

Remembering Roland

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Remembering Roland

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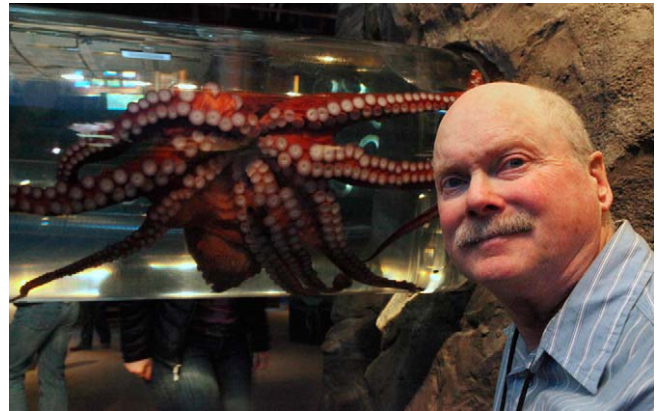
Friend, colleague and fellow malacologist and teuthologist Roland C. Anderson of Seattle died suddenly in his sleep in February 2014 at his Whidbey Island cottage. He was 67.

The son of a sea captain, Roland grew up near the coast and was fascinated with marine life, especially mollusks, from an early age. He was an avid scuba diver and shell collector and wrote about local dive sites. Roland earned his undergraduate degree from University of Washington and went to work at the Seattle Aquarium. Later he earned his Ph.D. in Marine Biology from Greenwich University. He served on the executive boards, including a term as president, for both the Western Society of Malacologists and the American Malacological Society. Roland recently delivered the keynote speech on color change in cephalopods and passing cloud displays at the World Congress of Malacology in the Azores in July of 2013. He was the author of over 200 scientific articles, primarily on the behavior, husbandry and natural history of marine mollusks. His recent work includes papers on tool use and play in octopuses, their recognition of individual humans, sand digging in sepiolids and enrichment for captive cephalopods. The authors of this remembrance co-authored the popular book, "Octopus: The Ocean's Intelligent Invertebrate" with Roland

Roland was a featured scientist on the Nature special, "Tentacles," and was often quoted in the media. He worked at the Seattle Aquarium for over three decades, retiring in 2009. Many knew him as the senior octopus biologist at the Seattle Aquarium. Roland created and organized the Puget Sound octopus surveys, the Octopus Week events including the Octopus Blind Date on Valentine's Day, and the Giant Pacific Octopus conference. Throughout his career, Dr. Anderson was always curious, helpful to colleagues and full of new ideas both theoretical and applied. Roland's friends span the globe.

Roland was a good friend to many and fun to work with. He had a well-developed sense of humor. During our field work in Bonaire, Roland would bring a gelatinous "wall walker," chill it in the freezer and then slip it into someone's dive bootie (the approved technique was not to react but to quietly slip it into someone else's bootie). In his obituary, Roland is described as "a researcher, author, diver, connoisseur of desserts, curmudgeon.....and friend."

He will be missed.



Roland Anderson at the Seattle Aquarium (Ken Lambert/The Seattle Times).