

Coastal Research Library

Volume 15

Series Editor

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Rafael Riosmena-Rodríguez • Wendy Nelson
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Editors

Rhodolith/Maërl Beds: A Global Perspective

 Springer

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Tribute to Rafael Riosmena-Rodríguez

In Memoriam

On March 15th 2016 we heard the sad news that our colleague and friend Rafael Riosmena-Rodríguez passed away suddenly as a result of heart failure. Rafael Riosmena, Rafa, was an internationally renowned scientist who dedicated 25 years working on many different aspects of marine biology, but particularly on the taxonomy and biology of red coralline algae.

Rafael was born in 1966 in León, Guanajuato. He began his degree in marine biology at the Universidad Autónoma de Baja California Sur (UABCS), in La Paz (México), then a Master's degree from San Jose State University (SJSU) in the United States, and a Ph.D. degree in marine botany at La Trobe University in Australia. He was currently a professor and researcher at UABCS, level III member of the National Research System of México (SNI).

He focused his work on the taxonomy of rhodolith-forming coralline red algae and the ecological significance of rhodolith beds. Rafa has left behind a valuable scientific legacy of more than 100 scientific papers published in peer-reviewed journals. He also edited many books on different aspects of the marine biology of the Gulf of California. Rafael was the driving force behind this book, his latest contribution to the knowledge of rhodoliths and rhodolith beds.

One of his most important contributions to science was to build a consolidated group of many young people, that now are spread in respected institutions all over the world, continuing his studies. His enthusiasm, generosity, and friendly behaviour facilitated an excellent atmosphere in which to work, and great collegiality with scientists internationally. Thanks to this tireless work training good researchers, Rafa's scientific school is now continuing his legacy.

Rafa wasn't only a highly regarded phycologist. He was also deeply committed to the defence and protection of the environment, also denouncing corrupt activities in México. His wide knowledge of the marine environments of the Gulf of California and his untiring work trying to unravel the mechanisms behind ecological interactions led him into contact with institutions trying to find the way to manage and protect these environments. We all depend upon marine ecosystems, so we have to learn how to interact with wildlife maintaining the equilibrium and seeking

sustainable approaches. Rafa provided scientific data to guide non-scientists at different levels in the protection of these precious environments.

In addition to all his scientific accomplishments and contributions, Rafa was a good friend, with kind words and always willing to help anyone. Our memories will be of Rafa smiling. We are indebted to him because, thanks to his constancy and firm conviction, he established a group of active scientists researching rhodoliths that share more than scientific results. We will miss him, but we know that his legacy will live in his lovely family and in all his students around the world. Nada nos detiene! Thanks Rafa!

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