

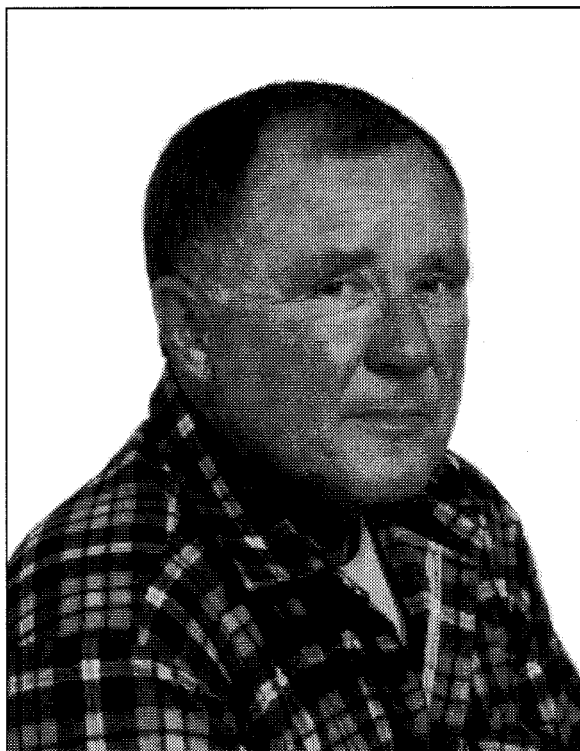
# D.L. Serventy Medal 1994: Citation

## HARRY FREDERICK RECHER

Harry is the sort of person you always remember once you have met him. You don't forget the wicked smile nor the sense of being challenged when you hear him speak. Perhaps one of Harry's greatest contributions to ornithology in Australia has been the fact he has never walked away from any argument, whether it be with land managers who are poorly managing bird populations, scientists who have done poor science, or with conservationists who have not thought through their values and aspirations. Harry makes you think, and he has made ornithologists think.

Harry Recher began studying as an undergraduate at the State University of New York, College of Forestry, and then at Syracuse University. He completed his PhD under Paul Ehrlich at Stanford University (California). After receiving this degree in 1964, he held postdoctoral positions at the University of Pennsylvania and then at Princeton University, where he worked with the late Robert Macarthur. With a background in the community ecology of birds, he made his way to Australia in 1967 and took up an appointment as lecturer at the University of Sydney. The following year, he was appointed research scientist at the Australian Museum. He stayed at the museum for 20 years, paying particular attention to conservation issues and the biology of forest birds. In 1988, he joined the Department of Ecosystem management at the University of New England, where he is currently an associate professor.

Harry's interest in forest birds has been longstanding. He has contributed to our knowledge of the effects of both fire and logging on forest bird communities. He has developed, tested and evaluated bird census techniques in these habitats, and provided valuable information for land managers, scientists and bird watchers. He has been deeply concerned about the effects of logging on bird communities and has always been extremely involved in campaigning for better forest management practices. At the present time, Harry is involved with a variety of research projects that address the role of corridors in the conservation and management of forest bird communities, the relationship between insect abundance and foliage structure on foraging by foliage gleaning birds, the ecology of forest owls and post-fire recolonisation by birds. These contributions make Harry one of the leading experts in Australia on forest bird communities. His interests have not been restricted



to forest bird communities because he has also studied other species such as herons, egrets and heathland birds.

Harry has published over 140 scientific papers, covering many aspects including avian ecology and conservation. He has been co-editor and author of three books: *A Natural Legacy: Ecology in Australia*; *Birds of Eucalypt Forests and Woodlands: Ecology, Conservation, Management*; and *Forests and Woodlands of Australia*. All these books were judged best in their category for the year of publication by the Royal Zoological Society (NSW) in its annual Whitley Awards.

Harry has been unusual as an academic. He is one of the few to attempt to undertake high quality research as well as become involved in the often highly political arena of land management. For his tireless work in helping to conserve our bird life using a solid scientific approach, and his contributions to our knowledge about the ecology of many species of birds, it is fitting that Associate Professor Harry Recher receive the 1994 Serventy Medal.

Prepared by Kris French