad, where she spent the longest part of her school teaching career. During 1964 she worked as an illustrator at the Institute of Anatomy of the Medical Faculty in Novi Sad.

From 1968 she was employed at the Department of Biology at the University of Novi Sad as a laboratory technician, and later as a specialist and technical associate. As the Department grew into the Institute of Biology at the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, University of Novi Sad in 1975, she first worked as an expert associate, from 1980 as a senior expert associate, and from 1983 as an expert adviser. In the meantime, she defended her Master thesis on September 29th, 1978 and her doctoral dissertation entitled "Phytogeographical Characteristics of the Flora of Bačka Salt Marshes" on July 30, 1986, at the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics in Novi Sad. In 1987 she was appointed to the position of assistant professor in the field of Systematics of Cormophytes with Phytogeography, and five years later, in 1992, she was appointed as an associate professor. Professor Budak retired in February 1998.

Professor Budak's lecturing activity included working with students within theoretical and practical classes in the course of Systematics of Cormophytes with Phytogeography and Botanical Practicum, as well as in the course of Biogeography for students of Geography. In addition, almost until her last working day, the professor participated in the fieldwork with students. She was a person around whom the students gathered, doing their scientific and graduate papers.

She was a mentor of numerous bachelor and several master's theses as well as a mentor of a doctoral dissertation. The lecturing activity of Dr Vera Budak will be remembered by the emphasis on the application of the principle of obviousness, as well as on favoring botanical illustrations applied both as teaching aids and in students' own work. Her work with students was marked with her great love for botany and often repeated words "There is nothing more beautiful than plants". As a trail of the efforts she made in the days of founding today's Department of Biology and Ecology and its growth into a high-ranking higher education institution producing biology experts, Professor Budak left sets of handmade schemes and drawings of exceptional dimensions and precision, having special educational, and sometimes even artistic value, which, after her retirement, have remained for new generations to use.

The scientific work of Dr Vera Budak was focused on the research of the florogenesis of the Vojvodina salt marshes, especially in the area of Bačka. Shortly before her retirement, Matica srpska published her monograph entitled "Flora and Phytogeographical Characteristics of the Flora of Bačka Salt Marshes", with which she completed her work in continuing the tradition of exploring the flora of continental halobiomes in the area of Vojvodina, which began at the end of the XIX century. Both as an author and co-author, she published more than 40 papers in national and two in international journals. She participated in a number of scientific and expert congresses with more than 30 announcements. Professor Budak was the author of significant monographic editions referring the national flora: "Flora of Deliblatska peščara" (1983), Flora of Serbia, X volume "(1986) and" Red Book of Vascular Flora of Serbia, volume I "(1999). She was a reviewer of a large number of scientific and expert papers, a board member of the Department of Natural Sciences Matica Srpska, a secretary of the editorial board of the Proceedings of the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, a biology series (today *Biologia Serbica*), a member of several

professional and scientific societies in Vojvodina, Serbia and Yugoslavia. She was the head of scientific project topics focused on exploring the diversity and biogeographical characterization of certain parts of Vojvodina, as well as the Head of the Chair of Botany.

Professor Budak passed away on July 24, 2017. To her associates she left a priceless potential of exceptionally well-prepared plant sets stored in the Herbarium of the University of Novi Sad - BUNS, of whose development and enrichment Prof. Budak took great care of. As her bestowal has remained her huge work experience on continental halobiomes transferred to her research papers as well as an immeasurable spiritual wealth in the figure of a university professor. She can be proud of her great reputation as she left an example

of a unique life story, teaching us how to walk proudly along the path of life even in the days when life brings obstacles and problems, how easy it is to live and how hard it is to be a human, how to respect the right to be a human and share humanity and nobility unselfishly.

We forever remain grateful to our professor, mentor, colleague and friend.

Dr. Goran Anačkov, Dr. Pal Boža,
Dr. Ružica Igić, Dr. Dragana Vukov
University of Novi Sad, Faculty of Sciences,
Department of Biology and Ecology,
Trg Dositeja Obradovića 2, Novi Sad, Serbia