CONTRIBUTIONS DEDICATED
TO
HOWARD E. EVANS

Howard Ensign Evans, 1919 – 2002
Howard E. Evans: Known and Little-known Aspects of His Life on the Planet

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Howard Ensign Evans was born in Hartford, Connecticut, on 23 February 1919, the son of Archie James Evans and Adella Marian Ensign. His maternal grandfather, Howard Ensign, a successful tobacco farmer, financed the purchase of a 60-acre tobacco farm for Archie Evans at the time the couple were married. Howard’s mother was his father’s second wife. She had been teaching school after having studied education at a normal (state teachers’) school, and Howard was her only child, though he had a stepbrother and three stepsisters by his father’s first marriage.

Howard’s love of nature began on the Evans family farm near East Hartford, Connecticut. In his earliest years he was strictly an applied entomologist. Here is what he wrote about that stage in his life:

I suspect that when most people dig into the recesses of their minds for their earliest childhood memories they come up with scenes of kittens, puppies, or hamsters. My earliest memories are of tobacco hornworms, and how delightfully they pop and ooze between bare toes. Picture a tobacco farm in the Connecticut Valley, with kids walking up and down the rows looking for big, green caterpillars and executing them by the most primitive of control measures” (Evans, 1985, p. 145).

As a youth, Howard helped to found the Hockanum Nature Club, a museum in a woodshed with collections of pressed leaves, wildflowers, birds’ eggs, and, of course, insects. The name of the club came from the Indian name for the region of the Evans farm in East Hartford. Howard Evans undoubtedly had something to do with choosing the name, for later he often used indigenous words as names for new species of insects discovered during his travels, for example, naming the Australian sand wasp Bembix mianga, a fly-catching species, after the aboriginal word (mianga) for “fly,” and B. uloola, a bright orange species, after the aboriginal word, uloola, for “sun” (Evans and Matthews, 1973). His “first wealth (several dollars!)” came when he sold some of the moths that came to the lights of the family fruit stand to a neighborhood hobbyist (Evans, 1968a, p. 25).
Life on the farm was ended not by tobacco hornworms, but by a series of hailstorms and a drop in the tobacco market that eventually drove Howard’s father to other crops and eventually to bankruptcy during the Depression of the 1930’s. But his rural background was a lasting influence and inspiration. Even as an undergraduate Howard wrote, in a classroom essay on “Experiences With Insects,”

I think the modern mind tends to debunk, or at least to minimize, the values and advantages of being country bred. . . . But I am sure that the appreciation of country life is merely going under a cloud, and will emerge again when the people once more take to the country rather than swarming in the cities like flies on rotten fruit . . . . Although my family moved away from the farm into the suburbs a few years ago, my absence from the country has tended to accentuate rather than suppress my affinity for the things of nature . . . . My hobbies then were not the ordinary ones, such as stamp or coin collecting, but consisted of recording the living things I saw, especially the birds, and, best of all, collecting insects. . . . I was an odd but happy figure in those days, roaming the countryside with a net in one hand and a pair of binoculars in the other. . . . I first became really interested in insects when I began to notice the attractiveness of certain moths which swarmed around the street lights . . . . The idea of making a net and of mounting what I caught in boxes of cotton covered with glass was adopted from a friend engaged in the same diversion. I soon became fanatic about the business, and, much to my parents’ disgust, spent hour after hour chasing “bugs” over field and stream.

When he finally tired of the hobby, after three years of collecting, he had over three hundred “scientifically worthless” poorly mounted and labeled specimens, some of them reared from the larval or pupal stages. Nonetheless, he states in the college essay, they were “of great value to me sentimentally” and had once provided “unforgettable pleasures.” In closing he writes “If I decide to major in entomology, it will not be so much because of my past familiarity with insects, which really did not amount to much, but because of the importance that insects as a group play in this world.” Anticipating the theme of his book Life on a Little-known Planet, written more than thirty years later, he asserts that “… man has hardly begun to explore the insect world.” He concludes that entomology should consequently prove “a broad and fascinating field or vocation,” and, he adds with characteristic candor, one “in which there is not quite as much competition as in many others.”

