



Top: Ray Fosberg and Lynn Raulerson examine Marianas specimens at the Smithsonian Herbarium, 1991. Bottom: With Margie Cushing Falanruw on a collecting trip to Tinian, 1984.

**F. Raymond Fosberg  
1908–1993**

Pacific botany has, within the 1993–94 academic year, lost two of its most active scientists, Dr. F. Ray Fosberg and Dr. Benjamin C. Stone.

Ray Fosberg died at his home in Virginia on 25 September 1993 at the age of 85. Ray was originally from the United States west coast, and received a bachelor's degree in botany from Pomona College in 1930. He spent 1930–32 as a botanist with the Los Angeles County Museum, and participated in a botanical expedition to southern New Mexico in 1930; he published several papers following this trip, but had published his first scientific paper—on an ecological theme—in 1929. This pattern of jobs, trips and publications would be as true of the last years of his life as it was for his first academic years.

Ray came to the Pacific in 1932 with an assistantship to the University of Hawaii, and received his M.S. in botany in 1935; during his time there he participated in the Mangarevan Expedition and published a monograph on *Gouldia*, a plant of the family Rubiaceae. Although Ray was a consummate generalist, the Rubiaceae remained his “plant family of choice,” just as the Pacific became his special area of expertise. Ray received his Ph.D. in 1939 from the University of Pennsylvania and took a position with the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture. In 1942 he went to Colombia to search for *Cinchona*, a source of quinine much needed as an antimalarial drug during World War II. He returned to the Pacific in 1946 as a botanist for the six month “Economic Survey of Micronesia,” was a visiting professor at the University of Hawaii in 1948, and in 1949 did a study of Pacific island vegetation for the USGS and the Office of Naval Research. This study led to the publication in 1960 of *The Vegetation of Micronesia*, and to the founding of the *Atoll Research Bulletin*.

Ray published about taxonomy, phylogeny, ecology and biogeography. He moved to the Smithsonian Institute in 1966, and worked with Marie-Hélène Sacht, David R. Stoddard and Royce Oliver during his 27 years there. He traveled to Micronesia often, and contributed several articles about Micronesian plants to *Micronesica*. He received honorary doctorates from Pomona College, the University of Guam, the University of Peradeniya (Sri Lanka) and the University of the South Pacific, plus several awards and medals.

Much more could be said of his scientific work, participation in numerous professional and conservation societies and travels<sup>1</sup>—but the most valuable factor of Ray's work was his mentoring of younger colleagues. He was enthusiastic and always encouraged interest and rigor in observation and writing. Ray was a learned scholar and a good friend, and we will miss him.

—LYNN RAULERSON, UOG

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<sup>1</sup> A commemorative volume of *Atoll Research Bulletin* (nos. 390–396) does so.