

The George Mercer Award is given in the memory of Lieutenant George Mercer who was killed in action while serving in the British Army during World War I. The award commemorates the sacrifice of a young naturalist and ecologist by recognizing others who have published papers comparable to those it is reasonable to assume George Mercer would have authored if he had lived. Given annually to an author under the age of 40, the award honors an outstanding paper in ecology published in English during the previous two years.

The 1989 recipient of the Mercer Award is Dr. Russell J. Schmitt for his 1987 paper "Indirect interactions between prey: apparent competition, predator aggression, and habitat segregation" published in *Ecology* 68:1887–1897. This paper presents elegant field experiments which demonstrate for the first time the existence of "apparent competition," including the underlying mechanism of aggression of shared predators as well as the community consequence of habitat segregation of prey. The award-winning paper is the capstone to a series of papers that exposes the roles of resources, competition, predation, and habitat structure in determining the distribution and abundance of subtidal snails. This work is more remarkable because it has been done in temperate subtidal reefs, a notoriously difficult habitat for ecological experimentation, and it represents a major extension of ecological principles to this habitat.

Dr. Schmitt is currently an Associate Research Biologist and the Director of the Coastal Research Center at the Marine Science Institute, University of California at Santa Barbara. Following the completion of a B.A. degree in Environmental Biology from the University of Colorado, Boulder in 1972, he received his M.S. in Marine Science from the University of the Pacific in 1975. His Ph.D. in Biology was taken at the University of California, Los Angeles in 1979.

The Mercer Award subcommittee also honorably mentions Drs. Ellen Simms and Mark



Russell J. Schmitt receives the Mercer Award from University of California at Santa Barbara Chancellor Barbara S. Uehling.

Rausher for their 1987 paper entitled "Costs and benefits of plant resistance to herbivory," which appeared in the 130th volume of the *American Naturalist*. Drs. Simms and Rausher have rigorously tested a crucial assumption of most work on plant-herbivore interactions—that plant defense against herbivores comes at a cost.

Selection Committee:
 Warren Abrahamson, Chair
 Stuart Chapin III
 Norm Christensen
 Nancy McCreary
 Bill Rice
 Earl Werner
 Tom Whitham

Source: Bulletin of the Ecological Society of America, Vol. 71, No. 1 (Mar., 1990), p. 21. Courtesy of JSTOR