

Entomology and the Indiana Academy of Science

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Entomology has always been a part of the Indiana Academy of Science and many nationally and internationally recognized entomologists have been members.

In the first proceedings published in 1891, we find a summary of papers presented to the Academy from 1885-1891. Of these, 34 referred to insects or related arthropods, presented by 11 men, as follows: P. S. Baker, one; W. S. Blatchley, six; C. H. Bollman, one on entomology and two on myriopods; R. F. Hight, one; G. C. Hubbard, two; O. P. Jenkins, one on arachnids and one on invertebrates; J. S. Kingsley, four on myriopods; Jerome McNeill, three on insects and one on myriopods; W. P. Shannon, one; F. M. Webster, nine; and A. J. Woolman, one.

Four entomologists have been presidents of the State Academy, as follows: W. S. Blatchley, 1903; E. B. Williamson, 1918 and 1919; J. J. Davis, 1931; and F. N. Wallace, 1940.

From the beginning until 1926 curators were named for Entomology, as well as other groups, such as Ornithology, Herpetology, and Mammalogy. So far as I know the Academy has never maintained or been responsible for collections or a museum and I do not know the functions of these curators or what they cared for. At any rate, F. M. Webster was listed as curator of Entomology from 1891 to 1895 and W. S. Blatchley from 1895 to 1926.

Previous to 1946, entomology was a part of the zoology section, but since an increasing number of the zoologists and papers in the section were entomologists' and entomological papers, the Academy provided a special section for entomology, beginning with 1946. The chairmen of the Entomology Section were as follows: G. E. Lehker, 1946; Arlo M. Vance, 1947; W. P. Allyn, 1948; Edw. Kintner, 1949; G. E. Gould, 1950; J. A. Clark, 1951; F. N. Young, 1952; M. Curtis Wilson, 1953; Paul T. Ulman, 1954; Donald Hamilton, 1955; Donald L. Schuder, 1956; H. O. Deay, 1957; John J. Favinger, 1958; and J. J. Davis, 1959.

It should be noted that for a number of years, entomologists met in special session on Saturday, the day following the main session of the Academy, to discuss their mutual problems of insect taxonomy and economy. These were discontinued in 1946 with the establishment of a section on entomology.

As stated, from the beginning of Indiana history to the present time insects and entomologists have played a significant role. In reports of travel, such as those published by the Indiana Historical Commission, we learn that early in the 19th century, travelers reported insects, such as army worm, as destroying crops; horseflies a serious annoyance to cattle; and many kinds, especially the mosquito, annoying to human beings. Ague, now known as malaria, and carried by the mosquito, was a common ailment, especially to newcomers.

There were many, 100 to 200 years back, who were ardent insect collectors and one of the first was Thomas Say of New Harmony, generally

referred to as the Father of American Entomology. Many amateur insect collectors made extensive insect collections, but unfortunately, for the most part, these have been lost or destroyed by museum pests. Purdue is the possessor of one such collection made by Constantine Troxler of Louisville, Ky. who collected Lepidoptera in northern Kentucky and southern Indiana from 1875-1900.

Then came the era of the modern amateur entomologist, including such persons as E. B. Williamson, whose collection is at the University of Michigan, W. S. Blatchley, whose collection is at Purdue University, J. Speed Rogers, whose collection is at the University of Michigan and A. C. Kinsey, whose collection is at Indiana University.

With the establishment of the land grant colleges and state agricultural experiment stations, the field of professional entomology was established, and with opportunities in entomology as a vocation increasing, courses were offered in the majority of state land grant colleges for training in the field. The field for trained entomologists was still further enlarged with the demand for insect control services some 25 years ago and the recognition of the need for consultant and service pest control operators.

Even so we owe much to the pioneers mostly those who we call amateurs, who studied insects as an avocation and depended on various vocations for their livelihood. They did much to promote the now large and important field of entomology.

From these facts, it will be seen that entomology and entomologists have played a major part in the activities and growth of the Indiana Academy of Science.

Our observations over the years, since I joined the Academy nearly forty years ago, lead us to reflect on the purposes and objectives of the Academy. Perhaps, first of all we should recognize the fact that it brings together the scientific workers of the State in annual and semi-annual meetings to stimulate better acquaintance, maintain and establish friendships, provide incentives, and develop discussions of various interests and problems of mutual concern.

The Academy should act as a clearing house for scientific information by bringing together the scientific men and women of the State in order to exchange ideas and provide the stimulus of association.

Perhaps the main purpose is to stimulate interest in the scientific problems of the area, together with a stimulation for investigation and research in science in general.

As we study the hundreds of papers presented before the Academy, one fact predominates and that is that the early scientists were general scientists and were interested in many subjects. In more recent years, scientists have become more specialized and less generalized in their interests. In an Academy of Science perhaps we should think more in terms of general science, rather than confine our thinking and study to smaller groups of the sciences.