

Iberian Meetings of Subterranean Biology – regional initiatives towards a global comprehension of subterranean ecosystems (2009–2013)

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The biogeographical position of the Iberian Peninsula, located in the extreme west of Europe, associated with the great diversity of subterranean habitats, has fascinated generations of biologists. Its richness in endemic elements and surprising subterranean biodiversity, has been constantly increasing with new discoveries and approaches. Organized under the auspices of the International Society for Subterranean Biology, the Iberian Meetings have biennial periodicity, unsynchronized from the International Conference. It constitutes a regional initiative to assemble the subterranean biologists community working in the Iberian Peninsula and the contiguous archipelagos of Balears, Canaries, Azores and Madeira.

The Iberian Meeting of Subterranean Biology, started in 2009, in the Museu Valencià d’Història Natural (Spain). Invited speakers and round-tables composed the first edition. More than 120 participants, among experts and students of the University of Valencia, attended to the 23 oral communications presented. This meeting included three round-tables about Biodiversity and Conservation in the Ibero-Macarronesian scope, providing a global view on the current knowledge in this geographic area, later synthesized in the meeting proceedings published in the volume 49 of the *Boletín de la Sociedad Entomológica Aragonesa*.

The second edition was organized in the University of Aveiro (Portugal) in the beginning of September of 2011. The scientific program was composed of 19 oral presentations and 9 posters, attended by 38 participants from four nationalities: Portugal (16), Spain (20), Italy (1) and France (1). The abstracts of each communication can be found in the II Iberian Meeting of Subterranean Biology Abstract Book.

The last Iberian Meeting of Subterranean Biology was held in the Museu de Ciències Naturals de Barcelona (formerly Zoology Museum of Barcelona, Spain), from 2nd to 5th October of 2013. This year's edition of the meeting hosted 44 participants from five countries: Spain (39), Italy (2), Portugal (1), France (1) and Croatia (1).

Organizing committee: Berta Caballero; Dacha Atienza; Eulàlia Garcia Franquesa; Glòria Masó; Jordi Agulló; Lina Ubero and Miguel Prieto.

Scientific committee: Xavier Bellés (Institute of Evolutionary Biology, CSIC-UPF); Antonio Gómez-Bolea (University of Barcelona); Damià Jaume (Mediterranean Institute for Advanced Studies, IMEDEA CSIC-UIB); Pedro Oromí (University of La Laguna); Vicente M. Ortuño (University of Alcalá); Alberto Sendra (University of Alcalá); Ana Sofia Reboleira (University of Aveiro) and Paulo Borges (University of Azores). A total of 12 oral and 10 posters communications, and two documentaries were presented during three days of the scientific program.

All Iberian meetings have had a social program with field trips to caves in the surrounding areas of its organization, as well as welcome receptions and a social dinner finishing the event.

The University of Azores was pointed out for the organization of the next conference, to be held on the end of 2015.

See you in Azores in 2015!