Dean Ray C. Friesner (A Tribute)

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.butler.edu/botanical

The Butler University Botanical Studies journal was published by the Botany Department of Butler University, Indianapolis, Indiana, from 1929 to 1964. The scientific journal featured original papers primarily on plant ecology, taxonomy, and microbiology.

Recommended Citation

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Commons @ Butler University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Butler University Botanical Studies by an authorized editor of Digital Commons @ Butler University. For more information, please contact digitalscholarship@butler.edu.
Butler University
Botanical Studies
(1929-1964)

Edited by

J. E. Potzger
The *Butler University Botanical Studies* journal was published by the Botany Department of Butler University, Indianapolis, Indiana, from 1929 to 1964. The scientific journal featured original papers primarily on plant ecology, taxonomy, and microbiology. The papers contain valuable historical studies, especially floristic surveys that document Indiana’s vegetation in past decades. Authors were Butler faculty, current and former master’s degree students and undergraduates, and other Indiana botanists. The journal was started by Stanley Cain, noted conservation biologist, and edited through most of its years of production by Ray C. Friesner, Butler’s first botanist and founder of the department in 1919. The journal was distributed to learned societies and libraries through exchange.

During the years of the journal’s publication, the Butler University Botany Department had an active program of research and student training. 201 bachelor’s degrees and 75 master’s degrees in Botany were conferred during this period. Thirty-five of these graduates went on to earn doctorates at other institutions.

The Botany Department attracted many notable faculty members and students. Distinguished faculty, in addition to Cain and Friesner, included John E. Potzger, a forest ecologist and palynologist, Willard Nelson Clute, co-founder of the American Fern Society, Marion T. Hall, former director of the Morton Arboretum, C. Mervin Palmer, Rex Webster, and John Pelton. Some of the former undergraduate and master’s students who made active contributions to the fields of botany and ecology include Dwight. W. Billings, Fay Kenoyer Daily, William A. Daily, Rexford Daudenmire, Francis Hueber, Frank McCormick, Scott McCoy, Robert Petty, Potzger, Helene Starcs, and Theodore Sperry. Cain, Daubenmire, Potzger, and Billings served as Presidents of the Ecological Society of America.

Requests for use of materials, especially figures and tables for use in ecology text books, from the *Butler University Botanical Studies* continue to be granted. For more information, visit www.butler.edu/herbarium.
tions was an index of the Indiana Academy of Science Proceedings from 1941 to 1950.

During his more than thirty years of service to the Botany Department at Butler University, Dr. Friesner supervised the development of the departmental library and the Butler University Botanical Studies. The latter is a publication presenting original research performed mainly in Indiana. In normal times it is distributed to libraries scattered throughout the world. Under his direction the department has expanded from a total of three courses offered at the time of its origin, to a total of twenty-seven listed in the current catalog.

In addition to his numerous duties as administrator, teacher, and scientist, Dr. Friesner was active in the Indianapolis Downey Avenue Christian Church, and was chairman of the official Board of Directors there. He was teacher of a Philathea class for more than twenty years. He held membership in the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Association of University Professors, the American Genetic Association, the Botanical Society of America, Phi Beta Kappa, Phi Sigma, Phi Kappa Phi, the Eugenics Research Association, and the Academies of Science of the states of Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio. In 1948 Dr. Friesner was the recipient of the James Irving Holcomb Award at Butler University. In 1951 he received the D.Sc. degree from Ohio Wesleyan University. He has been cited in Indiana Men of Science, American Men of Science, and Who's Who in America.

Dr. Friesner will long be remembered among his associates for his traits of honesty, industry, kindness, and devotion to duty. His record is not contained only in the lists of his publications, offices, and honors, but must be measured also by the ranks of students whom he inspired with his teaching and by his example and companionship. He has erected his own memorial within the hearts of those who knew him.

DEAN RAY C. FRIESNER

The moral and intellectual greatness of a University depends primarily upon the qualities of heart and mind which animate the men who make and direct its policies and teach its students. That man is touched by sublimity whose life is marked at once by love of God,
Man, and of Nature, and who renders to each a just tribute. Such a one was Ray C. Friesner, of late our Dean and Colleague in this Faculty.

Dean Friesner exemplified the Christian gentleman and intelligent man of good will in public and private life. His teaching, research and publication, administrative skill, and his service to students, University, and science were distinguished by broad perspective and careful regard for minutiae. He was learned in Scripture and by the Word of God he regulated his own life and guided wisely the young men and women whose good fortune it was to work with him.

Dr. Friesner saw the wonders of the natural world around him as manifestations of the greatness and goodness of God, and like Agassiz and Shaler, he learned its secrets and made them known to others. For thirty-three years he directed the growth of the Department of Botany at Butler University. He established an herbarium expanded now to nearly 100,000 sheets. He was second to none in his native state as a field botanist and taxonomist. Through the editorship of the Butler University Botanical Studies, he made known the fruits of Indiana research to scholars and libraries all over the world. He had been called to the presidency of the Indiana Academy of Science and he had directed the Division of Graduate Studies of this University. In 1951 his work was crowned with the degree of doctor of science awarded in honoris causa by his alma mater.

The fine quality of Dr. Friesner's intellect was revealed by his characteristic insight, patience, self-denial, persistence, and humility. Its versatility was demonstrated in council and classroom, in field and forest, in laboratory and library. The measure of his academic renown is found in the able colleagues who surrounded him, in the talented students he taught to take his place, in his long list of publications, in the unsought honors bestowed upon him by institutions and scholarly societies, and in the high esteem of his friends.

The Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences was a man of great goodness of heart who possessed a singular capacity to awaken in others a desire to emulate the good. And perhaps only his bereaved wife and venerable father can attest fully to the loving affection he brought to his home. The world of science and Butler
University, together with all his colleagues in this Faculty, mourn his passing. A sincere and loyal friend, a distinguished scientist and teacher, a gifted and humane administrator, a man greatly loved, has passed beyond the portals of this campus.

THE FACULTY
THE COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES

A. Dale Boeler,
Secretary

Indianapolis, Ind.
9 January 1953