

distinguished service citation

George Sprugel

The Distinguished Service Citation was established in 1975 to honor members whose outstanding contributions to ESA deserve special recognition. Dr. George Sprugel is the second recipient of the citation.

From the time that he left Iowa in 1951 to become the assistant head of the Biology branch of the Office of Naval Research, George Sprugel has actively served the interests of ecology and of the Ecological Society.

In 1954, Sprugel became the first program director for Environmental Biology at a time when environmental biology needed strong support and direction. His tenure was marked by critical and innovative developments in several areas of vital interest to ESA. The work of ESA study committee was supported through his interest, and he assisted the ESA Study Committee in its assessment of the ecological effects of weather modification.

From the National Science Foundation, Sprugel moved in 1964 to another challenging position, that of the first chief scientist for the National Park Service where he carried out recommendations for research reform and developed a program of scientific inquiry throughout the National Park Service which resulted in much of the ecological work now in progress in the National Park System.

In October 1966, Sprugel left the Park Service to become the Chief of the Illinois Natural History Survey, but he maintained interest in national environmental problems and in the Ecological Society on whose Council he has served in various capacities since 1961. As chief of the Illinois Natural History Survey, Sprugel moved toward a greater emphasis on environmental quality with research on air and water pollution and the effect of biocides.

One cannot pinpoint all of the ways in which George Sprugel has influenced the development of ecological science. He has served on numerous productive committees including the NRC committee on Scientific and Technical Communication, the Committee on Research in the Life Sciences, the US National Committee for the IBP and he directed the USIBP Program for Conservation of Ecosystems. He represented the ESA on the AAAS Council serving AAAS as vice-president and as chairman of the Section of Biological Sciences in addition to other responsibilities.

George Sprugel's work for the Ecological Society resembles a systems model with many cross linkages. Only a few are obvious such as his membership on the Study Committee for TIE, his service as Vice-President in 1968, as representative to NRC and most recently as Chairman of the Committee on Coordination. One of many quiet contributions to ESA was Sprugel's service as chairman of an Ad Hoc Committee to select ESA members for nomination as Fellows to AAAS, an effort, which resulted in the naming of many ecologists as AAAS Fellows.

There is no need here to elaborate on Sprugel's yeoman service to the American Institute of Biological Scientists. Throughout, he supported environmental and ecological concerns.

To George Sprugel for untiring effort in promoting sound ecological research and practice at all levels of government and for never-failing support on tasks within the Ecological Society, the Society is proud to award this distinguished service citation.