Howard credited his father with his “workaholic tendencies,” and was encouraged in his interest in natural history by his mother, who taught him the names of many birds, insects, stars etc.. Even so, when he went to the University of Connecticut in 1936 he started out as an English major. He switched to biology after his first course in entomology, taught by J. A. Manter, described by Howard as “a very unusual teacher” who “in his quiet way . . . introduced me to the world of professional entomology” (Evans, 1968a, p. 25). After writing an undergraduate thesis on insects reared from the downed trees and branches of the 1938 hurricane, he graduated magna cum laude in 1940.

The intention to major in English probably reflected his lifelong passion for writing. His first book was a volume of poetry titled The Song I Sing (1951), a compilation of poems previously published in the Hartford newspapers, and during spare moments while later in the army he wrote a novel which he later destroyed. Throughout his active life as a scientist he wrote popular books, not all of them related to entomology. The best known of his 16 books, Life on a Little-known Planet (1968a), was translated from English into French, German and Japanese, and was reprinted many times during the more than thirty years that it has remained in print. Unlike some popularizers of science, Evans did not lose respect in science as a result of his popular writing because his scientific output—a lifetime total of 265 scientific publications including a number of books and monographs (see
Appendix 1) was undiminished by his avocation as a writer for the general public. It was as if he led two highly productive lives in perfect harmony with each other.

Immediately after college graduation Howard worked at the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station in New Haven, then went to Cornell where he completed a Masters thesis on spider wasps (Pompilidae). Then, in December of 1941, while he and his mother listened to the NY Philharmonic on the radio, indulging a love of classical music acquired while in college, he learned of the attack on Pearl Harbor, and Howard asked his draft board to move his name to the top of the list. He spent four years in the army. Since he already had a master’s degree in entomology, he was assigned to be a medical laboratory technician in a hospital in Newfoundland, where he discovered that a mysterious ailment of servicemen was being caused by the parasite *Giardia*. Probably as a result of that discovery he was promoted to second lieutenant upon return to the U.S., and he spent the rest of the war at a base hospital in North Carolina working as a parasitologist on stool samples from servicemen returning from the Philippines. In one of his books (1985, p. 125), he said of this experience that “In a grim and odorous way, it was rather fun.” As a result of this stint in the armed services he was able to return to graduate studies at Cornell without financial problems, thanks to the GI bill. At Cornell, with J. Chester Bradley and V. S. L. Pate as co-chairmen of his doctoral committee, he finished a doctoral
thesis on the systematics of the tribe Pompilini (Hymenoptera, Pompilidae), and then
joined the faculty of Kansas State University in Manhattan, Kansas, as assistant professor
of entomology. At Kansas State he taught courses on General Entomology, Immature
Insects, and Morphology and curated the insect collection (from an unpublished “History
of the Department of Entomology, KSU,” by Herbert Knutson, deposited in the
Department; courtesy of John Reese). There he spent three productive years (1949–1952)
studying the behavior and systematics of sand wasps, along with his graduate students Carl
Yoshimoto and C. S. Lin. During this time he expanded his general interest in animal
ethology with the encouragement of a fellow faculty member, A. M. Guhl, a well known
student of peck order in chickens, and read works by Lorenz, Tinbergen, Thorpe and
others. During this period he also took a summer field trip to Mexico with the late Paul D.
Hurd, Jr. of the University of California.

