ISSN 0425-1016

ENTOMOLOGICA

Open access, DOI-indexed, full digital Juornal on Entomology
Department of Soil, Plant and Food Sciences - University of Bari Aldo Moro
www.entomologicabari.org – www.entbari.org

Vol. 47 – 2016

BARI

Department of Soil, Plant and Food Sciences - UNIBA Aldo Moro DiSSPA - Entomology and Zoology Section, Via Amendola, 165/A - 70126 BARI - ITALY
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www. entomologicabari. org – www. entbari. org
Authorization of the Court of Bari n. 306, 19 April 1966

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Open access, DOI-indexed, full digital Journal on Entomology
edited by Department of Soil, Plant and Food Sciences
University of Bari Aldo Moro
www. entomologicabari. org – www. entbari. org

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Scale Insect Research Award for Prof. Manuela Branco

Manuela Branco was honored *in absentia* during the XIV ISSIS meeting, held in Catania, Italy, from June 13th - 16th, 2016, for her achievements in the study of scale insects.

She was born in October 1960 in Vila Real, Trás-os-Montes, in the North of Portugal, a land of forests and vineyards. Although she has been living in Lisbon all her lifetime, most of her holidays up to the age of 16 were spent with her grandmother in the North. She believes that her passion for forests and nature comes from those times. She is married with Orlando, and mother of two sons, João and Miguel, and a daughter, Beatriz.

She completed her studies in Forestry and Natural Resources at the School of Agronomy (ISA), in the Technical University of Lisbon, in 1984. The project of her graduation was carried out at the National Institute of Forest Research (NIFR) and was dedicated to study the phenotypic variability of the honeybee. She proceeded working at NIFR for two years. Already in 1986, she was appointed lecturer at the Forestry Department of ISA and taught in several courses, including Apiculture, Animal Resources, Invertebrates Biology, Animal Biology, Ecology and Forest Protection. In 1993, she obtained a Master degree in Statistics and Probability from the Faculty of Sciences, at the University of Lisbon; her thesis was done on modelling the population dynamics of honeybee colonies. In the same year, she enrolled in the University of Wales, College of Cardiff, UK for her PhD in Applied Biology, under the supervision of Robert Stewart Pickard and Neil Kidd. She completed the PhD thesis in 1997, addressing the population dynamics of *Varroa destructor,* a parasite of the honeybee. In 2006, she obtained her post-doctoral qualification as the highest academic degree [habilitation] at the Technical University of Lisbon. During her academic career she

Franco J. C., Mendel Z. (2016); Scale Insect Research Award for Prof. Manuela Branco; *Entomologica*, Bari, 47: 13-15; doi: dx. doi. org/10. 15162/0425-1016/444

Award, accepted: September, 2016; ISSN 0425-1016

Part of this study was presented during the ISSIS XIV 13-16 June 2016, Catania - Italy

supervised 2 post-doc and 4 PhD students, and more than 30 MSc thesis or final graduation reports. She published 52 papers in international journals, and more than 50 other publications, including 12 book chapters.

Her research activity has been focusing on forest entomology and forest protection, with special attention to insect ecology and biological control. She started working on scale insects in the end of the 1990´s. Much of her activity in this field has been directed to pine bast scales (*Matsucoccus* spp.) and mealybugs (Pseudococcidae), with major attention on biological control and chemical ecology aspects of these insects. Among her interesting findings was the discovery of the kairomonal attraction of *Matsucoccus* predators to the sex pheromone of their prey (Branco *et al.* 2006a, 2006b, 2011). Manuela and her research partners also shed light on the bioecology of the ladybird *Iberorhyzobius rondensis* (Raimundo *et al.* 2006; Tavares *et al.* 2014, 2015a, 2015b). Among of her impressive achievements was the modelling of spread distance of scale insect males and natural enemies (Branco *et al.* 2006c). Lately, she has been intensively involved in the study of the relationships between mealybugs and their parasitoids (Bugila 2014a, 2014b, 2015).

She is an active partner in ISSIS meetings since 2001. She attended ISSIS-IX, Padua, Italy (2001), ISSIS-X, Adana, Turkey (2004), ISSIS-XII, Crete, Greece (2010), and organized with José Carlos Franco the ISSIS-XI, at Oeiras, Portugal (2007), editing the corresponding proceedings (Branco *et al.* 2008).

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