

OBITUARY

Marcelo Menin (1975–2021)

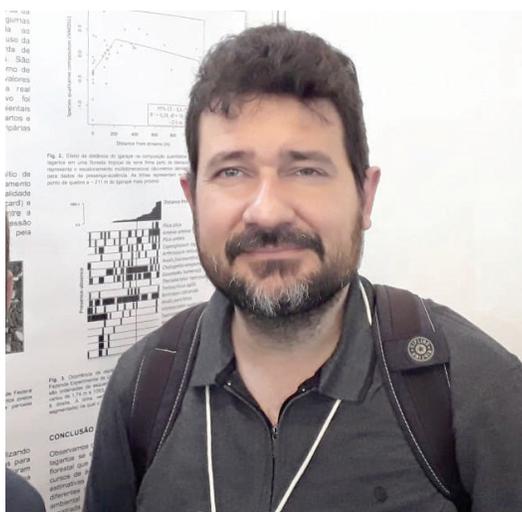
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Is it possible to be a pleasant and calm person and also a tireless and competent professional? Know about Marcelo Menin.

Losses are always sad and difficult. In this very complicated period that we are going through with the Brazilian government attacking and discrediting science and minorities, with the uncontrolled pandemic in Brazil, and many other attacks on common sense, on the respect for differences and for the justice, certain qualities such as serenity, resilience, competence, dedication, ability to aggregate people, to work tirelessly, capacity to overcome challenges and limitations without complaining, and keeping a calm persistence, are more than necessary. Sadly, unfortunately, we lost a lot of those at the beginning of this 2021 year with the departure of Marcelo Menin, taken from our coexistence by Covid in Manaus at the age of 45.

Marcelo Menin gathered these and many other qualities together. An internal and common joke among those who knew him was to say: - Talking about Menin's qualities is easy, I want to see someone to finding a flaw! A very special, honest and fair person, with a very kind and pleasant presence, of comprehensive, calm and welcoming personality. A professional of the highest competence, dedicated, extremely organized, assertive, tireless, generous and extremely patient with our limitations, confusions and much slower pace than his. Most importantly, he was always the same person in any situation and with anyone. The pleasant and calm person and the tireless and competent professional were



Marcelo Menin at IX Congresso Brasileiro de Herpetologia, Campinas, 2019.

an inseparable fusion, and this represented a lot in terms of support and understanding in difficult times in which all of us, his colleagues, students and advisers have gone through our lives; in terms of encouragement and inspiration in times of discouragement; in terms of showing us the way and the ways of acting correctly and competently, without hurting or belittling anyone!

Professor at the Universidade Federal do Amazonas (UFAM) since 2006, his competence is evidenced in his curriculum, with more than 90 publications including scientific articles, books and book chapters. This number will

increase even more, as Marcelo Menin was at the peak of his career, having still many researches in progress in partnership with several colleagues which, as much painful it may be, they will be finalized in his honor and memory.

He was passionate about the Amazon Forest, having greatly contributed to the fill of one of the most important gaps in Brazilian Herpetology knowledge: the lack of information about biology and natural history. Since very young he was an amateur naturalist, maintaining and observing many different animals in his house and making field excursions with his friends in Jaú (his hometown), as used to tell us Gustavo Quevedo Romero (professor at UNICAMP), his friend since the Fundamental School. In line with his passion, Marcelo Menin published several articles with new and important information on habitat use, diet, and anuran behavior from the Central Amazonia, as well as described the tadpoles of 17 species (three of which are redescriptions). He also published in community ecology of anurans, lizards and snakes.

At UFAM he was the Coordinator of the Postgraduate Program in Zoology, of which he was one of the creators. In this Program, he was the advisor of 20 students (master's and doctorate), in addition to having supervised 43 undergraduate students or graduated technicians. Currently, he was supervising two PhD students, three master students, one for scientific initiation and a graduated technician, with a scholarship linked to a project of which he was the coordinator.

