

## John Goldie Award - 2010

The Field Botanists of Ontario are pleased to announce the recipient of the 2010 John Goldie Award is Dr. Paul Maycock of the Department of Botany, University of Toronto Mississauga (AKA Erindale College).

Paul Frederick Maycock was a student of Professor John Curtis at the University of Wisconsin where he received his Ph.D. degree in 1957. Curtis had written the definitive text on the flora of Wisconsin [1].

Paul's own thesis was on the phytosociology of Great Lakes forests [2]. Along the way, he published his first paper on plant communities in Ontario [3]. That was followed by a series of similarly oriented papers on his own and with various students and collaborators that dealt with the same general topic of plant community structure and distribution in Ontario [4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9].



Paul first accepted a position at McGill University but later moved to University of Toronto Mississauga where he remains as Professor Emeritus in Plant Ecology

Paul not only worked in Ontario forests but in the forests of Quebec and in mesic, old growth, deciduous forests in different regions of the world including China, Japan, Central Eastern United States, Michigan, Ontario, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Poland, Ukraine, England and Chile [10].

Although the tall grass prairie at Windsor had been known since the early visits of David Douglas in 1823 and John Macoun in 1892, it fortuitously had managed to escape several attempts to develop the area for major industry and other urban developments. The City of Windsor acquired the Ojibway Park in 1957. Across the road, the salt company that owned the land had plans afoot to plant trees in the area as they considered that the prairie savannah was just a big field. They thought that the open space was not adequately populated by trees. By another stroke of good fortune, Paul Maycock was in the area at that time in October 1969 and had visited the prairie next to Ojibway Park. He recognized the ecological importance of the prairie and considered it to be 'phenomenal.' He wrote that "The tract appears largely untouched which seems nothing short of a miracle". Paul approached the city's Parks and Recreation Department, the salt company and the Ministry of Natural Resources with his findings, urging that the prairie be protected. This was the start of the collection of properties making up the Ojibway Prairie Complex now owned by the Province or the City of Windsor that botanists now recognize as a jewel among ecologically important sites in the province. But if Paul had not been there at that time, the fate of most of this complex might have lost forever.

Paul's knowledge and expertise has also been relied upon in the protection of other sites. These include the Creditview Bog (only remaining bog in Mississauga) and the

Carolinian Cawthra Woods, both within the City of Mississauga. In each case, a protracted effort was required to preserve these two areas from development. Although the protection was costly in terms of time, effort and financial capital, the City of Mississauga would be all the poorer had the sites not been saved. Paul's support in the preservation effort was a key part of the process.

The recognition of the work by Paul Maycock by the Field Botanists of Ontario is not the first such acknowledgement of his botanical contributions. In 1999, he was given a Gold Leaf Award by the Canadian Council on Ecological Areas in recognition of his long-standing contributions and personal dedication to enhancing Ontario's network of conservation areas and protected ecosystems.

### Selected References

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