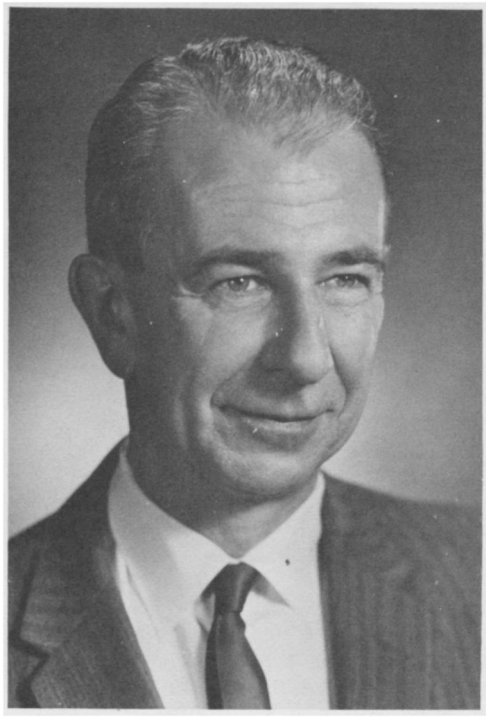

Professor LaMont C. Cole, Professor Emeritus of Zoology in the Section of Ecology and Systematics at Cornell University, died on June 3, 1978 at the age of 61.

LaMont Cole played an influential role in the Ecological Society of America for more than two decades, and served as Vice President in 1964 and President in 1967–1968. Between 1946 and 1963, he performed a series of editorial functions for the Society: as Associate Editor of *Ecology* (1946–1948 ), Associate Editor of *Ecological Monographs* (1951–1953), Review Editor of *Ecology* (1952–1954), and Zoological Editor of *Ecology* (1958–1963). In 1965, he was Chairman of the ESA Publications Committee.

He also served as Vice President (1968) and then as President (1969) of the American Institute of Biological Sciences.

A 1944 Ph.D. from the University of Chicago, Dr. Cole arrived at Cornell in 1948 as Assistant Professor after a two-year stay in the Zoology Department at the University of Indiana. By 1952 he had risen to the rank of Professor of Zoology. In 1964, he was Chairman of the Department of Zoology and later that year became the first Chairman of the Section of Ecology and Systematics in the new Division of Biological Sciences.

LaMont Cole's greatest influence was through his contributions in a very wide-ranging research career. His first publication, at the age of 19, was a report on the herpetology of the Navajo country, the first product of his four-year stint as chief herpetologist on the Rainbow Bridge and Monument Valley Expeditions of the US National Park Service and the American Exploration Society.

His Master's thesis (1939) at the University of Utah was on the effects of radiant energy on reptiles, and began a career of interest in the ecological effects of radiant energy and temperature variation. It led in a natural way to his later involvement with the study of environmental insults and their effects on natural populations.

LaMont's early work included a classic thesis (under Thomas Park) on the cryptozoa of a woodland in Kendall County, Illinois. In this work (published in Ecol. Monogr. 16:49–86, 1946) were rooted his later interests in population and community theory, and in the statistics of population distributions over space. LaMont's conclusion that it would be a mistake to refer to the cryptozoans as a supraorganismic community, as Harshbarger had argued in 1911 for the soil fauna in general, was an early and important ingredient in changes in the community concept.

LaMont's unique talents, however, were his tremendous ability to blend analytic thought and biological fact, and his special knack for interesting others in such work. His earliest theoretical studies were "A theory for analyzing contagiously distributed populations" (Ecol. 27:329–341, 1946) and "The measurement of interspecific association" (Ecol. 30:411–424, 1949), exercises in quantitative ecology which grew out of his thesis work. From these studies of static populations, themes which were not abandoned in his later work, his interests expanded to dynamic questions: population cycles, life history phenomena, and competitive exclusion. His fundamental paper, "Some features of random population cycles," J. Wildl. Management 18:2–24 (1954) showed that population cycles, for which "mysterious causes" had and have been suggested, could be explained equally well as being essentially random fluctuations. His delightful extension of this, "Biological clock

in the unicorn," Science 125:874–876 (1957), was his most popular paper and his personal favorite.

"The population consequences of life history phenomena," Quart. Rev. Biol. 29:103–137 (1954) remains the classic of LaMont's repertoire and the classic of the life history literature. This study of the tradeoffs between various life history characteristics demonstrated that LaMont Cole, as few others, could fit logical elegance to biological necessity. He had the ability to get to the heart of demographic problems and to phrase them in sharp new formulations. He had a profound understanding of a very diverse literature ranging from mathematics to natural history, and could eloquently combine these with his own particular insights and innovations.

In his later years he paid special attention to the social aspects of ecology. In 1963 he published on pesticides and "nature's equilibrium," in 1968 on radioactivity and power plants on Cayuga Lake, in 1969 on themal pollution, and over the years on a tremendous number of environmental problems. His concern for nature's balance, which perhaps dominated his thoughts for at least the last 15 years, led him to membership on the Committee on Pesticides of the US Department of Health, Education and Welfare; the New York State Environmental Board; and to other related activities.

LaMont's independence of thought was a heritage from his father, a distinguished anthropologist who had the courage to join with Clarence Darrow, H. H. Newman, and Shailer Mathews in planning the scientific defense of John Scopes. LaMont Cole's career was dedicated to fighting against the dangers of scientific ignorance and corporate self-interests. He had a tremendous impact on the ecological community, and upon all who came into contact with him.

LaMont Cole became Professor Emeritus in January 1978, and was honored at a Symposium in May which attracted distinguished scientists from across the country.

He is survived by his wife, Ann Schuster Cole; two sons, John LaMont Cole of Columbus, Ohio and George Frederic Cole of Ithaca; and a granddaughter, Carolyn Louise Cole of Columbus, Ohio.

Source: Bulletin of the Ecological Society of America, Vol. 59, No. 4 (Dec., 1978), pp. 171-172.
Courtesy of JSTOR.