
1971: Murray F. Buell
1972: Frank B. Golley
1973: George M. Woodwell
1974: F. Herbert Bormann
1975: Larry C. Bliss
1976: Robert P. McIntosh
1977: William A. Niering
1978: Hal A. Mooney
1979: Larry L. Tieszen
1980: Phillip L. Johnson
1981: William A. Reiners
1982: Jerry F. Franklin
1983: John L. Harper
1984: Eville Gorham
1985: Gene Likens
1986: Park S. Nobel
1987: Simon A. Levin
1988: Edward S. Deevey
1989: Anthony D. Bradshaw
1990: Berrien Moore III
1991: Martyn Caldwell
1992: Jane Lubchenco
1993: Fakhri Bazzaz
1994: Thompson Webb III
1995: Walter C. Oechel
1996: F. Ian Woodward
1997: Jerry M. Melillo
1998: Boyd R. Strain
1999: G. David Tilman
2000: James R. Ehleringer
2001: Peter M. Vitousek
2002: Paul R. Ehrlich
2003: Stephen R. Carpenter
2004: F. Stuart Chapin
2005: Stuart Fisher
2006: Monica Turner
2007: Pamela Matson
2008: William H. Schlesinger
2009: Thomas E. Lovejoy
2011: Chris Field
2012 Margaret Palmer
2013 Norman L. Christensen
2015 John W. Terborgh

In the Succession of Professor Oosting

The 44th Annual
Henry J. Oosting
Memorial Lecture in Ecology

Food, Nature and Land in an Urbanizing World

Ruth S. DeFries
Denning Family Professor of Sustainable Development
in the Department of Ecology,
Evolution and Environmental Biology
Columbia University

4:30 p.m.
Thursday, March 24

Love Auditorium, Levine Science Research Center
Duke University

Light refreshments at 5:30 p.m.
Dr. Henry J. Oosting

Henry John Oosting (1903-1968) initiated the renowned program in plant ecology in Duke University’s Botany Department in 1932. During his 36 years on the faculty, 35 students received their Ph.D degrees under his guidance. Many of his students and their students in turn have gone on to develop successful plant ecology programs around the world.

Oosting’s own research was principally concerned with the structure and distribution of vegetation and with successional dynamics following disturbance of forested lands in North Carolina. He wrote the classic ecology text The Study of Plant Communities, co-authored a well-used spring flora of the Piedmont of North Carolina, and served the Ecological Society of America in many capacities including the presidency. A portion of Duke Forest has been designated as the Henry J. Oosting Natural Area, creating a living memorial to Henry Oosting.

We are forever grateful for his leadership in the establishment of plant ecology as a science and for the exceptional program he and his students developed here at Duke University. We also acknowledge the establishment of this memorial lecture series by Mrs. Cornelia Oosting, and we thank his many friends and students for contributions to its continuation.

Ruth S. DeFries

Ruth S. DeFries is a professor of ecology and sustainable development at Columbia University in New York. She uses images from satellites and field surveys to examine how the world’s demands for food and other resources are changing land use throughout the tropics. Her research quantifies how these land use changes affect climate, biodiversity and other ecosystem services, as well as human development. She has also developed innovative education programs in sustainable development. DeFries was elected as a member of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences, one of the country’s highest scientific honors, received a MacArthur “genius” award, and is the recipient of many other honors for her scientific research. In addition to over 100 scientific papers, she is committed to communicating the nuances and complexities of sustainable development to popular audiences, most recently through her book The Big Ratchet: How Humanity Thrives in the Face of Natural Crisis.