Howard Evans and Mary Alice Dietrich were married in 1954, soon after Mary Alice
had finished her PhD in science education at Cornell, and not long after Howard had
returned to work there as assistant professor of entomology in 1952. They had three
children, Barbara (Galloway), Dorothy (Tuthill), and Tim. Mary Alice was the daughter of
the Cornell entomologist Henry Dietrich, who had “warned his daughters to stay away
from entomologists, who were likely to be impecunious and little appreciated by society.”
“Fortunately,” Howard wrote, “Mary Alice failed to take his advice” (1985, p. 217).
Howard declared, in his autobiographical notes, that “few persons have been lucky enough
to enter a partnership with someone so congenial and supportive.” He considered his
marriage to Mary Alice his main not-exactly-scientific achievement, and meeting her in
1953 “the most important (and fortunate) event in my life.” During the early years of their
marriage the Evans’s lived on eight acres of land on South Hill in Ithaca, New York,
adjacent to Buttermilk Falls State Park, a home that became the inspiration for Wasp Farm
(Evans, 1963), one of Howard’s most successful books and a nominee for the National
Book Award. With Mary Alice as senior author, they wrote a 363-page biography of
Harvard entomologist William Morton Wheeler (Evans and Evans, 1970), a major figure
of early 20th Century science whose story as recounted in the Evans biography gives
a fascinating view of the issues, personages and Old-world influences that marked biology
in the U.S. at the turn of the 20th century.

When I first met Howard Evans, in 1966, I was a graduate student at the University of
Michigan. By that time he had moved from Cornell to Harvard, and I had an appointment
to meet him in his office at the Harvard Museum of Comparative Zoology, the MCZ. I was
pretty green and innocent at the time, and I approached the broad front steps of the
Museum as if they were the entrance to a shrine, imagining the giants of biology who had
passed that way—Agassiz, William Morton Wheeler, Joseph Bequaert; and more recently
Philip Darlington, E.O. Wilson, George Gaylord Simpson, Ernst Mayr—and Howard
Evans himself, for me, a novice in the wasp business, the greatest hero of all. I had heard
that Evans was shy and reserved, a man of few words. What if we would end up having
nothing to say? I soon found out that Howard Evans was the kindest and least pretentious
of men, and he was not the least bit shy when it came to talking about wasps.

Later I learned that some people misinterpreted Howard’s shyness as snobbishness. One
person told me that she had ridden with Howard on the excruciatingly slow MCZ elevator
many times over the space of an entire year without Howard ever saying a single word. He
would just stare absently and look pan-faced. He wouldn’t smile, and sometimes he
seemed to have a little smirk. In this and in other ways he did not fit the image of the
urbane Harvard professor, but for many of us that was part of his charm. Those who knew
Howard well, especially those who spent time with him in the field, learned that he was a person who was not embarrassed by silence.

When I went to the MCZ as Howard’s postdoctoral associate in 1967 I discovered that he was completely human. He had three cute kids and a no-nonsense wife named Mary Alice with a sense of humor and a career of her own. Howard was at the height of his productivity. The year before, 1966, had been what he later called his “banner year.” In that single year he authored 10 publications, totaling well over 1000 pages. They included his now classic synthetic review on “The behavior patterns of solitary wasps” (Evans, 1966a), a 526 page book on *The Comparative Ethology and Evolution of the Sand Wasps* (1966b), and a 443 page monograph on the systematics of pompilid wasps (Evans, 1966c), an astounding list of achievements for one man in one year. In 1967 Howard was awarded the William J. Walker Prize of the Boston Museum of Science, for contributions to natural history.

How did he do it, you may ask, so much writing in so little time? I was there when he was writing *Life on a Little-known Planet*, and I had a chance to observe his disciplined habits. He divided his work day strictly in two: while at the Museum he did his “scientific” work, and at home he did what he called his “literary work,” meaning work on the essays and books that were outside of his Museum duties. At home, he often played recorded music while working or relaxing. He would always leave his desk at the Museum completely clear of clutter. I still think of Howard’s clean desk every time I have to remove the mountains of papers and books from our dining room table in order to entertain guests.

