

RHODE ISLAND NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY DISTINGUISHED NATURALIST AWARD

The Distinguished Naturalist Award is presented at the Rhode Island Natural History Survey annual conference and recognizes individuals who have made outstanding contributions to advancing our knowledge of Rhode Island's organisms, geology, and ecosystems. In particular, we want to identify those who have excelled in one or more of the following areas:



made significant contributions in the advancement of scientific knowledge of Rhode Island's organisms, geology, and ecosystems as evidenced by published books, scientific papers, and monographs;



are recognized as outstanding teachers and educators to students and the public on the form, functions, and ecological significance of Rhode Island's biota and natural systems;



made significant contributions in enhancing public awareness of the importance of understanding the natural history of Rhode Island's ecosystems.

Previous recipients of the RINHS Distinguished Naturalist Award

Irene H. Stuckey (1995)
Richard L. Champlin (1996)
Douglas L. Kraus (1998)
Francis C. Golet (1999)
Elizabeth Dickens (2000, posthumous)
Mark D. Gould (2000, posthumous)
Prentice K. Stout (2000)
Douglas Rayner (2001)
Les Sirkin (2001, posthumous)
Grace Klein-MacPhee (2002)
Harry Hathaway (2003, posthumous)
Hugh Willoughby (2003)
David Emerson (2004, posthumous)
Harold Nelson Gibbs (2004, posthumous)
C. Robert Shoop (2004)
Roger D. Goos (2005)
Elmer A. Palmatier (2005, posthumous)
Elise Lapham (2006)
Chris Nerone (2007)
Gil George (2007, posthumous)
Rick Enser (2008)
Ken Weber (2008, posthumous)

THE RHODE ISLAND NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY
2009 DISTINGUISHED NATURALIST AWARD
IS PRESENTED TO

Lisa Lofland Gould

...learning and teaching about the natural world to better preserve and protect it



For many Rhode Islanders, Lisa Lofland Gould is a name synonymous with plant ecology, plant identification, invasive plant preparedness, and natural history field trips. Lisa is a well-known speaker on native plants, led programs or taught classes on such topics as ecosystems and invasive species ecology, and is the author, coauthor, or editor of more than two dozen books and articles, a “distinguished naturalist” indeed.

With a B.A. in biology from the University of North Carolina, Greensboro, Lisa Gould came to Rhode Island in 1969 to study for her M.S. in zoology at the University of Rhode Island, which she received in 1972. For some time after that, she did biological inventory projects as a private environmental consultant for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), URI, and other parties. She gradually developed an expertise in Rhode Island plants, as well as an interest in environmental education and she became one of Rhode Island's most widely sought speakers on native plants. She led programs or taught classes for URI (including for the Master Gardener Program and Watershed Watch), the Rhode Island Wild Plant Society (RIWPS), New England Wild Flower Society, The Nature Conservancy, the Audubon Society of Rhode Island, and others. She has served on the steering committee of the New England Invasive Plant Group (NIPGRO) and as a field volunteer for the Invasive Plant Atlas of New England (IPANE) and the New England Plant Conservation Program (NEPCoP). Gould created

and then served as the coordinator of the RI Invasive Species Council (RIISC), a joint project of Rhode Island Natural History Survey (RINHS) and the Rhode Island Agricultural Experiment Station.

In 1987, Lisa participated in the founding of the Rhode Island Wild Plant Society and she served as the president of RIWPS from 1987 to 1989. From its beginning, the Wild Plant Society reflected Lisa's interest in conserving the state's plant diversity in native habitats. In addition to an array of educational programs, the Wild Plant Society under Lisa's leadership succeeded in getting sea lavender protected from picking under the so-called "Christmas Greens" law. Lisa also oversaw the introduction of the now much anticipated Native Plant Sales, proceeds of which have underwritten elementary school programs and many other educational endeavors. The Wild Plant Society has from its inception cooperated with other local and regional conservation organizations, conducted plant inventories that aid land management decisions, and provided consulting for restoring and enhancing properties through the use of native plants.

