

CV of Ferdinando Boero

Contacts:
Ferdinando Boero
DiSTeBA (Dipartimento di Scienze e
Tecnologie Biologiche e Ambientali)
Università del Salento
73100 Lecce
Italy
Voice: -39 0832 298619
Handphone: 3332144956
Fax: -39 0832 298702 or 298626
email: boero@unisalento.it

1951, February 13th, born in Genova, Italy.

Current position: Full Professor of Zoology and Anthropology at the Department of Biological and Environmental Sciences and Technologies of the University of Salento. Associate at the Istituto di Scienze Marine of the National Research Council

Appointments

1988-today, responsible of the Museum and Station of Marine Biology of Porto Cesareo.

1990- today, Member, or past member, of the editorial board of the journals:

Advances in Limnology and Oceanography

Aquatic Biology

Aquatic Invasions

Cahiers de Biologie Marine

Ecology Letters

Italian Journal of Zoology (editor in chief since 2008)

Journal of Evolutionary Biology

F1000 Research

Oebalia

Thalassia Salentina

1995-today, member of the Council of the "Consorzio Nazionale Interuniversitario per le Scienze del Mare" (National Interuniversity Consortium for Marine Sciences) (CoNISMA).

1995-today, director of the CoNISMA Research Unit of Lecce.

1996-1998, Member of the Academic Senate of the University of Lecce.

1998-2004, Chair of the Littoral Environments Committee of the International Commission for the Scientific Exploration of the Mediterranean Sea.

2007-2013, Chair of the Biological Resources Committee of the International Commission for the Scientific Exploration of the Mediterranean Sea.

1998-2004, Secretary General of the Società Italiana di Ecologia.

2004-2008, Member of the council of the Società Italiana di Ecologia,

2004-today, Member of the council of the Unione Zoologica Italiana.

2000-2008, responsible, with L. Ruggiero and A. Varola, of the Museum of the Environment of the University of Salento

2003-2008, Responsible of a node of the European Network of Excellence in Marine Biodiversity and Ecosystem Functioning (MARBEF).

2004-today, member of the board of the Commission for the Fauna of Italy

2007-2010, member of the Executive Board of CoNISMA

2007-today, member of the steering committee of the European Network of Marine Institutes and Stations (MARS)

2008-2011, Member of the scientific council of the Stazione Zoologica di Napoli.

2009-today Member of *Faculty of 1000*

2011-today Member of the *European Marine Board*.

2011-today Member of GEV (Gruppo Esperti Valutazione) of ANVUR (Agenzia Nazionale per la Valutazione del sistema Universitario e della Ricerca), with the role of president of a sub group of evaluation experts (SUB-GEV) of the Area 5 (BIOLOGY).

2013- today: Member of of the European Academies Scientific Advisory Council as a representative of the Accademia dei Lincei for the preparation of the document: Marine Sustainability in an age of changing oceans and seas;

2014-today: Member of the G7 Academies for the preparation of a document on the ocean as a discussion basing at the last Berlin G7 Meeting: Future of the Ocean: impact of human activities on marine systems

