

# Obituary: André Souza dos Santos (1983–2015)

JOSÉ ERIBERTO DE ASSIS<sup>1</sup>, ANA CLAUDIA DOS SANTOS BRASIL<sup>2</sup>  
AND MARTIN LINDSEY CHRISTOFFERSEN<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Departamento de Sistemática e Ecologia, Centro de Ciências Exatas e da Natureza - Universidade Federal da Paraíba (UFPB), Cidade Universitária, CEP 58059-900, João Pessoa, Paraíba, Brazil, <sup>2</sup>Departamento de Biologia Animal, Laboratório de Polychaeta, Instituto de Ciências Biológicas e da Saúde, Universidade Federal Rural do Rio de Janeiro (UFRRJ), Seropédica-RJ, Brazil

André Souza dos Santos was born in João Pessoa, Paraíba, Brazil, on 16 March 1983. He studied at the Universidade Federal da Paraíba, graduating in 2007, presenting his master's thesis in 2010, and obtaining his doctorate in 2014. In 2015, he moved to the Universidade Federal of Sergipe for a post-doctorate position at FAPESE, a private foundation affiliated with the university, working on Projeto Marseal Talude da Petrobrás.

In 2004, he published his first paper on nesting of Hawksbill Turtles in Paraíba, Brazil, when he was a volunteer on Project Guajiru, a Non-Governmental Organization for the protection of marine turtles. Thereafter he published almost exclusively on annelids, until his death in 2015.

During his first degree, he received an undergraduate scholarship from the Programa Institucional de Bolsas de Iniciação Científica (PIBIC), and he started to work with polychaete annelids following his master's and doctorate degrees under the supervision of Dr Martin Lindsey Christoffersen. During this period, he attended many courses and participated in many scientific meetings. He moved to Rio de Janeiro and met Dr Ana Claudia dos Santos Brasil, whereupon he became involved in the study of Sabellariidae, a favourite family ever after.

During his numerous travels, both in Brazil and abroad, he was inspired by scientists such as Drs Paulo da Cunha Lana at Universidade Federal do Paraná (UFPR), João de Matos Nogueira at Universidade de São Paulo (USP) and Cecília Amaral at Universidade Estadual de Campinas (UNICAMP), who collaborated with him, encouraging and advancing his studies. André went to the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, USA to compare Brazilian specimens of sabellariids and terebellids with those from worldwide locations. There, he met Dr Kirk Fitzhugh, who helped him to think objectively about phylogenetics and abduction, and Leslie Harris, who helped with his research using the large polychaete collection and welcomed him to stay at her house. All these were very important influences in his life and career.

He worked also as a volunteer curator of marine annelids at the Coleção de Invertebrados Paulo Young at UFPB. He made many collections, contributed to their organization and conservation, and participated in several researcher projects, such as: Projeto do Porto de Cabedelo, Paraíba; Projeto Biota, Paraíba; Caracterização espacial da macrofauna de



Fig. 1. André Souza dos Santos. Photograph: Ana Claudia dos Santos Brasil.

praias arenosas em cinco ilhas da Baía de Sepetiba, Rio de Janeiro; and Taxonomic revision of Sabellariidae and Terebellidae from the Brazilian coast.

André had experience in the areas of taxonomy, systematics and phylogenetics, with an emphasis in Zoology. He worked especially on the morphology and taxonomy of recent groups of Polychaeta, particularly Terebellidae and Sabellariidae, and published on both the systematics and ecology of these groups. His PhD was on the taxonomy and phylogeny of Sabellariidae (Annelida: Polychaeta). He left eight published papers on annelid polychaetes: Santos *et al.* (2009, 2010, 2011, 2014); Nishi *et al.* (2010); Lomônaco *et al.*, (2011); De Assis *et al.* (2012) and Mattos *et al.* (2013). He also participated in several national and international meetings.

André was an intelligent and ambitious person, who got along well with almost everyone. He helped other students to identify and collect polychaetes, and searched for new ways and techniques to improve these identifications. He contributed to the knowledge of polychaetes from north-eastern Brazil, published new species for science, worked with us to produce the first catalogue of polychaetes from the coast of the State of Paraíba, and prepared taxonomic inventories of sabellariids and terebellids from the Brazilian coast and the world.

Unfortunately, André had a short life. On 2 October 2015, he passed away unexpectedly, struck down by a terrible pneumonia, after only a few days spent in hospital. He has contributed to a large part of our understanding on annelid polychaetes,

Corresponding author:  
J.E. De Assis  
Email: eri.assis@gmail.com

especially sabellariids, which were his major focus in life. This young scientist will be remembered in our hearts forever.

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### Correspondence should be addressed to:

J.E. De Assis  
Departamento de Sistemática e Ecologia, Centro de Ciências Exatas e da Natureza - Universidade Federal da Paraíba (UFPB), Cidade Universitária,  
CEP 58059-900, João Pessoa, Paraíba, Brazil  
email: [eri.assis@gmail.com](mailto:eri.assis@gmail.com)