

In Memoriam: Alfred M. Dufty Jr., 1950–2012

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No one who knew him could forget how big the man was, not only in height but, most unforgettably, in heart. You would be hard pressed to find someone who wouldn't call Al "the nicest guy."

Al Dufty passed away suddenly on 16 April 2012 while working out at the Boise State University gym. Al was a fixture at Boise State, dedicating roughly 25 years to the university in a variety of roles, most recently as an associate dean of the graduate college. He came to Boise State in 1988 as an assistant professor in the Department of Biology, was made full professor in 1996, and acted as associate chair from 2003 to 2005. He served as the chair of the department's Graduate Student Oversight Committee and the Undergraduate Studies Committee and as Director of the Biology Graduate Programs.

Born and raised in a small town in New York, he grew up with a love of education, and, as his stature—6'6", with size 14 feet that earned him the nickname "Flipper"—would suggest, a love for basketball. The eldest son of Irene and Alfred Dufty Sr., he became the president of his senior class at Vestal High School and its valedictorian. His skill as a basketball player and his innate intelligence took him to Princeton University, from which he graduated in 1972 with a baccalaureate degree in biology. After graduating he went to France to play professional basketball when, after only a year, he gave it up for a girl back home, Bonnie Post, whom he married in 1975. She was the love

of his life, and he was devoted to her to the end, a 37-year love. Together they had two children, a daughter Cam and a son Brian. The young family weathered Al's earning both his M.Sc. and Ph.D. in biological sciences at the State University of New York–Binghamton. They moved on with him to Rockefeller University, where he was a postdoctoral fellow, and then on to Boise, Idaho, where the family resided since.

Al was a well-respected researcher specializing in behavioral endocrinology and raptor ecology. His dissertation focused on the social organization of the Brown-headed Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*), with which he continued to work for much of his career. In the mid-1990s he began to pursue his interest in raptors. He worked with a variety of owls, including the Western Screech (*Megascops kennicottii*), Northern Saw-whet (*Aegolius acadicus*), and Flammulated (*Otus flammeolus*), as well as the Northern Goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*), but Al seemed to have found his long-term interest in the American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*). His research resulted in more than 60 publications, including nine in the *Condor*, and numerous contributions to books and journals such as the *Auk*, *Journal of Raptor Research*, *Journal of Comparative Physiology B*, *Hormones and Behavior*, *Animal Behaviour*, *Trends in Ecology and Evolution*, *Journal of Field Ornithology*, *Nature*, and *Physiological Zoology*.

Al's service record was as exemplary as his research record. He was on the editorial boards of both the *Auk* (since 2004) and the *Condor* (since 2008), he served on the Cooper Ornithological Society's Publications and Bylaws Committees as well as chairing that society's Student Awards Committee, and he played a key role in organization of the highly successful North American Ornithological Conference in Veracruz in 2006. Last, Al was president of the Boise State chapter of Sigma Xi, the scientific research society to which one must be elected to membership, from 1992 to 1994 and again from 2002 to 2004. This impressive combination of research and service to ornithology culminated in Al being named a fellow of the American Ornithologists' Union in 2005.

Our loss of Al at the young age of 62 left us both shocked and saddened. He left a great hole that will be impossible to fill, in no small part because it seems to be increasingly difficult, in this modern age of impact factors, *h*-indices, and the hyper-competitiveness in which they result, to find someone who combined so perfectly an immense knowledge of his discipline and a friendliness and humility to share that knowledge unselfishly.