


# A tribute to Professor Stefan H. Foord

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For Professor Stefan Foord's family, friends, colleagues and students, Thursday, 21st December 2023, was the saddest day. On that particular day, Stefan collapsed and died while cycling in Stilbaai, Western Cape. He was only aged 52 and at the peak of his career. Stefan was born on 04 of April 1971 in Pretoria. He was a distinguished academic, mentor and educator.

Throughout his life, Stefan has dedicated himself to pursuing knowledge and nurturing young minds. In addition to his academic achievements, Stefan was also a keen rugby player (as a university student) and later a coach during his early days as an academic. Stefan completed his undergraduate studies in 1993 and later his Bachelor of Science Honours in Zoology studies in 1994 at the University of Pretoria. In 1997, he completed his Master of Science in Entomology and Zoology, also at the University of Pretoria. In the same year, he was appointed a Lecturer at the University of Venda.

Stefan completed his PhD in 2005 from the University of Pretoria. His PhD revised a spider family, Hersiliidae, in the Afrotropical region. Between 2008 and 2016, he was promoted to Senior Lecturer, Associate Professor and Professor at the University of Venda. At his passing, Stefan was a National Research Foundation SARChI chair. For 8 years (2008–2016), he was the head of the Zoology Department in the then School of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, University of Venda.

Stefan taught and developed curricula for various modules at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels. He supervised the completion of over 60 postgraduate students. He raised millions of Rands in research grants during his career from various sources, both locally and internationally. He was known for his unwavering dedication to inspiring countless individuals through his engaging lectures, insightful guidance, and genuine care for students' success.

Beyond the lecture room, Stefan was well-known as a keen cyclist and runner. In addition, he was known for his exuberant spirit, humility, and capacity to impart his knowledge and passion for outdoor activities, including fieldwork. He was an excellent member and in good standing in his discipline of study, as evidenced by his various roles as a reviewer and editor in multiple journals, external examiner for numerous universities, organising conferences and serving in various academic societies.

Stefan is survived by his wife, Caron Foord, his daughters, Nicola and Emlyn Foord, his younger brother and his sister, and his parents. Our sincere sympathies are extended to his spouse, daughters, parents and siblings. His friends, family, students, coworkers, collaborators, and the local and global scientific community will miss him sorely. We as the authors would like to acknowledge that the obituary was also published in the *African Entomology Journal* (Munyai 2024).

## References

Munyai, T.C., 2024, 'Professor Stefan Hendrik Foord (1971–2023): Obituary', *African Entomology Journal* 32, a17810. <https://www.africanentomology.com/article/view/17810>.

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