

Habeck Obituary

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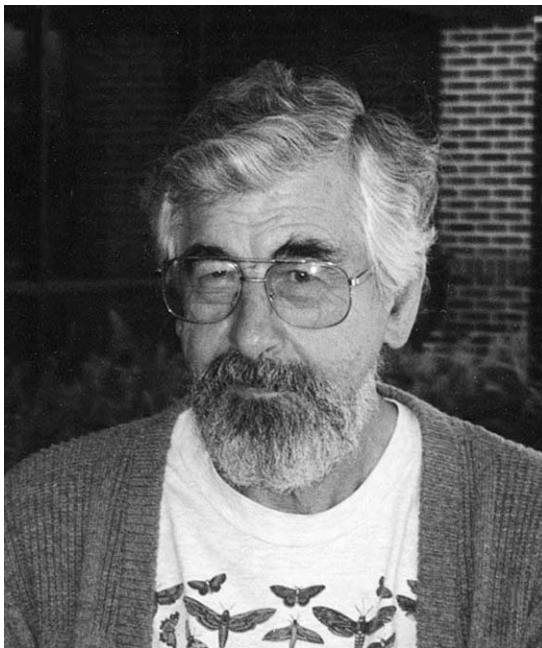
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DALE H. HABECK, 1931-2010

A dairy farm near Bonduel in northern Wisconsin was the birthplace of Dale H. Habeck, on October 21, 1931. As a youth, he was fascinated by nature, which led him to study insects at the University of Wisconsin for a B.S. degree in 1953 and a M.S. degree in 1954. Military service for an entomologist officer took him to the Medical Service Corps, with training in Texas, and later stationing in Georgia, North Carolina, and Maryland. 1959 was an especially eventful year for him because he completed a PhD degree at North Carolina State University, married Phyllis Pake, and the couple traveled to Hawaii where Dale took up his first academic appointment at the University of Hawaii.

In 1963 Dale took a faculty position at the Entomology Department of the University of Florida, which in 1965 became the Entomology and Nematology Department. He retired in December 1996 (Fig. 1) with rank of full Professor and having served in November 1986 to September 1987 as Acting Chairman.

Dale's entomological expertise centered on caterpillars of moths (especially aquatic Crambidae), and on beetles of various families. It extended from classification to behavior, and was put to applied use as he investigated pest species of these groups and sought biological control agents to use against aquatic and terrestrial weeds. His searches for potential biological control agents and attendance at scientific meetings led him to travel to more than 40 countries. His foreign trav-

els included three months in Italy in 1977 and four in Queensland, Australia in 1992 for work on aquatic weed projects, while a working trip to Brazil allowed some time in Brasilia.

While in Hawaii, Dale developed a university course on immature insects. He brought this expertise to Florida, where he refined and continued to teach this popular course, inspiring students in the field and laboratory. His supervision of students in Florida included more than 40 graduate students for whom he served as committee chairman, and more than 50 others on whose committee he served during his tenure.

He was a long-standing member of the Florida Entomological Society (President in 1985-1986), Entomological Society of America, Entomological Society of Washington, Coleopterists Society, Lepidopterists' Society, Southern Lepidopterists' Society, Center for Systematic Entomology, Florida State Horticultural Society, and Gamma Sigma Delta. He served on the Board of Directors of the American Entomological Institute in 1990-2006 and was its President in 1990-2002.

Classical Biological Control researchers at Land Grant Universities and State and Federal Departments of Agriculture in the Southern States have been linked for years in a continuing series of 5-year projects. Dale took an active part in the annual meetings (a few days each spring) of these projects. The idea for a bulletin documenting classical biological control in the Southern States first surfaced at one of these meetings in

Rougemont, North Carolina. It still took 4 years under Dale's prodding to get 36 authors based in 11 states to produce manuscripts, edit those manuscripts, and get them published in 1990 as Southern Cooperative Series Bulletin no. 355, "Classical Biological Control in the southern United States" with 177 pages.

Dale also took advantage of those annual meetings of biological control researchers to allow himself a day or two in the field after a meeting, to collect insects for the camaraderie and utility of it. A meeting in Little Rock allowed some insect-collecting in Arkansas, and a meeting in Weslaco allowed some in Texas.

On retirement in 1996, Dale was appointed Professor Emeritus and he continued to work on his insect collection during the months of each year that he spent in the Gainesville, Florida area. The other months of the year he spent in Indiana to be near his son Michael's family; it was there that he passed away on May 17, 2010 after

a fall resulting in a head injury. We condole Phyllis, Michael, Michael's wife Andrea and daughter Phoebe because their loss is even greater than ours.

Dale's insect collections are deposited in the Florida State Collection of Arthropods. His CV and bibliography are posted on Florida Entomological Society's website <http://www.flaentsoc.org>. Besides those details of his career shown in his CV, he had various other interests including bird-watching, growing ornamental cacti, rearing catfish, and collecting postcards with insect-related designs. What distinguished Dale from many other friends, advisors, mentors, colleagues, and accomplished entomologists was his friendly, easy-going and exceptionally helpful nature to everyone.

Eliana Fontes, Brasilia, Brazil

Howard Frank, Gainesville, Florida

Judy Gillmore, Micanopy, Florida

Deborah Matthews Lott, Gainesville, Florida