

**Ed Wilson** is an **Alabama** native - born in **Birmingham**, he grew up in **Mobile**, graduated from high school in **Decatur** and attended the **University of Alabama** (B.S., M.S.) before heading to **Harvard**:

[E.O. Wilson - Of Ants and Men](#) bio-documentary

You can find out about Dr. Wilson's [Half- Earth Project](#) [here](#) ).

... \* note also: E.O. Wilson was major professor of **Tom Seeley**, uber bee man at Cornell.

[ [re: Tom Seeley](#) ]

## EDWARD O. WILSON PROFILE



A Harvard professor for four decades, biologist Edward O. Wilson has written 20 books, won two Pulitzer prizes, and discovered hundreds of new species. Considered to be one of the world's greatest living scientists, Dr. Wilson is often called, "the father of biodiversity."

A childhood accident claimed the sight in his right eye. In adolescence, he lost part of his hearing. He struggled with math and a mild form of dyslexia. Any one of these imperfections might have blocked the road to a scientific career. But nothing could stop Ed Wilson's curiosity of the natural world. So, he decided to focus on the tiny creatures he could pick up and bring close to his remaining good eye. He decided to study insects, particularly ants.

Today Dr. Wilson is arguably one of the most important thinkers of the twentieth century.

## Born

**Birmingham, Alabama, June 10, 1929**

## Education

**Graduated Decatur Senior High School, Decatur, Alabama, 1946**

**B.S. (biol.), University of Alabama, 1949**

**M.S. (biol.), University of Alabama, 1950**

**Ph.D. (biol.), Harvard University, 1955**

## Positions

- Alabama Department of Conservation: Entomologist, 1949
- Harvard University: Junior Fellow, Society of Fellows, 1953-56
- Assistant Professor of Biology, 1956-58
- Associate Professor of Zoology, 1958-64
- Professor of Zoology, 1964-1976
- Curator in Entomology, Museum of Comparative Zoology, 1973-97
- Honorary Curator in Entomology, Museum of Comparative Zoology, 1997-
- Frank B. Baird Jr. Professor of Science, 1976-1994
- Mellon Professor of the Sciences, 1990-1993
- Pellegrino University Professor, 1994 - June 1997
- Pellegrino University Professor, Emeritus, July 1997-December 1997
- Pellegrino University Research Professor, December 9, 1997-
- University of California, Berkeley: Hitchcock Visiting Professor, 1972
- Society for the Study of Evolution: President, 1973
- Marine Biological Laboratories: Board of Trustees, 1976-80
- John Simon Guggenheim Foundation: Fellow, 1976
- Advisory Board, 1977-81; Committee of Selection, 1982-89
- World Wildlife Fund: Scientific Advisory Committee, 1978-
- World Wildlife Fund; Board of Directors, 1984-94
- World Wildlife Fund; Executive Committee, 1987-92
- National Research Council: Board on Science and Technology in International Development, 1984-86
- Committee on Research Opportunities in Biology, 1985-89
- Chairman, Committee on Biodiversity, 1988-90
- National Science Board Taskforce on Biodiversity, 1987-89
- Xerces Society; President, 1989-90
- New York Botanical Garden: Board of Directors, 1992-95
- New York Botanical Garden; Honorary Manager of the Board of Directors, 1995-
- American Academy for Liberal Education; Founding Director, 1992-
- American Museum of Natural History, Board of Directors, 1993-
- The Nature Conservancy, Board of Directors, 1993-
- Conservation International, Board of Directors, 1997-
- Scientific Committee of the Ministry of the Environment, Colombia, 1999--

