

## GEORGE MERCER AWARD



**J. Timothy Wootton**

The George Mercer Award is given annually to a young ecologist for an outstanding publication. The 1994 award was presented to J. T. Wootton for his paper, "Indirect effects and habitat use in an intertidal community: interaction chains and interaction modifications" (*American Naturalist* 141:71-89). In this and subsequent publications, Dr. Wootton has moved beyond simply marveling at the occurrence of "indirect effects," and introduced the idea of *chains of interaction* and *interaction modification* as a distinction that will help us better understand the manifold consequences of indirect effects in communities. The terminology is not important; what is important is

the way that he has gone about determining the extent to which a perfect understanding of pairwise interactions can be pieced together to predict community dynamics. Dr. Wootton's work provides a technology for anticipating how wrong we will be if we confine ourselves to pairwise studies.

### **George Mercer Award Subcommittee:**

Peter Vitousek (Chair)  
Kirk Winemiller  
Elvira Cuevas  
Michael Vanni  
James Clark  
Craig Williamson  
Maxine Watson