

## MERCER AWARD

Douglas W. Schemske

Douglas W. Schemske is the recipient of the George Mercer Award for 1986. The Mercer Award is presented annually to a young ecologist in recognition of an outstanding paper published during the previous two years.

The George Mercer Award is given in memory of Lt. George Mercer of the British Army of World War I, killed in action in 1918. The purpose of the award is to commemorate the sacrifice of a young naturalist and ecologist, to encourage others to publish papers comparable with those it is reasonable to suppose Mercer would have published had he lived, and to honor recipients.

Dr. Schemske receives the award in recognition of his paper, "Population structure and local selection in *Impatiens pallida* (Balsaminaceae), a selfing annual," published in *Evolution* in 1984 (38:817–832). His paper is one of the very best experimental field studies on the ecology and evolutionary significance of plant mating systems in relation to population structure. Few previous workers have effectively melded experimental population ecology with a genetical analysis of plant mating systems. Douglas Schemske clearly documented how the population structure of this species "... is a complex function of ecological and genetic factors." Schemske is widely admired as a leader in the field of pollination ecology. This work and his related studies have fundamentally altered the way in which pollination ecology must be investigated.

*Impatiens pallida* was studied at two forest localities in central Illinois, where earlier he received his Ph.D. at the University of Illinois.



Mercer Award winner Douglas Schemske (left) receiving plaque from Dr. Walter E. Massey, Vice President for Research of the University of Chicago.

Following his degree at the University of Illinois he was awarded a one-year postdoctoral fellowship at the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute in the Republic of Panama. The following year Dr. Schemske held a position at Amherst College, prior to joining the Department of Biology at the University of Chicago where he is currently an Associate Professor.

Written by Ralph E. Good  
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