In 1994, Lisa Gould was one of a group of amateur and professional naturalists who founded the Rhode Island Natural History Survey and she began serving as its first executive director in that year. As executive director, Lisa initiated the Biota of Rhode Island publication series, now including volumes on vertebrates, beetles, and fungi, as well as vascular flora. In addition to her work on RINHS publications, Lisa Gould has a long catalogue of her own publications, being author, co-author, or editor of more than two dozen books and articles, including *Coastal Plants from Cape Cod to Cape Canaveral* (U. of NC Press, 2000) with Irene H. Stuckey. She helped create the annual "Ecology of Rhode Island" conference, the 13th edition of which we attend today. She brought the "BioBlitz" event to Rhode Island. This annual biodiversity field day, to be held for the 10th time this June 5th and 6th in Glocester, features over 100 volunteer naturalists documenting as many species of animals and plants on a particular parcel of land as possible in 24 hours. Lisa was instrumental in making the Rhode Island Distinguished Naturalist Award the highly regarded recognition that it is, and now we are here today to award it to Lisa herself. Lisa stepped down as director of the Survey in 2004 to take the position of senior scientist. In that position she was primarily involved with advocating better research, education, coordination, and planning in Rhode Island and southern New England on the problem of invasive species. She also worked to build the Survey's state-wide database of animals and plants, called BORIS for "Biota of Rhode Island Information System."

After 33 years in Rhode Island, Lisa returned to her native North Carolina in 2006, but her work continues through the organizations she helped found, the people she taught and inspired, and an endowment created by her friends and colleagues and designated "for the support of education on the conservation of Rhode Island native plants." The endowment funds an annual event on native plants co-hosted by the Wild Plant Society, the Natural History Survey, and the University of Rhode Island.

Of course, Lisa Gould's departure for North Carolina to be closer to her family has been a loss to Rhode Island, but she has shown us by her example how to do what needs to be done and has helped provide us with several strong institutions through which to carry on her work. We are fortunate to have her with us today so we can recognize her for her contributions.

William Whitman Bailey (1843 - 1917)

...field trip leader, author, teacher, artist, and poet, he wanted everyone to appreciate the natural world with reverence and humility



There may be no historic figure more deserving of the title of “Rhode Island Distinguished Naturalist” than William Whitman Bailey. First chair of the natural history department at Brown University, field trip leader, author of books and journal articles, private school teacher, artist, and poet, Bailey inspired a generation to the study of botany at a time when this pursuit was mostly considered frivolous.

William Whitman Bailey was born on February 22, 1843, at West Point, New York, where his father, Jacob Whitman Bailey, was professor of chemistry, mineralogy, and geology. On July 28, 1852, William Bailey was with his family aboard the steamer *Henry Clay* when it burned and sank off Yonkers, New York. In the confusion, seventy people perished including William’s mother and sister. Long after the event he wrote, “After the dread event and consequent shock I never regained my original tone.”

Shortly after the death of his father, in 1857, William was sent to Providence, Rhode Island, to live with an uncle. He entered University Grammar School and in 1860 became a freshman at Brown University. Although he left college with his class, he did so without a degree. In 1862 he enlisted as a private in the Tenth Regiment Rhode Island Volunteers, a unit established for three months service to provide additional manpower for the defenses in Washington, D.C.

After leaving Brown, Bailey occasionally visited a brother, Professor Loring W. Bailey, who held the chair of Chemistry and Natural Science at the University of New Brunswick at Fredericton, and would at times assume his brother's duties teaching chemistry, physiology, and comparative anatomy. In 1866 and 1867 he was assistant chemist in the Manchester Print Works, Manchester, New Hampshire, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Boston. Up to this time he had not been interested in botany, regarding work in chemistry to be his ultimate goal, but while in Boston he became a student of Dr. Asa Gray's at Harvard. In 1867, Bailey heard of the need for a botanist on the United States Geological Exploration of the 40th parallel, led by Clarence King. With Dr. Gray's recommendation, Bailey joined the expedition, and from that time devoted himself to botany.

After the *Henry Clay* catastrophe, Bailey suffered from poor health the rest of his life, and in the spring of 1868 was forced to leave the 40th Parallel Expedition, being replaced by Dr. Sereno Watson. He later wrote, "I was with the party in Nevada about nine months when my health failed and I resigned. Still, for a tyro my work was not so bad. Watson told me that he adopted my sketch of the phytographic regions in his report."

