

## HAVE WE MET OUR OBJECTIVES <sup>1</sup>

G. WALLACE DEKLE

Division of Plant Industry, Fla. Dept. Agric., Gainesville

Much progress has been enjoyed by the Florida Entomological Society during the past 20 years. One way to measure the success of an organization is to determine first whether it is solvent and, if it is, then to ascertain how the funds are being used. The Florida Entomological Society is solvent, I am happy to report. All of our financial obligations have been paid. We have been able to meet these responsibilities through the sale of subscriptions and advertising space in THE FLORIDA ENTOMOLOGIST, through the sale of reprints of published papers, and through the increase in the annual membership dues. Speaking of THE FLORIDA ENTOMOLOGIST, permit me to point out here that the journal is a tremendous undertaking for an organization such as ours. And yet, issue after issue of this impressive publication continues to roll off the presses on time.

Sometimes, those of us who have attained the status of a professional entomologist may be inclined to think mostly of ourselves, but let us not forget for a moment the hard times through which the Society struggled to get where it is today. Neither let us as entomologists or as members of this Society shun our responsibility to encourage the talented youth of this nation to enter the field of science and in particular the field of entomology. This we can do with a very positive attitude of promoting full-time scholarships in the colleges and universities located in Florida. An entomologist-in-training session on the program indicates the interest of the Society in its student membership.

A sound foundation for promoting entomology and the professional entomologist has been established, but we are not doing our best in fulfilling our objectives.

How many of you today recall the 1956 presidential address of Herman Mayeux entitled, "Our First Objective"? That address stimulated the members of the F.E.S. to give their full support to promoting the study of entomology. To meet this objective squarely, Mayeux recommended that the Society purchase copies of a brochure, "Opportunities in Professional Entomology," published by the Entomological Society of America and send this to high schools in Florida. The executive board recognized the value of this proposal and authorized the purchase of 500 copies, which were mailed to high school libraries and vocational agricultural teachers. Past president Mayeux was also the driving force behind the Entomology-In-Action talk and the Entomology-In-Action exhibit; both are in use today. The Society this year revised the talk and mimeographed copies were sent to all members. We urge each of you to present it to science classes in high schools and junior colleges in your home communities. A set of koda-chrome slides to illustrate the talk can be secured from the secretary.

The Entomology-In-Action exhibit has been used extensively at agricultural meetings in the state and also has been exhibited at two national entomological meetings. Last year the membership approved the construction of a second exhibit which is on display at this meeting.

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<sup>1</sup> Presidential address read at the 47th Annual Meeting of the Florida Entomological Society, Fort Lauderdale, Fla., 24 Sept. 1964.

In 1960, Andrew J. Rogers, in his "forward look" presidential address, injected prestige, pride, and challenge into the veins of the professional entomologist. Rogers had this to say: "The science of entomology has progressed because it has dared to change to keep abreast of new and expanding problems. As individuals we must rise above being just taxonomists, insect physiologists, insecticide testers, etc. We must first be professional entomologists in the broadest meaning of the term. And as societies we must rise above being just once-a-year conventioners and publishers of scientific journals; we must assume our appropriate responsibilities in public affairs relating to the science and profession of entomology, and take a more tangible interest in problems affecting the individual members of our societies." Rogers' address instilled in us the courage to move ahead with increased efforts. Mayeux and Rogers established a sound foundation for promoting entomology.

"To distribute widely knowledge pertaining to insects" and "to publish *The Florida Entomologist*" are the Society's third and fourth objectives. What is our score here? These two objectives have been met with truly great performances by those members who have participated on the programs at annual meetings and have published their research in *THE FLORIDA ENTOMOLOGIST*, and by the high standards established by Lewis Berner, editor of the journal for the past 14 years. Our journal today is recognized as one of the outstanding entomological publications in the United States. Because of a backlog of scientific papers, it has been necessary to increase the number of pages in each issue this year. We can anticipate the journal's continued growth in size and quality as additional means for support are explored.

