



ENTOMOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF NEW ZEALAND INC

Nomination of Dr. George W. Gibbs as a Fellow of the Entomological Society of New Zealand.

George W. Gibbs took a very early interest in entomology under the guidance of his grandfather, G.V. Hudson, who is one of the entomologists we have celebrated at this conference and whom was spoken about by George today. George went on many insect collecting trips as a boy and marvelled at his grandfather's collections. These early experiences started George on a long and productive career in entomology.

George has had a long relationship with Victoria University of Wellington, graduating with a BSc in 1959, and an MSc in 1961. He then spent three and a half years doing a PhD at Sydney University before returning to Victoria University of Wellington to a lecturing position in 1965. Since this time George has remained at this university. He retired in 2000, but has continued teaching his Flora & Fauna course, which has long maintained a reputation as one of the best courses in the School of Biological Sciences. Not only is it popular with those who take it, but also with the teaching assistants, and every year graduate students fight to determine who will be demonstrating the course.

George has pursued a career researching butterflies, tiny little moths, weta, and in particular the origin and evolutionary background of our flora and fauna. He is the author of four books on these topics. His first book, "New Zealand butterflies", published in 1980, remains the foremost reference on butterflies in New Zealand, even today 30 years after its publication. His most recent book is the Montana Award winning publication "Ghosts of Gondwana: The History of Life in New Zealand". This book has received wide acclaim as essential reading for anyone interested in the natural history of New Zealand. Before, in between and after these books, George has published widely in journals, including the prestigious journal *Science*, on topics such as the insect-pollinator interactions. He continues to be an active researcher, especially in moth phylogenetic studies, combining molecular and morphological techniques. His dedication to research is exemplified in the collection of a massive multiyear mark-recapture dataset on weta on Somes Island, which has and is providing unique insights into the mating and movement behaviour of weta populations on Somes Island. George keeps on producing: his next book on Monarch butterflies, co-authored with Lisa Berndt and Steve Pawson will be published in time for this conference next year.

George has taken an active role in the Entomological Society of New Zealand. He was president of this society from 1976- 1978. He has been on the organizing committee of several conferences, and there is no doubt that he will be coerced into organizing more conferences, and will maintain a substantial role in the society, in the future.

Somewhere in between all that, George has managed to fit in a marriage and three children. Blair is very much involved with Spy Valley Wines and generously provided the wine for this conference. George's daughter Nicci works with the Seafood Industry Council, and Shona currently has the most important job of all in raising his grandchildren. We are sure George is hoping that there will be an entomologist in amongst that cohort. George, if your grandfather was alive today, he would be very old, but he would also be very proud of the quantity and quality of the contribution that you have made to entomology in New Zealand. It is our pleasure to nominate George W. Gibbs as a Fellow of the Entomological Society of New Zealand.

Sincerely,

Phil Lester

Jacqueline Beggs

Steve Pawson

12 April 2010

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