In addition, he was the sub-curator of the Paulo Bührnheim Amphibian Collection and the founder of the Tadpoles collection, both of them at UFAM. He obtained CNPq' government financial for four major projects in which he was the coordinator, and also he was an ad-hoc reviewer to CNPq for many times. He yet was a reviewer of scientific articles for more than 40 scientific journals, the vast majority from abroad, and he was a member of more than 80 master's and doctoral judging boards. These and other information about Marcelo Menin's scientific



Marcelo Menin in the field at Reserva Ducke-Manaus, an area that he walked throughout all many times, and where he developed many of his projects.

Photo: Domingos J. Rodrigues.

production, research projects and professional life can be accessed at: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/3661952638867868>. Anyhow, this is a small technical summary that does not come close to representing the generous and aggregator professional that was Marcelo Menin. For instance, as one of the first professors to obtain funding from CNPq in his scientific area at UFAM, he sought to develop broad projects which included colleagues who studied other taxonomic groups, in addition of course, to seeking the best possible knowledge about the biodiversity of the Amazon Forest.

A very dedicated professor, responsible and passionate about teaching, he was one of the most beloved professors by students, having received many honors at graduation ceremonies and other events. As a result of his dedication, competence, and productivity as a professor as a researcher, he achieved great recognition in the academic environment, having been an affiliated member of the Brazilian Academy of Sciences and received a CNPq Research Productivity Grant, in addition to several awards, including one from the City Council from Manaus, for the relevant services rendered to the society of the

area of Biology, in addition to several honorable mentions to research results presented in scientific events.

Personally, I met Marcelo Menin in 1995, when he started his undergraduate course in Biological Sciences at UNESP-São José do Rio Preto- SP, where I am a professor. His great interest, his seriousness and the evident knowledge that he already had, besides making me feel extremely trusted in him since the first contact, made me accept him as an intern, together with his classmate Tiago J. Izzo (Professor at Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso), despite both of them were still in the 1st year of the course, and the Ecology course I taught was only offered in the 3rd year. The internship program was developed by Tiago and him with such a quality and success that it resulted in the first scientific publication of the two friends. In addition to being an excellent intern, Marcelo was an excellent student in the undergraduate course, maintaining this standard in the Master Course (Ecology and Conservation of Natural Resources, Universidade Federal de Uberlândia, supervised by Ariovaldo A. Giaretta) and along his PhD (Ecology, Instituto Nacional de Pesquisas da Amazônia, supervised by Albertina P. Lima).

In Manaus he met Sumaia Vasconcellos, his wife, an agronomist and PhD in Tropical Forest Sciences-INPA, a spectacular hardworking, generous and competent person, in short, the ideal life partner! With her he gained two stepchildren, Karol and Rômulo, and a daughter, Maria Clara, who is now 9 years old. He was a loving and dedicated husband and a responsible and passionate father for his children.

Marcelo Menin was a great research partner, totally reliable, extremely organized, calm, persevering, competent, cooperative, resolute and generous, assertive and an aggregator. I had



Marcelo Menin and his family: Sumaia Saldanha de Vasconcelos Menin, his wife; Susan and Rômulo Vasconcelos Valentim, his stepchildren, and Maria Clara, his 9 years old daughter, in 2018 January at Susan's Architecture Graduation ceremony.

the honor of sharing with him the authorship of several articles, books and book chapters, in addition to having some still in progress, which will be finalized in his honor. But more than all of that, or along with all of that, Menin was a great friend, a son of my heart, supportive, trustworthy, and inspiring. Whenever I find myself at an impasse I think: "What would Menin do in this situation?" And I will continue with this habit because he left with us his example of conduct, love and unrestricted respect for science, teaching and to all people.

Rest in peace dear friend, your mission has been accomplished with immense success and you will continue to bear fruit here, through his many students, advisers, and professional colleagues, who will certainly take his legacy of dedication, correctness, honesty and passion in doing science and teaching to the future generations of professors and researchers.