Fig. 2. Howard Evans in 1963.
Some think that Howard’s clean desk top was made possible by a set of messy drawers underneath. I have my own hypothesis about how Howard got so much writing done so fast with so little mess. I think he had special neurons that were connected directly from his eyes and brain to the printed page, so that anything he observed was immediately published. Whatever his secret for rapid publication, Howard never seemed pressured or nervous, even when, in 1968, he was interviewed on the popular television “Today Show” to publicize his book. He always had time for students. He never seemed too busy to write an encouraging letter to an amateur insect enthusiast, or to a kid hoping for a career in entomology. At Harvard his only graduate student was Robert Matthews, and the Matthews and Evans families spent a productive year of fieldwork in Australia in 1969. On a later sabbatical (1979) the Evans’s were accompanied in Australia by Howard’s CSU graduate student, Allen Hook.

E. O. Wilson recently told me the following story from those days at Harvard. When Howard was in his office he sat hidden from view behind a high bookcase, and the department secretary worked at a desk on the other side, near the door to the collection. If you came for department business you never knew whether Howard was present on the other side of the bookshelf, and if he ever listened to what went on there he never let on. Ed Wilson decided to put this to the test by performing an experiment. He knew that Howard and Mary Alice were working on their biography of Wheeler, and that they had spent hours interviewing Wheeler’s daughter Adaline. But there weren’t many other people still around who had known Wheeler. So, to test Howard’s discretion, Ed walked in and said to the secretary, in a squeaky imitation of a 95-year-old voice, “I am a friend of Professor Wheeler, and I’d like to see him.” That did it: Howard instantly popped into view, revealing himself to be as much an eavesdropper as anybody else.

Howard considered his move from Harvard to Colorado State University in Fort Collins, in 1973, one of the best things he ever did. Tired of the long commute between home and the Museum, disillusioned with a new administration at the MCZ, and with good places for fieldwork diminishing in Massachusetts, the Evans family decided to move. As Howard put it, they decided not to give Harvard tenure.

Howard’s unpublished autobiographical essay, “A Brief Review of Scientific Accomplishments,” written when he turned 80 (in 1999), mentions that when the Evans family moved to Colorado State he actually accepted a non-tenured position! He had already published 170 papers and 6 books. Not surprisingly, he received tenure at CSU soon after he arrived. There he served as advisor for several graduate students, including the late Byron Alexander (a CSU Masters’ student who later studied with George Eickwort at Cornell), Darryl Gwynne, Mary Hathaway, Allan Hook, Rob Longair, Kevin O’Neill and William Rubink. Three years after the move to Colorado Howard was awarded the Daniel Giraud Elliot medal (1976) by the National Academy of Sciences, given for “recently published meritorious work in zoology.” Previous winners of that award were T. Dobzhansky, G. G. Simpson, E. Mayr and W. M. Wheeler. A year later (1977) he was elected to the U.S. National Academy of Sciences. Howard says in his essay that he had “no illusions about these awards” and once in a letter he told me that he thought of dropping out of the Academy, which he called “an elitist club” that wasn’t “his cup of tea,” but that he kept his membership in the hope of helping to elect other field biologists to the Academy. He did regard election to the Academy as an important recognition. With characteristic modesty he mentions, in the unpublished “Autobiographical Notes” written for his family, that it was “an indication that I have done reasonably well as a scientist.”
I think it is fair to say that Howard Evans was one of the finest entomologists of all time. Not only was he the leading authority on a number of large groups of insects, but he published widely on insect behavior, larval morphology, and insect paleontology. By 1999 Howard Evans had described a total of 782 new species of insects, plus 31 new genera, and even a new family—the Scolebythidae, a family of wasps found in the Southern Hemisphere. Ten of the new genera are based on study of fossils. A complete list of his 265 scientific publications (Appendix 1), and popular articles and book reviews (Appendix 2), including 10 books, follows this essay.

