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Daniel Guthrie Obituary

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Obituary



Image: Claremont McKenna College

Long-time SCAS Fellow and Professor of Biology Emeritus at Claremont McKenna College Daniel Guthrie died on July 1, 2019.

Guthrie, 80, specialized in comparative anatomy, animal behavior, introductory biology and environmental science during his 48 years at the Claremont Colleges, and had a lasting impact on students interested in careers in biology, ecology and medicine. Guthrie was an active member of SCAS in which he served as secretary, treasurer and Bulletin editor, and whose contributions to the academy's mission are unprecedented.

Dan authored more than 70 papers and studies in biology, and led innumerable field trips both locally and abroad. Every summer the Guthrie family drove across the United States, camping, looking at birds and collecting fossils. One of his favorite yearly expeditions was to San Miguel Island, which is one of the most remote destinations amongst California's Channel Islands. He also had an extensive collection of seaweed that he gathered from Alaska's Aleutian Islands while birding on Attu Island. His love for learning never faded, which inspired his travels to more than 40 countries, including Madagascar, Mongolia and Belarus.

Born in Terre Haute, Ind. and raised in Garden City, N.Y., Guthrie attended Amherst College, where he studied biology and played lacrosse. He earned a Master's degree in biology from Harvard and a doctorate from the University of Massachusetts. As a biologist, he salvaged and collected U.S. bird skeletons for use by museums and teachers. He donated his time and expertise to finding and identifying fossil bird bones from roads, excavations, and collections for local educational institutions.

Even as his mobility worsened, Dan still got out of the house to watch birds and enter data into Cornell's eBird database. His extensive collection of bird watching notebooks continued through 2019, which included observations of more than 7,000 bird species. Guthrie also loved soccer, attending games at Claremont College, and watching the FIFA Women's World Cup right up to his passing.

SCAS offers the sincerest condolences to Dan's family: daughters Kate Poaster, Ruth Guthrie and Winnie Larson, and their spouses, Bob, Dave Overoye and Tom, respectively; grandchildren Lee, Ben, Bobby, Acacia, Sage, Jack, Teddy and Alex; and

great-grandchildren Aydan, Gavyn and Cypress; and to all whose lives and careers were touched by Dan's generosity and influence.

Dave Ginsburg, Ph.D.

SCAS President

