

MARK P. M. ROBINSON

JOHN T. MCNEILL

Mark Robinson was born in Philadelphia on October 23, 1906, the son of Benjamin Franklin Robinson and Elizabeth Smith Robinson. He died on October 9, 1965. A resident of Springfield, Delaware County, Pa., he held the post of senior engineer with one of the nation's large electrical equipment firms.

Elected a member of the D.V.O.C. on November 7, 1941, Mark subsequently gave a number of talks to the members, among which was "Some Minerals of Audubon's Mine," the story of the Ecton Mine at Audubon, Pa. The work done was such that he subsequently discovered a number of copper-affiliated minerals new to science. In 1954 he presented an illustrated lecture "Carnivorous Plants from Key West to Gaspé."

During his travels Mark was always on the lookout for birdlife, but his primary interests were entomology, mineralogy, wild flowers, and ferns. He made original contributions to the development of micromount photography in the study of mineralogy. His contributions to the study of the scarab beetle brought him international recognition and a worldwide correspondence. He donated his collection of 16,000 specimens of scarab and allied beetles to the Smithsonian Institution. His collection included 63 which had not been previously identified, including a number taken from the nests of birds. Six species bear his name. Mark was a past president of the American Entomological Society.

During his many travels Mark found every species of fern and wild orchid native to the eastern United States. His last trip, shortly before mid-summer, led him to the Redwood River, Humboldt County, California, for the world's tallest tree, only to be informed by the ranger, a short two miles from it, that he would need a helicopter to get close by.

One of his principal activities during the last four years was his participation with the writer in a project of compiling material for a book on "Notable Trees of the Delaware Valley." During this period he photographed some 700 historic, ancient, or large trees. He found the largest yellowwood in the country and, near Chesterfield Crossroads, N.J., the pin oak with the largest girth (19' 1"). The Delaware County Institute of Sciences has published the first phase of this work, "The Notable Trees of Delaware County."

Mark's background in scouting was a long and varied one. Campmaster at old Camp Biddle, Delaware County, for a number of years, his interest in teaching insect lore to young people led to the formation of the Comstock Society in the 1930's; he was a founder and the first elected president. The Comstock Society began as an entomological group, later becoming a general nature society.

During his career Mark wrote some 100 research papers on various natural history subjects, including about 25 on the scarab beetle. Among his last papers was "Ecology of the Bogs of the New Jersey Pine Barrens."

In addition to his affiliation with the D.V.O.C., Mark held membership in the Leidy Microscopic Club, Cape May Geographical Society, Delaware County Institute of Sciences, Franklin-Ogdensburg Mineralogical Society, Academy of Natural Sciences, and the Mark P. Mills Rod and Gun Club.

Mark was an enthusiastic field companion. A person gifted with such an instinctive curiosity about so many things will not soon come upon the scene again.

He is survived by his wife, the former Helen Keddie, and by a son, Mark, Jr.

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