

Tea Kolar-Jurkovšek's Pander Medal

During the celebration of the European Conodont Symposium at Utrecht University in September 2022, Dr Tea Kolar-Jurkovšek, scientific advisor at the Geological Survey of Slovenia, was awarded the highest recognition of the Pander Society, the Pander Medal for “a life dedicated” to the study of conodonts.

The Pander Society is an international association of palaeontologists and stratigraphers with a common interest in the study of conodonts, whose main goal is to encourage the exchange of information about conodont research. According to the Pander Society, The Pander Medal, which is the society's highest recognition, acknowledges senior conodont workers who have made truly outstanding contributions to the study of conodonts. After evaluating her many merits, this award was conferred on Dr Tea Kolar-Jurkovšek, one of Slovenia's most prominent palaeontologists.

Tea Kolar-Jurkovšek was born in August 1954 in Litija, Slovenia. After completing her graduate studies at Ljubljana University (1979), she obtained her PhD at the University of Belgrade in 1989. Since then, she has been employed at the Geological Survey of Slovenia as a researcher, serving in various positions as a project and program leader. Tea actively collaborates in other scientific institutions, especially as a member of the IUGS International Commission on Triassic Stratigraphy, where she is part of several working groups.

Her work has focused primarily on Slovenian palaeontology, working on Devonian, Carboniferous, and Permian, and mainly Triassic conodonts in Slovenia as well as in the wider Dinarides area, where she was responsible for long-term programs and bilateral scientific exchanges where she directly contributed to our knowledge of conodonts by solving important taxonomical, geological, and biostratigraphical questions.

In the course of her substantial contributions to and advances in conodont knowledge, which spans over four decades, she has published over 200 contributions, most of them related to work on conodonts. At the same time, Dr Kolar-Jurkovšek developed an international network collaborating with several leading international experts on various fossil groups all over the world. In this context, she has been part of several international projects working on biostratigraphic issues in various countries.

In related work, Dr Kolar-Jurkovšek, together with her husband Dr Bogdan Jurkovšek, stands out with her commitment to transferring some part of her work to the general public, by means of books and public exhibitions. Recently, they have published two books – “Conodonts of Slovenia (2019)” and “Fossils of Slovenia (2021)”, published in Slovenian and English, and both issued by the Geological Survey of Slovenia.

In summary, Tea Kolar-Jurkovšek has been one of the most productive and influential researchers working on conodonts, establishing a working network of researchers and international scientific exchanges that continues to this day. For these reasons, and as she approaches retirement, the international community of conodont researchers recognises her work, awarding her with its highest recognition, the Pander Medal, for a lifetime of achievements in the diverse study of conodont palaeontology. On behalf of the Pander Society, I would like to congratulate her and wish her a long and most productive future in her ongoing and widely recognised conodont studies.

*Dr. Carlos Martínez-Pérez
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Dr. Tea Kolar-Jurkovšek after receiving the Pander Medal during the European Conodont Symposium, celebrated at the University of Utrecht in September 2022. From left to right: Dr. Carlos Martínez-Pérez (University of Valencia, Spain), Dr. Tea Kolar-Jurkovšek (Geological Survey of Slovenia), and Dr. Emilia Jarochowska (University of Utrecht, Netherlands). Photo: Nicola Vuolo.