

OBITUARY

In memoriam: Hermann Remmert (1931–1994)

Hermann Remmert, Professor at the University of Marburg, died on 23 June 1994 at the age of 63. He is survived by his wife Lisa and son Sönke. The sudden death of Hermann Remmert, which was unexpected despite a period of illness, has left his active and flourishing ecology group at the University of Marburg without a leader. The German ecological community has lost a prominent member, and *Oecologia* no longer has at its disposal its founder and constant promoter, to whom we owe this thriving journal.

Hermann Remmert was born in Hannover. He obtained his doctorate from the University of Kiel in 1953, writing his thesis on the dipterous fauna of the North Sea and the Baltic. He then moved to the Max Planck Institute for Marine Biology in Wilhelmshaven, having received a postdoctoral scholarship from the German Science Foundation. In 1961 Hermann Remmert joined the Faculty of Biology at the University of Kiel, and in the following year qualified as a university lecturer (*Habilitation*) in Kiel with a thesis on the biological rhythms of insects. In 1968 Hermann Remmert became full Professor of Physiology at the University of Erlangen. In 1976 he was called to the Chair of Ecology at the University of Marburg.

Hermann Remmert was an enthusiastic ecologist with an astonishingly broad range of interests. Initially an ornithologist, as a young man he was greatly interested in the diversity of nature. His many excursions and observations in the field furnished him with an extensive biological knowledge of flora and fauna. He was always full of ideas. His early experiences formed the basis for his sound analysis of ecological phenomena.

He was a pre-eminent, pioneering researcher into the physiological ecology of marine littoral animals, of arctic ecology, and into general ecological concepts. Hermann Remmert was one of the most renowned German ecologists, and was well known to the scientific community for his books *Ökologie* (which first appeared in 1978 and in its 5th edition in 1992, and was translated into English, Portuguese, Polish, Spanish, Chinese and French) and *Arctic Animal Ecology* (1980). Hermann Remmert was also interested in applied ecological problems. In 1988 he published his book *Nature conservation*, which aroused much discussion among conservationists.

Hermann Remmert was deeply engaged in the development of ecology as a scientific discipline in Germany. For instance, he was on an advisory board preparing the foundation of the University of Bayreuth,



where ecology is strongly represented as a discipline. He also served on numerous panels reviewing research proposals and scientific programs in ecology.

One of his greatest achievements was the founding of *Oecologia* in 1967, a successor to *Zeitschrift für Morphologie und Ökologie der Tiere*. In the beginning, Hermann Remmert had to work hard just to ensure the survival of the new journal. In the years that followed he broadened its scope to include plant ecology and plant-animal interactions. In 1990 he retired from the board for health reasons.

We have lost a friend and an ingenious adviser. We will miss our conversations with him in a typically cordial, sometimes slightly ironic atmosphere. We will miss the stimulating discussions that lead to new insights in science. And we profited from him not only scientifically. Hermann Remmert had many interests. He had worked on a book about village churches and was brilliant as regards his knowledge of the history of art and culture.

Matthias Schaefer for the Editors of *Oecologia*