About Dr. Thomas L. Quay...

Tom Quay is a “rare bird” among people who appreciate birds and all wildlife in general. More than 70 years ago, an impressionable 15 year-old boy watched and listened to a mourning dove and thought, “God, that’s beautiful.” That first experience began a journey that became Dr. Quay’s vocation and his lifelong passion.

He playfully calls himself “the old quack.” This is scarcely the case when one reads about the amazing work that he accomplished during his professional career as a professor in the Zoology Department at NC State and his tireless mentoring to students and wildlife professionals. Even in retirement, Dr. Quay has continued his mission of educating the public about the importance of natural habitats and the conservation of all species.

The Academic...

Dr. Quay received his PhD from NC State in 1948 and was invited to become a member of the Zoology Department where he remained until his retirement — 32 years later! Over the years he distinguished himself in the field of ornithology by his study of how birds adapted themselves to their habitats. He did vital work on the mourning dove, the Canada goose, the ring-necked pheasant, the wood duck, and various song birds. He was one of the first people in North Carolina to conduct detailed studies of the population levels of colonial waterbirds and the way they used their coastal island habitats. One of his early and most important works was a faunistic survey on the Cape Hatteras National Seashore soon after it became a national park.

The Teacher...

Few teachers have had such a profound effect on so many. Dr. Quay has influenced many students and volunteers during his professional career, and he continues to do so in his retirement. Those who know him as a teacher describe him as an extroverted, energetic educator who inspired them with his own enthusiasm and passion for his studies. He was a mentor to undergraduates and graduates, counseling them on their personal and professional lives and career choices. As a result, many of his students are now doing important work for wildlife and habitat conservation all over the country. They are quick to give credit to the man who ignited their interest and shaped their vision for this vital mission - Tom Quay.

The Commitment...

Since his retirement in 1980, Dr. Quay has served as a self-described “full-time volunteer and unpaid environmental activist” lobbying state agencies and legislators on behalf of a variety of conservation causes. He continues his zeal for educating the public about the importance of natural habitats and the conservation of all species.

While leading a three-day field course for wildlife enforcement officers studying 25 species of waterbirds that nest on North Carolina’s beaches and coastal islands, he provides younger generations of conservationists with the first-hand benefits of his sage expertise and admirable example of his passionate environmental activism.

“...When you watch birds, you become concerned with so much more. You start seeing nature as a whole. (One realizes that) We cannot survive without the natural systems. I think education must be the single biggest answer to our environmental problems.” Dr. Thomas Quay

Dr. Quay “steals” a fish from his little friend.
**Announcing the Creation of the**

**Thomas L. Quay**

**Wildlife and Natural Resources Undergraduate Experiential Learning Award**

Colleagues, friends, and former students established this endowment to honor Dr. Quay and commemorate his enthusiasm for wildlife, ornithology, and teaching that has marked his career.

**The Honors...**

In 1994 he was inducted into the NC Wildlife Federation's Conservation Hall of Fame. He was one of the first appointed members of the Wildlife Commission's Non-game Advisory Committee and is credited with being among the chief movers behind the passage of the Non-game and Endangered Species Act in 1986. He was an active member of over 20 state, regional, and national societies devoted to science and wildlife conservation management.

Dr. Quay was chairman for 53 graduate students and served on over 300 graduate committees.

**The Award...**

The endowment will provide support in perpetuity for students in environmental and natural resources curricula in the Department of Forestry and the Department of Zoology at NC State, specifically:

- Environmental Sciences - Ecology
- Fisheries and Wildlife Sciences
- Natural Resources - Ecosystem Assessment

The competitive award will be given to students who show strong leadership potential, high levels of academic achievement, and future promise. It is intended to enable undergraduates to participate in activities such as internships and field or lab-based research projects.

**For more information or to make a donation please call or write:**

Chris Cammaren-Wessel
CALS Foundations Office
Box 7645, NC State University
Raleigh, North Carolina 27695-7645
(919) 515-7678
Fax: (919) 515-5274
Email: chris_wessel@ncsu.edu
www.ncsu.edu/cals/foundation

**A brown pelican wears Dr. Quay’s trademark red hat.**