



Dr. Don Leroy Moll

October 3, 1949 - November 17, 2021

Dr. Don Leroy Moll

Dr. Don Leroy Moll, age 72, of rural Butternut, Wisconsin, passed away on Wednesday, November 17, 2021, in his home with his wife and beloved dog by his side. He was born on October 3, 1949, in Peoria, Illinois, the son of Edward Leopold and Bessie Isabel (Kennedy) Moll. He married Janice Jo Mysinger on October 26, 2001, in Springfield, Missouri.

Don received his B.S. in Biological Sciences at Illinois State University, his M.S. in Zoology at Western Illinois University, and his Ph.D. in Biological Sciences at Illinois State University in 1977. He taught undergraduate and graduate classes and mentored numerous M.S. graduate students at Missouri State University in the Department of Biology from 1977 teaching general ecology, biogeography, and other courses until his retirement in 2010.

Don particularly enjoyed working with and mentoring his many M.S. graduate students at Missouri State. He also served as an adjunct professor and graduate student committee member at the University of Louisville (for Ms. W. Worthy [Baumer]) and at the University of Florida (as a Ph.D. committee member for Dr. Amber Pitt). He served—as co-advisor with major professor Dr. Kumthorn Thirakhupt—for Dr. Wachira Kitimasak at Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand, in his Ph.D. research concerning the biology

and management of the critically-endangered Asian narrow-headed giant softshelled turtle, *Chitra chitra*.

He was a longtime member of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Tortoise and Freshwater Turtle Specialists Group and was a former member of the Marine Turtle Specialists Group. Don's main research interests were chelonian conservation, ecology, and natural history. He conducted his research in the United States, Central America, East Africa, and Southeast Asia. He had published and presented his work on freshwater turtles, land tortoises, and marine turtles from his work in these locations.

Some of Don's research projects and publications included: "The Ecology of River Turtles in Polluted Habitats" (Natural History, 1980), "The Effects of Sea Level Change on the Feeding Ecology of Pleistocene Green Sea Turtles" (Copeia, 1983), "The Status, Exploitation and Distribution of the Central American River Turtle in Belize" (Biological Conservation, 1986), "The Ecology of Sea Beach Nesting in Costa Rican Slider Turtles" (Chelonian Conservation and Biology, 1994), "The Ecology and Exploitation of the Pancake Tortoise in Tanzania" (Chelonian Conservation and Biology, 1995, 1996), "The Status Distribution and Natural History of *Chitra chitra* in Thailand" (The Natural History Journal, Chulalongkorn University, 2005), and "Frugivory and Seed Dispersal by Chelonians" (Biotropica, 1995; Wetlands, 2011; Biological Reviews, 2020). These were but a few of his many publications.

Although they usually conducted their field research separately (sometimes in far-flung locations on opposite sides of the planet), Don and his brother, Edward, pooled their collective knowledge to write the book, *The Ecology, Exploitation and Conservation of River Turtles*, for Oxford University Press in 2004.

After retirement, Don continued to write and publish manuscripts, often in

collaboration with his former major professor and friend, Lauren E. Brown, until Lauren's death in March 2021. He also served as chelonian section editor for the journal Herpetological Conservation and Biology.

In addition to his passion for scientific research, Don enjoyed fishing, hiking, and reading in his leisure time.

Don was preceded in death by his parents and his dear cousin, Jerry Brockmeyer. He is survived by his wife, Janice; a brother, Edward O. Moll and wife, Judy, of Arizona; a daughter, Jane Seawell, of Georgia; a son, Bryan Moll and wife, Sara, of Colorado; two grandchildren; one niece; and two nephews.

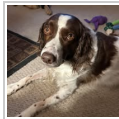
At Don's request, no formal services will be held in his honor.

Tribute Wall



“ I had a dream last night of Don and his cousin Jerry Brockmeyer, so I looked and found Don's obituary. We grew up together in Peoria Heights. We were best of friends along with Kurt Hoffman, who passed years ago. Jerry and I kept in touch over the years and both went to U of Illinois. So sorry to hear of Don's passing. I was hoping to get together again to go fishing!! My sympathies to his family.

Dr Dale Wittmer - April 07, 2024 at 09:15 PM



Thank you, Jerry, Don and Kurt have all passed. I'm sure they would have loved to hear from you.

Janice Moll - May 16, 2024 at 09:18 PM



“ Dr. Don Leroy Moll

October 05, 2023 at 02:07 PM



“ Deepest sympathies to all who had the pleasure of knowing him. I met Don on a handful of occasions and he always struck me with his kindness and warmth. He will be greatly missed.

CB

Cory - December 04, 2021 at 01:55 PM



“ Our deepest condolences from the Brown family.

Gary Brown - November 30, 2021 at 01:12 PM

KD

“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



Ken Dodd - November 26, 2021 at 09:48 AM

KD

I don't remember who the woman is, but it is Anders Rhodin, Don, and Dick Vogt at the Turtle Conference in Gonfaron, France, 1995. I took the photo - Ken Dodd

Ken Dodd - November 02, 2025 at 05:59 PM

 Robert
Villa

“ *The Tucson Herpetological Society would like to extend our sincerest condolences and thanks to Don's great service to the earth and those who he touched in his genuine and quiet way.*

*Sincerely,
Robert Villa
President,
Tucson Herpetological Society*

Robert Villa - November 24, 2021 at 11:30 AM

RR

“ Dear Janice and family,
With Thanksgiving around the corner, we gratefully remember the awesome feasts that you held here in Tucson, Az. And thanks to Bryan and Sara, the wine was outstanding as well! As a fellow herpetologist, I am sad to see Don go, but those who knew his kind and gentle nature will agree that he is in a better place. My three best memories of Don are 1) When he presented his work with Pancake Tortoises in Africa to the Tucson Herp Society 2) Ed, Don and entomologist Justin Schmidt led a group of students from St. Olaf College (Minnesota) into the desert to teach them about tortoises, Gila Monsters and bugs. 3) Ed, Don and I did a quiet trip out into the desert. That trip happened on 16 January 2017, and that was the last time Don was ever out with me. It was a hoot watching our hapless Bears with him--he even almost lost his cool once over a bad ref call. "Terrible call! Just terrible!" I am glad that Don was in my life, and will miss him a bunch. Fondly, Roger Repp

Roger Repp - November 24, 2021 at 07:40 AM

DB

“ My sincere condolences to the family on Don's passing. Peace to his spirit. I remember him as a kind person and great scientist. —
David Bowles

David Bowles - November 23, 2021 at 04:30 PM

BT

“ *My condolences to the family and friends. I have many great memories of past field trips and adventures. A wonderful human that will be greatly missed by many.*



Brent Thomas - November 23, 2021 at 02:56 PM

BS

“ *1 file added to the album Memories Album*



Birch Street Funeral Service - November 22, 2021 at 04:45 PM