

Theodore (Ted) Clarence Bjornn

Ted Bjornn, 69, passed away 3 November 2001 after a courageous battle with a peritoneal infection at the same hospital where he received a heart transplant in 1992. Born in Salt Lake City, Utah, Bjornn was a fisheries professor at the University of Idaho, in the U.S. Geological Survey's Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit.

Bjornn was first introduced to fish as a young boy through his maternal grandfather, and week-long fishing trips were not unusual. He and his friend also would ride their bikes to fishing spots near home. At age 10, Bjornn and his uncle Bob (age 12) were observed by the game warden fishing in Loa Hatchery Pond on the Freemont River. This early encounter with the law resulted in confiscated fish and fishing poles, and a fine of \$100, a very large sum in 1942. From that time forward, Bjornn fiercely obeyed all fish and game regulations.

This passion for fishing evolved into a passion for fishery science that was kindled by his professors at Utah State University and the University of Idaho, and those professionals with whom he worked. Bjornn received his B.S. from Utah State in 1955. His master's research on Priest Lake, Idaho, provided the pivotal description of the fish and the fishery. His major professor, Virgil Pratt, passed away during that time, and Bjornn took over Pratt's classes and mentoring of students. From there, Bjornn was hired by James C. Simpson to work for the Idaho Department of Fish and Game as a regional biologist at Salmon, Idaho. He began research, funded by the Dingell-Johnson program, on the steelhead and salmon stocks in the upper Salmon River and expanded a new program to construct screens at irrigation diversions to build weirs to obtain valuable stock recruit and migration information throughout the Salmon River drainage. This extensive research project provided the basis for his Ph.D. dissertation at Utah State University, under the direction and mentorship of William F. Sigler. In 1965, Bjornn was promoted to chief of research for Idaho Department of Fish and Game and moved to Boise. Following a brief time in active military service, Bjornn was hired by Don Chapman to become the assistant unit leader for the Fishery Research Unit that was formed at the University of Idaho and funded by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Bjornn was known throughout North America as an expert in Pacific Northwest salmon, steelhead, and trout. He made long-lasting contributions to the fisheries profession through his research, work with graduate students, and collaborations with federal, state, and tribal

groups on fisheries research and management projects. These contributions will guide salmon and steelhead recovery efforts for many years to come.


Bjornn was honored by many professional awards, including the Most Significant Paper the *North American Journal of Fisheries Management* and numerous awards from the Western Division and Idaho Chapter of AFS. In May 2001, the University of Idaho honored him with induction into the Alumni Hall of Fame, their highest honor for alumni.

Bjornn served on numerous panels and management teams for Columbia and Snake River salmon and steelhead. He authored dozens of scientific publications on fisheries, including studies pioneering catch-and-release fishing regulations for trout streams. He became a member of the American Fisheries Society in 1954. In the 1990s, Bjornn served with distinction on the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Snake River Salmon Recovery Team (chaired by the late Don Bevan) and was the team's primary resource for the real, down-to-earth biology of the species at risk. His colleagues on the team were both relieved and in "awe" as Bjornn called for a portable computer to continue working within days of his heart transplant surgery. In 2001, he was appointed to yet another NMFS technical recovery team for interior Columbia Basin salmonids.

In recent years, Bjornn worked with many agencies on the most comprehensive study of adult fish passage conducted on any river in the world. Much of the fieldwork is completed and the results are just now coming together. In September 2001, he finished a draft of a book about Snake River salmon and steelhead. This project will be completed so that the legacy of his data and interpretations can remain.

Bjornn had five children by his first wife (two sons and triplet daughters), who grew up sharing his enthusiasm for fisheries. After a divorce, he married Christine M. Moffitt, an AFS past president, and they enjoyed sharing their careers in fisheries research and education, gardening, and traveling.

Biology aside, the characteristic of Bjornn all will miss most was the diplomatic and dignified way in which he dealt with those who held different views. He seldom expressed anger and always took the time to understand other perspectives. In this regard, he set high standards and examples for us all.

The funeral and burial for Bjornn were in Utah, and a memorial service was held at the University of Idaho. The family suggests donations to the AFS John Skinner Memorial Fund be made in his name. 

Christine Moffitt
Michael Schiewe
Robert Lohn
Jerry Mallet
Don Chapman
Robert Leonard
Russell Strach



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