The finances of the Society have been in good hands. For the past seven years, R. E. Waites has conducted the financial business of the Society in a most conscientious manner. Surplus funds have been invested by Waites, and the accumulated interest was used to increase the pages in the 1964 issues of the journal. It has also been necessary to use some of the principal of the monies also for this purpose. Yes, we are moving ahead with our third and fourth objectives, but more can be done.

My entomological interest has been in the field of systematic entomology, which performs a service for all branches of entomology. This is closely allied to our second objective, "to encourage research relative to insects and related arthropods in Florida." There is a definite need for the continued support of each member in developing The Florida State Collection of Arthropods which is curated by the Division of Plant Industry, Florida Department of Agriculture. This collection, housed in the Division's office in Gainesville, is a pot-of-gold to the systematic entomologist. The collection now contains over 300,000 pinned and labeled specimens, and over 20,000 slide specimens, but the Division of Plant Industry's present facilities for housing the collection are critical. Each specialist has sacrificed office space for the collection until only a small, darkened cubicle remains in which to work. The University of Florida engineer's report listed the floor space as supporting nearly three times the amount of weight regarded as safe. The overcrowding has created such a fire hazard that the local fire department strongly recommended that all smoking in the entomology section be prohibited. The Division of Plant Industry will need the support of this Society when it requests building

funds for the next biennium. The Society can give this support by going on record to endorse a resolution to the Florida Agricultural Council and other appropriate officials and agencies for a building to adequately house this valuable collection.

For a few moments, let us consider some interesting comparisons. There are about 8,600 species of birds in the world; about 3,200 species of mammals; and about 850,000 species of insects. These numbers have had a marked influence on the rate of taxonomic growth in these groups.

The last North American species of bird was described in 1889. In the last 20 years, less than 200 new species of birds have been described from other parts of the world. Large taxonomic publications covering the fauna of a nation, continent, or the entire world have been available for years in the better known groups of birds and mammals. Thus, taxonomists in these areas are concerned largely with intraspecific analysis, because the basic taxonomic work is essentially completed.

Because of the tremendous number of species of insects, this basic work in insect taxonomy is still underway with several thousand new species of insects being described each year. Only within recent years has the taxonomy of certain of the larger groups been sufficiently advanced to enable the compilation of monographs, revisions, bulletins, manuals, etc., which cover the United States, North America, or the entire world.

It has only been within the last five years that entomologists have seen the publications of such works as Arnett's "The Beetles of the United States," Linsley's "The Cerambycidae of North America," Rehn and Grant's "Monograph of the Orthoptera, Vol. 1," and Hull's "Robber Flies of the World," to name just a few.

In January 1965, "The Lepidoptera of Florida" by C. P. Kimball will be off the presses. The last revision of the Lepidoptera of Florida was published in 1917 by J. A. Grossbeck. Division of Plant Industry entomologists have been collaborating with Kimball for the past 10 years on this greatly needed publication.

Because the task is an enormous one, it will be a long, continuing process to bring the taxonomy of all groups to equally advanced levels as the above cited examples. The important fact is that there is sufficient taxonomic background now to permit this to be done. Future years will witness more and more of these advanced taxonomic publications. Florida's arthropod collection can undoubtedly contribute to our knowledge of insects and help bring further advancement to entomology in general.

Where do we go from here? There is yet much to be accomplished. I predict the Florida Entomological Society will in the near future promote legislation to establish biological study areas in each of the state forests; promote the establishment of biological study areas on other state-owned property that exhibits certain unique biological characteristics; and actively participate in studies to learn more of the insect fauna in the Caribbean areas. These steps can affect the economy of Florida and its further growth.

#### LITERATURE CITED

- Mayeux, Herman S.* 1956. Our first objective. *Fla. Ent.* 40(1): 1-3.  
*Rogers, Andrew J.* 1960. Mature science—retarded profession. *Fla. Ent.* 43(4): 155-162.