



FORREST SHREVE

1878-1950

In the death of Forrest Shreve, plant science has lost a research worker who was a major contributor to desert ecology during the first half of this century. For over 40 years the West was his home and the desert his workshop. But his early years in the East were also productive ones as evidenced by "The Plant Life of Maryland" written with Chrysler, Blodgett and Besley.

Maryland was Dr. Shreve's native state. He was born in Easton on July 8, 1878, and received undergraduate and graduate training at Johns Hopkins University—Ph.D. 1905—thus joining the ranks of that distinguished group of Hopkins men which played such a prominent role in the advancement of biological science during the early nineteen hundreds. Following a year of post-doctoral research at Hopkins as a Bruce Fellow, Dr. Shreve taught for two years at Goucher College and then joined the botany staff of the Carnegie Institution of Washington, an association that continued until his death on July 19, 1950.

Throughout an active professional life, Dr. Shreve gave his time generously to the establishment and advancement of scientific organizations. From 1911 until 1919, he was editor of PLANT WORLD which gave way to

ECOLOGY. He was among the original small group of ecologists that Dr. H. C. Cowles brought together in Philadelphia on December 30, 1914, for the purpose of discussing the need for an ecological society. At the next meeting for organizing the Society, held in Columbus, Ohio, on December 25, 1915, Dr. Shreve was nominated secretary-treasurer "as representing the far west," a position that he held until illness necessitated his resignation in 1919. The Society was organized as a field society and so it is significant that Dr. Shreve issued the circular calling for the first field trip which took place in 1916. This circular was the Ecological Society Bulletin that he started as a monthly publication. At his suggestion, the soil temperature committee of which he was chairman became a committee of the newly formed Ecological Society. In 1921, he served as president of the Society. His services to other organizations included the presidency of the Southwest Division of the A.A.A.S. in 1929, the vice presidency of the Association of American Geographers in 1940, and the presidency of the Association of Pacific Coast Geographers in 1942. In 1950, the Seventh International Botanical Congress in Stockholm selected him as one of its Honorary Presidents.

To few biologists comes the opportunity of spending such a long and uninterrupted period of exploration and research. Those years were active and productive ones. In the East his field studies included, besides the plant life of Maryland, ecological and physiological study of the mountain rain-forests of Jamaica. But, it was in the western states that he did his greatest work. Here, his research included the ecology of the coastal mountains of California, the relationships between climate and vegetation on desert mountain ranges, and the phytogeography of the deserts of northern Mexico. In 1917, he published in GEOGRAPHICAL REVIEW what was probably the first generalized vegetational map of the United States. He had a special interest in the relationship of soil conditions to the distribution of desert vegetation, his desert studies being centered chiefly on the Sonoran Desert and the Chihuahuan Desert.

Forrest Shreve made lasting contributions to knowledge of the ecology, geography and physiology of plants. He was a pioneer and leader in the study of North American deserts. The Ecological Society of America pays tribute to a distinguished founder and a loyal friend.

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Berkeley, California
February 5, 1951

Source: Bulletin of the Ecological Society of America, Vol. 32, No. 1 (Mar., 1951), pp. 5-6.
Courtesy of JSTOR.