## **Awards (Science)**

- National Medal of Science (1976)
- Presidential Citation, American Psychological Association (1999)
- William Procter Prize for Scientific Achievement, Sigma Xi (1997)
- First recipient, Edward Osborne Wilson Naturalist Award, The American Society of Naturalists (1997)
- Certificate of Distinction, Council of the XX International Congress of Entomology (1996)
- David Ingalls Award for Excellence, Cleveland Museum of Natural History (1995)
- Eminent Ecologist Award, Ecological Society of America (1994)
- Henry Shaw Medal, Missouri Botanical Garden (1993)
- International Prize for Biology, Government of Japan (1993)
- Association of Systematics Collections Award (1991)
- Crafoord Prize, Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences (1990)
- Prix du Institut de la Vie, Paris (1990)
- Reville Medal, San Diego Natural History Museum (1990)
- Benjamin Dann Walsh Award, Illinois Academy of Sciences, Chicago (1989)
- Founders' Award, Field Museum, Chicago (1989)
- Terrestrial Ecology Prize of the Ecology Institute, Germany (1987)
- National Zoological Park Medal in Zoology and Conservation (1987)
- L. O. Howard Distinguished Achievement Award, Entomological Society of America (1985)
- Tyler Prize for Environmental Achievement (1984)
- Leidy Medal, Academy of Natural Sciences (1979)
- Carr Medal, University of Florida (1979)
- Distinguished Service Award, American Institute of Biological Sciences (1976)
- Founders' Memorial Award, Entomological Society of America (1973)
- Mercer Award, Ecological Society of America (1971)
- Cleveland Research Prize, American Association for the Advancement of Science (1968)

## **Awards (Letters)**

- pg Pulitzer Prize, General Non-fiction, *On Human Nature* (1979)
- Pulitzer Prize, General Non-fiction, *The Ants* (1991)
- Clarence Cason Award, University of Alabama, Non-fiction Writing (1999)
- Reading for the Environment, Deutsche Umweltstiftung, *The Diversity of Life* (1998)
- Benjamin Franklin Award, Publishers Marketing Association, *Naturalist* (1995)
- Los Angeles Times Book Prize, Science, *Naturalist* (1995)
- Science Book of the Year, Germanjournalist, *Bild der Wissenschaft*, Journey to the Ants (1995)
- Phi Beta Kappa Prize, Science, *Journey to the Ants* (1995)
- John Hay Award, Orion Society (1995)
- 1994 AAAS Award for Public Understanding of Science and Technology, American Association for the Advancement of Science (1995)
- 1994 Award for Increasing the Public Understanding of Science, Council of Scientific Society Presidents (1994)
- Distinguished Achievement Award, Educational Press Association of America (1994)
- Sir Peter Kent Conservation Book Prize, Book Trust, U.K., *The Diversity of Life* (1994)
- Wildlife Society Book Award, *The Diversity of Life* (1993)
- Hawkins Award, Outstanding Professional or Reference Work, American Publishers Association, *The Ants* (1991)
- Ingersoll Prize in Scholarly Letters, 1989 Richard Weaver Award, Rockford, Illinois (1989)
- Book of the Year Award, Alabama Library Association (1979)

## **Awards (Conservation)**

- David B. Stone Award, New England Aquarium (1999)
- Scientific Fellow of the Wildlife Conservation Society (1999)

- 100 Champions of Conservation, 20th Century, National Audubon Society(1998)
- Zoological Society of San Diego Conservation Medal (1998)
- Earthwatch Global Citizen Award (1997)
- Frances K. Hutchinson Medal, Garden Club of America (1997)
- Bruno H. Schubert Prize, Germany (1996)
- Audubon Medal, National Audubon Society (1995)
- Wildlife Conservation Award, Cincinnati Zoo (1994)
- National Conservation Achievement Award, National Wildlife Federation (1992)
- Distinguished Service Award, Society for Conservation Biology (1991)
- Gold Medal, Worldwide Fund for Nature(WWF-International) (1990)

## **Awards and Recognition (General)**

- Humanist of the Year, American Humanist Association (1999)
- Sir George Deacon Medal, Fulbright Association, for interdisciplinary studies (1999)
- Benjamin Franklin Medal, American Philosophical Society (1998)
- Caroline P. and Charles W. Ireland Distinguished Visiting Scholar Award, Birmingham, Alabama (1998)
- McGovern Award, Cosmos Club, Washington, D.C. (1996)
- Bradford Washburn Award, Museum of Science, Boston (1996)
- America's 25 Most Influential People, TIME (1996)
- Laureate, Alabama Academy of Honor, State Legislature (1995)
- Phi Beta Kappa Prize for Excellence in Teaching, Harvard College (1995)
- University Medal, Complutense University of Madrid (1995)
- Levenson Prize (teacher of the year), Harvard College (1992)
- Distinguished Scientific Humanist Award, Free Inquiry (1990)
- University Medal, University of Helsinki (1989)
- Golden Plate Award, American Academy of Achievement (1988)
- Rector's Medal of the University of Bergen (1987)
- Laureate, Academy of Humanism (1983)
- Distinguished Humanist Award, American Humanist Association (1982)
- Sesquicentennial Medal, University of Alabama (1981)

