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IN MEMORIAM: ANGUS D'ALBINI BELLAIRS  
1918-1990

Angus Bellairs, Emeritus Professor of Vertebrate Morphology, St. Mary's Hospital Medical School, University of London, has died at the age of 72. His scientific career, spanning five decades, was devoted to the study of reptiles. His contributions were numerous and ranged broadly over many aspects of the biology of reptiles. Primarily through studies of morphology, his research addressed biological issues as diverse as the evolutionary origins of snakes, the functions of the extra nose in lizards (Jacobson's organ), the secondary development of the eyes in snakes, the meaning of the bump on the gharial's nose, and the significance of tail autotomy and regeneration in lizards. His mastery of knowledge about reptiles from ecology and behavior, to development and evolution, made him a unique resource and one of the most distinguished herpetologists of his generation.

Angus' expert advice was sought equally by conservationists and anatomists. He had a special ability to speak for and to all students of reptiles, whether professional or amateur, adult or schoolchild. In addition to publications in standard scholarly journals, he frequently wrote articles for journals appealing to naturalists. For one of these, the *British Journal of Herpetology*, he served for several years as Editor. In addition, he was Founder and Honorary Member of the parent society, the *British Herpetological Society*. Away from the rarified air of academia, he was best known for his comprehensive and readable books about reptiles: *The Life of Reptiles, Volumes 1 and 2*, and *Reptiles*. It was to these books that school-aged children curious about reptiles turned first for information. These would-be biologists were always treated with respect and interest by Angus, who spent many hours each week at his typewriter answering their questions and nurturing their interests in biology.

For most of his career, Angus was a faculty member in the Department of Anatomy at St. Mary's Hospital Medical School.

In 1970, the University of London recognized his scientific contributions with the award of a personal Chair in Vertebrate Morphology, a position that he occupied until his retirement in 1982. His other honors included being a Fellow and a member of the Council of the Linnean Society; a Fellow of the Zoological Society of London and the Zoological Club, and a consultant and Honorary Herpetologist for the London Zoo. He was also Honorary Member of the American Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists, a Trustee of the Hunterian Museum, and an honorary foreign member of the American Society of Zoologists.

Angus was frequently torn between his desire to see his beloved reptiles in their natural environments in far flung corners of the globe, and his strong dislike of travelling. His love of reptiles usually won out, and among his numerous travels, he spent time studying giant tortoises in the Galapagos, crocodiles in the swamps of Australia and rattlesnakes in the deserts of the American Southwest.

In his retirement, Angus continued his studies of amphisbaenian skull anatomy, and completed his first novel, *The Isle of Sea Lizards*. The novel was published last year in time for the First World Congress of Herpetology, of which Angus was the Honorary President. Although the book is fiction, Angus drew on his life experience as a university professor and a zoologist, on his extensive knowledge of history and literature, on his likes and dislikes, and on the causes he cared about, to create a captivating thriller that could only have been written by him.

Angus Bellairs was different things to the different people whose lives he touched. To me he was a warm and loyal friend and a wonderful mentor. At the time of his retirement, I wrote: "I would like to take this opportunity to publicly acknowledge my former thesis advisor, Angus Bellairs, for his many and varied contributions to my growth and development as a biologist

and as a person. Angus introduced me to research on regeneration, natural history, sherry, antiques, military history, the zoo, novels, movies, academic politics, poetry, his family, friends and colleagues, and his many original views about all sorts of subjects. In these days of ultraspecialization, I am forever grateful for having had as my mentor a scholar with such broad-ranging interests and knowledge about biology as a whole." I will miss his presence in my life, even though we lived on different sides of the world. But his influence will stay with me forever.

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