2013-today: Member of the scientific council of the Stazione Zoologica di Napoli

2013-today: Member of the European Academies Science Advisory Council

2014-today: Member of the Scientific Council of Associazione Pro-Natura

2014-today: Member of the Scientific Council of the World Wildlife Fund-Italy

2015-today: Member of the Scientific Council of Coldiretti

2015-today: Vicepresident of Marevivo

2015-today: Vicepresident of Fondo Ambiente Italia – Lecce Section

Scientific activity

1. Author of **129** scientific articles on ISI journals; **104** on non-ISI journals; **44** editorials, letters, book reviews; **20** book chapters; **13** authored books; **9** edited books that, according to Google Scholar, June 9 2016 (<https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=Syro5DUAAA&hl=en>) received **6825** citations, h-index **45**.
2. Top Italian Scientist according to the Virtual Italian Academy
3. Keynote speaker at meetings of: Società Italiana di Biologia Marina, European Marine Biology Symposium, Commission Internationale pour l'Exploration Scientifique de la Mer Méditerranée, International Congress on the Zoogeography and Ecology of Greece and Adjacent Regions (ICZEGAR), Congress of the Partnership for Enhancing Expertise in Taxonomy, International Conference of Coelenterate Biology, Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology, Unione Zoologica Italiana, Associazione Italiana di Oceanografia e Limnologia, Società Italiana di Biogeografia, Società Italiana di Ecologia, British Ecological Society, Mares Conference.
4. Organiser of sessions at the meetings of: American Society of Limnology and Oceanography, European Society of Evolutionary Biology, INTECOL, Società Italiana di Ecologia, Unione Zoologica Italiana, MarBEF.
5. Field work (using SCUBA) in: the whole Mediterranean, California, Sea of Cortez, Papua New Guinea.
6. Member of: Unione Zoologica Italiana, Società Italiana di Ecologia, Società Italiana di Biologia Marina, Associazione Italiana di Oceanografia e Limnologia, Gruppo "Gadio" di Ecologia di Base, Commission Internationale pour l'Exploration Scientifique de la Mer Méditerranée, Hydrozoan Society, Linnean Society of London, European Society of Evolutionary Biology, American Society of Naturalists.
7. Collaborator or coordinator of many research projects supported by local, national and international funding agencies, including the National Science Foundation of the United States, the European Union, the United Nations. Among the most noticeable ones:
The EU projects Jason, Sesame, Perseus, Vectors of Change, Med-Jellyrisk, CoCoNet (coordinator)
The PEET project (Partnership for Enhancing Expertise in Taxonomy) of the National Science Foundation of the US
Three Projects of Relevant National Interest (PRIN) of the Italian Ministry of Education and Research (Coordinator)
An INTERREG Italy-Greece project (Coordinator)
The Flagship Project RITMARE

Awards and special mentions

2004, Prize *Renoir* of the Region Apulia

2005, Manley Bendall Prize, Medaille Albert Premier for Oceanography of the Institut Océanographique de Paris

2007, Prize *Il Sallentino* for the Sciences

2010, First Absolute Prize at the Sea Heritage Best Communication Campaign.

2010, First Prize in the section Scientific Research at the Sea Heritage Best Communication Campaign.

2012, Faculty Member of the year 2011 for the Faculty of Ecology of Faculty of 1000

2013, Faculty Member of the year 2012 for the Faculty of Ecology of Faculty of 1000

2014, Outstanding Faculty Member of the year 2013 of Faculty of 1000

2015, Outstanding Faculty Member of the year 2014 of Faculty of 1000

2016, Tridente d'oro

2017, medal for the Physical and Natural Sciences of the National Academy of Sciences of Italy

My work has been mentioned by: Book of the year 1995 of the Encyclopedia Britannica, Mc Graw Hill Yearbook of Science and Technology 1999, Mickey Mouse Journal (in Italian), Frank Zappa (YCDTOSAM VOL VI: Lonesome cowboy Nando), The New York Times, Time Magazine (with a cover story and an online article).

Honorary taxa:

Boeromedusidae Bouillon, 1995 (Cnidaria)

Boeromedusa Bouillon, 1995 (Cnidaria)

Sphaerosyllis boeroi Musco, Cynar, Giangrande, 2005 (Annelida)

Tethia boeroi Sarà, 1992 (Porifera)

Outreach and third mission

Having had responsibility in the direction of two scientific museums, I have bridged scientific achievements with the communication of their outcome. Museums are only a part of my communication program. I have participated to innumerable TV shows, for Italian and foreign TVs, including the national televisions of Japan, France, Austria, Germany, Russia. I have written three general books: *Ecologia della bellezza (The ecology of beauty)*, *Ecologia ed evoluzione della religione (The ecology and evolution of religion)* and *Economia senza natura. La grande truffa (Economy without nature. The great swindle)* to show to the general public that the enforcement of an ecological and evolutionary point of view can help the understanding and management of human problems, since we are part of Nature.

With the campaign Occhio alla Medusa I have launched a project on the involvement of citizens in providing information on the presence of jellyfish throughout the Mediterranean Sea. Citizen science is a powerful tool to involve people in research activities and leads to a better consciousness of the general public.

