



Distinguished Service Citation

Frank N. Egerton

The Distinguished Service Citation is given annually in recognition of long and distinguished service to the Ecological Society of America, to the larger scientific community, and to the larger purpose of ecology in the public welfare. This year's recipient is Frank Egerton.

Dr. Egerton has written widely about the historical antecedents of ecology and how ecologists perceive the world. His classic article, "Changing concepts in the balance of nature" (1973, *Quarterly Review of Biology* 48:322–350) is a seminal paper that first pointed ecologists in the direction of nonequilibrium thinking. He has written or edited a number of other books on the history of science and ecology, including *Hewett Cottrell Watson: Victorian Plant Ecologist and Evolutionist* (Ashgate Publishing, Aldershot, UK, 2003). Dr. Egerton taught World History, History of Science, and American Environmental History at the University of Wisconsin, Parkside for 25 years. He continues to teach the latter two courses in his retirement.

Dr. Egerton has been writing a world history of ecological science beginning with the ancient Greeks. Twenty-two chapters of this history have appeared as a series in the *ESA Bulletin* since January 2001, and more than a dozen additional chapters will be published over the next several years. At the 2006 Annual Meeting, Dr. Egerton summarized the chapter on the development of ecological ideas about food web structure and dynamics in a presentation given during the symposium "What makes an ecological icon." His talk, which was attended by more than 200 people, reflected on discoveries and contributions to the discipline that are more than 5–10 years old, something that many ecologists rarely do. As ESA President Alan Covich pointed out after the symposium, Dr. Egerton's historical survey is of immense importance to our discipline because it provides historical perspective on the development of ecology, of which all current students, faculty, and interested citizens should be made aware.

By bringing scholarly attention to paradigm shifts made throughout the history of ecology, from the ancient Greeks to the first naturalists and evolutionary biologists and onwards, Dr. Egerton's work has greatly influenced how ecologists view the development of their discipline, and science in general. Through his own books and many book reviews over the past 40 years, he has done a great deal to critically sharpen thinking about ecology in the largest intellectual sense.