

## OBITUARY

### James (Jim) F. Lynch 1942–1998

Jim Lynch lost his long battle with cancer when he died at home at Shady Side Maryland, USA on 26th March. Despite the difficulties posed by his illness, he was carrying out fieldwork in Texas only three weeks before he died. Over the past year he produced several new papers and manuscripts and sustained an active correspondence with colleagues around the world.

Jim was born in Boston, Massachusetts in November 1942. He went to Harvard College, graduating *Cum Laude* in 1964 with a BA in geology. He was a man of many facets and this was demonstrated during his time at Harvard. In order to help with his finances he sang professionally with a group aptly named "The Lynch Mob". He also rowed during this period and made the decision then to concentrate on science rather than train as a member of the American Olympic rowing squad.

From Harvard he moved to the University of California at Berkeley to do his Ph.D. It was at this stage that he underwent a major change in research direction. He started his Ph.D. and during his first two years at Berkeley he was a graduate teaching assistant in geology. Then he switched to zoology, graduating in 1974. His thesis was titled "Ontogenetic and geographic variation in the morphology and ecology of the Black Salamander (*Aneides flavipunctatus*).

Jim then joined the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center at Edgewater in Maryland as a research scientist. He remained with that unit until his death. During his 24 years with the Smithsonian Institution he conducted research on ecology, systematics, island biogeography, habitat reduction and fragmentation, and animal-plant interactions. During this research he worked on amphibians, birds, mammals, reptiles and ants. His time at the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center provided him with a licence to work over an enormous range of the world including North, Central and South America, Australia and East Africa.

It is appropriate that this obituary should be published in *Pacific Conservation Biology* as Jim carried out research on both sides of the Pacific.



Jim produced over 60 scientific publications. He was actively involved in many professional societies, advisory committees, and with World Wildlife Fund and International Committee for the Preservation of Birds, and was a regular reviewer for many international journals. He was an enthusiastic collaborator with scientists from many institutions and nationalities; in fact over two-thirds of his publications were written jointly.

He first came to Australia in 1985 to attend a conference on the role of remnants of native vegetation in nature conservation. This was an area of research in which he was then involved, in America and Mexico. This kindled a love of Australia and he returned in 1987 to join forces with CSIRO Wildlife and Ecology in Western Australia and with the University of New England in New South Wales working on conservation in fragmented landscapes. He returned annually until his last visit in May 1994, when he attended the conference in Western Australia on the role of networks in conservation.

I worked with Jim in Kenya during part of his battle with cancer, helping in a research programme he was carrying out at Mpala Research Center in Likipia Province near the base of Mt Kenya. He was as enthusiastic as ever and fascinated with Africa, especially with the comparisons between the natural systems operating there and those in the other parts of the world.

Jim Lynch was a man with a great love of life and a large appetite for its many aspects. He was a productive scientist, a willing teacher, a talented artist, a gifted musician and a generous friend. He was married in March last year and is survived by his wife Linda McCann, his mother and two brothers.

Denis Saunders  
CSIRO Wildlife and Ecology