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## John D. Rickett: In Memoriam

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## John D. Rickett, 1944 - 2002

John Delbert Rickett, a full professor of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, Biology Department, passed away on 6 April, 2002, the last day of the annual Arkansas Academy of Science meeting where he was to have presided as President. The loss of Dr. Rickett has saddened our department, students, and alumni and the membership of the Academy.

John was born on 12 December 1944 near Ludlow, Missouri. He attended Harding College, Searcy, Arkansas (B.A. Biology, 1966), Southern Illinois University Carbondale, Illinois (M.S. Zoology, 1969), and University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas (Ph. D. Systematics & Ecology, 1973). In 1973 John took a position at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock as an aquatic biologist, where he remained for his academic career to be tenured and promoted from assistant to associate rank in 1977 and to full professor status in 1993. He was a talented professor with strong accomplishments in teaching, research, and service. It is fitting to review some of the accomplishments of this remarkable colleague to point out how replacing him will be difficult and why he will never leave our memories.

Good teaching was everything to Professor Rickett. He taught lectures and laboratories in biology, zoology, ecology, limnology, fisheries, and ichthyology. He taught special summer field courses in Tropical Marine Biology at St. Ann's Bay, Jamaica, and a Barrier Island ecology and geology course as an adjunct associate professor of Lamar University, Beaumont, Texas. He taught numerous short courses for gifted high school students at the UALR Summer Science Institute and

short courses for teachers on the environment and energy for the UALR College of Education. John never stopped learning, having taken 13 short courses to add new skills and techniques to his very full toolbox. In order to better document his many trips and short courses around the country, and to add material for seminars and his UALR courses, John took several photography courses at UALR and became a professional grade outdoor photographer. This was typical of John ñ he never did anything that he did not do it well.

Research was also important to Professor Rickett. While at UALR, Dr. Rickett received \$258,000 in grants and contract monies. He wrote or co-wrote 16 contract reports, published 22 refereed publications, 21 technical reports, and an additional eight reviews. He authored or co-authored numerous oral presentations at meetings of the Arkansas Academy of Science, Southwestern Association of Naturalists, Arkansas Chapter of American Fisheries Society and American Society of Limnology and Oceanography. Ten of his independent study students presented papers at the Arkansas Academy meetings.

Service was equally important to John. He was a member of the Technical Advisory Board, Arkansas Water Resources Research Center, University of Arkansas from 1989 to present; New Perspectives Committee (renamed Ecosystem Management Advisory Committee) U. S. Forest Service, Ouachita National Forest from 1990 to 1997; Governing Board of Ouachita Mountains Biological Station, established in 1999; and Executive Board of Mississippi basin Interstate Cooperative Research Association (MICRA) from 1998 to present. At UALR, John recently was the Vice President of the Assembly of the College of Science and Mathematics, the Chair of the Humane Animal Care Committee, and the Biology Department Graduate Student Coordinator since its inception.

Complimenting his hectic professional schedule, John was an accomplished musician (serenading students for hours around a field trip campfire), master furniture craftsman, house builder, Sunday school teacher, and philosopher. John loved and spent many hiking and camping trips with his five sons - Paul, Mark, Daniel, James, and Steven. He also adored his wife Shannon and looked forward to spending many years with her.

Most importantly, Professor Rickett was a life member of the Arkansas Academy of Science, the editor of the Academy Newsletter from 1982 - 1988, Academy Secretary from 1989 to 1999, Vice President from 1999-2000, and President at the time of his death. His unbroken string of 20 years of leadership and hard work was surely the glue that helped keep the Academy focused as a state-wide scientific society during these past years. He served as judge of student presentations, chaired numerous sessions, and participated in the business and committee meetings that made things run seamlessly for the rest of us. Dr. Rickett will be missed but will never be replaced.



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