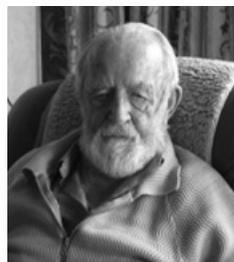


## NEW ZEALAND PLANT PROTECTION MEDAL

This medal is awarded by the New Zealand Plant Protection Society to honour those who have made exceptional contributions to plant protection in New Zealand in the widest sense. The medal is awarded for outstanding services to plant protection, whether through research, education, implementation or leadership.



Arthur Healy was awarded the New Zealand Plant Protection Medal for 2008. Arthur has been an outstanding botanist and, as such, has provided unparalleled service, not only to New Zealand botany, but also and more importantly to the plant protection industry. He was a one-man biosecurity organisation for many years, helping introduce and foster legislation aimed at weed control. Although for his entire career weed administration was about the protection of agricultural industries, he also documented the spread of many species that later became environmental weeds. Indeed Arthur was the first to recognise the seriousness of *Clematis vitalba* spread.

Arthur was first employed in the Botany Division of DSIR, and from there went to Massey Agricultural College, where he graduated with a B.Ag.Sc. On moving back to the Botany Division, Arthur's first major task was to survey the occurrence of nassella tussock in North Canterbury, a study that formed the basis of his M.Ag.Sc. thesis and a DSIR monograph, which is still the authoritative work on this weed.

Arthur was instrumental in establishing several pieces of legislation to effect control of weeds, including the Nassella Tussock Act of 1946 and the 1950 Noxious Weeds Act. As evidence of his lengthy involvement in this area, Arthur was also on the Fitzharris Committee of Enquiry into Noxious Weeds Administration, whose report formed the basis for the 1978 Noxious Weeds Act. He spent time investigating the methods by which seeds and fruit of weeds entered New Zealand by accident – on clothing or footwear, in agricultural produce and in machinery and tents imported from the Pacific war theatre. He published an article in Nature based on his experience of accidentally collecting seeds in the cuffs of his trousers.

Arthur was an inveterate collector, not only of plants but also of invertebrates and micro-organisms, and has several species named after him. His wide knowledge led to a stint in DSIR's Information Bureau in Wellington, and then he returned to Botany Division as Assistant Director. Arthur has published widely on identification of weeds, with his book entitled "Standard Common Names for Weeds in New Zealand" still in demand by botanists, industry and students. Arthur and Elizabeth Edgar completed Volume III of the Flora of New Zealand, a remarkable book that comments on the weedy characteristics of and problems caused by the species described.

As well as being an extremely worthy recipient of the New Zealand Plant Protection Medal, Arthur has received a MBE for services to agriculture, and is a life member of the Institute of Noxious Plants Officers (now the Biosecurity Institute) and the New Zealand Weed and Pest Control Society (now the NZ Plant Protection Society).