

Preface

The Iberoamerican Echinoderms Network (Red Iberoamericana de Equinodermos) (RIE) (<http://zicatela.umar.mx/~redequinos/2/>) was created in August 2006 at the 12th International Echinoderms Congress in New Hampshire, United States, as an initiative to strengthen academic connections between Iberoamerican echinoderm researchers. The RIE seeks to fortify the links of researchers in the different countries of the region, being a bridge of communication and exchange of ideas. It seeks to be the platform for discussion and communication of priority projects for Latin America echinoderms. It seeks to offer the opportunity of collaborative work, to place the region among the principal research and conservation regions of the world. Likewise, the RIE intends to support students interested in echinoderm research. To enrich their formation, it will offer information about researchers who could help in their projects, courses, seminars, or symposia, as well as providing literature. The goal of the RIE is to develop workshops, congresses, special journals supplements and books, and to support the development of the knowledge of the echinoderms in Latin America.

The first effort of the RIE was the preparation and publication of a Special Issue of the *Revista de Biología Tropical* (International Journal of Tropical Biology and Conservation) (Alvarado, J. J. and Cortés, J. (Editors). 2005. Research on Echinoderms in Latin America, Volume 53, Supplement 3: 387 p.) (<http://www.ots.ac.cr/tropiweb/intpages/suppl/sup53-3.html>). This initiative was born during the 11th International Echinoderms Congress in München, Germany, in 2003. This Special Issue compiled 28 papers from 12 countries by 62 authors, touching topics as diverse as paleontology in the Uruguayan region and fisheries models of sea cucumbers in Baja California. The second output of the RIE was a second supplement of the *Revista de Biología Tropical* (Alvarado, J.J. and Cortés, J. (Editors). 2008. Research on Echinoderms in Latin America II, Volume 56, Supplement 3: 360 p.) (<http://www.ots.ac.cr/tropiweb/intpages/suppl/sup56-3.html>). This issue compiled 21 papers from eight countries by 46 authors in Latin America (including an invited paper from the Canary Islands). Those papers demonstrated the high degree of knowledge of some countries in topics such as diversity, ecology, aquaculture, and fisheries. It also identified countries where more efforts are needed.

The third effort was the establishment of the first Latin American Echinoderm Congress (Congreso Latinoamericano de Equinodermos-CLE) held in Puerto Madryn, Argentina, between 13 and 18 November 2011. This congress was organized by the Centro Nacional Patagónico (CENPAT), the Museo Argentino de Ciencias Naturales “Bernardino Rivadavia” (MACN), and the Universidad Nacional de la Patagonia San Juan Bosco. A total of 112 people participated in this event with 76 oral presentations and 54 Poster, covering the following themes: biogeography, biochemistry, ecology, physiology, paleontology, fisheries and aquaculture, reproduction and development, and taxonomy, systematics, and evolution.

This book represents the fourth output and the confirmation of the commitment of the RIE with the international scientific community. The book represents an extensive recompilation of information about all the research done in the region from theses, reports, books, and scientific journals. We were able to identify the strengths and weaknesses of each country and also allow the international scientific community to be able to access information that was held in reports, theses, and local papers that were written in Spanish, allowing a greater diffusion of the results and conclusions obtained. Our goal is to improve the echinoderm research on the region and with this road map establish future research in collaboration with the different laboratories and researchers that participated in this book.

Juan José Alvarado
Francisco Solís-Marín



Echinoderm Research and Diversity in Latin America

Alvarado, J.J.; Solis-Marin, F.A. (Eds.)

2013, XVIII, 658 p., Hardcover

ISBN: 978-3-642-20050-2