Among Howard’s scientific papers are some on evolutionary biology and systematics that contributed to a change in how taxonomy was done. He was a pioneer in the use of behavioral data in systematics, and he proposed a number of important ideas that I would call “transition hypotheses” showing how complex behaviors such as nest building, social life, and specialized prey transport could have evolved from hypothesized ancestral states. Along with phylogenies and adaptive explanations in terms of natural selection, such hypotheses, establishing the feasibility of particular phenotypic changes, are an essential part of evolutionary explanations. One such paper, which he describes as “slapped together” and “too simplistic” was his classic article on the evolution of sociality in wasps (Evans, 1958). Although he wrote in his unpublished “Brief review of Scientific Accomplishments” that he had “never been especially proud of this paper,” it was one of the few to discuss the transitions to sociality taking the behavior of numerous taxa into account and as a result frequently has been cited. Howard was more fond of publications packed with new data on natural history, such as his 1970 monograph on “Ecological-behavioral studies of the wasps of Jackson Hole, Wyoming” (Evans, 1970). “I have always been especially proud of that paper,” he wrote.

Some of Howard’s theoretical ideas were far ahead of their time. He had data on wasps that showed how behavior, including learning, could affect evolution, and he discussed the general importance of this especially in his 1966 book on sand wasps (see also Evans, 2002). Howard’s ideas on how behavior can take the lead in evolution are now being cited more frequently than before, because finally evolutionary biologists are seeing how the condition sensitivity of organisms can supplement the genetic study of evolution. Howard saw that connection long ago, and because of it he wrote important critiques of overly gene-centered thinking, such as some analyses involving kin selection (e.g., see Evans, 1977). One paper he considered underappreciated described what he called dual sex-limited mimicry in South American Spider wasps (Pompilidae), where he showed that in several species the males mimic social wasps and females of the same species mimic tarantula hawks (Pepsis) (Evans, 1968b). Howard was naturally creative and independent minded, so he had many important insights that did not fit the preconceptions of the day. For this reason I recommend re-reading his conceptual discussions, at least once every four or five years, on the chance that you will capture an insight that you were not quite ready for before.

Howard Evans was never a powerful administrator or a bio-politician. He didn’t run a big lab bustling with technicians. He wasn’t a brilliant orator, and he didn’t hobnob with the rich and famous. Yet he was a leader among biologists, and had a deep influence on those who knew him. He exerted a special kind of leadership in entomology because he stood for certain values in science and a certain kind of decency in human affairs. His way of promoting those values, aside from his personal interactions with the people around him, was to write—to write clean, beautiful poetic prose that was at the same time light-hearted, and earnest and deep.
I can see three things that Howard Evans stood for, that were his ideals and his crusades, in both his scientific publications and his books and articles written for the general public.

First, he stood for a love of nature, for the humble inhabitants of this planet, especially the insects, and he argued eloquently for their respect and preservation. His arguments for conservation were not so much political as they were personal—his tone was passionate, and philosophical. He tried to make us see ourselves better by reflecting on our humbler, insect companions.

Second, he stood for the value of curiosity-driven research, though it is worth mentioning that he never praised pure science at the expense of the applied, for which he had an equal respect. “Curiosity,” he wrote, “may have ‘killed the cat,’ but it has nourished every good scientist” (1985, p. 23). He defined entomology as “the study of insects as one of the best ways to revel in the joys of discovery.” “So,” he added, with characteristic lightheartedness, “I embrace every biologist who studies insects, whether he likes it or not.”

Third, he defended the importance of research on natural history. He was incensed when he read, in a book review, that “biology is a system that proceeds from biochemistry to the associated subjects of neurophysiology and genetics. All else . . . is stamp collecting.” (1963, p. 149). “If this is so,” Howard wrote, “I can lay no claim to being a biologist . . . I find Darwin, Gray, and Fabre worth emulating in this twentieth century.” But Howard never allowed himself to be preachy and pedantic for very long. In the middle of this tirade about stamp collecting he says: “And it seems unfair to call me a stamp collector when I can never remember what it costs to send a postcard.”

With Howard Evans, science was serious but it was never too serious—there was always room to lighten up, to be an ordinary human. When you worked with him as his post doc—and it must have been the same for his students—you saw what it was to work hard, to be passionate about research, and to be a virtuoso entomologist, but you also got the idea that it was OK to live a normal life.