Through my museum activities I have involved a whole group of artists to convey my messages through sculpture, painting, models, dioramas etc.

Concepts are better explained with beauty.

As Chair of two Committees of the Mediterranean Science Commission (CIESM) I joined missions to Greece, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Turkey, with meetings with local politicians, including Ministries. I have helped the United Nations in enforcing an environmental policy in Albania, and I have participated to many initiatives in Italian Ministries, aimed at bridging gaps between the scientific community and decision makers. Similar initiatives have been pursued during my activity in the European Network of Excellence in Marine Biodiversity and Ecosystem Functioning, and in the European Marine Board.

In 2001, at the University of Salento, I have organized, together with prof. Giampalo Cò, the series of conferences "Semplice e Complesso", aimed at bridging cultural gaps within the members of the Faculty of Sciences. In 2009, together with prof. Giampaolo Cò and prof. Livio Ruggiero, I have organized a series of conferences to celebrate the impact of Darwinian thinking on the manifold branches of Culture.

I have been invited to write articles dealing with marine issues for the newspapers *Corriere della Sera*, *La Stampa*, *Nuovo Quotidiano di Puglia*, *Il Secolo XIX* and for the magazines *Internazionale*, *Rolling Stone*, *La Contraddizione*, and *Le Scienze*. I have been interviewed by the main media of the world, from the *New York Times*, to the *Washington Post* and *Time Magazine* and by innumerable newspapers, magazines, tv programs.

I have started a collaboration with the portal of the *Enciclopedia Treccani* (http://www.treccani.it/webtv/esperti/boero_ferdinando), explaining basic concepts through posted videos.

Organization of meetings, congresses, and workshops

I organize meetings since 1982, when I participated to the organization of a national meeting of the Italian Society of Marine Biology at Massa Lubrense-Sorrento.

In 1985 I organized, at Ischia, the first workshop of the Hydrozoan Society, organizing also the workshops in Blanes, Roscoff, Bodega Bay, Porto Cesareo.

I have organized the meeting of the Zoological Union of Italy, of the European Network of Excellence on Marine Biodiversity and Ecosystem Functioning, and of the National Interuniversity Consortium of Marine Sciences.

As chair of CIESM committees, I have organized the following workshops:

Scientific design and monitoring of Mediterranean marine protected areas (location: Porto Cesareo, Italia, 1999)

Gelatinous zooplankton outbreaks: theory and practice (location: Napoli, Italia, 2001)

Erosion littorale en Méditerranée: dynamique, diagnostic et remèdes (location: Tangers, Morocco, 2002)

Climate warming and related changes in Mediterranean Marine Biota (location: Helgoland, Germany, 2008)

Marine Extinctions - patterns and processes (location: Valencia, 2012)

I have organized the meeting Euroceans 2014 as an Italian representative in the European Marine Board.

Main concepts developed by F. Boero

Besides reporting about facts in many papers, I have always tried to contribute to the general understanding of biological phenomena. These are the main concepts I have developed, stemming from my experience on facts:

A general model of ecosystem functioning as the result of three main fluxes, usually kept separate by theoretical ecology:

Extraspecific fluxes: biogeochemical cycles

Intraspecific fluxes: life cycles and life histories

Interspecific fluxes: food webs

Benthic pelagic coupling is not only a matter of biogeochemistry, it is a matter of life cycles. In coastal waters, many plankters spend long periods in the sediments, as resting stages. The main compartments of marine biota (plankton, benthos, nekton) are not separated and must be studied as a whole.

Seasonality is not only a matter of plankton, also benthic communities are subjected to strong seasonality, with alternation in the dominance of species.

The biomass of a given ecosystem tends to be stable, but the contributions of the various species changes with time, both as fluctuations (linked to seasonality) and as variations (actual changes in biodiversity composition).

Irregular and episodic events are the key of change in ecological systems: we are attracted by regularities but change is driven by irregularities.

