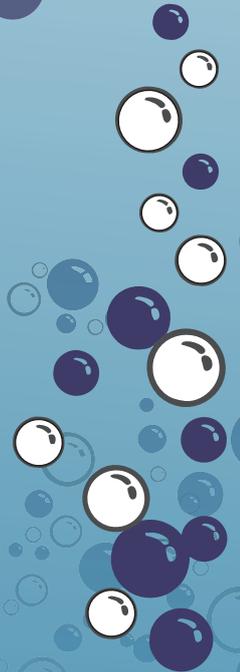
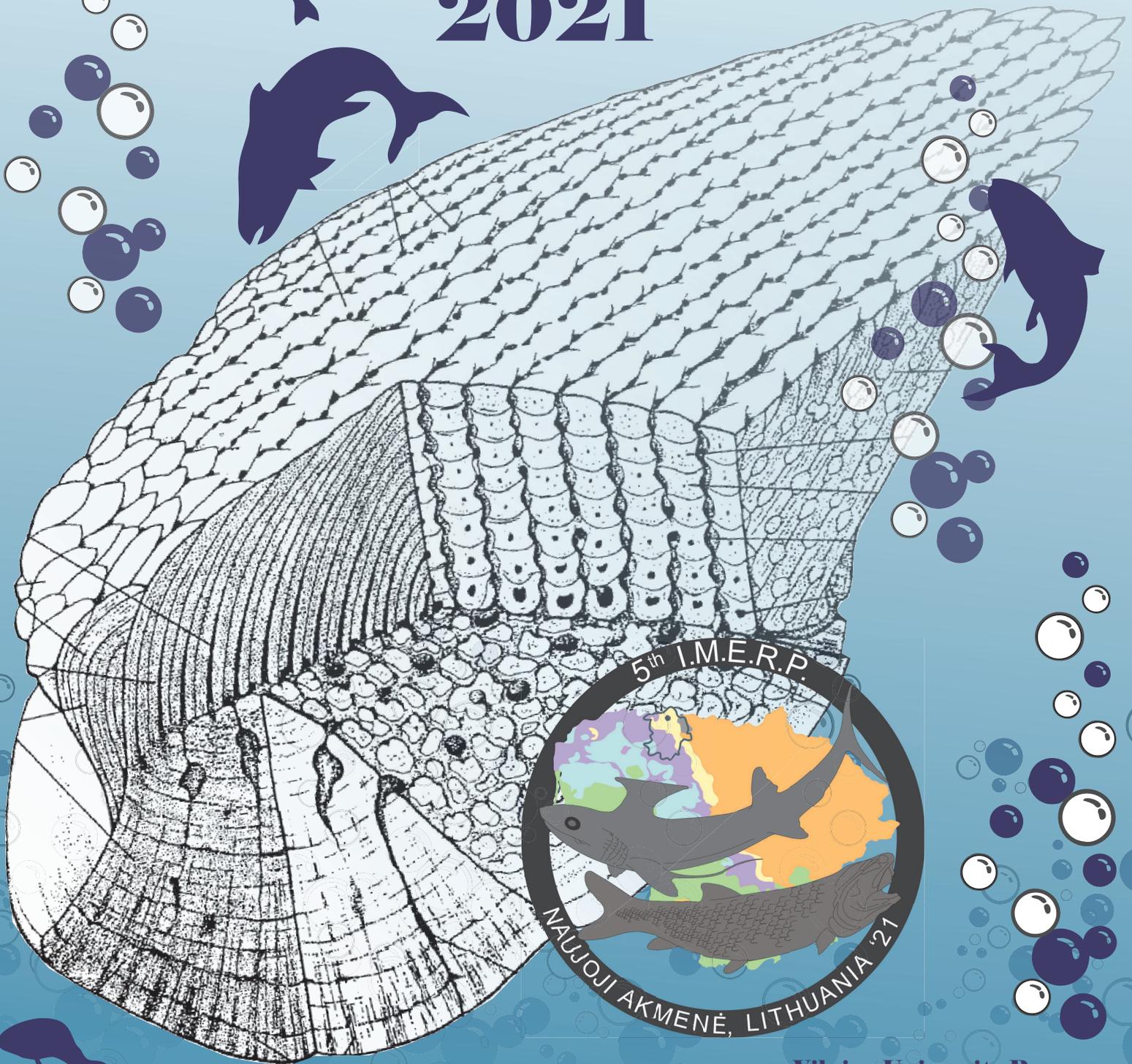
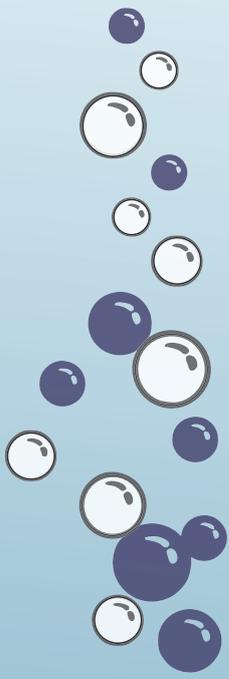
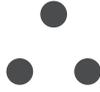


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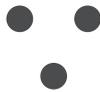




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## NEMATODA AS THE SOURCE OF INFORMATION OF SO-CALLED “AMBER FOREST” – WHAT STORY DO THEY TELL US?

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The fossil record of nematodes contains mostly parasitic forms preserved either in form of fossiliferous remains, including inclusions in various types of fossil resins, or ichnofossils (traces of their interactions with hosts or eggs). Knowledge of non-parasitic forms is fragmentary and primarily based on molecular studies. The poorly recognized fossil record of free-living groups could be related to the form of their preservation. Parasitic forms are usually easier to find as inclusions in fossil resin thanks to an association with their hosts. They usually occur caught fleeing from their dying host straight into a resin matrix.

This study reveals different morphotypes of nematodes not associated with any animal host, found in Baltic amber nuggets as groups of numerous specimens of different ontogenetic stages, which could suggest other than animal parasitism type of feeding. Analysis of their taxonomic assignment and type of preservation provides information about the taphonomical aspects of the resin they were found in.

Each trophic groups of Nematoda preserved in amber, especially free-living carnivores, phytophagous and plant parasites could provide a better understanding of the paleoecology of “amber forest” and the conditions of forming inclusions and amber itself.

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