

GILBERT L. VOSS:
A COMMEMORATION, BIBLIOGRAPHY AND DESCRIBED TAXA

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ABSTRACT

Professor Gilbert L. Voss served the leading role in American cephalopod research for nearly 40 years. He drew attention to the importance of cephalopods in marine ecosystems and as fisheries resources. Through his research and that of his students he significantly advanced the knowledge of cephalopod systematics, distribution and biology. An insight into Gil Voss' ideas and attitudes concerning cephalopod research and teaching is given. Voss's broad interests are indicated in his bibliography of over 210 diverse published items, including 73 book reviews, 16 editorials, and 124 research papers on cephalopods, fishes, crustaceans, botany, zoogeography, history of oceanography, anthropology, fisheries, and marine and deepsea biology. He authored or co-authored descriptions of two new families or subfamilies, 6 new genera and more than 65 new species or subspecies.

COMMEMORATION

Long before Gilbert L. Voss was an oceanographer he was a man of the sea: a youthful adventurer in small sailing and fishing boats in south Florida, a seaman in the U.S. Merchant Marines following high school, a World War II U.S. Coast Guard boatswain, a commercial mullet and charter fisherman. Thus, his initial education in what became a life-long commitment, marine sciences, began at a very practical level, that of making a living. Gil was nearly 30 years old when he entered undergraduate school at the University of Miami in 1947. His first publication appeared in 1948 and described a trip to the outer reef off Florida's east coast. By the time he graduated in 1951 he had published seven papers, four about cephalopods of south Florida and western Atlantic waters. By the time he had finished his Ph.D studies at George Washington University in 1956 he had completed an additional 15 papers, mostly on cephalopods but others as well on sailfish, penaeid shrimp, seaweeds and shallow water ecology.

Professor Voss was widely known as a biological oceanographer, a specialist in deepsea and coral reef biology and the history and technology of oceanography.¹ His long-term, deepsea biology program in the 1960's and early 1970's resulted in comparative deepsea research expeditions to the Gulf of Guinea, the western Atlantic and Caribbean and the Gulf of Panama. Scores of publications by Voss, his colleagues and students emerged from this program and contributed immeasurably to our knowledge of the deepsea. He was an early, continuous, outspoken and influential advocate for the conservation of South Florida's coral reefs and the Florida Keys ecosystems. Through the culmination of his initial idea, tireless efforts and expert testimony at public hearings, the John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park, the first of its kind in the United States, was established at Key Largo, Florida in 1959. His interest in the coral reef ecosystem was vigorously pursued throughout his lifetime, and not only led to his first publication but to a book, *Coral Reefs of Florida* (1987). Several research grants for coral reef studies resulted in numerous publications by colleagues and students on coral reef ecosystems. Just two months before his death, Gil (and co-principal investigator

¹ Several obituaries and appreciations have been published in memory of Gil Voss: Miami Herald (1989a; 1989b), The New York Times (1989), Sea Frontiers (1989), Aldrich (1989), Clarke (1989), Lu (1989), Roper (1989a; 1989b).

Professor Samuel Snedaker) had received funding of over a half million dollars for a study of the effects of pollution on the coral reefs and inshore habitats of the Upper Florida Keys.

In spite of the magnitude and significance of these contributions, Gil Voss's primary research passion was cephalopods. His first paper dealt mainly with taxonomic descriptions and clarifications of the Floridian and tropical western Atlantic cephalopod fauna, which in the 1940's and 1950's was poorly known. The number of new species and new combinations introduced by Gill attests to that. Interestingly, among Gil's earliest research objectives as a new faculty member at the University of Miami in the early 1950's was to study the larval cephalopods that were so abundant in the plankton of the nearby Florida Current. After months of toil, Gil had to set aside the project because most of the larvae could not be identified to species—the adults were unknown. So, Gil Voss was forced, as it were, to study the systematics and zoogeography of adult oceanic squids, first those of the western tropical Atlantic, the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico, then, as monographic studies ensued, of the world's oceans. Ultimately, Voss published monographs and faunistic reviews on all orders of cephalopods (except Vampyromorpha) from all over the world. To support these studies he amassed a most comprehensive collection of cephalopods in terms of species diversity. The new taxa described by Gil Voss are presented in a separate section (p. 17-18). They include two families or subfamilies, 6 genera or subgenera and more than 65 species and subspecies (some still are in press). Voss had described taxa in every group of Recent Coleoidea except Vampyromorpha, a rather remarkable testament to the breadth of his knowledge and understanding of the systematics of the Cephalopoda.