## **Fellow**

- American Academy of Arts and Sciences (1959)
- American Philosophical Society (1976)
- Animal Behavior Society (1976)
- Deutsche Akademie der Naturforscher Leopoldina (German Academy of Sciences) (1977)
- Royal Society of Sciences of Uppsala (1989)

## **Member**

- National Academy of Sciences (1969)

## **Foreign Member**

- Royal Society, England (1990)
- Finnish Academy of Science and Letters (1990)
- Russian Academy of Natural Sciences (1994)

## **Honorary Life Member**

- American Genetic Association (1981)
- British Ecological Society (1983)
- Entomological Society of America (1987)

- Darwin Society, University of Bergen (1987)
- American Humanist Association (1989)
- Zoological Society of London (1992)
- Linnean Society of London (1994)
- Netherlands Entomological Society (1995)
- Association for Tropical Biology (1999)

## **Member of founding group of the following organizations**

- International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (ICIPE)
- Organization for Tropical Studies (OTS)
- Ecosystems Center of the Marine Biological Laboratory

## **Honorary Degrees**

**D.H.C.** University of Madrid (Complutense), 1995

(hon. caus.):

**D.Phil.** Uppsala University, 1987

(hon. caus.):

**D.Sc.**

- Duke University, 1978;
- Grinnell College, 1978;
- University of West Florida, 1979;
- Lawrence University, 1979;
- Fitchburg State College, 1989;
- Macalester College, 1990;
- University of Massachusetts, 1993;
- Oxford University, 1993;
- Ripon College, 1994;
- University of Connecticut, 1995;
- Bates College, 1996;
- Ohio University, 1996;
- College of Wooster, 1997;
- University of Guelph, 1997;
- Muhlenberg College, 1998;
- Yale University, 1998;
- Cedar Crest College, 1999;
- State University of New York, Albany, 1999

**L.H.D.**

(hon.caus.):

- University of Alabama, 1980;
- Hofstra University, 1986;
- Pennsylvania State University, 1995;
- University of Portland, 1997;
- Bradford College, 1997

**LL.D.**

(hon.caus.): Simon Fraser University, 1982

## Lectures

- Griswold Lecture, Cornell University (1968)
- Bartram Lecture, Florida State University (1976)
- Messenger Lectures, Cornell University (1976)
- Distinguished Lecture, Eastern Psychological Association (1977)
- Leon Lecture, University of Pennsylvania (1977)
- Gilmour Lecture, Johns Hopkins University (1977)
- Orr Lectures, Dartmouth College (1977)
- Beatty Lectures, McGill University (1977)
- Harris Lectures, Northwestern University (1978)
- Tanner Lecture in Philosophy, University of Michigan (1979)
- Patten Memorial Lectures, Indiana University (1979)
- Annual Lecture, Carnegie Institution of Washington, D.C. (1979)
- Tarner Lecturer, Trinity College, Cambridge University (1979-82)
- Aharon Katzir-Katchalsky Lecture, Weizmann Institute, Israel (1980)
- George Gay Lecture in Ethics, Harvard Medical School (1980)
- Wilhemine Key Lecture, American Genetic Association (1980)
- Adolf Meyer Lecture, American Psychiatric Association (1981)
- Inaugural Corliss Lamont Lecture, American Humanist Association (1982)
- Philip Denecke Lecture, Oxford University (1982)
- Plenary Lecture, American Psychoanalytic Association (1982)
- Robert Clinton Rhodes Lecture, Emory University (1983)
- Loren Eisley Lecture, University of Pennsylvania (1983)
- Man and Ideas Lecture, Carnegie Institute (1984)
- Presidential Lecture, Rice University (1984)
- Rosenstadt Visiting Professor of Medicine, University of Toronto (1984)
- Lewis Clark Vanuxum Lecture, Princeton University (1985)
- Mangelsdorf Lecture, University of North Carolina (1985)
- Centennial Lecture, University of Arizona (1985)
- Tansley Lecture, British Ecological Society (1985)
- Felix Santschi Lecture, University of Zürich (1986)
- Distinguished Lecture, Family Theory Symposium, Georgetown University (1986)
- Joseph Leconte Lecture, Georgia Southern College (1986)
- Keynote Address, National Biodiversity Forum (1986)
- Keynote Address, Conservation 2100, New York Zoological Society (1986)
- Keynote Address, American Academy of Psychiatry and Law (1987)
- Keynote Address, Entomological Society of America (1987)
- Address, National Geographic Society Centennial (1988)
- Phi Beta Kappa Lecture, University of Miami (1988)
- Lionel Trilling Lecture, Columbia University (1988)
- Centennial Lecture, Marine Biological Laboratories, Woods Hole (1988)
- Gannon Lecture, Fordham University (1988)
- Bicentennial Lecture, Georgetown University (1989)
- Florence Mahoney Lecture, National Institutes of Health (1989)
- Hilldale Lecture, University of Wisconsin (1989)
- Centennial Lecture, Entomological Society of America (1989)
- NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Commemorative Lecture, American Zoological Society (1989)
- H. O. Lund Lecture, University of Georgia (1990)
- Capital Lecture, Carnegie Institution of Washington (1991)
- Keynote Address, American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquaria, Providence, RI (1991)
- Cochrane Memorial Lecture in Conservation Biology, Wesleyan University (1991)
- Centennial Lecture, California Institute of Technology (1991)
- Dupleian Lecture, Harvard Divinity School (1991)

