

The George Mercer Award is given in the memory of Lieutenant George Mercer who was killed in action while serving in the British Army during World War I. The award commemorates the sacrifice of a young naturalist and ecologist by recognizing others who have published papers comparable to those it is reasonable to assume George Mercer would have authored if he had lived. Given annually to an author under the age of 40, the award honors an outstanding paper in ecology published in English during the previous two years.

The 1988 recipient of the Mercer Award is Dr. May R. Berenbaum for her 1986 paper "Constraints on chemical coevolution: wild parsnips and the parsnip webworm," published in *Evolution* 40:1215–1228 and coauthored with Art R. Zangerl and James K. Nitao. This paper presents the most rigorous study of coevolution since Mode's (1958) coining of the term and Ehrlich and Raven's (1964) seminal paper on coevolution. The selection committee felt that the Berenbaum, Zangerl, and Nitao paper represents a benchmark denoting a shift to critical quantitative and experimental evaluation of the extent and limitations of coevolutionary potential.

Dr. Berenbaum is currently an Associate Professor of Entomology at the University of Illinois, Urbana, where she is continuing her work on the interactions of the parsnip webworm and wild parsnip. Whereas the research reported in the award-winning paper detailed herbivore impacts on host plants, her ongoing research will determine the degree to which host plants exert selection pressures on herbivores and the herbivore responses to those pressures. Following the completion of a B.S. degree from Yale University in 1971, Dr. Ber-



May R. Berenbaum receiving the Mercer Award certificate from Chancellor Morton Weir of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

enbaum received her Ph.D. degree from Cornell University in 1975, working under the direction of Paul Feeny. Her coauthors, Art Zangerl and James Nitao, were affiliated with her laboratory as post-doctoral fellow and graduate student, respectively.

Written by Warren G. Abrahamson
Selection Committee:

Warren G. Abrahamson, Chair
Norman L. Christensen
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Bruce A. Menge
Rebecca R. Sharitz
Christopher C. Smith
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