As a former commercial fisherman, a pragmatist, and a seafood enthusiast (especially for octopus), it was quite natural that Gil Voss would become interested in the resource potential of cephalopods and in the development of its fisheries. To this end he became a strong advocate for cephalopod fisheries development based on firm biological foundations, both in the United States and around the world. Voss published a number of cephalopod papers related to cephalopod fishery topics, including articles in topical, non-technical journals, especially *Sea Frontiers*.

In order to assess the impact Gil Voss made on the research and knowledge of cephalopods, it is necessary to look beyond the number of cephalopod publications, of which there are nearly 100. We need to consider what the cephalopod research world was like when Gil Voss began studying cephalopod systematics in 1949. The first quarter of the 20th century represented a pinnacle in cephalopod research with such giants as Chun, Hoyle, Joubin, Pfeffer, Berry, Naef, Sasaki and Robson. But, by the 1930's the golden age was gone and a 20-year dark age followed, during which about the only systematic light on cephalopods was shown by William Adam of Belgium.

To set the scene in the immediate post-World War II years, there was not a single specialist in the Western Hemisphere under whom an aspiring teuthologist could study cephalopod systematics. In the United States, S. Stillman Berry was winding down a 50-year adventure with cephalopods, but he had no academic position through which to serve as a mentor. Grace Pickford had just completed classic monographic studies on *Vampyroteuthis* and was involved with North American benthic octopuses, but she too was unavailable in an academic advisory capacity. In Europe the situation was little better. William Adam of the Musée royal d'Histoire naturelle de Belgique (now Institut Royal des Sciences Naturelles de Belgique) was very actively publishing on cephalopod systematics, as a curator,

Table 1. Cephalopod students of Gilbert L. Voss

Name	Year	Degree	Topic
Kumpf, H. E.	1958	M.S.	<i>Bathypolypus</i> systematics
Roper, C. F. E.	1962	M.S.	<i>Enoploteuthis</i> systematics
Alvina (Burgess), L. H.	1965	M.S.	<i>Octopus hummelincki</i> biology
LaRoe, E. T.	1967	M.S.	Loliginidae of tropical W. Atlantic
Roper, C. F. E.	1967	Ph.D.	<i>Bathyteuthis</i> systematics
Young, R. E.	1968	Ph.D.	Cephalopods of southern California
La Roe, E. T.	1970	Ph.D.	Rearing and maintenance of squid
McSweeney, E. S.	1971	Ph.D.	<i>Galiteuthis glacialis</i> morphology
Wolterding, M. R.	1971	M.S.	<i>Octopus briareus</i> rearing
Cairns, S. D.	1973	M.S.	Cephalopods of Straits of Florida
Thomas, R. F.	1974	Ph.D.	<i>Tremoctopus</i> systematics
Opresko, L. K.	1974	Ph.D.	<i>Octopus briareus</i> development
Hanlon, R. T.	1975	M.S.	<i>Octopus briareus</i> growth and rearing
Palacio, F. J.	1977	Ph.D.	Cephalopods of Brazil
Hanlon, R. T.	1978	Ph.D.	<i>Loligo Doryteuthis plei</i> biology
Hixon, R. F.	1980	Ph.D.	Loliginids of Gulf of Mexico
Toll, R. B.	1982	Ph.D.	<i>Gladii</i> comparative morphology
Brakoniecki, T. F.	1986	Ph.D.	Loliginidae systematics
Hess, S. C.	1987	Ph.D.	Cephalopod spermatophore morphology
deMaintenon, M.	1990	M.S.	Myopsid cranium cartilage morphology
Candela, S.	—	Ph.D.	Beaks in diet of NW Atl. predators

not a professor. J. Z. Young's brilliant career was well underway and was concentrated in aspects of cephalopod neuroanatomy. And, at that time, Katharina Mangold was still dissecting elephant brains in Switzerland, just prior to her conversion to cephalopod research. The only other relatively active worker was Iwao Taki of Hiroshima University, Onomiti, Japan and he was primarily a malacologist. This historical perspective is to point out that Gil Voss had to go it alone in his pursuit of cephalopod research. He accumulated an exceptional library, built comprehensive and representative collections, had correspondents and taught himself.

