

Obituary for URSULA FRIEDERICH (1948–2010)

Following a long severe illness, URSULA FRIEDERICH, former Chief Editor of the DGHT, died on 10 May of this year.

URSULA FRIEDERICH had been born as URSULA EISTETTER in Stuttgart on 10 July 1948. Following her matriculation, she started studying biology at the University of Stuttgart and completed her studies with a thesis titled “Der Pileus der Squamata”, supervised by HEINZ WERMUTH, which was published in the *Stuttgarter Beiträge zur Naturkunde* (Ser. A [Biol.] No. 307, pp. 1-64) in 1978. She then worked, mainly on a volunteer basis, in the Herpetology Department of the Staatliches Museum für Naturkunde in Stuttgart, which at the time was still a decentralized outpost in Ludwigsburg as a result of the war. Supported by her friend and mentor, HEINZ WERMUTH, the head of the department for many years, she was introduced into collection management and museum work, but she always preferred to work with living animals. Her particular fields of interest were turtles, chameleons, tarantulas, spiders of the genus *Nephila* and dormice, which she kept in numerous terraria at home. She also presided over the DGHT District Group Stuttgart for several years, which was then situated in Ludwigsburg as well. During this period, she married her husband PETER FRIEDERICH. Their union remained childless.

Many terrarium keepers know the name URSULA FRIEDERICH as the senior author of the book, “Futtertierzucht: Lebendfutter für Vivarientiere”, which she published together with WERNER VOLLAND from the “Wilhelma” zoological garden Stuttgart. It was issued by Eugen Ulmer Publishers of Stuttgart in 1981. The same publishing house followed it up with a revised second edition in 1992. This book has remained a standard reference on the feeder animals for our terrarium animals to this day.



In 1982, URSULA FRIEDERICH and I were elected as editors to the board of the DGHT – she became the Chief Editor and I the Vice Editor. It was the first time a woman was elected to our executive board. At this time, the editors of the board were responsible for the journal SALAMANDRA, the only publication issued by our society during its first decades of existence. Years of successful and friendly collaboration followed. It needs to be taken into consideration that during this time prior to computers and internet, editorial work used to be much more time-consuming and involving than many may imagine today. It is therefore even more laudable with how much energy this small, petite woman went about her tasks. The year of 1988 then saw our joint project of a supplementary publication to the SALAMANDRA, turning up in the shape of the MERTENSIELLA. It is URSULA FRIEDERICH's merit and strength to have accompanied the SALAMANDRA with her efforts for such a long period and to have helped to overcome partly difficult times for the journal with her enviable commitment.

It was in the early 1990' that URSULA FRIEDERICH was struck by cancer, and it was for this reason that she resigned from her post as editor in 1994. Affected by her illness, she rearranged and refocused her entire life and developed new interests. Herpetology and husbandry now took a backseat. The long time of illness and her personal fight against it was characterized by recurrent moments of hope and backstrokes. Finally, she lost this fight and died in a hospice in Wangen in Allgau.

The DGHT honoured her for her many years of dedication to the society, and to the SALAMANDRA in particular, by bestowing on her the Golden Honorary Pin on occasion of the Annual General Meeting in Lünen in 2003.

Many who knew her will remember URSULA FRIEDERICH and her refreshing, friendly attitude. And she will always occupy a place of honour in the annals of our society.

WOLFGANG BISCHOFF