After his return, Bailey was occupied in several occupations, including assistant librarian at the Providence Athenaeum, teacher at several private schools, and part-time assistant at the herbarium of Columbia College, New York, with Dr. John Torrey. He also continued studying and teaching in the summer school at Harvard College, but his botanical career became established in 1877 when he started a private class at Brown University. It was the first botany class taught at Brown, and Bailey wrote, "At the end of the season I was voted thirty dollars, and was tempted to go on by the title of instructor and the advanced pay of fifty dollars for the season of 1878." At first, the University's support was meager. Bailey was required to sandwich his class "in between the older studies, in such lacunae on the schedule as remained after the others had chosen their hours." He also had to meet wherever space could be found, including his own boarding house, and had to rely on the donation by "a few personal friends" of ten dissecting microscopes. As he described years later in *The Brown Magazine*, "a request for the purchase of any kind would have shaken the college cosmos." However, he was able to bring his class on field trips to Abbott's Run, Diamond Hill, Snake Den, Limerock, and other well known Rhode Island collecting spots.

Bailey supplemented his income by teaching botany at Miss Abbott's School and by offering private lessons to groups of interested individuals. In 1880, Rowland Hazard proposed to pay his transportation and a small stipend to conduct a class in Peace Dale. Bailey gladly accepted, writing in his diary: "There are five including Mr. H. in the class. They pay my way up and back besides the regular amount, and meet me at the train with a carriage. They give me a cup of tea before returning." Bailey also convened meetings at his boarding house in Providence of naturalists and scientists including James Bennett, George Hunt, and Howard Preston, providing a forum for stimulating conversations on pertinent scientific issues of the day, especially Mr. Darwin's ideas. In 1881, Bailey's supporters prevailed on Brown University to name him chair of Natural History (Professor of Botany), and curator of the herbarium, positions supported by the bequest of Col. Stephen T. Olney.

In October 1880, Bailey was commissioned by the Naturalist's Bureau, Salem, Massachusetts, to write a *Botanical Collector's Hand-book*, which became his first published work in 1881. Other books that followed included, *Botanical Note-book* (1894-1897), *New England Wild*

Flowers and Their Seasons (1895), and *Botanizing* (1899), but his most beloved volume was *Among Rhode Island Wild Flowers*, published by Preston and Rounds in 1895. Here was Bailey at his best, writing in his poetic, non-technical style about plants and the places to find them in his adopted state. This volume remains today an important historic benchmark for students of the Rhode Island flora.

Bailey also contributed articles to journals including *Rhodora*, *Bulletin of the Torrey Botanical Club*, *Appalachia*, and *Botanical Gazette*. Most important among these are two articles on Rhode Island plants. The first entitled “Flora of Block Island” is a report on the month he spent botanizing there with James F. Collins in the summer of 1892, and includes the first full accounting of the plants of Block Island during the period of heaviest human use, when “trees of any sort (were) extremely scarce.”

A second article, “The Old-time Flora of Providence” written in 1900, documents plant records collected by the City’s earliest botanists, along with his personal musings on the changes that had occurred during the intervening years. As examples, he noted that purple bladderwort had been recorded at Long Pond, noting “the locality has totally disappeared – as has the pond itself.” Also, how the Cove at the head of the Providence River (now buried underneath Waterplace Park and Providence Place Mall) was formerly, “a natural estuary of tolerably pure water, in which one could bathe, and around which grew many littoral plants,” but which by 1900 he described as “putrescent” and “defiled by ashes and garbage.”

Brown conferred upon Bailey the degree of Ph.B. in 1873 and of A.M. in 1893, but his failing health compelled him to resign from teaching in 1906. He was honored with the title of Professor Emeritus and became one of the first recipients of a pension from The Carnegie Foundation, through a fund established to support retired scientists. He continued writing, especially for *The American Botanist*, for more than a decade and his last article, a treatise on hog-peanut entitled “*Amphicarpea*”, was published after his death in 1917. Preceding the article, the editor noted how Bailey had been, “...a facile and entertaining writer on botanical subjects...”, and that his last article was, “a good example of the way a sympathetic treatment may make common things interesting.”

William Whitman Bailey was a consummate educator who always strived to make difficult concepts accessible for the layman. He wanted everyone to appreciate the natural world as he did, with reverence and humility. His daughter, Margaret Emerson Bailey, became a well known author in her own right, and in 1945 published “*Good-bye, Proud World*”, an autobiographical account of her childhood wherein she expresses an admiration for her father and his charitable style. She includes a conversation with him that may best define the life of William Whitman Bailey.

“Ever since I can remember, everybody’s felt they could come to you with questions. I can’t remember any walk we ever took when someone didn’t stop you on the street and want to know about a plant of some sort. I never knew you once to make them feel ridiculous, even when you had to say that what they asked about was just a common dandelion. No matter what it was, you treated ignorance with dignity.” A fitting description for a most distinguished naturalist.