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ANNOUNCEMENT
THE HAROLD JEFFERSON COOLIDGE MEMORIAL MEDAL
2008

The World Conservation Congress at its 3rd Session in Bangkok, Thailand, 17-25 November 2004, established the Harold Jefferson Coolidge Memorial Medal. The Medal is to be awarded to an individual who has made internationally significant contributions to conservation of nature and natural resources and whose conservation efforts embody Dr. Coolidge's approach and achievements.

The Harold Jefferson Coolidge Memorial Medal will be awarded at the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Barcelona, 5-14 October 2008

Anybody can nominate any individual by filling out the appropriate form. Please note that no individuals may nominate themselves and that current staff and officers of IUCN are not eligible. Nominations may be sent, using the attached nomination form, via fax (+41 22 999 00 25), email (coolidgemedal@iucn.org), or mail (Attention: "Coolidge Medal" at the IUCN headquarters' address).

If you have any query, please contact Véronique Zurcher (+41 22 999 02 50) or Tamara Montalvo Rueda (+41 22 999 01 87)

Criteria for Nomination and Selection

- The awardee shall be an individual who has made internationally significant contributions to effective conservation, and whose conservation efforts embody Dr Coolidge's approach and achievements as set out in the criteria below, especially in the way he inspired, encouraged and supported individuals to become leading conservationists, and for his vision in creating and supporting effective conservation initiatives and institutions.
- The awardee shall have made consistent and outstanding contributions to furthering the cause of conservation in one or more of the following ways:
 - Providing inspiration, encouragement and support to individuals to enable them to become leading conservationists with significant conservation achievements and who have been, or are being, recognised as conservation leaders at national and international levels.

- Contributing very significantly to the establishment of an effective conservation institution, or to making an existing conservation institution more effective.
- Contributing in an especially significant way to the creation or implementation of one or more outstanding conservation initiatives at the international level. Such initiatives may include particularly effective and notable conservation programmes or national or international conservation legislation.

The Award Jury:

The Jury will consist of five serving members of the IUCN Council's Membership Committee and three eminent conservation leaders who knew Harold Jefferson Coolidge well and understand his conservation ideals:

Dr. Lee Talbot, USA
Dr. Gerardo Budowski, Venezuela
Dr. Kenton Miller, USA
Ms. Silvia Sánchez Huaman, Peru
Mr. Javed Jabbar, Pakistan
Dr. Russell Mittermeier, USA
Professor Zohir Sekkal, Algeria
Ms. Marija Zupancic-Vicar, Slovenia

DR HAROLD JEFFERSON COOLIDGE

Harold Jefferson Coolidge, a descendent of American President Thomas Jefferson, was born in Boston on 15 January 1904 and was educated at the Universities of Harvard, Arizona, and Cambridge (England). Dr. Coolidge was a remarkable individual, truly a renaissance man, who left an indelible mark on many aspects of science, conservation and international cooperation

An eminent primatologist and key figure in international conservation, Dr. Coolidge was closely associated with IUCN and the World Wide Fund for Nature from their inception.

He was part of the US delegation at the historic Fontainebleau meeting which led to the founding of IUCN and was elected IUCN's first Vice-President. He served as IUCN President from 1966 to 1972 and was the Union's Honorary President after that. He also founded and chaired both the Species Survival and the National Parks Commissions of IUCN.

Dr. Coolidge was a WWF International Board member from 1971 to 1978 and was named a Member of Honour in 1979. He was also a founding Director of the WWF-US.

In his capacity as Curator of Mammals at Harvard's Museum of Comparative Zoology, he organised and led several path-breaking zoological expeditions to many parts of the tropics.

During World War II, Dr. Coolidge invented many life saving devices, including chemical shark repellents and a signalling mirror for downed airmen. He was awarded the US Legion of Merit in 1945.

After the war he began to concentrate on long-term conservation issues. In 1947 he became Director of the Pacific Science Board of the US National Academy of Sciences, a post he held for 23 years. In addition to his illustrious work for IUCN and WWF, Coolidge also provided leadership to many other leading international organisations.

Indeed, it is impossible to think of the field of conservation without thinking of Harold Jefferson Coolidge, not only because his own initiatives, but also due to the assistance and encouragement he has given to many others. As Sir Peter Scott notes:

“Hal Coolidge was an amazing man. He made an immense contribution largely because of his dogged energy and drive. He never took no for an answer and never seemed to rest but was working away on ten fronts at the same time.... We owe him an enormous debt of gratitude for all that he did for IUCN and WWF over a very long period.”

During his lifetime, Hal Coolidge earned more than fifty major academic and community leadership awards. Among the awards and prizes he received are: the US Legion of Merit 1945; the Garden Clubs Hutchinson Medal 1963; the Albright Medal 1968; the Gold Medal New York Zoological Society 1969; Commander Order of Golden Ark 1972; Silver Medal of International Achievement Award, US National Park Service 1972; Edward W. Browning Conservation Award, Smithsonian Institution 1978; John C. Phillips Medal, IUCN 1978; Member of Honour, World Wildlife Fund International 1979; J. Paul Getty Wildlife Conservation Prize 1979. He also held honorary doctorates of science from several universities, including George Washington University and the Seoul National and Brandeis Universities.

In 1983, the Coolidge Center for Environmental Leadership was established to honour the life, work and ideals of this remarkable man. Located in Cambridge, Massachusetts, the Center works with developing country graduate students, mid-career professionals and industry interns, providing training in environmental management, international law, economic development, and government.

The long list of honours and achievement, however, does not fully reflect the many lives of conservation professionals that were profoundly marked by Hal's encouragement and support over the years. He was also highly influential in bringing women scientists into international conservation research; a domain previously reserved for men only. Hal Coolidge was a genuine pioneer on many fronts.

Hal Coolidge's paramount concern was the responsible care of Earth's environment. He believed in the causes he espoused and worked long and hard to achieve the important goals of conservation and sustainable development. In his own words: “as we confront the often troubled relationship between Man and Nature, we must be ecologically and economically realistic and we must take into consideration cultural restraints. That requires effective and creative environmental leadership,” he said.