

Prof. Dr Mirosław Przybylski (1956-2023)

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Prof. Dr Mirosław Przybylski (1956-2023)



Mirek on the Island of North Uist in Scotland, teaching local schoolchildren about the wonders of the three-spined stickleback, a species he used in his research.

Mirosław ('Mirek') Przybylski, Professor of Biological Sciences at the University of Lodz from 1982-2023, passed away at his home in Lodz on 26th August 2023.

Mirek was born and grew up in Lodz, where he graduated in biology in 1982 from the University of Lodz. He joined the Faculty of Biology and Earth Sciences of his home university as a teaching assistant in the same

year, completing his PhD under the supervision of the renowned ichthyologist Prof. Tadeusz Penczak, who had built a substantial research group focused on the ecology of riverine fishes. Mirek progressed through the Polish academic system as a senior teaching assistant (1984-1990), Assistant Professor (1990-1999), Senior Lecturer (1999-2005), Habilitated Professor (2005-2015) and finally full Professor in 2015.

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Mirek made a substantial contribution to the administration and running of his department and faculty, serving as Head of Doctoral Studies in the Faculty of Biology and Environmental Protection, Chairman of the Faculty of Mathematical and Natural Sciences of the Lodz Scientific Society, and Chairman of the Faculty Recruitment Committee, among other roles. Mirek supervised the dissertations of four doctoral and 30 masters students, and was also the reviewer of numerous undergraduate and postgraduate theses, as well as for submissions for habilitation and professorships. Mirek was a member of the Polish Zoological Society, Editor of the journal *Acta Ichthyologica et Piscatoria*, a member of the Editorial Board of the *Scientific Reports of the Polish Anglers Association*, and Associate Editor of *Journal of Vertebrate Biology*. His contributions were recognised by numerous awards, including the Gold Medal of the University of Lodz, the Lodz Medal for Service to Society and Science, and the Gold Medal of the President of the Republic of Poland for Long Service.

Mirek's research concerned several aspects of freshwater fish biology and ecology, mainly relating to life-history evolution, foraging, growth and reproductive ecology. He also researched the ecology of river fish assemblages and published a substantial body of work on the life-history characteristics, growth and distribution of riverine fishes. Later in

his career, he became interested in invasive fishes and their impacts on native assemblages. He collaborated widely, sharing authorship with numerous researchers with similar interests. Mirek undertook several international internships and study visits during his career, including in the UK, Hungary, Spain and Portugal, as well as conducting fieldwork throughout Poland and Europe.

Cheerful and optimistic, all dealings with Mirek were a pleasure. He was a great companion during fieldwork; resilient and physically tough, he treated sampling as a serious endeavour and completed his work with meticulous care. He had a quick mind and a profound understanding of fish ecology and was always ready with ideas and solutions. Mirek was also a highly competent statistician with an outstanding grasp of experimental design and data collection. An important focus for Mirek in the latter part of his life was in developing younger colleagues' careers, and he was a patient and encouraging mentor to many of us. Perhaps Mirek will be best remembered by his many colleagues for his prodigious sense of humour, thoughtful anecdotes, and philosophical perspective that reflected his polite, educated, cultured and well-rounded character.

Carl SMITH