
2009 George Mercer Award

Richard Lankau and Sharon Strauss



This year's George Mercer Award is given to Richard Lankau of the University of Illinois and coauthor Sharon Strauss for their paper, "Mutual feedbacks maintain both genetic and species diversity in a plant community," published in *Science* in 2007. The Mercer Award is given for an outstanding recently published ecological research paper by a young scientist. The authors show that changes in a physical trait of a plant can affect overall plant community structure, which in turn drives the evolution of the trait. The paper uses a combination of theory, experiment, and observation to bridge the fields of community ecology and quantitative genetics.