

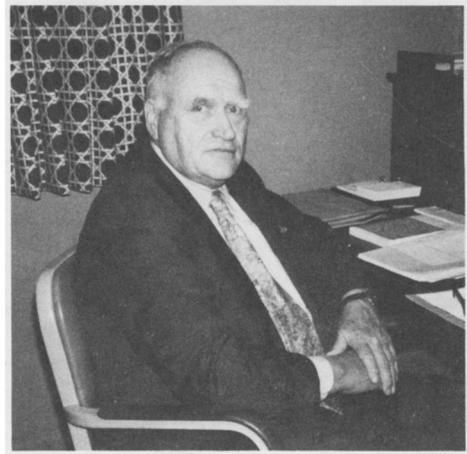
Forest Stearns

The devoted and effective service of Forest Stearns to the Ecological Society of America may be traced through his thirteen years of editorial work and terms as Vice-president, Treasurer, President, and Council member. The long period of his major influence and leadership largely coincided with the coming-of-age of the pure and applied facets of ecological science, both of which are his concerns. A career distinguished by an extraordinary range and magnitude of professional service can only be sketched in outline here.

Dr. Stearns was born in Milwaukee in 1918. Graduation from Harvard University was followed by graduate work in botany and soil science at the University of Wisconsin at Madison, studies interrupted by four years of wartime service in the U.S. Army Air Force. His 1947 doctorate made Stearns the first of a notable group of Ph.D. recipients majoring in plant ecology with the late John T. Curtis.

A still-continuing dedication to undergraduate teaching became evident during a decade at Purdue University where he worked with Samuel Postlethwait and others in initiating new approaches to general botany, and in curriculum development. Even while chairman (1973–77) of the Botany Department at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee, he continued to teach introductory courses, and participated in team-taught freshman biology, and in an interdisciplinary Environmental Studies course which he had helped to establish.

Between his academic work at Lafayette, Indiana, and that beginning in 1968 at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee came



a decade in the research branch of the U.S. Forest Service. At Vicksburg, Mississippi, his interests centered on physical factors; at St. Paul, Minnesota and Rhinelander, Wisconsin, he directed studies of wildlife habitat in the Lakes States Region, and worked with microclimates and remote-sensing techniques. Since accepting a professorship at the University of Wisconsin, Stearns has done diversified and productive research and trained many oncoming ecologists, not neglecting to instill a sense of responsibility toward both nature and society.

Among his 80 publications, this later period is represented by several related and continuing interests, including primary productivity, marsh and hydrophyte ecology, and phenology. For several years he directed the United States IBP Phenology

Program. Two other interests have claimed his special attention. He has a leadership role in Wisconsin in behalf of scientific areas preservation and use, as chairman of the Wisconsin Scientific Area Preservation Council. Secondly, he was an innovator in urban and suburban ecology; working with T.I.E. he organized an interdisciplinary Urban Ecosystems Project (1972-74) for RANN (going far beyond the biological sciences) and was co-editor of the resulting book.

Stearns' broad and deep interests, personal contacts, and guidance role are reflected in his activities in several professional societies, on the Executive Committee of AIBS, and in the positions he fills in national and state organizations and projects.

It was primarily through his thought and effort that the ESA, in January 1972, estab-

lished the position of professional managing editor for our research journals. During his own earlier tenure first as volunteer botanical editor and later coordinating editor, he combined high editorial standards with an apparently unlimited willingness to give inexperienced authors the help they needed to put promising material into acceptable form for publication. This unusual editorial attitude was but an extension of the unfailing patience, understanding, and helpfulness so appreciatively mentioned by colleagues, students, friends, and acquaintances. Forest Stearns has set standards both of scientific excellence and of unselfish service which inspire many but will be fulfilled by few indeed.

A. A. Lindsey
for the Awards Committee