- Keynote Address, Sustainable Forestry Conference, Wilderness Society (1992)
- Lipkin Man and Nature Lecture, American Museum of Natural History (1992)
- Christmas Lecture, Public Television, University of Chicago (1992)
- Keynote Address, Endangered Species Coalition (1993)
- Inaugural Lecture, Theodor Boveri Institute, WYrzburg (1993)
- Siemens Foundation Lecture, MŸnich (1993)
- Distinguished Scientist Lecture, History of Science Society (1994)
- Plenary Lecture, American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS)(1995)
- Spring Environmental Lecture, American Museum of Natural History (1995)
- Annual Plenary Lecture, Thoreau Society, Concord, Massachusetts (1995)
- Keynote Address, annual meeting, The Nature Conservancy, Indianapolis, Indiana (1995)
- World Bank, Address on biodiversity, Washington, DC (1995)
- Opening Address, Environmental School Inauguration, Clark University, Worcester, Massachusetts (1995)
- Keynote Address, 150th anniversary meeting, Netherlands Entomological Society, Amsterdam (1995)
- Keynote Address, Society of Environmental Journalists, MIT, Cambridge, Massachusetts (1995)
- Keynote Address, Human Behavior and Evolution Society (1996)
- Opening Address, XX International Congress of Entomology, Florence (1996)
- Smithsonian Institution 150th Anniversary Lecture at Museum of Natural History, London (1996)
- Sermon, Great Issues of the Twenty-first Century, Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York City (1996)
- Opening Lecture, Inauguration of Institute of Virology, Baltimore, Maryland (1996)
- Jean Mitchell Watson Lecture, Chicago (1998)

## **Research Interests**

Evolutionary biology; biology of social insects; classification of ants; sociobiology; biogeography; ethical philosophy

## **Field Interests**

United States, Canada, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Trinidad -Tobago, Mexico, Costa Rica, Panama, Suriname, Brazil, Fiji, New Caledonia, Vanuatu, Australia, New Guinea, Sri Lanka

## **Articles, mostly technical: about 370**

CITATION CLASSICS (*Current Contents*, most cited articles and books):

Brown, W. L. and E. O. Wilson.1956. Character displacement. *Systematic Zoology*, 5: 49-64.

Harvard Univ. Press, Cambridge, MA. 548 pp.

MacArthur, R. H. and E. O. Wilson.1967. *The Theory of Island Biogeography* .Princeton Univ. Press, Princeton, NJ. 203 pp.

Simberloff, D. S. and E. O. Wilson. 1969.Experimental zoogeography of islands: the colonization of empty islands. *Ecology*, 50(2): 278-296.

Wilson, E. O. 1971. *The Insect Societies*. Belknap Press of

Wilson, E. O. 1975. *Sociobiology: The New Synthesis*. Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, Cambridge, MA. 697 pp.