I was lucky enough to be working with this supremely humane man when I came up against the two greatest crises in the life of a woman in science: the birth of my first baby, and the offer, to my husband, of an attractive job, in a place where there would of course be no formal job for me. A lesser advisor than Howard—or perhaps I should say one with a less strong-minded wife than Mary Alice—might have given up on me then and there. But Howard never said a peep, even when I began to work mostly at home, and most of my projects began to lag, including my chapters for a book we were writing together on wasps (Evans and West-Eberhard, 1970). On the contrary he recommended both my husband William Eberhard and me for a fellowship at a summer research station, even though we would be going there directly from a maternity clinic; and he waited with seemingly endless patience for my chapters of our book. Howard always treated us with respect as a couple, reinforcing our own natural optimism that we would both keep going in science, never turning his back when, in the eyes of others, the signs probably did not look too good.

When we were preparing to move to Colombia, South America, in 1969, Howard did us two very wise favors which we will never forget. Knowing that the university in Colombia would be poor in scientific equipment, and that I would likely be working at home, he sold us—for ten dollars apiece—two antique dissecting scopes that were no longer used at the MCZ, even though they had excellent optics (I never asked him what he did with money). He also gave us a second-hand slide projector, one of those where you push the slides through one at a time, a hand-me-down from the Evans family. We used it to give dozens of talks at universities and schools in South and Central
America, where you could never count on finding a projector, especially one with a good bulb.

Evans’ fun-loving side occasionally appeared, especially during field trips, as a slightly mischievous boyish streak, and this seemed to bring out the same in others. In 1972 he visited us in Colombia, a trip that coincided with that of several other well-known entomologists including his former student Robert Matthews, bee specialist Charles Michener of the University of Kansas, and O. W. Richards, the British entomologist and expert in tropical social wasps. Richards and Evans, when together, seemed especially prone to daring misbehavior while collecting. Near our house in Colombia they threw oranges at a large wasps’ nest in order, they said, to get a few valuable specimens. I found out about this only because of Howard’s published confession in *The Pleasures of Entomology* (1985, p. 224). There he also describes a similar incident in Australia, where he and Richards were stung so badly when they bungled the capture of a large *Ropalidia* nest that their hands were too swollen to dissect its contents.

Howard didn’t always bungle collecting—in fact he was legendary for his athletic prowess with an insect net. One of his students, Allan Hook, remembers that once while collecting at night in Australia he and Evans were trying to catch some hawk moths that were zipping up and down a trail. Allan couldn’t come close to catching one even though he considers himself especially fast with a net, but Howard managed to get one. When he thrust his hand into the net to extract the specimen he exclaimed “Hey, it’s hairy!” The elusive specimens were bats, and Howard was quick enough to catch one.

After Howard retired from his position at Colorado State in 1986 the Evans’s moved to a beautiful mountain home 35 miles from Fort Collins. At 7800 feet, it had a spectacular 50-mile view on all sides. The view did not completely distract Howard from writing, and he completed five books and many scientific articles after his retirement. He continued to do fieldwork, and taxonomic research on collections, throughout the rest of his life.

Here are some excerpts from publications by Howard Evans that illustrate his approach to science and nature:

Most of what we know of nature was gathered by persons—many of whom would have to be ranked as “amateurs”—who were curious. If we relegate curiosity to a subordinate role, we shall sterilize science. Comments about “relevance” and “the solution of pressing problems” strike me as only a slight improvement over the well-known comment of a former Secretary of Defense that basic research is “when you don’t know what you’re doing.” Basic research is simply modern lingo for satisfying one’s curiosity. It is indeed “mission-oriented,” and its mission is to add to man’s understanding of the world... The history of science is the story of a constant flow of useful information from the vast coffers of basic research into human affairs. In these crisis-ridden times it would seem wise to strive to fill these coffers furiously, for we are in urgent need of whatever new ideas and insights may be drawn from them (1968a, p. 275).

There is much to be said for making discovery a way of life, however limited one’s resources... It does not pay to worry about the usefulness of a discovery: all we know of the world is the result of discovery pure and simple, and all of technology is the stepchild of science. Now and then, on cold winter days, I like to mull over these high-sounding ideas. But perhaps I am merely rationalizing my summers spent with a camera, notebook, and tape recorder in a place where the buzz of insects fills the air and the bee-wolves are simply being bee-wolves, which is enough (1985, p. 124).

