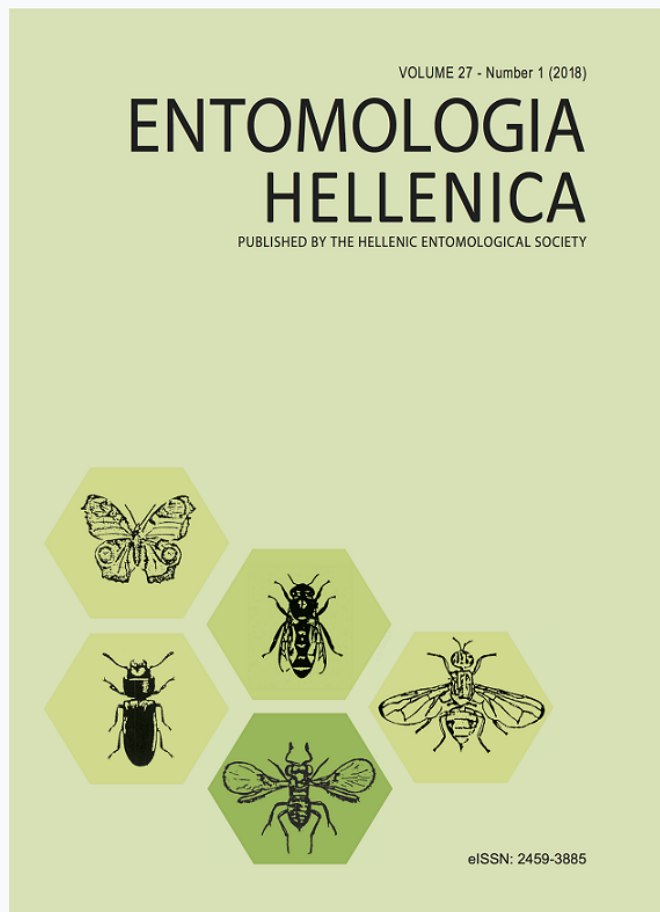


# ENTOMOLOGIA HELLENICA

Vol 27, No 1 (2018)



## PROFESSOR MICHAEL KARANDINOS: Obituary

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doi: [10.12681/eh.18704](https://doi.org/10.12681/eh.18704)

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### To cite this article:

Fantinou, A., & Saitanis, C. (2018). PROFESSOR MICHAEL KARANDINOS: Obituary. *ENTOMOLOGIA HELLENICA*, 27(1), 10–11. <https://doi.org/10.12681/eh.18704>

## PROFESSOR MICHAEL KARANDINOS: *Obituary*



Michael Karandinos, an Emeritus Professor of Ecology at the Agricultural University of Athens, died on November 28, 2017, at the age of 84. Karandinos, first professor of Ecology in Greece, was a remarkable scholar, outstanding teacher and mentor, dedicated to the University and to the Academic community.

Karandinos was born on January, 1933, in Ierapetra, Crete. He started his academic career at the "Highest Agricultural School of Athens (H.A.S.A.)" (nowadays Agricultural University of Athens) (1953-58), where he studied for his BSc in Agriculture, and at the "Higher School of Industrial Studies" (nowadays Piraeus University of Industrial Studies), where he gained a Diploma in Statistics, (1958-60). Following this, he completed his Master's Degree in Entomology at the North Carolina State University (N.C.S.U.), Raleigh, NC, U.S.A. (1964-67) and his Ph.D. (1967-69) in the fields of Ecology and Biomathematics, in the same University. He was extremely well-read, and had extensive knowledge of mathematics, a fact that led him to continue

as a Postdoctoral Researcher in the Dept. of Biomathematics, at the N.C.S.U., from 1969 to 1970. In 1970, he was elected Assistant Professor, in the Dept. of Entomology at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI, U.S.A., while in 1976 he became a tenured Associate Professor of Ecology at the same University and collaborated with the famous statistical ecologist Dr E.C. Pielou.

Karandinos joined Agricultural University of Athens as a tenured Professor, and Director of the Laboratory of Ecology and Environmental Sciences in 1978 and served in that position until his retirement in 2000. Shortly after his retirement he was honored, by the Agricultural University of Athens, with the status of Emeritus Professor. Professor Karandinos was an active member of the Hellenic Entomological Society. He initiated the first Greek Red Data Book and co-edited the volume "The Red Data Book of Endangered Vertebrates of Greece" (Karandinos M., Legakis S. Eds. 1992, Hellenic Zoological Society. 356 pgs. Athens). After retiring, he remained active, by giving lectures, participating in scientific committees and mainly by focusing on writing books on issues of Ecology. In 2008, he was honored with the Academy of Athens Award, for his outstanding book "Ecological Methods" (Crete University Press).

He was member of numerous boards and committees, among which worth to mention: Member of the Board of Directors (BoD) of the Greek Atomic Energy Commission, National representative for post-doctoral fellowships of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Chairman of the BoD of the National Agricultural Research Foundation (NAGREF), etc.

Karandinos' ecological interests were wide-ranging. He was actively engaged in

research on a number of different aspects of ecological and environmental issues, and his published work ranges from mathematical ecology, arthropods ecophysiology and population ecology to studies on radionuclides contamination and air pollution biomonitoring. Karandinos' interest in the environment and the worlds of ecosystems led him to travel widely. He took part in field trips through which he examined the natural vegetation of different parts of the world, including a major expedition to tropical forests in Costa Rica.

In his distinguished career, he wrote numerous highly cited publications, he coordinated and participated in many research projects, and he supervised many doctoral, master's and undergraduate students. Many of the fortunate postgraduate students he mentored followed a successful academic career in Greece and abroad.

He was an inspirational teacher both inside and outside the classroom. His enthusiasm was conveyed to his colleagues and collaborators, and to the many graduate students and young scientists he supervised. He was known as a generous and open-minded teacher, a superb communicator and popular speaker. His teaching approach was guided by his belief that students have to be informed on several contemporary issues and invited many well-known scientists of different disciplines to give lectures. His controversy on outdated teaching methods is revealed by a disarming honesty in his speech *"To my teachers de profundis"* at the honorary ceremony organized for him by the Agricultural University of Athens in 2008. In this sensitive confession, dedicated to his teachers, he includes his students to those by whom he was taught, by saying: *"I will speak deeply about my teachers. But who are our teachers? In the broad sense they are our parents, our brothers, the companions of our lives, our classmates, our associates, our superiors and subordinates but sometimes*

*our institutional students. It will have been happened to some of you - as has happened to me - to give exam questions waiting for a specific correct answer and to get another one that is also right. So, we are taught by our students as well. Ultimately, our teachers are all those with whom we have communication"* - indirectly adopting Galileo's quote "We cannot teach people anything; we can only help them discover it within themselves".

Karandinos was a true pioneer of ecology, and will be sorely missed by his family but also by many friends, colleagues and students, and by the world of ecology. He will be remembered for his exceptional kindness, humble nature, insatiable enthusiasm, sensitivity and outstanding contributions to ecology.

Karandinos is survived by his wife Dr. Antonia-Nelly Riga-Karandinos and his daughter Dr. Anastasia Karandinou senior Lecturer in Architecture at UEL London and his son PDEng. Georgios Karandinos.

### *Γαίαν έχοι ελαφράν*

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