

Professor Edred John Henry Corner



Date of Birth:
January 12, 1906

Nationality:
British

Address:
91 Hinton Way, Great Shelford, Cambridge
CB2 5AH, England

Present Position:
Professor Emeritus (Tropical Botany), University of Cambridge

Education & Career:

- 1924–1928 Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge. Scholar; Frank Smart Research student.
- 1929–1946 Assistant Director, Gardens Department, Straits Settlements (Singapore).
- 1947–1948 Principal Field Scientific Officer, Latin America, of UNESCO.
- 1949–1965 Botany School, University of Cambridge, as lecturer in taxonomy, then as reader.
- 1966–1973 Professor of Tropical Botany, University of Cambridge.
- 1973– Emeritus Professor of Tropical Botany, University of Cambridge.

Honours:

- 1930 Fellow of the Linnean Society of London.
- 1955 Fellow of the Royal Society of London.
- 1972 C.B.E. (Commander of the British Empire), civil award.

Scientific Awards:

- Darwin Medal of the Royal Society
- Patron's Medal of the Royal Geographical Society
- Gold Medal of the Linnean Society
- Victoria Medal of Honour of the Royal Horticultural Society
- Allerton Award of the Pacific Tropical Botanical Garden, Hawaii

Corresponding Member:

American Society of Botany
Royal Netherlands Botanical Society

Honorary Member:

Mycological Society of Czechoslovakia
Mycological Society of Japan
Botanical Society of Edinburgh
Association of Tropical Biology

Publications:

Wayside Trees of Malaya (1940)
The Life of Plants (1964)
Checklist of Ficus in Asia and Australasia (1965)
The Natural History of Palms (1966)
The Seeds of Dicotyledons (1976)
(Many others)

Achievements

Research activities of Prof. Corner cover many fields of biology, dealing mainly with organisms in the plant and mycological kingdoms. In his study he has made free use of taxonomical, morphological and ecological techniques. He has also paid utmost attention toward the nature conservation, when he is gathering specimens of flowers and seeds. It is because of this that he is famous as one of the top-level naturalists among his contemporary scientists.

Prof. Corner conducted field research for many years in tropical districts, as clearly known from his career. Abundant in knowledge about tropical plants, he wrote many books of tropical botany. The Durian Theory he fully discussed in *The life of Plants* (1964) was a bold inference about the origin of angiosperms, and made the focus of common attention of those interested in the natural history of plants.

As for the ecology of tropical plants, he led an expedition to Malay swamp districts as early as the 1930's. He continued to study in the remaining problems, which he succeeded in solving with the help of later development of research, and published *Freshwater Swamp Forests of Johore* (1978).

In the taxonomical study of higher plants, Prof. Corner is famous for his successful establishment of a new classification of the genus *Ficus*. He also conducted a trailblazing research on the coevolution of insects and plants. This is at present one of those problems which are most actively pursued by many researchers.

As regards the taxonomy of fungi, Prof. Corner's research is not only the profuse taxonomy and systematics, but the anatomical basis for classification. He also devised an ecological analysis, and made a great contribution to the establishment of the modern taxonomical systems.

Prof. Corner has also attained a notable achievements as an educator. He has not only brought up many excellent biologists in England, but also directly educated or largely influenced most of the leading botanists in Southeast Asia.

It is clearly recognized from the viewpoint of his achievements briefed above, that Prof. Corner has made an outstanding contribution to the advancement of research in fundamental biology.