



Byron Lamont Wins the Henry Wright Lifetime Achievement Award

The Association for Fire Ecology (AFE) is pleased to announce Dr. Byron Lamont has been awarded the 2022 Henry Wright Lifetime Achievement Award for his significant contributions to fire ecology and management in grasslands and shrublands.

Byron Lamont is Distinguished Professor Emeritus in Plant Ecology at Curtin University in Australia, which he joined in 1974, with sabbaticals in California (Senior Fulbright Award, Stanford), South Africa, Sweden and Germany. He is a world authority on the ecology of fire-prone sclerophyll shrublands/woodlands of the world's Mediterranean-climate regions. His first paper (1979) was on fire-stimulated flowering of grasstrees, with 90 citations. He pioneered research on canopy seed storage (serotiny) in the 1980s, postfire recruitment in the 1990s, postfire seed dispersal in the 2000s, and evolution of plants in relation to fire in the 2010s.

In 2022, he was ranked fifth most highly cited author among 23,000 researchers worldwide who published papers about fire in the period 2011-22 (by PubMed). His 2011 paper with Dr. Tianhua He, entitled "Banksia born to burn," set the scene

for subsequent wide-ranging papers on the fire-directed evolution of pines, graminoids, proteas, buckthorns, and terrestrial orchids. Currently, his 1991 review on serotiny has been cited 525 times, the 2011 review on fire-stimulated flowering 185 times, the 2013 review on resprouting almost 700 times. With Dr. Tianhua He and Professor Juli Pausas, their 2019 paper "Fire as a key driver of Earth's biodiversity" was cited 90 times in 2022 alone. His work over 45 years has shown beyond doubt that fire is an ancient disturbance that has had a profound effect on the evolution of plants throughout the world and thus has provided guidelines for the management of fire-prone floras.

"As a perusal of Professor Lamont's publications and related scientific products make clear, his work spans a lifetime and adds up to an impressively broad and deep body of work. The responses of species and vegetation to fire cannot be thoroughly understood without referring to the manifold works of Professor Lamont."

AFE honors career achievements in fire ecology and management by recognizing the pioneers and early advocates in our field. Each year, lifetime achievement awards are presented to individuals who have made significant contributions to fire ecology and management and who have inspired and mentored a generation of fire ecologists. The award for individuals who primarily work in grassland and shrubland ecosystems is named after Henry Wright of Texas Tech University. Henry's extensive research in prescribed fire, along with his extension programs and university courses, helped fire become an accepted management practice for controlling brush and weeds and for restoring grasslands.

A list of all Lifetime Achievement Award winners is available at <https://fireecology.org/afe-award-winners>.

About AFE

The Association for Fire Ecology (AFE) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the knowledge of fire ecology and uses of fire in resilient landscape management. Our members include scientists, educators, students, managers, practitioners, policymakers, and interested citizens. To learn more about AFE, visit www.fireecology.org.



Left: Byron Lamont in 2018. Right: Byron with Richard Cowling (right, from South Africa) in 1983 undertaking research on postfire recovery of serotinous banksias at Yardonogo Nature Reserve, 350 m north of Perth, Western Australia (both are now Distinguished Professors Emeritus at their respective universities)