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After graduating with a BSc in Microbiology in 1977, I joined the Natural History Museum (NHM), London, to undertake a PhD focused on the ecology and systematics of peritrich ciliates. In 1979, I became a member of staff in the Protozoa Research Group at the NHM. I was awarded my PhD in 1983. I continued to carry out research on the systematics and biodiversity of ciliates, initially focusing on freshwater forms but for the last 25 years of my career I focused on marine forms, mainly in collaboration with various research groups in China. For ca. 35 years, I also had curatorial responsibility for the NHM protozoa collection. I have been an editorial board member of several journals and held various positions on the committees of both Protistology-UK and the International Society of Protistologists. In addition, I am a former member of the Editorial Board of the World Register for Marine Species (WoRMS) with responsibility for the Ciliophora (ciliates). I have published ca. 380 articles in peer-reviewed journals, 23 book chapters and co-edited two books. I retired in 2021 but continue to pursue my research interests as a Scientific Associate of the NHM.