

Robert F. Denno 1945-2008

On Saturday 22 March 2008, Dr. Robert F. Denno, Professor Extraordinaire of Entomology, died of a heart attack on Sapelo Island, Georgia, where he was conducting field work.

Dr. Denno was born in Queens, New York, and grew up in Santa Barbara, California. He attended the University of California at Davis, receiving a B.S. in 1967 (Phi Beta Kappa) and a Ph.D. in 1973, both in entomology. Dr. Denno was a postdoc and then an assistant professor at Rutgers University before joining the Entomology Department at the



University of Maryland in 1976. He was promoted to Associate Professor in 1979 and Professor in 1985.

Dr. Denno was one of the world's leading insect ecologists, noted especially for his intensive studies—spanning three decades—of the arthropod community associated with saltmarsh cordgrass. He published over 130 research papers in scientific books and journals, edited two books, and was co-authoring a

textbook on insect ecology at the time of his death. His work had been continuously supported by the National Science Foundation for the past 25 years.

Dr. Denno served on numerous grant review and other panels, and was in constant demand as a speaker, at conferences and leading research institutions in the U.S. and abroad. At Maryland, he twice won Research Excellence awards at the College level (1990, 2000), and in 2000 was named a campus Distinguished Scholar-Teacher. He taught a variety of undergraduate and graduate courses, on campus and in the field; his long-standing graduate class on insect ecology was greatly admired.

Research mentorship was Dr. Denno's foremost personal priority. The 20 students completing graduate degrees in his lab (6 M.S., 14 Ph.D.), like his 8 former postdocs, are all employed in entomology. Among them are 18 faculty members at universities; four have served as department chairs and three as deans.

Dr. Denno is survived by his wife of 42 years, Barbara, their sons Erik and Alex, and their grandchildren Noa and Ella. The Department of Entomology is currently planning a

tribute and celebration of Bob's life, to be held Friday 9 May 2008. Details will be posted as they become available.

The family asks that any memorial gifts in Dr. Denno's honor go to support graduate student education in the Department of Entomology. Checks should be made payable to The University of Maryland Foundation and sent to the Department of Entomology, indicating that they are in memory of Robert Denno.