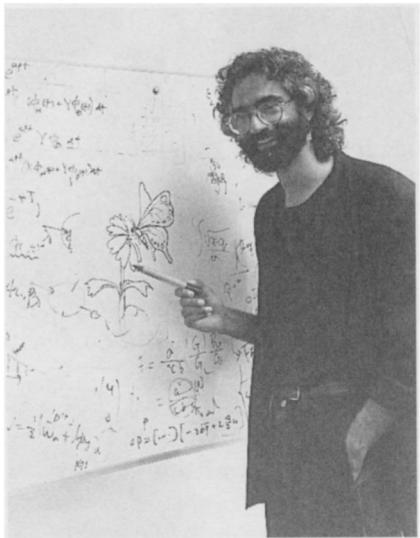


GEORGE MERCER AWARD



Shahid Naeem

The George Mercer Award is given for an outstanding paper by an author under the age of 40. This year's recipient is Shahid Naeem, first author of the paper "Declining biodiversity can alter the performance of ecosystems," which appeared in *Nature* 368:734-737. Shahid was responsible for the design and execution of the Ecotron project. The Ecotron provided the first good test of the influence of changes in biodiversity on ecosystem performance. The results of the experiment provided support for the idea that reductions in biodiversity may result in a loss of ecosystem function. This idea has been debated for years, but a conclusive experiment demonstrating that the process really occurs, at least in laboratory situations, provides even more rea-

son for us to be concerned about losses of biodiversity in the real world. Shahid is one of those few ecologists who is equally adept at both theoretical and experimental studies. His recent research will be recognized as important to our understanding of complexity in nature and his future research will continue to make major contributions to the field.

George Mercer Award Subcommittee

Jim Clark (Chair)
Mike Vanni
Craig Williamson
Maxine Watson
Naomi Cappuccino
Monica Turner
Barbara Peckarsky