

# TRIBUTE

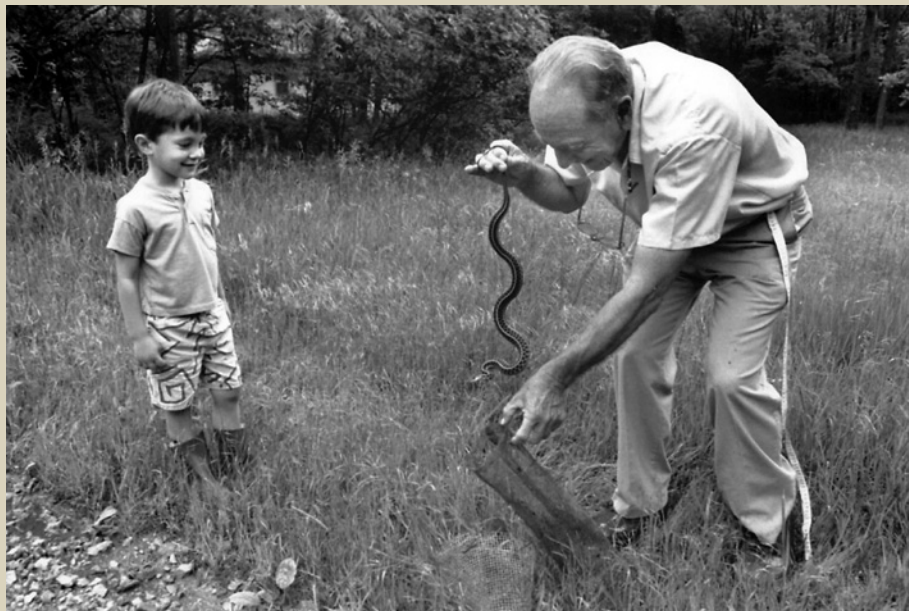
Henry S. Fitch

1909–2009

“The father of snake ecology.”

His keen eye and perseverance, his many years of dedication to field research, deep understanding and appreciation of his subjects, and timeless contributions will continue to inspire those of us who study reptiles and amphibians for many, many years to come.

As a tribute to Henry Fitch, the IRCF and editors of *Reptiles & Amphibians* are dedicating the March 2010 issue to his memory and impact on natural history and the entire herpetological community.



Henry Fitch and friends in 1991.

“In the last few weeks, many have written remembrances of Henry Fitch. In reading through some of these, I have noted a consensus in describing the qualities of this man:

- Quiet and reserved — a man of few words but wide knowledge;
- Energetic and enthusiastic about field studies and natural history — almost universal mention of the difficulty younger students had in keeping up with the old man in the field;
- Gracious, gentle, and kind — the gentle encourager of students and patient explainer to children and adults — and yet he had high standards of excellence;
- Parsimonious — completing field studies with a minimum of expense;
- Modest and unassuming — not fighting to create his own “academic empire” — **but** very competitive in basketball;
- A stubborn confidence and determination, and I would add perseverance, and focus to learn as much as he could about the life on [the] one square mile [of what is now known at the Fitch Natural History Reservation at the University of Kansas].”

*Dwight R. Platt*

“A Tribute to Henry Sheldon Fitch: A Legend in Our Time”  
Annual Meeting of the Kansas Herpetological Society, 7 November 2009