

## O B I T U A R Y

### Ernest (Ernie) A. Liner (1925–2010)

Dr. Ernest A. Liner, one of Louisiana's most noted herpetologists among the many who have lived there, died at the age of 85 on 23 September 2010, in Houma, Louisiana. Ernie was born on Weeks Island in Iberia Parish on 11 February 1925, and lived most of his life in Houma within 60 miles of New Orleans. He spent his early years in the late 1940s and early 1950s associated with the herpetological contingent at Tulane University. These were the years following World War II, during which he served as a U.S. Marine and received a Purple Heart after being shot in the elbow on Iwo Jima. Although Ernie made a living as a pharmaceutical salesman, he was the consummate professional herpetologist in all aspects of scientific publishing, attending national and regional meetings and contributing valuable scientific specimens to museums. He received an Honorary Doctor of Science at the University of Colorado in 1998 in recognition for his lifetime contributions to herpetology, a well-deserved honor.



One of his proudest moments, Dr. Ernest (Ernie) A. Liner receiving an honorary Doctor of Science at the University of Colorado in 1998.



GEORGE R. ZUG

Ernie Liner in the office of the Division of Amphibians and Reptiles, National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution (July 1998).

Ernest A. Liner will continue to be a recognized name in herpetology because of his more than 100 scientific publications and his two famous cookbooks — *A Herpetological Cookbook: How to Cook Amphibians and Reptiles* and *The Culinary Herpetologist*. Many of his scientific publications address the amphibians and reptiles of Mexico, where Ernie spent much of his vacation time in pursuit of herpetological adventures.

Although widely respected and well noted for his herpetological achievements, Ernie Liner is equally well characterized by those who knew him as a man with a gracious nature and generous spirit. From my own experience as a youngster on into adulthood, I remember Ernie Liner as one of the most gentle, benevolent, and friendly herpetologists I ever met. I caught my first slider turtle in a seine haul with him in 1952 when I was in grammar school. He and I were on one end of the seine and Don Tinkle was on the other. That same year, Ernie turned over a log near New Orleans and let me catch the first Pigmy Rattlesnake I had ever seen. I distinctly remember that he let me be the one to “catch” these and many other of my first herps rather than claiming them for himself in the competitive “look what I caught” game. This is but one measure of the generosity that has been noted by many others. Following his death, many of Ernie's colleagues posted statements referring to his personal character, which included “most considerate person I have ever known,” “his kindness will be missed,” “he was truly a humble man,” “he loved to share and help others,” and “he was an intelligent and always friendly person.” Collectively, these and similar statements do indeed characterize the essence of Ernie Liner. Clearly, he will be missed not only as a fine herpetologist, but also as a very fine person.

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