

IN MEMORIAM: NIKOLAAS TINBERGEN, 1907–1988

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In the death of Niko Tinbergen on 21 December 1988, we have lost a most distinguished scientist, dedicated teacher, and talented writer. Born on 15 April 1907, his career as a pioneer in the field of animal behavior led to a Nobel Prize in 1973. Sad to say, the co-winner of this prize, Konrad Lorenz, died earlier this year.

Tinbergen was first and foremost a field naturalist. His keen observations, ingenious experiments, and brilliant deductions brought the study of animal behavior out of sterile "white rat" laboratories into the natural world. His approach emphasized what at the time was a radical idea: that behavior can be an adaptation to an animal's environment and as such may be subject to evolution. He became a member of the AOU in 1938 and was elected Honorary Fellow in 1962.

In his professorships, first at Leiden and later at Oxford, he conveyed to his many students

the excitement of studying behavior in the field. These students, and the many ethologists whom he advised and helped, remember him with warmth and admiration.

I first met Tinbergen in the 1930s when he spoke to the Linnaean Society of New York. I was immediately impressed by his facility with words when he referred to the European settlers on Greenland as "sessile." His lucidly written books, "The Study of Instinct" (1951) and "Social Behaviour in Animals" (1953) are landmarks in the field of ethology, and "The Herring Gull's World" (1953) should be required reading for students of birds at all levels, both for the author's understanding of the birds and for the clarity of his writing.

Full-scale memorials are scheduled for publication this year in *Ibis* and *Ardea*. The latter is also to contain a list of his writings.