

Clifford Osburn Berg

August 9, 1912 — April 6, 1987

Clifford Osburn Berg, professor of entomology emeritus, died on April 6, 1987, at his home in Ellis Hollow, near Ithaca, New York. He was born on August 9, 1912, in Stoughton, Wisconsin, where he attended the public schools. He entered Luther College in 1930 and in 1934 was granted a Bachelor of Arts degree cum laude. After his graduation he taught science in the high school of Mohall, North Dakota, until he began graduate study at the University of Michigan in 1937. He was awarded a Master of Science degree in 1939. His graduate studies were interrupted by World War II, during which he served in the South Pacific area as a malaria control officer with the U.S. Navy. After the war he returned to his studies at the University of Michigan and received his Ph.D. degree in 1949. He was appointed assistant professor of zoology at Ohio Wesleyan University and promoted to associate professor before he accepted his position at Cornell in 1953. He was promoted to professor in 1959, and he retired on July 1, 1978.

During the summers of 1950 to 1952 he was a consultant entomologist for the Arctic Health Research Center of the U.S. Public Health Service at Anchorage, Alaska. In 1957 he spent the summer as a reserve officer of the U.S. Public Health Service, studying household insects on Indian reservations in the north central states. Sabbatic leaves in 1960 and 1967 were spent in Europe and in South America collecting, rearing, and studying sciomyzid flies. From October 1970 to June 1971 he served as resident geologist with the Office of Environmental Sciences, Smithsonian Institution, continuing his studies of the sciomyzid flies and snail-borne diseases.

A Guggenheim Fellowship was awarded to Professor Berg in 1966 in support of his research on the sciomyzid flies in South America, and he was a Fulbright scholar doing similar research in Brazil in 1970. He accepted an honorary D.Sc. degree from his alma mater, Luther College, in 1970.

Professor Berg was a member of the Entomological Society of America, the Entomological Society of Canada, and the Entomological Society of Washington. As a member of the Ecological Society of America he was the associate editor of the journal *Ecology* from 1956 to 1958. He also held memberships in the American Society of Limnology and Oceanography and in the International Association of Theoretical and Applied Limnology. He was vice president of the American Microscopical Society from 1953 to 1956, a member of its editorial board from 1957 to 1959, and a member of its executive committee from 1957 to 1959.

Clifford Berg was the first to discover that marsh-dwelling flies of the family *Sciomyzidae* prey on snails, and after that discovery his own research turned mainly to a careful elucidation and expansion of our knowledge of the varied life-history relationships between the sciomyzids of the world and their molluscan prey. The diversity of these prey soon grew to include slugs, freshwater clams, and many kinds of gastropods, including the snails serving as intermediate hosts for such important diseases of humans and mammals as schistosomiasis and sheep liver fluke. Thus was born the notion that certain *Sciomyzidae* might be useful in the biological control of these snail-borne diseases. Most of what we now know about the complex biology of sciomyzid flies we owe to Professor Berg and a number of his students. Also on the long list of degree holders whose thesis research Professor Berg directed are some who studied the biology of other families of insects, some who worked on snail systematics and ecology, and a few who were more general limnologists; they have developed reputations that reflect their careful training in the meticulous research and reporting methods of their mentor. Clifford Berg's publications have always been models exhibiting the highest professional standards.

Professor Berg also made himself indispensable as a teacher of more-formal courses and seminars in aquatic entomology and limnology, serving with equal enthusiasm and skill in the classroom, at streamside, and in the marsh. Students, both graduate and undergraduate, benefited from his instruction and showed their appreciation of it.

After his retirement he continued his research and continued to publish. He became interested in the work of the Nature Conservancy and was very active in that organization, serving in various administrative capacities.

His wife, Peg, predeceased him in 1978; two daughters, Karen and Kathy, survive.

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