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H. G. BAKER



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**T**RROPICAL BIOLOGY has lost a great practitioner, teacher, and mentor. On 2 July 2001 Herbert George Baker died after a twenty-five-year battle with Parkinson's disease. Born in Brighton, England, on 23 February 1920, Herbert received his B.Sc. (1941) and Ph.D. (1945) from the University of London, studying breeding systems of British plants. After serving as lecturer at the University of Leeds (1945–54) and senior lecturer at University College, Ghana (1954–57), Herbert joined the faculty of the University of California. A professor of botany, he received the University Citation upon his retirement in 1990; he remained as emeritus for many more years.

Elected an honorary fellow of the Association for Tropical Biology (1982), Herbert also served as president of the Botanical Society of America (1979), the Society for the Study of Evolution (1969), and the California Botanical Society (1964). He was a founding member of both the Organization for Tropical Studies and the Association for Tropical Biology. His studies of bat pollination in Africa were seminal in the field of pollination ecology, and over the years he collaborated with many famous tropical ecologists studying pollination and plant breeding systems. In 1968 he taught one of the first specialized Organization for Tropical Studies (OTS) courses (with Bill Hatheway, Ed Klekowski, and Gary Stiles), "Reproductive Biology in Tropical Plant Ecology," which trained many important practitioners of plant ecology and systematics. His long collaboration with Gordon Frankie (1968–85), Paul Opler (1970–74), and Bill Haber (1976–82) provided much of the foundation upon which our understanding of plant/pollinator interactions in the New World tropics is built.

Herbert was interested in so many different topics, and published in so many different research areas, that every one of his forty-nine Ph.D. students or his many associates would probably cite different contributions as his most important (e.g., Cox 1996). Work by the Bakers in pollination biology and nectar rewards of plants was the magnet that drew some of us to graduate work at Berkeley. How fascinating that nectar was more than just sugar and water (Baker and Baker 1973a, b)! And what was the significance of the various constituents (Baker and Baker 1976a, b, 1986; Baker 1977)? Does nectar composition correspond to the type of pollinator (Baker and Baker 1975, 1982, 1983), and is extrafloral nectar different from floral nectar (Baker, Opler, and Baker 1978)? Their work answered these questions and generated many, many more.

Herbert married his Welsh sweetheart, Irene ("Cariad" he called her, born 22 February, coincidentally), and took his bride to Leeds and his family to Ghana. Their daughter, Ruth, and grandson, Michael (raised in Berkeley), were enormous sources of pride to the Bakers. Irene's death preceded Herbert's by more than ten years. Tracing Irene's col-

laborative role in Herbert's research by reviewing Herbert's nearly two hundred publications shows her transition from being mentioned in the acknowledgments to being a research collaborator. Irene was first Herbert's coauthor in 1971; by the mid-1970s she was a frequent coauthor in many studies of nectar, pollen, and floral rewards. By the time my cohorts and I knew them in the mid-seventies (I was his student from 1976 to 1982), they were together constantly, and Irene was very involved with the graduate students' projects as well as their joint research. They organized a weekly informal seminar, the "Friends of Ecology and Evolution," in which people from many departments gathered for presentations and lively discussions. These later evolved into monthly gatherings at their house for relaxed scientific discussion fueled by excellent food and drink (including homemade trifle and Welsh cakes). The Bakers hosted many Thanksgiving dinners for students and others far from home.

At the 1987 Botanical Society of America meetings in Columbus, Ohio, a symposium was held to honor Herbert's retirement from Berkeley. In this colloquium, G. Ledyard Stebbins and many of Herbert Baker's graduate students (first and second generation; that is, his students and their students) presented work, much of which was published as a book (Bock and Linhart 1989). As a graduate adviser Herbert Baker was kind, positive, and encouraging, and instilled in students the ability to find the value of all scientific contributions, while inspiring us to work very hard and to do the most thorough job possible on every task undertaken. He was a prized editor and reviewer because he took a constructive slant on everything he judged. Letters I received from him over the years reveal obligations undertaken far greater than any mortal could hope to complete. It is no wonder he was never able to finish his book on plant reproductive biology. He had a truly international perspective, and welcomed to the lab visitors from many nations and disciplines. He had a dry sense of humor (Baker 1978, 1979), a passion for puns, an enthusiasm for track and field and soccer, and a soft spot for chocolate (Cadbury Fruit and Nut). He was a dedicated and thorough teacher, offering incredible undergraduate courses such as *Plants and Man* (replete with an amazing collection of ethnobotanical items) and *Plant Ecology* (with field trips to breathtakingly beautiful locales). Herbert had an amazing ability to incorporate an abundance of findings and ideas into his courses. Each time his inspiring graduate course, *Evolutionary Ecology*, was offered, one quarter to one third of the material was new; and Herbert commonly called upon students to talk about their interesting research projects when the topic warranted an impromptu presentation. That course is where many of today's professors of entomology, botany, forestry, and zoology got their start in research.

Herbert and Irene last visited Costa Rica during our cloud forest phenology and pollination research in 1979, measuring nectar, collecting nectar and pollen, and even joining Cecile Lumer in her midnight watch for mouse pollinators to *Blakea chlorantha* on the Monteverde continental divide. A memorial for the Bakers was recently held at the University of California Botanical Garden, where a bench was dedicated in honor of Herbert and Irene Baker. I hope that all tropical biologists will visit this wonderful garden during their travels to California, and spend a moment reflecting on the dynamic duo of floral rewards, “Old Herbaceous” and “Cariad.”

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