

## The Celebration of the first Century of *Acta Botanica Croatica* (1925–2025)

It was a privilege for the editorial team to organize the celebration of the *Acta Botanica Croatica* centenary last year. The Celebration was organized through a series of events organised by the Editorial Board during the autumn of 2025. Preparations for marking the journal's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary were initiated at the annual meeting of the Editorial Board on 19 November 2024. On that occasion, an Honorary Committee was appointed, comprising Mirko Planinić (Dean of the Faculty of Science), Sandra Radić Brkanac (Head of the Department of Biology), and former Editors-in-Chief Ljudevit Ilijanić, Damir Viličić, and Branka Salopek Sondi. An Organising Committee was also established, chaired by Zrinka Ljubešić and including Mirta Tkalec, Nenad Jasprica, Sunčica Bosak, Mateja Jagić, and Sandra Vitko. This committee was responsible for designing and coordinating the programme of anniversary activities scheduled for autumn 2025 (Jasprica et al. 2025).

The jubilee was first highlighted within the programme of the 8<sup>th</sup> Croatian Botanical Symposium, held in Osijek from 3 to 6 September 2025. A poster entitled *Centennial celebration of the journal Acta Botanica Croatica* (Tkalec et al. 2025) was presented in the poster session. In addition, as part of the Evening Programme *Promotion of Croatian*

*scientific journals*, Nenad Jasprica delivered a presentation in Croatian focusing on the journal's hundred-year history and achievements.

The main celebration took place on 25 September 2025 at the Faculty of Science, University of Zagreb. The event attracted considerable public attention and was preceded by a live segment broadcast on Croatian National Television (HTV). On the day of the ceremony, an HTV crew led by journalist Krešimir Volarević visited the Faculty and conducted interviews with Nenad Jasprica and former Editor-in-Chief Branka Salopek Sondi.

Approximately sixty guests attended the central celebration, which consisted of a formal ceremony followed by a panel discussion (Fig. 1). The programme was hosted by the Editors-in-Chief, Mirta Tkalec and Nenad Jasprica. In his opening address, Nenad Jasprica welcomed the participants and acknowledged the presence of distinguished guests, including Sandra Radić Brkanac (Head of the Department of Biology), Ivančica Ternjej (Dean of the Faculty of Science), Tomislav Josip Mlinarić (Vice-Rector for Innovation, Technology Transfer and Cooperation with the Economic Sector), representatives of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts – Academicians Mirko Orlić, Goran Durn, and



Fig. 1. The central celebration at the Faculty of Science, University of Zagreb, led by the Editors-in-Chief, Nenad Jasprica and Mirta Tkalec (A), followed by a panel discussion (B), with active participation of the Editors-in-Chief of European botanical journals, from left to right: Gianmaria Bonari (Italy), Zoltán Botta-Dukát (Hungary), Urban Šilc (Slovenia), Marko Sabovljević (Serbia/Slovakia), and Nenad Jasprica (Croatia).

Nikola Ljubešić – and Amalija Babić, Head of the Department for the Scientific System and Technological Development at the Ministry of Science, Education and Youth. Following welcoming remarks by Sandra Radić Brkanac and Dean Ivančica Ternjej, Nenad Jasprica delivered a concise presentation outlining the historical development of *Acta Botanica Croatica* and its contribution to botanical research at both national and international levels. During the ceremony, the jubilee issue *Acta Botanica Croatica* 84(2) 2025 was officially presented. This special issue, comprising 168 pages, includes four review articles, eight original research papers, and two short communications, and opens with a Foreword by the Editors-in-Chief.

In recognition of the journal's centenary, the Editorial and Advisory Boards decided to honour individuals, institutions, and organisations that have made outstanding contributions to the journal and to botanical scientific publishing. Certificates of Appreciation were awarded to former Editors-in-Chief Ljudevit Ilijanić, Damir Viličić, Branka Salopek, and Nenad Jasprica for their leadership and long-term commitment. The certificate for Ljudevit Ilijanić was accepted on his behalf by his son-in-law, Stanko Uršić. Additional certificates recognising editorial dedication were presented to former Technical Editors-in-Chief Mirta Tkalec and Nataša Bauer, current Technical Editor-in-Chief Petra Peharec Štefanić, Quality Assurance Editor Željka Vidaković-Cifrek, and long-time language editor Graham McMaster. On behalf of the awardees, Branka Salopek addressed the audience and expressed their collective gratitude. Acknowledgement was also given to the companies Denona (Zagreb) and Laser Plus (Zagreb) for their contribution to botanical publishing. Special recognition was reserved for three institutions whose sustained financial and institutional support has been essential for maintaining the journal's continuity and quality: the University of Zagreb, the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, and the Min-

istry of Science, Education and Youth of the Republic of Croatia. Representatives of these institutions accepted the awards and briefly addressed the audience.

The event was followed by the Panel discussion entitled "The role of scientific journals in the development of botany and strategies for enhancing their visibility and influence", moderated by Aleksandra Uhernik Đurdek, a certified incentive specialist and certified Croatian meetings and events professional. The panelists were editors-in-chief of several European botanical journals: Zoltán Botta-Dukát (*Acta Botanica Hungarica*, Hungary), Gianmaria Bonari (*Vegetation Ecology and Diversity*, Italy), Urban Šilc (*Hacquetia*, Slovenia), Marko Sabovljević (*Comprehensive Plant Biology*, Serbia), and Nenad Jasprica (*Acta Botanica Croatica*, Croatia). The panel focused on shared editorial experiences, current challenges in scholarly publishing, and strategies for increasing journal visibility and impact. Topics included reviewer availability, manuscript quality, competition with large commercial publishers, and the role of impact metrics, alongside potential solutions such as thematic issues, stronger regional collaboration, and maintaining a clear journal identity. The programme concluded with a reception held in the Faculty atrium. We would like to thank the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts for financially supporting the celebration.

Commemorating the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Division of Botany, Department of Biology, Faculty of Science, University of Zagreb at an event held on 24 October 2025 in the Exhibition Pavilion of the Botanical Garden, Mirta Tkalec presented a brief overview of the journal's history and anniversary activities.

At last but not least, in honour of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our journal, the Departments of Natural and Medical Sciences, together with the Faculty of Science of the University of Zagreb, organised a roundtable on the importance of Croatian scientific journals and their validation and recog-



Fig. 2. A roundtable on the importance of Croatian scientific journals and their validation and recognition in the national criteria for academic promotion held in the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts Library in Zagreb (A), moderated by academicians Vida Demarin and Goran Durn (B).

nitio in the national criteria for academic promotion (Fig. 2). The event was held on November 6, 2025, in the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts Library in Zagreb (Ljubešić et al. in press).

Founded in 1925 by Professor Vale Vouk, *Acta Botanica Croatica* is among the longest-standing botanical journals in this part of Europe. Over the course of a full century, the journal has evolved alongside the discipline of botany itself, documenting scientific progress while actively contributing to it. Within its rich history, it has been particularly influential in advancing knowledge of the flora and vegetation of karstic and dry environments, with a strong focus on southern Europe. At the same time, it has continuously expanded its thematic scope, providing a forum for research in plant ecology, systematics, physiology, and, more recently, molecular biology. The journal's sustained relevance can be attributed to its commitment to high peer-review standards and its readiness to adopt innovations in scientific publishing. The celebration of the first Century of *Acta Botanica Croatica* served not just as an honour to history, but as a strategic look toward the future.

## References

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