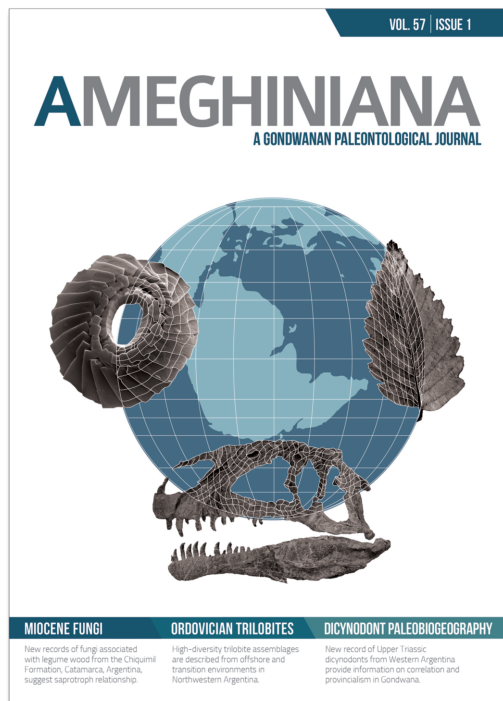




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GUSTAVO JUAN SCILLATO-YANÉ (1948–2019)

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MIOCENE FUNGI

New records of fungi associated with legume wood from the Chiquimil Formation, Catamarca, Argentina, suggest saprotroph relationship.

ORDOVICIAN TRILOBITES

High-diversity trilobite assemblages are described from offshore and transition environments in Northwestern Argentina.

DICYNODONT PALEOBIOGEOGRAPHY

New record of Upper Triassic dicynodonts from Western Argentina provide information on correlation and provincialism in Gondwana.

On January 20, 1948, Gustavo was born in Buenos Aires; he would become one of the most renowned vertebrate paleontologists in Argentina and one of the most highly regarded professors by many generations of students of the Facultad de Ciencias Naturales y Museo (FCNyM, Universidad Nacional de La Plata).

Gustavo became enthusiastic about paleontology from an early age. He decided to become a paleontologist and, in particular, to devote himself to the field of Paleomammalogy. His interest in fossil Edentates, a topic on which he would become one of the most important references worldwide, appeared when he was just seventeen years old. He obtained a college degree in Paleontology (specializing on Vertebrates) in 1973, and immediately after he began his career in CONICET, first with a scholarship and, from 1979, as a staff researcher.

Gustavo produced numerous original scientific contributions, which were almost entirely focused on fossil Xenarthra. Research on this highly relevant neotropical mammal group was almost stagnant in the 70s, after a more active earlier period that included the work of Burmeister, Ameghino, Kraglievich, Hoffstetter, and Castellanos. Thus, Gustavo had to perform an exhaustive review and an update of the systematic paleontology of this clade. His first studies were focused on the Dasypodoidea, and his PhD disserta-



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One of the many speeches he gave as sponsor during the biology student graduation ceremony, FCNyM, Universidad Nacional de La Plata. December 2010.

tion has been a valid reference for the study of fossil armadillos. Subsequently, his research expanded to include also the Glyptodontoidea, and later the Tardigrada (Mylodontoidea and Megatherioidea) and Vermilingua (Myrmecophagoidea).

Gustavo published in international journals early on in his career. This is remarkable since during that period Argentine researchers rarely got to publish in such periodicals. He published a total of about 120 scientific papers.

Gustavo considered essential in his career the training of xenarthran specialists to carry on and expand the work that he began as an almost solitary effort. Many of those trained under his guidance focused their research on

this mammal group and have developed numerous and relevant research lines over the past 40 years. Some of these researchers include: Alfredo Carlini, Sergio Vizcaíno, Graciela Esteban, Alfredo Zurita, Cecilia Krmpotic, Diego Brandoni, Martín Ciancio, Martín Zamorano, Esteban Soibelzon, Laureano González, and Flavio Gois.

However, Gustavo's lifework was not restricted to scientific research. In addition to his contributions to science, he had an outstanding career as a professor at the FCNyM. He began teaching in 1972 as an assistant in the Comparative Anatomy course.

Three years later, he first taught Paleozoology classes. He continued teaching this latter subject, eventually becoming a Professor. Gustavo played his teaching role for over forty years always with the same enthusiasm and passion for education. He went beyond the formality of curricular compliance and taught not only the fundamental aspects of Vertebrate Paleontology, but also encouraged his students to grow as natural scientists with critical thinking, social commitment and, above all, as good people.

In Gustavo's own words, during one of the many speeches he gave as graduation sponsor (elected by the students) in the FCNyM graduation ceremony for biology students "*...it is what I tried to convey to them throughout the year, to the extent that different*



Gustavo Scillato-Yané working at his office. July 1980.

topics worthy of discussion arose spontaneously in the course of Paleozoology and Vertebrate Paleontology that we share: history and politics, education and university, science and epistemology,

philosophy and religion, art and moral. I think we talked a little about all this during the course and without detriment to the coverage of subject matters ...".

In 2016, the FCNyM honored him

as Extraordinary Professor with the category "Profesor Consulto", which may seem scarce for an emeritus like Gustavo.

As previously mentioned, he was also chosen by graduating students as Graduation Sponsor on numerous occasions. Many students approached him to seek advice when planning their professional future. Gustavo considered these actions and gestures as the most valuable recognition and prize.

But beyond all scientific and academic merits, it is important to highlight his qualities as a person. The doors of his laboratory were always open for anyone who wanted to see him and he always listened carefully to any question, no matter who he was speaking to. A great scientist and educator, greater because of his humility despite his notable relevance in the national and international scientific field, he always knew how to listen respectfully to students, young researchers or any other person who wanted to talk about the subjects he was passionate about, such as classical music, philosophy, history, and, obviously, paleontology. And that was, in large part, what engendered the enormous affection and admiration that many of us feel for him.

Today, a few months after his passing, we do not forget the great person he was, his strong commitment as an educator, his distinguished career in research, and mainly, his great life teachings, his fellowship, and his friendship.

Goodbye Gustavo!

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