Within a decade Voss had become a recognized world authority on the systematics and distribution of cephalopods, in addition to being a broadly based marine biologist. With the evolution of the graduate program in marine sciences at University of Miami, a number of students selected Professor Voss for their thesis advisor. (Initially only Master's degrees were offered at the Institute of Marine Sciences; the first Ph.D. was awarded in 1962.) Voss's first Master's student finished in 1956 with a study on a species of fish. Herman Kumpf completed the first Master's degree in cephalopods in 1958 with a study of the *Bathypolypus* species complex in the North Atlantic. Master's degrees were finished sporadically during the next few years (Roper, 1962; Alvina (Burgess), 1965; LaRoe, 1967) followed by a rapid succession of Ph.D. dissertations (Roper, 1967; Young, 1968; LaRoe, 1970; McSweeney, 1971). Numerous Master's and Ph.D. students followed through the 1970's and 1980's. Table 1 lists chronologically the names of students who received degrees on cephalopod topics under the supervision of Professor Gilbert L. Voss, giving a total of eight Master's and 13 Doctor's degrees. Topics of theses and dissertations cover a broad range of subjects: systematics and zoogeography, faunal studies, comparative morphology, fisheries, biology, embryology, behavior. While not all these individuals have been able to pursue careers in cephalopod research, some have, to the extent that almost 200 publications about cephalopods have resulted. That begins to provide a measure of the impact Gil

Voss has had on cephalopod research. In total, Gil Voss was supervisory professor for 53 masters and Ph.D. students

Dr. Voss had an interesting and effective philosophy in regard to graduate students. He believed that the only way a student would become trained as an independent research scientist was to insist on independent inquiry through the entire degree process—no spoon-feeding. Voss encouraged students to publish, not only their theses and dissertations but other papers based on topics related to these or on any subject that represented independent research. I (C.F.E.R.) never discussed this with Gil, but I think he had an excellent approach that helped students learn the sometimes painful process of publishing a first paper. He would discuss a student's work and review the manuscript prepared by the fledgling teuthologist or marine biologist. He made some comments and suggestions, but he wouldn't run the manuscript through the same kind of rigorous review (perhaps scathing if called for) given to a colleague's manuscript. When that first manuscript came back from the editor, filled with reviewer's comments that seemed overwhelming, even devastating, to the student, Gil would then calmly discuss the validity of the comments and criticisms pointing out their relative merits. That technique exposed the new author to the outside world of reviewers with a paper that hadn't been perfected and protected by the professor—thus, development of independence.

Another technique led to independence for his students. Of all the theses and dissertations Gil supervised that were later published, not a single one ever bore his name as an author. It was the student's work, the student's responsibility, the student's reward, and the student's success. Consequently, it was Gil's success.

In addition to the publications and students Gil produced, his impact on the development of research on cephalopods around the world was enormous. Researchers and students came to Miami to spend a few days or a few months studying in Gil's laboratory, with its comprehensive collections and library, and discussing cephalopods with Gil. The specimens and literature were important elements in the process, but surely the greatest contributions to the knowledge accumulated by the visitors were from direct contact with Gil Voss, in both formal and informal settings. He was so enthusiastic about cephalopod systematics and fisheries, so emphatic about the crucial role cephalopods play in marine ecosystems and so encouraging in support of researcher's and student's work, that he infected them with enthusiasm and affected how they worked and published on cephalopods.

Gil Voss was an extremely active participant in national and international activities concerned with cephalopods. He always was eager to discuss papers, ideas, proposals that would advance research on cephalopods, be it basic systematics and biology, fishery development and utilization, or broad-scale oceanic ecosystem mega-programs. Voss was a founding member of the Cephalopod International Advisory Council (CIAC) and was influential in helping to develop the directions and programs of this organization.

When we examine the development of Gil Voss's research career in cephalopods we see continuous growth (see Bibliography). Initial works were more focused, descriptive studies (e.g., 1950; 1953b; 1954b; 1956c). Later, monographs, reviews and comprehensive studies were added to his repertoire (e.g., 1962h; 1963c; 1967; 1972g; 1973b; 1977c). Then more synthetic and theoretical works appeared (e.g., 1988i; 1988s). Furthermore, throughout Gil's career he maintained a steady flow of articles and book reviews written for the educated lay person interested in the marine sciences. These were published primarily in the *National Geographic Magazine* and in *Sea Frontiers*, the journal of the International Oceanographic

Foundation with which Gil was associated since its founding, most recently as its Interim Editor until his death. These articles are an example of Gil Voss as a consummate educator, not only of undergraduate and graduate students in marine sciences, but of the public as well.

In summary it seems certain that Professor Gilbert L. Voss was responsible for stimulating and influencing a new wave, a resurgence, of research on cephalopods that has been sustained and increased over his 40-year career. So important is his influence on the resurgence of cephalopod systematic research, hardly a paper has been published in cephalopod systematics and zoogeography, and even other aspects of cephalopod biology and fisheries, that doesn't cite at least one paper published by Voss. This has been the case for nearly 4 decades and it will continue to be so for many decades into the 21st Century.

In the next few days as we listen to the broad diversity of presented papers and read abstracts of submitted papers in this symposium in honor of Gilbert L. Voss, we will be impressed with how many of them have some genealogical link, whether directly or indirectly with Gil Voss. Thus we celebrate the exciting life, stimulating career and lasting contributions of Gilbert L. Voss.

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