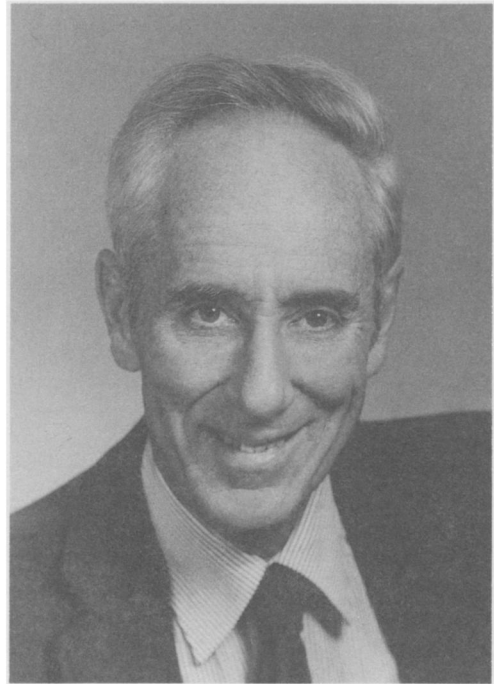


Archie Fairly Carr, Jr. was born in Mobile, Alabama in 1909. In the 1930's he moved to Gainesville, Florida, intending to pursue a B.A. in English. It was the good fortune of ecology that he changed his major to biology partway through his degree program, thus beginning a life-long affiliation with the discipline. Exercising a degree of inbreeding that would be frowned upon today, he took all of his degrees (including the first doctorate in biology) from the University of Florida, then joined the faculty there, rising from Instructor to Graduate Research Professor. In 1987 he received the University of Florida's Presidential Medallion for his scholarly contributions during an unprecedented 50 years of service.

An eminent natural historian, Archie Carr was intimately familiar with the organisms with which he worked. The first of his 11 books, *Handbook of Turtles*, won the Daniel Giraud Elliott Medal of the National Academy of Sciences in 1952. In 1957 another of his books, *The Windward Road*, earned him the John Burroughs Medal for nature writing from the American Museum of Natural History. In a rare demonstration of immodesty, but a typical show of humor, Archie responded to a 1940's request from the War Department, which was surveying unique talents in academe that might be militarily useful, by reporting that he could "recognize and imitate more frog calls than any other human being."

One could argue whether it was sea turtles that made Archie Carr famous, or Archie Carr who made sea turtles famous. Based on decades of arduous tagging, tracking, and recapture studies, he and his co-workers unravelled many of the mysteries of the life history of sea turtles, especially the green turtle. They discovered the whereabouts of its feeding grounds, they determined the periodicity of its egg-laying, they studied its diet and nutrition, and they identified the weak links in its life cycle. And although they learned a lot about sea turtle migrations, Archie and his team never did quite solve the riddle of navigation that enables sea turtles to depart the coast of South America and unerringly hit tiny Ascension Is-



land, 2000 km to the east. In 1985, however, Archie did solve a mystery that had puzzled him for years: Where were those sea turtles between the time they left the beach as hatchlings and when they showed up on the turtle-grass beds as dinner-plate-sized subadults? Through field work, interviews, knowledge of diets, and study of ocean currents, Archie deduced that the young turtles are pelagic. They concentrate in zones of downwelling, where marine life is swept together and concentrated on the surface of the sea. Archie's findings were reported in more than 100 research articles, from 1934 to the present.

The key to Archie Carr's eminence as an ecologist was his effectiveness as a writer. He had an uncanny ability to communicate his findings in ways that made his science exciting to the nonspecialist. In 1956, for example, a chapter entitled "Black Beach" from *The Windward Road* garnered the O. Henry Memorial Award for best nonfiction short story.

Ecologists who think they suffer from terminal writer's block might be relieved to know that writing did not come especially easily to Archie Carr. He worked at it, and he worked hard. He was aware, though, that his popularity as a describer of nature attracted to him the notoriety and the resources that enabled him to conduct scholarly research of the very highest quality.

Good science and effective communication were but two facets of Archie Carr's three-pronged career. The third was international conservation, an activity he pursued tirelessly. Many of the awards he received—World Wildlife Fund Gold Medal, Edward W. Browning Award (Smithsonian Institution), Order of the Golden Ark (Netherlands), New York Zoological Society Gold Medal, Fairfield Osborne Lecturer, Hal Borland Award (National Audubon), Member of Honor of the Species Survival Commission (IUCN), Conservationist of the Year (Florida Audubon)—were given in recognition of his accomplishments as a conservationist. The turtle-nesting beach where he did much of his field research became the

focal point of Tortuguero National Park, established by the government of Costa Rica in 1971.

Archie F. Carr was selected to receive this year's Eminent Ecologist award shortly before his death, from cancer, in May 1987 at age 77. The award is bestowed in recognition of all three aspects of his career—his outstanding research contributions, his efforts on behalf of the well-being of our planet, and his uncanny ability to communicate the excitement and the music of ecology to nonspecialists.

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