

Obituary: André de Mendonça-Lima (1973-2015)

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On August 18th 2015, the Brazilian society of Ornithology lost one of its most beloved and competent members: André de Mendonça-Lima. André (Dedé) was born in Porto Alegre, on August 13th 1973. Since the age of 20 he attended the laboratory of Ornithology at the “Museu de Ciências e Tecnologia da PUCRS”, under the guidance of ornithologist Carla Suertegaray Fontana, where he was the first PUCRS student to do an internship at the newly founded Laboratory. From an early age, he demonstrated excellent skills in bird identification out in the field, having a special interest in small and inconspicuous species, which did not go unnoticed to his “sharp-eye”. In Rio Grande do Sul, he collaborated on more than 30 field trips to study birds at the PUCRS Center for Research and Conservation of Nature – “CPCN Pró-Mata in São Francisco de Paula” also surveying birds in Porto Alegre – at the Country Club, in the “Morro do Osso” Park and throughout the city. Between 1999 and 2001, he was one of the young researchers who assisted in the study of the bird community of Porto Alegre, the object of Carla S. Fontana’s PhD.

His graduate work was completed at the Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul-UFRGS, where he obtained a masters and PhD in ecology, working at the laboratory of Populations and Communities Ecology, coordinated by Prof. Sandra Maria Hartz, his supervisor. During his master’s degree, between 2000 and 2001, he was motivated to understand the co-occurrence of syntopic species, concentrating his studies on the behavioral aspects of birds in the Parulidae family. A by-product of this study, published with Grazielle Volpato, was a proposal for a standardized nomenclature for bird’s foraging maneuvers in the Portuguese language, which is still widely used and made him nationally known on the ornithological stage. Later, during his doctorate, conducted between 2008 and 2011, he focused on silvicultural systems, motivated by the need to understand how the commercial areas of pine modify the diversity and behavior of birds in Araucaria forest



André de Mendonça-Lima
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(Floresta Ombrófila Mista) areas, as well as the diversity of tree species that are able to colonize these areas.

During his PhD studies he advised, along with Prof. Sandra, the undergraduate student Gisele Patel and master’s student Lucilene Jacoboski. André was always a dedicated and responsible student, loved by all the members of the classes in which he participated, admired for his wide knowledge of bird biology and for his great ability to identify the songs of different species. Throughout his academic career, mainly conducted in UFRGS, he never failed to assist colleagues at the PUCRS Ornithology laboratory supervised by Prof. Carla, aiding undergraduate and graduate students, collaborating on relevant academic discussions and, mainly, on the analysis of ecological data.

In May 2012, Dedé joined the Board of biologists of the Museu de Ciências Naturais da Fundação Zoobotânica do Rio Grande do Sul (FZBRS) under emergency procurement. In the FZB Ornithology Section, he guided undergraduate research fellows, served as subject editor of the journal *Iheringia Zoology Series* and participated in research projects, conservation, and the fostering of

biodiversity projects. One of his last contributions related to the revision of the checklist of the endangered fauna in Rio Grande do Sul, coordinated by FZB. This required registering all the bird species in a database system and being responsible for the evaluation of 147 out of the total 666 species being evaluated. He also reviewed nearly all of the non-endangered species and, as everything he did, was extremely effective in this task. In December 2013 after being diagnosed with a brain tumor, he took a sick leave but did not terminate his contract with FZB. His last field research for the institution was for the PELD and RS-biodiversity programs at “APA do Ibirapuitã” and around the Lagoa do Peixe, in November and December of 2013.

Throughout his short but intense career at PUCRS, UFRGS and FZBRS, Dedé taught people that surrounded him not only about birds, but also about how the coexistence between colleagues in the lab and in the field could be both a fun and serious experience. He leaves behind many friends in Rio Grande do Sul and countless pupils as well as 12 published scientific articles focusing on ornithology. Without doubt a great colleague and the first ornithologist to depart from the second “Beltinho generation”, that is, those inspired from the legacy of the Gaucho Ornithologist William Belton. As an exceptional father to Marina and a great husband to Cristiane he will be missed.

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