The sites of deep water formation of the Mediterranean Sea (the Gulf of Lions and the Gulf of Trieste) host biota of cold water affinity that are threatened by global warming. These “cold spots” of biodiversity are the most sensitive areas of the world to climate change and the species restricted to these localities run the risk of extinction due to global warming.

Marine canyons, with their upwelling currents, are further contributors to benthic pelagic coupling, supplementing the role of the “cold engines” and acting as “units of ecosystem functioning” by driving nutrient rich deep water, and propagules, to the coastal systems, triggering plankton blooms.

Ecology is a historical discipline and cannot be modeled in a predictive way, with algorithms: the key to understand the environment is natural history (with the modern tools of experimental ecology and biology).

Ecology and evolution must go together, there is nothing like stability in evolution and this concept is tenuous also in ecology. Since the time frames are different, change is appreciated in different ways.

Evolutionary novelties are linked to mutations during ontogeny, according to Arthur’s inverted cone. The earlier in development the mutation, the greater the difference of the descendant from the ancestor. Complex

life cycles are nested inverted cones that can also change independently from each other (inconsistent evolution).

Most milestones of metazoan evolution are in the Cnidaria: bilaterality, germ layer differentiation in ectoderm, mesoderm, endoderm, coelom, chitinous skeleton, calcium-based skeleton, metamerism, central nervous system.

Evolutionary novelties stem from the coupling of paedo- and peramorphosis, as exemplified by the case of medusa re-expression in *Obelia*.

The Popperian paradigm of falsification calls scientists to produce universal statements (that can be only falsified and cannot be verified) whereas historical disciplines (such as ecology and evolution) are based on existential statements (that can be only verified and cannot be falsified). Gradual evolution, for instance, falsifies the universality of punctuate evolution, but not its existence (and viceversa).

The cells of ecosystem functioning as conservation and management units, considering both biodiversity and ecosystem functioning.

The study of biodiversity

Taxonomy is the basic science of biodiversity. The main product of taxonomy is the revision of taxa and the description of new taxa.

New taxa

Families:

Octocnoidae Bouillon, Boero & Seghers, 1991

Tiaropsidae Boero, Bouillon & Danovaro, 1987

Genera:

Antohebella Boero, Bouillon & Kubota, 1998

Fraseroscyphus Boero & Bouillon, 1993

Wuvula Bouillon, Boero & Seghers 1988

Zanclella Boero & Hewitt, 1992

Species:

Bythotiarra metschnikovii Bouillon, Boero & Seghers, 1988

Cytaeis adherens Bouillon, Boero & Seghers, 1991

Halocoryne frasca Boero, Bouillon & Gravili, 2000

Halocoryne pirainoid Boero, Bouillon & Gravili, 2000

Phialella zappai Boero, 1987

Solmaris quadrata Bouillon; Boero & Seghers, 1991

Sympagohydra tuuli Piraino, Bluhm, Gradinger, Boero, 2009

Wuvula fabietti Bouillon, Boero & Seghers 1988

Zanclea bomala Boero, Bouillon & Gravili, 2000

Zanclea divergens Boero, Bouillon & Gravili, 2000

Zanclea fanella Boero, Bouillon & Gravili, 2000

Zanclea giancarloii Boero, Bouillon & Gravili, 2000

Zanclea gili Boero, Bouillon & Gravili, 2000

Zanclea hirohitoi Boero, Bouillon & Gravili, 2000

Zanclea medusopolypata Boero, Bouillon & Gravili, 2000

Zanclea retractilis Boero, Bouillon & Gravili, 2000

Zanclella bryozoophila Boero & Hewitt, 1992

Zanclella diabolica Boero, Bouillon & Gravili, 2000

Zanclella glomboides Boero, Bouillon & Gravili, 2000

Pelagia benovici Piraino, Aglieri, Scorrano, Boero, 2014

*Aurelia relict*a Scorrano, Aglieri, Boero, Dawson Piraino, 2016

Another task of taxonomy is the publication of faunas. In 2004, I have published a Monograph on the Hydrozoa of the Mediterranean Sea (Bouillon J., M.D. Medel, F. Pagès, J.M. Gili, F. Boero, C. Gravili. 2004. Fauna of the Mediterranean Hydrozoa. Scientia Marina 68 (Suppl. 2): 1-449) and, in 2006, a Monograph on the Hydrozoa of the World (Bouillon J., C. Gravili, F. Pagès, J-M. Gili, Boero F. 2006. An Introduction to Hydrozoa. Mémoires du Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle. PARIS: Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle (FRANCE) 194, 598 pp).

