

Entomology: The Intermediate Fifty Years (1906-1956)¹

After nearly 50 years of entomology teaching, research and outreach, the program was granted department status in 1906, with Professor Rufus Pettit as its first Chair. The academic instruction program consisted of Entomology I, plus six additional courses (Farm and Garden Insects, Fruit Insects, Forest Insects, Applied Entomology A, Applied Entomology B and Household Insects). Dr. George Shafer was hired as a Research Entomologist by the Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station in 1908. Upon completion of the present Agriculture Hall in 1909, The Department moved from Linton to Cook Hall (formerly known as Agricultural Hall and then as the Entomology Building). In 1910, Miss Eugenia I. MacDaniel was hired to teach insect systematics and economic entomology. She thrived in this position for the next 39 years. A three-credit course in systematic parasitology was added to the curriculum for senior veterinary students in 1911, and an apiculture course was initiated in 1914. Two Entomology Extension Specialist positions were added shortly after passage of the Smith-Lever Act of 1914. Assistant Professor Russell H. Kelty was hired as an apiculturist in 1919 and five entomology instructors were hired between 1925 and 1928. In 1921, the Department became part of the new Division of Applied Science, offering a B.S. in Entomology. Prior to this reorganization, which focused on increased specialization, all students in the agriculture curriculum were required to take at least one course in entomology. In 1928, apiculture was transferred to the Department of Horticulture in the School of Agriculture. Professor Walter F. Morofsky, Professor Ray Hutson (Chair, 1934-1961) and Assistant Professor Curtis W. Sabrosky were hired in 1927, 1930 and 1935, respectively.

From 1930-1945, the depression and World War II resulted in a significant decline in enrollment in entomology and both Professor Hutson and Professor Morofsky taught physics while Assistant Professor Curtis taught chemistry. During this period, however, courses in Shade Tree Insects and Aquatic Insects were added. Herman L. King and Ray L. James were hired as Associate Professors of Entomology in 1945. A course entitled Insecticides and Their Uses was initiated in 1946. It was also a time when entomology faculty began to have joint teaching and Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station responsibilities. In 1948, the Department of Entomology moved to the recently completed Natural Science Building and became part of the newly organized School of Science and Arts. Research space became available in the new plant science greenhouses and Assistant Professors, Julius R. Hoffman and Leland J. Merrill were hired in 1949. Apiculture was returned to the Department in 1951, shortly after the hiring of Assistant Professor Ethelbert C. Martin. This year, the Department was placed in the Division of Biological Science and a course in medical entomology added. Assistant Professor Roland Fisher was hired in 1953 to provide leadership for insect systematics and Gordon E. Guyer became an instructor in 1954. In a 1953 survey of 2,902 Michigan State College agricultural graduates, 1,658 had taken entomology and 84% of this group believed that this was important in acquisition of their employment. Of those that had not taken an entomology course, 59% thought that expertise in entomology would be beneficial in their positions. Michigan State College reopened the Kellogg Gull Lake Biological Station in 1954, with Dr. Walter F. Morofsky, Professor of Entomology, as its first post-war Resident-Director. The Department had 11 graduate assistants awarded 58 advanced degrees during between 1905 and 1955. This was an era of immense change, including the advent of synthetic pesticides, formation of the Michigan Pest Control Association in 1945 and promulgation of the Michigan Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act of 1949. MAC/MSU entomology graduates of this era provided major leadership for enhancement of academia, economic development and overall quality of life throughout our nation. They also provided a sound foundation for the next imperative: the challenges of international development.

¹Developed from: Houk, W. E., 1954. *A study of Some Events in the Development of Entomology and its Application in Michigan*. Ph.D. Dissertation. Department of Entomology, Michigan State College. East Lansing, MI. 307 pp. by G. W. Bird, Professor.