

Charles M. "Mike" Mather

Outstanding Service Award

We have all heard the old adage that if you want a job done, give it to a busy person. One look at the accomplishments of Mike Mather over the past few years convinces you that there is some truth in this view. Of course, a "busy" person could do less than a good job because of being "busy," but, if you know Mike, you know that he never does anything half way. Being Recording Secretary for OAS from 1991 to 1997 meant added responsibilities to his already busy day that began with his undergraduate education.

Mike graduated with a major in Biology (and minor in Agriculture) from Stephan F. Austin State University. He then was an NSF Fellow at the University of Kansas before returning to Texas for his masters degree (Zoology, Vertebrate Ecology). After that, he was in the Navy for three years teaching Anatomy and Physiology at the U.S. Navy Hospital Corps School in San Diego. He selected Texas A & M for his Ph.D. (Wildlife and Fisheries Science, emphasis in Herpetology). Since 1976, he has been on the faculty at The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma where he is currently an Associate Professor.

In addition to his work as Recording Secretary for OAS, Mike has held offices in the USAO Faculty Association, two terms each as President-Elect and President. He has also served in the as Vice-Chairman and Chairman of the Biological Sciences Section of OAS.

He has done committee work with such groups as the Executive Committee of the Animal Research Council for the Oklahoma City Zoo. For the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation, he has been Chairman of the Herptile Technical Committee as well as Chairman of the Invertebrate Technical Committee and served on the Biodiversity Committee and the Non-Game Advisory Council.

In addition to his teaching, he has organized all the USAO zoological and paleontological collections and started proper curatorial techniques. He has initiated a mollusk collection that now has nearly 9,000 catalogued lots and nearly 50,000 specimens.

Mike has also been active in his community. He has contributed to the Boy and Girl Scouts as a leader (Cub Pack 306) and as a speaker. He has presented programs at various schools in his area and been a judge at science fairs.

Mike's consulting has taken him to Texas, New Mexico, and West Virginia as well as throughout Oklahoma. He has shared his expertise on mollusks with the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Forest Service, the Oklahoma Biological Survey, and the Oklahoma Water Quality Lab.

When it comes to recognition of his many services, Mike has garnered many awards. For example, OAS honored Mike with a 1997 Award of Merit. He has won recognition for his work from groups other than OAS. He has won the Regents Award for Superior Teaching four times and is a member of Beta Beta Beta National Biological Honor Society and the Phi Sigma Society.

With all these many activities, Mike has still found time to contribute to the literature of his field as author or co-author of 24 papers.

Congratulations, Mike, on a richly deserved award for all the contributions that you have made to science in Oklahoma.