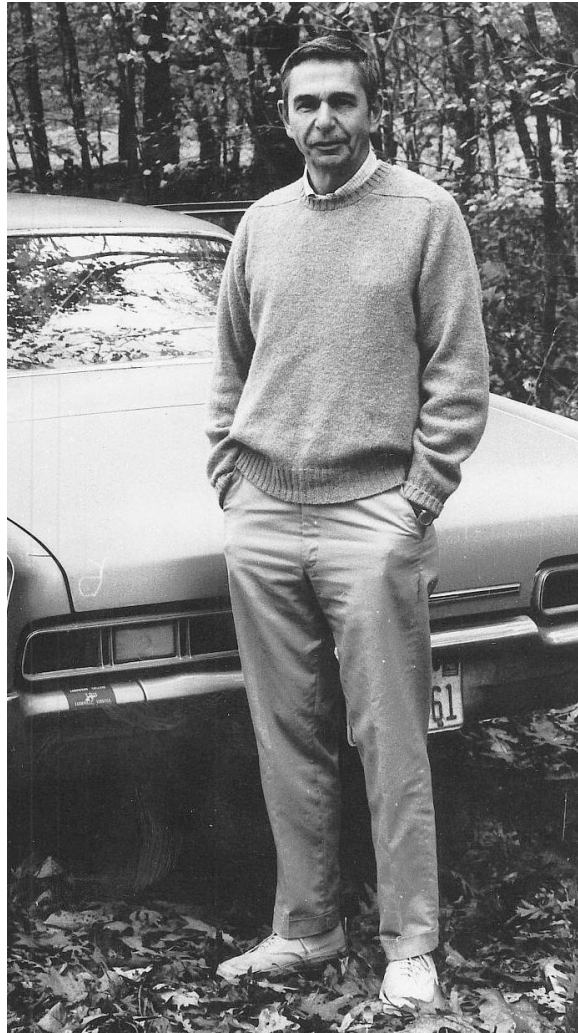


# BANISTERIA

A JOURNAL DEVOTED TO THE NATURAL HISTORY OF VIRGINIA



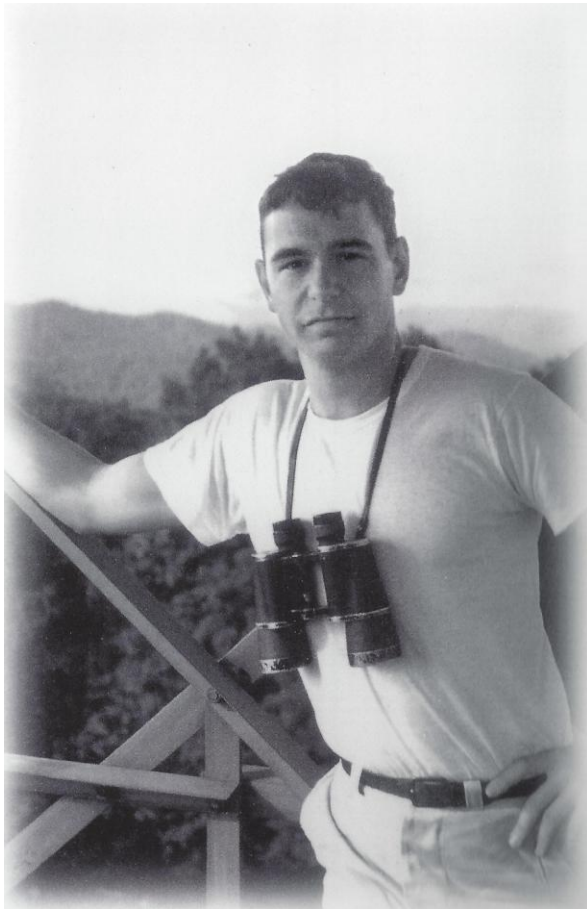
Charles E. "Mo" Stevens, Jr.  
(1926-2015)

A tribute to one of the finest amateur naturalists in Virginia during the past century, who was a major contributor to regional herbaria and coauthor of three atlases documenting the geographical distribution of plants in the Commonwealth, appears on pages 38-48 of this issue.

## Charles Elmo Stevens, Jr. (1926-2015) Tribute to a Naturalist

Thomas F. Wieboldt

155 Shady Grove Lane  
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Mo Stevens as a young birder. Photo by Bill Minor.

On October 7, 2015, we lost a stalwart of Virginia natural history in the passing of Mr. Charles E. (Mo) Stevens. Mo was born May 2, 1926, in Charlottesville, Va., to Charles Elmo and Hellen Goodyear Stevens. As a youth, he joined the Boy Scouts and attained the rank of Eagle Scout. He soon developed a keen interest in birds and began a lifetime of long treks in the countryside documenting the local avifauna, and later the plant life of the entire state of Virginia and

neighboring parts of West Virginia, with occasional visits to the more distant lands of Maine, Panama, and Ireland.

