

ALDO LEOPOLD AWARD - 1970



Ian McTaggart-Cowan 1910-2010

Ian McTaggart-Cowan was a pioneer in the application of science to the management and conservation of wildlife. He was born in Scotland in 1910 and immigrated with his family to Canada in 1913. He completed his studies at the University of British

Columbia and then at the University of California at Berkeley, where he studied deer under Joseph Grinnell. When he returned to Canada, he accepted a position at the provincial museum in British Columbia before taking a professorship at the University of British Columbia, where he established the first university wildlife program in Canada. Dr. McTaggart-Cowan was an acclaimed teacher and orator who supervised more than 100 graduate students, with many becoming eminent scientists in academia and government. He served at the University of British Columbia as a professor, department head, and dean. He produced more than 275 publications as author or coauthor including directing an encyclopedic four-volume *Birds of British Columbia*, to which he was a major contributor. More so than many other ecologists of the time, McTaggart-Cowan stressed the importance of studies of individual variation, in addition to population-based studies

McTaggart-Cowan was active in early studies of British Columbia Provincial Parks and Canada's Rocky Mountain National Parks. He served as vice-president of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (now IUCN), chair of the Board of Governors of the Arctic Institute of North America, president of the Biological Council of Canada, chair of the Canadian Environmental Advisory Council, and member or executive of numerous local, provincial and national councils and boards. He also was a pioneer of science television, co-authoring 6 teaching films on mammalian behaviour, 110 educational television programs, and more than 200 radio broadcasts. The Cowan Vertebrate Museum in Vancouver is named in his honour. He was inducted into the Royal Society of Science as a Fellow and was awarded the Leopold Medal (1970), Einarsen Award in Conservation (1970), Officer of the Order of Canada (1971) and Officer of the Order of British Columbia (1991). He was a life member and former president of The Wildlife Society and director emeritus of the Nature Trust of British Columbia. Following retirement, Dr McTaggart-Cowan served as chancellor of the University of Victoria (1979-85), as well as chair of the Canadian Committee on Whales and Whaling, Academic Council (BC), the Habitat Conservation Board (BC), and other public service bodies.
