#### Introduction

ESA's Historical Records Committee is taking the opportunity of the 2015 Centennial to explore the wealth of historical records locatable or digitally available on the Internet. as well as use of traditional archives.

Some records are at ESA's Archives but many more are found elsewhere. While HRC's Organized Oral and Poster Sessions of August 6, 2012, explore manifold ways in which history and ecology are inextricably linked, three posters in this session (#33891, #34353, and this one) specifically explore the institutional history of ESA. Here, we focus on the early years of the society, and specifically on its initial cohorts of members and what might have brought them to the society.

Our starting point for the first two cohorts (284 Charter Members plus 23 members elected at the December 1916 meeting), was published in th ESA Bulletin 1(3) in early 1917. This "Handbook" offers a fascinating alimpse of information abstracted from information provided by the members themselves in response to eight questions. We provide cameos of a diversity of individual responses and additional biographical nerspectiv

Shelford introduced the Handbook by providing an overview of the membership. There were no criteria for membership initially, and Shelford grouped the members into five categories, shown here as part of the enrollment form for prospective members after April 1, 1916.

MEMBERSHIP in the Ecological Society is open to those who have advanced the science of ecology; those who have attained recognition through their contributions to other fields and are interested in ecology: those who have conducted researches in ecology which are not yet published; those who have the training and opportunity to conduct observations or instrumentation of importance in ecological work; and those who are interested in the application of ecological principles.

In short, the requirement for membership, as stated in the Bylaws, was "an interest in ecology." Members were asked to provide information for the Handbook, but due to printing costs, not all of the requested information could be included. Shelford provided the questions for which answers were included.

**H**rizona

- 1. On what ecological topics have you published papers? 2. In what ecological subjects have you a special interest, or work in progress?
- 3. In what localities have you carried on ecological work?
- 4. With what regions are you slightly familiar? 5. In what taxonomic groups are you particularly interested?
- (italics indicate willingness to identify material in that group). 6. With what experimental methods have you had the most
- experience? 7. With what field instruments have you worked?

Members also were asked to provide degrees or position. Some provided both

In some cases so little information is provided that we believe the individuals were included as members after having been nominated but before questionnaires could be returned. Two cases we found particularly interesting in this regard: Phil and Nellie Harris Rau

Graphical We did not have access to the original information sent representation of in by members, but from the abstracted entries, we Shelford's tabulation suspect the summary statistics were developed and of other society presented in a way that countered a prevailing concern memberships that botanists or zoologists might be perceived to dominate the new organization

This concern persisted for Shelford's tally of members decades, as did the policy by subdiscipline: of alternating " botanists' and "zoologists" in the presidency of ESA.

plant ecology animal ecology forestry entomology marine ecology agriculture plant physiology plant pathology climatology

geology

soil physics

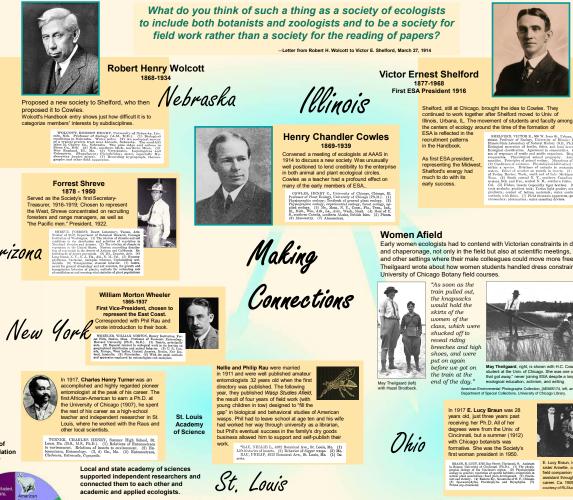
animal parasitology

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# Looking at ESA's early membership:

## Continuity, contrasts, and surprises

Sally L. White, Morrison, CO. Juliana C. Mulroy, Department of Biology, Denison University, Granville, OH, and Harold Balbach, Installations Division, US Army ERDC, Champaign, IL



Early women ecologists had to contend with Victorian constraints in dress and chaperonage, not only in the field but also at scientific meetings, travel, and other settings where their male colleagues could move more freely. May Theilgaard wrote about how women students handled dress constraints on University of Chicago Botany field courses. "As soon as the train pulled out, the knapsacks would hold the women of the class, which were

that got a

In 1917 E. Lucy Braun was 28

Cincinnati, but a summer (1912) with Chicago botanists was formative. She was the Society's first woman president in 1950 BRAUN, E. LUCT, 2703 May Street, Cincinnati, O. Assistant in Botany, University of Cincinnati (Ph.D.). (1) The physic graphic ecology of the Cincinnati region. (2) Physicarphy-terior economic veneration of aperofit hubitistic emportion 1. E. Lucy Braun, left, with he

Illinois in 1914 to Chair the Department of Botany at Ohio State, E. N. Transeau helped build the institution as a center of ecological research second only to Chicago and Nebraska. He brought with him strong Chicago connections

women

women

held PhDs.

The often hidden details of the lives of the first members show the importance of connection to existing networks.

details on individuals and their interactions via online materials we have barely scratched the surface. This line of inquiry provides fruitful opportunity for future research using tools like network

### A note on sources

Burgess, Robert L. The Ecological Society of America: Historical Data and Some Preliminary Analyses. Oak Ridge National Laboratory. This summary cites most of our source

And A of a second secon SHELFORD, VICTOR E., 506 W. Iowa St., Urbana, III. As-istant Professor of Zoology, University of Illinois, Biologist, University of Illinois, 19 B. (1)

Then and Now

In 1917, 93% of ESA members lived in the U.S. and

its territories. Concentrations of early members

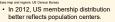
educational and research centers.

reflected personal networks of the founders and



CANADA





 12% of ESA members live in the top ten non-US countries.

"Charter Plus members included 6 5% 13 of the 21

In 2005, 39% of ESA members were

Switzerlan

France

81 other

Countries 2011 and 2012 ESA

## Conclusions

- Membership patterns show importance of:
- field courses (e.g., Chicago Botany) biological stations (e.g., MBL),

proactively encouraging diverse talent,

All had the effect of generating new generations of ecologists who spread new ways of thinking through research, teaching, writing,

Although we have demonstrated that it is feasible to explore

local academies of sciences

and civic engagement at all levels

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(especially tiger beetles ank: Yerkes light grader









J. Arthur Harris's early employment at Missouri Botanical Gardens began a series of connections fostered by the St. Louis Academy among Harris, his sister Nellie, her husband Phil Rau, and Turner The Raus and Turner were giving papers and publishing well before ESA existed.

St. Louis is not apparent.

HARRIS, J. ARTHUR, Cold Spring Harber, Long Island, N. Y. Izvozfijate, Station for Experimental Evolution (PED.). (1) Crayfildes; Benil ecology: physico chessical pro-prints of endition to programmical distribution to the statement of the stat These kinds of hidden connections among researchers help explain the presence of individuals with apparently Jamaican desorts, Long Island, Jamaican rain-glades. (4) Great Plains, Booky Mts. (6) Bre meets and chemistry. anomalous backgrounds. In this case, only Harris has the expected background, and his connection to



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was an important

figure in the Ohio

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attracted economic entomolog

students from all over the

world.

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