

**Prof Bettina Sonntag**  
**University of Innsbruck Research Department for Limnology, Mondsee, Austria**

## **Biosketch**

### **Main areas of research**

My research group focuses on the ecology, biodiversity, taxonomy and phylogeny of ciliates mainly in lakes. To understand the autecology of ciliates in planktonic food webs, we study these protists on an alpha-taxonomic level including morphological, molecular and ecological state-of-the-art methods.

### **Present position**

Senior scientist and Head of the research group ‘Ciliate ecology and taxonomy’  
Research Department for Limnology, Mondsee  
University of Innsbruck, Austria  
Homepages: [www.uibk.ac.at/limno/personnel/sonntag/](http://www.uibk.ac.at/limno/personnel/sonntag/) and [www.ciliates.at](http://www.ciliates.at)

### **Education**

Ph.D. 1998–2000 Thesis: “Seasonal dynamics of ciliates and flagellates in a deep oligotrophic lake (Traunsee, Upper Austria) influenced by saline and alkaline industrial sludge” University of Innsbruck

Diploma 1990–1998 Study of Biology, University of Innsbruck, thesis: “Comparison of three methods to determine flagellate abundance, cell size and biovolume in cultures and natural freshwater samples”

### **Recent and ongoing research projects**

- ‘NGTax – Next Generation Taxonomy: Ciliophora and their bacterial symbionts as a proof of concept’ (PI Giulio Petroni, University of Pisa, Italy), EU-Horizon2020 Marie-Curie Actions – Research and Innovation Staff Exchange (RISE), July 2021-June 2025
- ‘Aquatic Symbiosis Genome Project’, Subhub of Patrick Keeling (University of British Columbia), ‘Ciliates as models for symbiosis: using genomic analyses of functionally diverse symbiotic associations with parallel origins to gain insights into basic evolutionary principles of symbiosis’ Wellcome Sanger Institute and Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, since October 2020
- ‘Pan-European Lake Sampling – Microbial Eco-genomics’ Czech Academy of Sciences, Biology Centre CAS, Budweis Czech Republic, PI Rohit Ghai, Michaela Salcher, January 2020 – December 2024
- ‘Freshwater endosymbiotic algae and their ciliate hosts: morphology, phylogeny, ecology’, April 2016 – March 2021, Austrian Science Fund FWF
- ‘Co-occurrence networks in aquatic food webs: ciliates as models’, September 2015 – August 2020, Austrian Science Fund FWF

### **Publications (peer-reviewed)**

See [www.ciliates.at](http://www.ciliates.at) for a full list  
About 50 publications in total

