

BIOGRAPHY AND NECROLOGY: DR. DARYL R. KARNS

Darrin L. Rubino: Biology Department, Hanover College, Hanover, Indiana 47243 USA.,
tele: 812-866-7247, fax: 812-866-6752, email: rubino@hanover.edu

Dr. Daryl R. Karns, Professor of Biology at Hanover College, died 7 June 2011. Daryl was born in East Chicago, Indiana on 23 July 1949 to Ralph R. and Lillian M. Heinz Karns (both deceased). Daryl earned his B.S. in Zoology from the University of Wisconsin (Madison) in 1972, his M.A. in Systematics and Ecology in 1974 from the University of Kansas (Lawrence), and his Ph. D. in Ecology and Behavioral Biology from the University of Minnesota (Minneapolis) in 1984. Daryl's dissertation was titled *Toxic Bog Water in Northern Minnesota Peatlands: Ecological and Evolutionary Consequences for Breeding Amphibians*. Between earning his various degrees, Daryl was a member of the Peace Corps and spent extended time in Senegal studying the ecology and systematic of lizards (joint US Peace Corps, Smithsonian Institute, and University of Dakar research program). He was also a Curatorial Assistant and Research Assistant at the Bell Museum of Natural History at the University of Minnesota.

Hanover College.—Daryl joined the Biology Department of Hanover College in 1984. He served the College as an Assistant Professor until 1990 when he was promoted to Associate Professor. He was promoted to Full Professor in 1997. In addition to introductory biology, Daryl taught a wide variety of courses in the Biology Department including Biodiversity, Herpetology, Tropical Biology, Ecology, Comparative Anatomy of Vertebrates, Evolution, Aquatic Biology, and Conservation Biology. Daryl's expertise extended beyond Biology; he spearheaded a group of faculty to develop a multidisciplinary Environmental Science Minor program. The program became so popular that a new set of innovative Environmental Science majors was added to the Hanover College curriculum. He also formed and led the Environmental Stewardship Group at Hanover College in an effort to create a greener campus. He was the Faculty Advisor of the Nature and

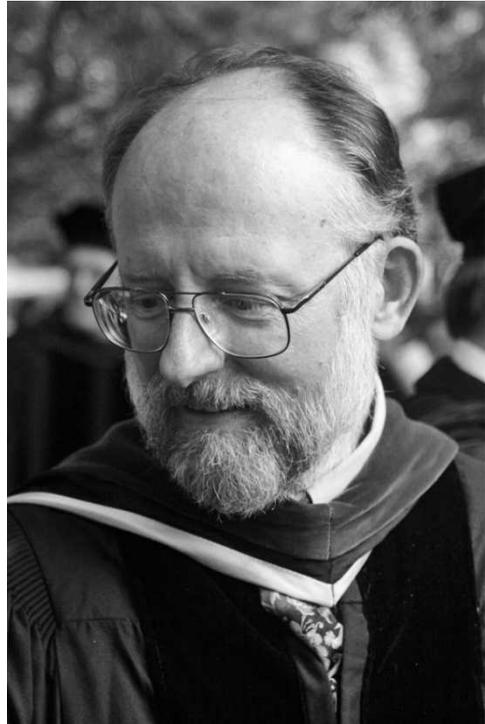


Figure 1.—Daryl R. Karns, Professor of Biology, Hanover College: 23 July 1949–7 June 2011.

Outdoor Club and Beta Beta Beta, a national biology honors society.

Daryl was the Director of Science Programs in the Rivers Institute at Hanover College since 2004. His work with the Rivers Institute led to the creation of numerous internship and funding opportunities for students, grants for faculty research, the creation and success of a High School Summer Academy focusing on Environmental Science, and a Teacher Academy for elementary teachers.

Upon his death, Daryl's dedication to Hanover College was memorialized with the naming of the trail system he and his students developed on the Hanover College campus. The Daryl R. Karns Natural History Trails

wind for 2.4 miles (3.9 km) throughout the Hanover campus.

Research.—A dedicated researcher, Daryl's scholarly activity focused on the natural history and evolutionary biology of amphibians and reptiles throughout the world. Daryl authored or coauthored 29 peer-reviewed publications. Daryl was extremely dedicated to student research; eleven of his coauthors were Hanover College students. Daryl authored a book chapter focusing on amphibians and reptiles of the Minnesota peatlands (Karns 1992). He also wrote a book entitled *Illustrated Guide to Amphibians and Reptiles in Kansas: An Identification Manual* (Karns et al. 1974). Daryl wrote numerous technical reports and popular articles which focused on such diverse topics as mangrove forests of Singapore, the reptiles of Belize, and movie stars from outer space (an analysis of Hollywood aliens). He contributed 37 conference papers and delivered 45 invited seminars and public presentations. He was awarded 41 grants, awards, and fellowships. In 2011, Daryl was the first recipient of the Hanover College Faculty Award for Excellence in Scholarly and Creative Activity.

