

## The 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the biologist Angela TONIUC



Angela Toniuc (daughter of Iosif and Elisabeta Bișoc) was born in the village of Ciumbrud (part of the city of Aiud, Alba county) on July 24, 1944. She attended pre-university studies in the city of Roman (Neamț county), and in 1962 she graduated the “Roman – Voda” High School with the baccalaureate diploma. Between 1964 and 1969, she attended the Department of Biology-Botany within the Faculty of Biology-Geography (since 1990, the Faculty of Biology). In 1979-1980 she completes her studies by attending postgraduate courses in English within the Faculty of Philology at the “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iași.

In the second year of her university studies she became an active member of the scientific circle of students, involved in the study of the corn (*Cornus mas*) from the Moldavian Plateau, which was also the subject of her diploma paper. The full recognition of the competences in the field of botanical research came with the title of doctor in biology of the University “Al. I. Cuza” Iași, in 1998, with the thesis “Embryological researches in some *Campanulaceae* both spontaneous and cultivated in Romania”.

Immediately after graduation, she joined the team of the Botanical Garden of Iași, recently (1962-1963) transferred on the site of the Copou hill. The main responsibilities within the institution were permanently related to the Globe Flora section. Initially Angela Toniuc coordinated the *Alpine* sub-section, for which she elaborated and transferred to the field the scientific topic. Since 1993 she has taken over the surface of the entire sector, acting permanently in the spirit of preserving and enriching the botanical material. One of the most important achievements of the biologist Angela Toniuc within the Globe Flora section is the establishment of a bonsai collection, which over the past 25 years has come to contain hundreds of specimens of indisputable value. It is probably still one of the most valuable collections of the type in the whole country.

Her passion for bonsai art was complemented by her interest in other aspects of the Japanese artistic life (Japanese gardens, tea art etc.). They were all inspirational for the exhibitions organized in the Botanical Garden and, especially after 1990, the space organized under the inspired guidance of Angela Toniuc was highly appreciated by the visitors initiated in the Japanese culture.

Between 1985 and 2001 she coordinated the activity of the section “International seed exchange”, which annually publishes the journal “*Delectus Seminum et Sporarum*”, as a base for exchanges of botanical material with our national and international partners.

As coordinator of these sections, botanist Angela Toniuc collaborated in the publication of four issues of the “Botanical Garden of Iași. Guide” journal, in 1983, 1988, 1994 and 2003, respectively. The experience regarding the activities specific to the botanical gardens and her talent to put on paper the vast information that she scrupulously accumulated were very useful in writing and publishing the book “File de istorie” (2006, in collaboration with Prof. M. Mititiuc), a true chronicle of the institution she has permanently promoted.

Botanist Angela Toniuc had the opportunity to promote the Botanical Garden of Iasi during various exchanges with similar institutions in Switzerland (1990), France (1990), Italy (1990, 1995), Belgium (1998), Republic of Moldova (1992, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1998) and Sweden (2000).

The valuable experience regarding the specificity of the botanical gardens resulted in her becoming a member of the scientific council of the Botanical Gardens of Iași and Galați, (after 1990). The specialists of the latter benefited from the guidance and the botanical material generously offered by the Botanist Angela Toniuc.

Between 1990 and 2000, she was associated professor of “Plant anatomy”, “Plant embryology” and “Ecological biogeography” at the Faculty of Biology of the University “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” of Iasi. In this period, she generously shared with the students her valuable botanical knowledge with real pedagogical talent, collaborating in the laboratory and specialized practice, but also supervising their graduation and dissertation papers.

She devoted an important part of her time to research, the results of this activity being found in the over 130/110 works published, alone or in collaboration, four of them being published in international journals (Italy, Sweden). She also published in collaboration “Adaptation to the environment in the world of plants” (1991) and “Flora spontaneous and cultivated in Romania” (4 volumes). For this reference work (extremely useful to specialists), in 2006, Mrs. Angela Toniuc received the “EMANOIL TEODORESCU” prize from the Romanian Academy (along with Dr. Ion Sârbu). She was also among the collaborators of the work “The illustrated flora of vascular plants from Eastern Romania” (vol. 1, 2001). She was involved in 6 research contracts on rare plants, with ornamental value, medicinal and tincture, affected by polluting factors etc.

After retirement (in 2001), she continued to be interested in the botanical field, so that in 2014 she published in collaboration the book “Common names of Romanian Plants - expression of their morphological and ecological characteristics”.

All the achievements of Mrs. Angela Toniuc, whether it was scientific work, obtaining exotic taxonomy, setting up the bonsai collection, participating in exhibitions etc., were marked by the seriousness, tenacity, refinement and remarkable energy that characterized her during the 35 years of activity. She was and remains a true mentor to the young biologists who took over the specific work of a botanical garden. The authors of these lines are grateful for the opportunity to collaborate for several years with Mrs. Angela Toniuc, a model of erudition, perseverance, fairness, creative but also critical spirit; a multitude of qualities from which we want to highlight the altruism with which she supported, encouraged and guided all the young people who had the chance to collaborate with her: graduates, doctoral, master and high school students or just nature lovers.

On the occasion of her 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we wish her the best of health, innumerable happy moments with her beloved ones, and also energy to complete the botanical projects at which she still works with dedication and that are dearly expected by those who know and admire her.

Many happy returns of the day!

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