The main tool for taxonomy is taxonomic literature. By joining Jean Bouillon's collection of reprints and monographs with mine, the largest thematic library on Hydrozoan taxonomy has been assembled. The library has been digitized and indexed in a database as a product of the PEET project on the Hydrozoa. The pdf files of papers and monographs have been linked to the bibliographic entries. Cinzia Gravili is keeping the

database updated in real time, providing a crucial tool to all Hydrozoan taxonomists of the world. The demise of taxonomy has been the object of several commentaries, the most successful one (The study of species in the era of biodiversity: a tale of stupidity) has been downloaded more than 6000 times and has become a sort of manifesto for taxonomists.

Key words

Marine biodiversity, Hydrozoan Taxonomy, Marine Biology, Marine Ecology, Ecosystem functioning, Marine Protected Areas, Climate change, Evolutionary biology, Developmental biology, Museology, Communication Science, Philosophy of science

Teaching

I teach undergraduates since 1987, when I was appointed Associate Professor of Zoology at the Università degli Studi di Lecce, now University of Salento. I have courses both in Biological Sciences and in Environmental Sciences, teaching mainly Zoology and Marine Biology. For some years I have taught Scientific Communication for the Course in Communications Science. I am member of the teaching staff of graduate courses since the institution of the course in Ecologia Fondamentale. I have taught also in the Quarto Settore of ISUFI. I have graduated a high number of students, who made their thesis under my supervision. Former students of mine now are full professors, like Giorgio Bavestrello, the most prominent one being Roberto Danovaro, presently President of the Zoological Station of Naples. I have founded the Laurea Magistrale course “Coastal and Marine Biology and Ecology”, the first course of the University of Salento to be fully given in English. I waive my right to privacy and I authorize consultation of the evaluation scores made every year by the students of my courses. As University professor I am aware that my contribution must be creative and must stimulate the interest and enthusiasm of the students, being based on my experience of researcher.

Concluding remarks

The above fields of interest might appear disconnected. But they are not so. They constitute an integrated approach to the study of life, having the organism at its centre. The hyperspecialisation of research led to prodigious progress in single disciplines, but increased the gaps among them. The result is a world of specialists that do not interact with each other, and are away from the public. My view of science implies, of course, a horizontal approach defining a main field of interest (for me it is Hydrozoan taxonomy, ecology, and evolution) but it requires also a vertical approach connecting as many disciplines as possible. This requires strong theoretical efforts towards the “discovery” of the conceptual continuity that links all types of knowledge. I call it “Natural History” and humans are part of it.

Publications by F. Boero Publications by F. Boero on ISI Journals

1. Boero F. 1980. *Hebella parasitica* (Ciamician, 1879) (Cnidaria, Hydroida) a thecate polyp producing an anthomedusa. *Marine Biology* 59: 133-136.
2. Boero F. 1981. Osservazioni ecologiche sugli idroidi della fascia a mitili della Riviera Ligure di Levante. *Cahiers de Biologie Marine* 22: 107-117.
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4. Boero F. 1984. The ecology of marine hydroids and effects of environmental factors: a review. *P.S.Z.N. I: Marine Ecology* 5 (2): 93-118.
5. Boero F., Chessa L., Chimenz C., Fresi E. 1985. The zonation of epiphytic hydroids on the leaves of some *Posidonia oceanica* (L.) Delile beds in the Central Mediterranean. *P.S.Z.N. I: Marine Ecology* 6 (1): 27-33.
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15. Bouillon J., Boero F., Fraschetti S. 1991. The life cycle of *Laodicea indica* Browne 1906 (Laodiceidae, Hydromedusae, Cnidaria). *Hydrobiologia* 216/217: 151-157.
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