Since 1990 Daryl was a Research Associate at the Field Museum of Natural History (Division of Amphibians and Reptiles) in Chicago. At the Field Museum, Daryl and his colleagues (especially Harold Voris) focused their research on the ecology, evolution, conservation, and biogeography of amphibians and reptiles in Southeast Asia. Colleagues at the Field Museum included Hanover College Biology Department faculty and students. Daryl's work utilized morphological and molecular methods of analysis to better understand homalopsid snake ecology and evolution. To commemorate Daryl's long career studying Southeast Asian snakes, a species in the Australasian genus *Myron* Gray will bear his name.

Daryl also performed extensive research at the Big Oaks National Wildlife Refuge in collaboration with Dr. Joe Robb and countless Hanover College students. Their research focused on such diverse topics as methods used to capture burrowing crayfish and the behavioral ecology of the crawfish frog (*Lithobates areolatus*). Daryl enjoyed participating in the Christmas bird count and butterfly survey at the Refuge. He was a member of the Big Oaks Conservation Society.

Indiana Academy of Science.—Daryl was a very active member of the Indiana Academy of Science. Daryl became a Fellow of the Academy in 1997. Since 2000, Daryl was a member of the Biodiversity and Natural Areas Committee and organized an amphibian workshop for the 2004 annual Academy meeting. He has also served as Chair of the Ecology and Zoology Sections of the Academy. Most recently, Daryl was involved in planning and coordinating BioBlitz events throughout the state. Along with his collaborators, he helped to organize the Otter Creek (2005), Hanover College (2007), Wesselman Woods (2008), Loblolly Wetland Preserve (2009), and Goose Pond Fish and Wildlife Area (2010) BioBlitz events. Please see the Bibliography for citations for the results of these BioBlitz events and other publications in the Proceedings of the Indiana Academy of Science. He was actively assisting in the Trail Creek Open Space BioBlitz at the time of his passing. As a member of the Academy he also organized the Wabash River Symposium (Karns et al. 2006).

Daryl was a prolific contributor to the Indiana Academy of Science Newsletter. Daryl was also a member of the Proceedings Editorial Review Board since 1991. When the Proceedings of the Indiana Academy of Science began publishing a series of biographical articles honoring notable living members of the Indiana Academy of Science, Daryl wrote the first installment on Dr. J. Dan Webster (Daryl was Dr. Webster's successor in the Biology Department of Hanover College; Karns 2005). Daryl's sudden and unexpected death precluded him from being honored by this series, but his distinguished academic, service, and teaching careers surely would have earned him this honorable distinction. It is the author's sincerest wish that this brief biography honors this distinguished man.

An Active Life of Service.—Daryl's rich life was marked by his tireless ambition to learn as much about the world and its diversity as he could and to share his knowledge with others. To this end, he selflessly volunteered his time and talents to numerous causes, committees, and groups at Hanover College and in Indiana and Southeast Asia. He was a charter board member of the Oak Heritage Conservancy (Hanover, IN), served as an Associate Editor for *Herpetological Review* (Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles), judged

countless high school science fairs, served on the Technical Advisory Committee on Amphibians and Reptiles for the State of Indiana (serving as Chair from 1991–1999), organized the 2010 annual Ohio River Basin Consortium for Research and Education meeting, and served as President and on the Steering Committee for the Indiana College Biology Teachers Association.

Daryl is survived by his wife Pamela A. Middleton M.D., Ph.D. of Madison, Indiana. Daryl is also survived by his Hanover Family including his close colleagues and dear friends in the Hanover College Biology Department and Natural Sciences Division. He is also survived by a long list of colleagues from eastern Asia, the Field Museum, Big Oaks National Wildlife Refuge, and a countless list of students that he mentored during their tenure at Hanover College. We are all greatly saddened by his death and will forever remember his contributions to the College, biology, and conservation.

Memorial contributions for Dr. Daryl R. Karns can be directed to the Hanover College Foundation for Student Travel, Student Research Development, or to the Natural History Trails maintenance; the Chicago Field Museum; or the Oak Heritage Conservancy.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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