



IN MEMORIAM

Norma J. Lang
Professor of Plant Biology, Emerita
UC Davis
1931 – 2015

Professor Emerita Norma J. Lang died of heart failure on 6 March 2015, at Sutter Memorial Hospital in Sacramento, California. Her niece and nephew were with her.

Norma was born in Memphis, Tennessee to Dave and Mary Lang and after several family moves she graduated from high school in Toledo, Ohio. In 1948 she entered Bowling Green University. She completed her B.S. and M.A. degrees at Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio, in 1952 and 1958, respectively. She studied with Dr. Richard C. Starr at Indiana University, Bloomington and received her Ph.D. in botany in 1962. Her research focused on the study of blue- green algae (or, cyanobacteria) using a then- new technology in biology, transmission electron microscopy.

Her post- doctoral work was at the University of Texas, Austin with Dr. Harold C. Bold, as a National Institutes of Health Postdoctoral Fellow. She accepted a position as Assistant Professor of Botany at the University of California at Davis in 1963 and was promoted through the faculty ranks. Her early research was funded by the National Science Foundation. In 1968, Dr. Lang was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship for sabbatical studies at the University of London. Upon her return to campus in 1969, she resumed her research on blue green- algae and her teaching in phycology and general botany.

In 1969, Norma was awarded the Darbaker Prize by the Botanical Society of America for the best paper on microscopic algae published worldwide in the two previous years. In 1977, she described a new cyanobacterium species which she named *Starria zimbabweensis* Lang, in recognition of its origin from Zimbabwe and to honor her mentor, Dr. Richard C. Starr. She served as the President of the Phycological Society of America in 1975 following many active years with the organization.

During her lifetime she adored dogs and trained and showed several breeds in dog obedience competitions, winning several awards. Her last canine companion was her beloved, Chris, a Papillon.

Norma retired from UCD in 1991 but remained active in the community. She had numerous students through the adult literacy program of the Woodland Public Library for which she was recognized for her volunteer service by the California State Assembly in 2011.

Norma is survived by nieces Lana Lang Payne and Laura Lang Ellis and nephew William A. Lang, and their children and grandchildren, who along with her many lifetime friends in Davis and the surrounding area, remember her unique perspectives on life and living.

Provided by Dr. Judy Jernstedt, Department of Plant Sciences, UC Davis and
Dr. Russell L. Chapman, Department of Oceanography and Coastal Sciences, Louisiana State
University