

awards

EMINENT ECOLOGIST

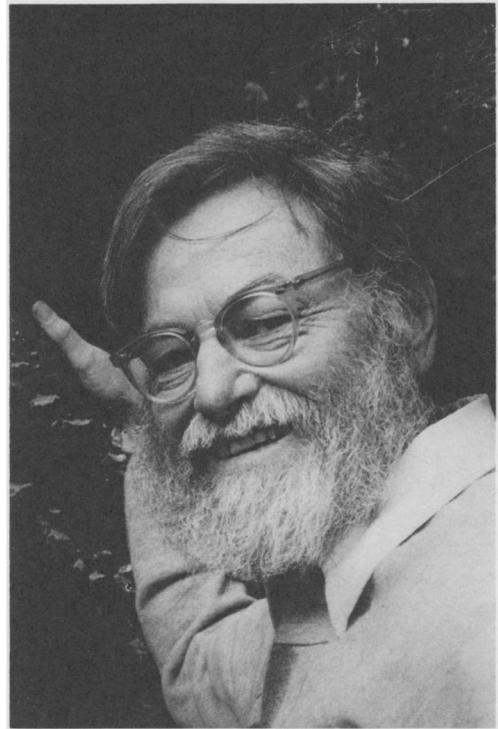
Joseph H. Connell

Joseph H. Connell has had a profound impact on the discipline of ecology. During the past three decades his work and its implications have become so broadly known it is difficult to imagine what the field would have been like had Joe pursued a different career.

Joe was born in Gary, Indiana in 1923. He completed his undergraduate degree at the University of Chicago and a Master's degree at the University of California, Berkeley. After a short tenure as a high school biology teacher, Joe completed a doctoral degree in Zoology at the University of Glasgow, Scotland in 1956. Later that year he joined the faculty of the Department of Biological Sciences, University of California, Santa Barbara.

Joe's early research on competition between barnacle species in Scotland was seminal for two reasons. First, this classic body of work, published in *Ecology and Ecological Monographs* in 1961, remains one of the finest studies of the effects of interspecific competition. Perhaps more important, it became the cornerstone of an entire school in ecology, one that advocates manipulative field experimentation whenever possible. The importance of the barnacle research was immediately appreciated, and Joe was awarded the Mercer Award for 1963. In the ensuing years, these papers have been cited so often and discussed so much that it is a challenge to find an ecologist unfamiliar with them. Joe proceeded from this classic study of competition to an analysis of predation by snails on barnacles in Puget Sound, Washington. This work was again published as a monograph, a mode of publication that is almost a Connell hallmark.

Joe's research achievements span an astonishing breadth of concepts and taxa. He is one of the first scientists to test experimentally hypotheses about tropical diversity. His long-term coral study has become a classic, and his recent rain forest results may justifiably achieve that status. Joe is surely the



outstanding experimental field ecologist of the latter half of this century.

Much of Joe's research has dealt with understanding processes that determine community structure. His research has probed the action, and interaction, of competition, predation, recruitment, and physical factors. Debate on this subject, stimulated in part by his chapter in the 1975 book *Ecology and Evolution of Communities*, is still ongoing a decade later. More recently, Joe's studies of coral reefs and tropical rain forests have led him to champion the idea that disturbance can have a crucial influence on ecological communities. He has written a number of papers synthesizing existing evidence and trying to establish well-founded generalizations about mechanisms that determine the structure of communities, different patterns of

succession, and species diversity. This work has caused many ecologists to rethink their views and has sparked the development or refinement of theory and empirical tests.

The contributions Joe has made to his field are not limited to his published research. His incredible curiosity and enthusiasm about ecology are infectious and energize all who come into contact with him. As a teacher, he encourages students to look beneath the surface and evaluate. As a mentor, he is as eager to discuss research with undergraduates beginning their first research project as with postdoctoral students in his laboratory.

As a colleague, he is an unending source of intellectual stimulation and good fellowship. Because of his profound and enduring contributions to the field, it is with honor that the Ecological Society of America awards him the Eminent Ecologist citation for 1985.

**Written by Sally J. Holbrook
Selection Committee:**

**Fakhri A. Bazzaz, Chair
James F. Kitchell
Jane Lubchenco
Michael L. Rosenzweig
Mary F. Willson**