... there is something Orwellian about the inexorability of wasps’ lives, the tyranny of
their instincts. Wasps share our planet but live in a different world. All about us they wind out their little lives, unaware that man is lord and master of the earth (1963, p.1).

We humans . . . tend to define success in terms of dollars and cents, in terms of how big a “splash” is made in the world, in terms of how much the environment is molded to our ends. But other definitions are possible. If I were to define success as a harmonious living together with the environment, as a gradual unfolding into many small available places in nature, as a surviving for eons of time without making a big splash—then the wasps would qualify. But where would that leave man? (1963, p. 173)

. . . my wife and children claim they play “second fiddle” to my wasps. My usual answer is that wasps are, after all, elegant creatures, and they are lucky to be playing second fiddle to them and not, let us say, to chicken lice (1968a, p. 25).

I believe the strongest argument for keeping as much of the natural world as possible in the anthroposphere lies in the human need for variety, individuality, and the challenge of endeavoring to understand the nonhuman world. I believe, too, that immersion in a world of trees, flowers, and wild creatures is needed to nourish human attributes now in short supply: awe, compassion, reflectiveness, the brotherhood we often talk about but rarely practice except on the most superficial of levels . . . Human qualities grow best in an environment that transcends the human, that allows room for a stretching of minds and emotions. (1968a, p. 280).

The earth is a good place to live. We shall appreciate it more and more as we explore the moon and the planets. If man shall ever have another home, it is presently unimaginable. We had better learn to respect the little-known planet beneath our feet (1968a, p. 293).

Howard Evans departed this little-known planet on 18 July 2002, at the age of 83, leaving life here a little better known than it was before he arrived. He never skipped a beat in his correspondence or in his research. He went out, as some say, with his boots on. I suspect he left a clean desk, and up to the last minute he probably had his special neurons working on another good book. I haven’t found words eloquent enough to say how much we will miss him, but they would be irrelevant anyway. He made a lasting impression on us because he was a profoundly good man. He wrote thousands of pages to help us identify, love, and understand insects and other living organisms. And he laid his soul bare in his articles and books. Because he did that he will always be with us. Or, as Howard might have written, “he will always be with us, embracing us as entomologists—whether we like it or not.”

Acknowledgments

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mammalogist at the University of Connecticut, upon his retirement in 1983 (Wetzel had been Evans’ professor of introductory Zoology). Arnold Menke provided the frontispiece, dated 1968, from a collection of portraits of noted sphecidologists printed by the US Department of Agriculture in 1974. Joetta Weaver assisted with preparation of the lists of publications of Appendices. An additional biography of Howard Evans, with a selected list of his publications, will appear in the Biographical Memoirs of the National Academy of Sciences.

Literature Cited


Appendix 1. Scientific Publications

*Asterisk indicates a book

7. 1950. A taxonomic study of the Nearctic spider wasps belonging to the tribe


47. 1959. Prey records for some midwestern and southwestern spider wasps.
68. 1962. Further studies on the genus Dissomphalus in the United States, Mexico, and


87. 1965. Simultaneous care of more than one nest by *Ammophila azteca* Cameron (Hymenoptera, Sphecidae). *Psyche* 72:8–23.


134. 1972. A review of the Australian species of *Elaphrosyron* and *Telostegus*, with notes...


176. 1977. Notes on the nests and prey of four Australian species of *Tachysphex* Kohl, with description of a new species (Hymenoptera: Sphecidae). *Journal of the...


Appendix 2. Popular Publications and Book Reviews

*Asterisk indicates a book

*1951. The Song I Sing. Bruce Humphries; Boston, Massachusetts; 63 pp.


1977. Discovering life on earth. Initial probes suggest that conditions on this planet are nearly ideal for the support of life as we know it. Sierra Club Bulletin 62(1):24–25.  


