



IN MEMORIAM

W. Harry Lange
Professor of Entomology, Emeritus
Davis
1912 – 2004

William Harry Lange, Jr. was a third generation Californian who first learned about insects from his father, an amateur butterfly collector. Harry had a deep curiosity about insects. He spent most of his life in their study. Few entomologists understand the biology of insects as thoroughly as he did. His career spanned seven decades and ranged from the species level taxonomy of aquatic pyralid moths of the world, to the pests of California agricultural commodities, to the integrated management of pests from Zambia.

Harry was born in San Francisco in 1912, and was raised in Oakland. He became an Eagle Scout before graduating from Oakland Technical High School. He attended UC Berkeley, receiving his BS in 1933 and MS in 1934. In 1940 associates at the Berkeley Experiment Station were told that they had one year to complete their PhD degrees or get fired because of the war. Harry was awarded his PhD in 1941 on the eve of Pearl Harbor.

In the mid- to- late 1930s Harry worked for the California Agricultural Experiment Station at Half Moon Bay, Salinas, and Berkeley/ Davis. During the war he was stationed at Salinas where he worked on vegetable crop pests and on a U. S. Department of Agriculture project to produce natural rubber from guayule (*Parthenium argentatum*).

Harry became a lecturer and Assistant Entomologist in Davis in 1943, Associate Professor and Associate Entomologist in the Experiment Station in 1952, and Professor and Experiment Station Entomologist in 1957. Although Harry retired in 1983, he continued his research and consulting, working for UC Davis Environmental Health and Safety, the Nurseryman's Exchange, and Bay City Flower Company in Half Moon Bay.

Harry's research activities extended overseas. In the late 1940s he worked as Field Associate of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences studying the biological control of several species rhinoceros beetle pests of coconut on Saipan and the control of land snails and other pests across the Mariana Islands. He was a Visiting Professor of Agriculture at the University of Zambia from 1974 to 1975. During this year he collected more than one million insects, depositing them in the UC Davis Entomology Department Museum, (since renamed the R. M. Bohart Entomology Museum).

He was an expert in the biology and control of insect pests of more than 20 of California's agricultural commodities. Harry published more than 170 research articles on a wide variety of subjects. These included works on the systematics of pyralid and pterophorid moths and aphids, the integrated pest management of terrestrial snails and slugs, and many fruit, vegetable, horticultural, and field crops. He was exceedingly proud of his work with UC Davis geneticists V. M. Williamson and I. Kaloshian, showing that "an aphid- resistance locus was tightly linked to the nematode- resistance gene, Mi, in tomato" published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences in 1995.

Harry served as President of the Pacific Branch of the Entomological Society of America, the Northern California Entomological Club, and the Pacific Coast Entomological Society.

Harry received a number of awards for his tireless efforts for growers by developing solutions for pest problems. He received the C. W. Woodworth Award of the Pacific Branch of the Entomological Society of America, an honorary membership in the Entomological Society of America, the Silver Sugar Beet Award, and the Artichoke Growers 40- year Award. In 1996 he received the Award of Distinction from the UC Davis College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. He was most proud of the butterfly named after him by J. A. Comstock in 1938: Lange's Metalmark (*Apodemia mormo langei* [Riodinidae: Riodininae]), a critically endangered species from the Antioch Dunes.

He taught agricultural and economic entomology courses as well as courses in immature insects and integrated pest management. To this day former students have legendary tales to tell about their experiences. His immature insects course was one of the few given in the U.S. The most memorable of field trips in that course was the visit to the local poultry farm to dig through mounds of chicken manure to find beetle grubs and fly maggots. Harry also taught many continuing education courses on pest management. He received the University Extension Excellence in Teaching Award.

As a trumpet player Harry was active in the musical activities of the communities where he lived. In the San Francisco Bay area he was an occasional player for the Berkeley and Oakland Symphony Orchestras. In Davis he played in the Davis Municipal Band, UC Marching Band, and many others.

Harry was survived by his wife, Ellen, and three daughters Marilyn Larson, Diana Sawall and Becky Adams from his first marriage to Pauline Schulthess.

A soft- spoken, self- effacing man, Harry referred to himself as a “bugologist.” He was a tireless worker, shepherding hundreds of students through his classes and giving them valuable, practical field experiences. His many foreign graduate students extended this experience and his knowledge worldwide. Even though he was offered a position at the Smithsonian Institution early in his career to study moth systematics he elected to remain at the University of California. He died July 15, 2004, in Davis at the age of 92.

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