

In Memorium

Loy W. Morgan

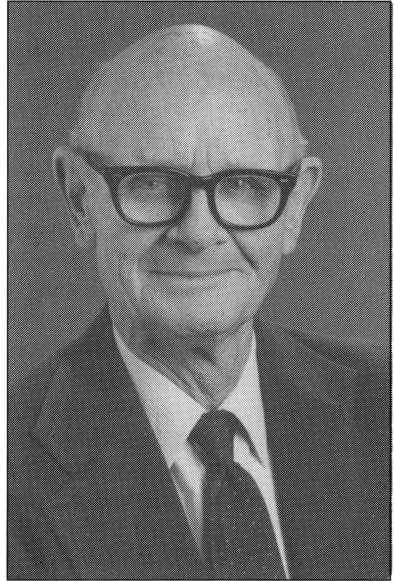
(1917 – 1996)

Loy W. Morgan, University of Georgia Assistant Professor Emeritus, former President of the Georgia Entomological Society, retired U.S. Army Captain, and the acknowledged Elder Statesman of Entomology for the State of Georgia, died at his home in Tifton, GA on 10 November 1996. He was born on 22 August 1917, on a farm near Clio, GA. He attended Effingham Academy in Springfield, GA, and later received an Associate Degree in Forestry from Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College (ABAC) in Tifton, GA.

While attending ABAC, Morgan was employed as a student worker at the University of Georgia's Coastal Plain Experiment Station. He left ABAC and the Coastal Plain Experiment Station in 1940 to attend the New Mexico College of Agricultural and Mechanical Arts in Las Cruces where he graduated in 1942 with a B.S. in Agriculture. Upon graduation Morgan volunteered for service in the United States Army where he served in the U.S. Army Medical Corps Laboratory during the European campaign of World War II. He was discharged in November of 1945, but served in the Army Reserves until 1970.

After his tour of active duty in the military, Morgan entered The University of Kansas where he received his M.S. Degree in Entomology in 1948. That same year he accepted a faculty position with the University of Georgia's Coastal Plain Experiment Station. It would be his professional home for the remainder of his career. Loy Morgan was the first full-time University of Georgia research entomologist. He conducted research on insect pests of all agricultural crops grown in Georgia.

Over time, Departments of Entomology were established on the University's campus at Athens and at the Georgia Experiment Station at Griffin. In 1960, an Entomology Department was established at the Coastal Plain Experiment Station with Morgan as Department Head. In 1965 Morgan stepped down as Department Head to accept research responsibility for insect pests of all crops except tobacco. Other researchers were gradually added to the Department to conduct research on insects affecting various commodities, allowing Morgan to expand his work on peanut insects.



In July of 1986, Loy Morgan retired from the University of Georgia after serving as an entomological researcher for 40 years. The University System of Georgia Board of Regents awarded him Emeritus status, and the Georgia Peanut Commission presented him with the Georgia Research and Education Award for Innovative Peanut Research citing him as being “the production troubleshooter who saved farmers millions of dollars.”

Morgan served as a Scoutmaster and in other capacities for the Boy Scouts of America during 28 years. In 1973, he was presented the Silver Beaver Award for Distinguished Service to Boyhood by the National Court of Honor of the Boy Scouts of America.

After his retirement, Morgan was instrumental in establishing the arboretum at the Coastal Plain Experiment Station. He also designed the bog garden and collected plants for the wetland which is currently under construction at the Fulwood Garden Center in Tifton. In addition to his expertise as an entomologist, Morgan was almost as well known for his work as a naturalist.

Loy Morgan was known for many things. Among the characteristics that made him great were integrity, loyalty, and humility. He was a devoted family man and a faithful member of the Tifton First Baptist Church. Among entomologists, there are perhaps three things that are paramount in our memories of Loy Morgan. These are: (1) He knew more about peanut insects than any man alive at the time; (2) He was the best generalist-naturalist among us; (3) He was quick to step aside to let others lead or even to let others take credit for things that he, himself, had done. He was gentle and humble, but he was a giant in character. He was truly Georgia's Elder Statesman of Entomology.

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