Mo graduated from Lane High School in 1943 and enlisted in the U.S. Army on September 4, 1944. He was assigned to the 102nd infantry division, nicknamed “Ozark”, which had been activated in September, 1942, at Camp Maxey, Texas. The division assisted with the war campaign in Rhineland and central Europe and returned in March, 1946. Mo served in the 407th infantry regiment which maintained the battle line along the Roer River near Linnich, Germany ([infantryozark.blogspot.com](http://infantryozark.blogspot.com)). Mo recounted that his unit was captured by the Germans very close to the end of the war. Apparently, he had some sort of field guide to birds with him in the trenches, as years later he humored his listeners with slightly differing versions of the story.

After the war, Mo returned to his beloved Albemarle County and entered the University of Virginia in 1947 majoring in geology, which not only fascinated him, but was, in later years, instrumental in his explorations for plants. In the years following, Mo established lifelong friendships with birders such as Fred Scott, Robert J. (“Jim Bob”) Watson, Bill (“Willie”) Minor, and Ken Lawless, some of whom served the Virginia Society of Ornithology for many years. The 1951 yearbook, *Cork & Curls*, lists his activities as Theta Delta Chi fraternity, Rogers Society and the “Cavalier Daily”, UVa’s student newspaper. He was very active with his fraternity, and the Rogers Society, named for famed 19th century geologist, physicist, and educator at the University of Virginia, William Barton Rogers, speaks to his study of geology.

In 1951, Mo married Sarah Todd Fletcher (“Toddy”), with whom he raised their three children at Preston Place in Charlottesville where he was visited by many botanists and birding friends.

Initially, Mo aspired to become a professional ornithologist but was discouraged by uninspiring biology instructors, so he turned to geology which also fascinated him (Field, 1978). Even many years later, he

spoke fondly of Brooks Hall and the geology collection housed there. Graduating with a degree in geology in 1951, with his young bride, he initially headed off to Texas where he worked for several years as a geologist exploring for oil (Field, 1978). He soon tired of the constant moving around, and by winter of 1956, he was back in Charlottesville. He worked as a cashier and trader at the Wiley & Thornhill brokerage firm (Minor *in* Gaden et al., 2010), where his talents of systematic organization and record-keeping found utility in the brokerage industry (and later at the University of Virginia Hospital Controller's Office, then the Department of Credit and Collections), but even more so in the field of natural history. His passion continued to be in the field making observations and forging connections between geology, physiography, vegetation, and the distributions of birds and plants.

In his late 40's, initially concerned that he was gaining weight, but also desiring to keep in shape for walking in the mountains, Mo took up long distance running which he approached with the same enthusiasm and dedication he brought to all his endeavors. He began running with the local running club, but it wasn't long before he was entering local 5K and 10K races. Initially, he didn't think he'd ever run a marathon, but at age 51, he ran in the Marine Corps Marathon with "the embarrassingly slow time of 4 hrs, 16 min." (CES to John Pancake, letter dated 11-14-1977). This was the first of quite a few marathons, and though he wasn't particularly fast, he always finished.

In the 1960s, Mo's interests shifted primarily to botany, forged in large part by his acquaintance with Dr. Alton M. Harvill, Jr., of Longwood College. Though his interest in birds never waned, the magnitude of the task of learning plants and working out their distributions consumed the remainder of his life. He was always eager to explore, and even after he wasn't able to drive, he never turned down an opportunity to go out in the field.

Mo was truly an autodidact, mastering the vocabularies of geology, ornithology, and botany. Outings with him were such fun because he shared his knowledge with generosity and modesty. He entertained with wit and whimsy and could discuss just about anything with authority. He was equally comfortable with professionals and novices alike, as everyone enjoyed his ever-questioning mind, numerous interests, and especially, his sense of humor. He was a prolific letter writer and the following accounts borrow heavily from this correspondence as a way of communicating the breadth of his curiosity and his ever present wittiness. In addition, several individuals who knew him well have generously communicated some of their recollections.

## MO, THE BIRDER

Mo taught himself birds at an early age which he pursued relentlessly with his good ears and sharp eyes and which he learned to identify by the least chirp. Warblers were abundant in his yard on 2nd Street in Charlottesville during migration, and he would leave his window open at night and listen to the calls of the warblers and other birds as they flew over. Importantly, he also recorded these observations assiduously in small, pocket-sized, black notebooks. He recounted that, as a boy, his father would drive him out into the county to a destination he wanted to bird, and he would walk back to town, or occasionally hitch a ride. Thus began a lifetime of long walks for which he became renowned. Through scouting, he became a close, life-long friend with Bill Minor with whom he would camp, backpack, and go birding. As a teenager, Mo published the first of many ornithological observations in *The Raven* in 1944, the sighting of a White Ibis along the Rivanna River at Charlottesville.

Mo and Bill were drafted into military duty, but both returned to Charlottesville after the war and attended the University of Virginia, picking up their birding together as time permitted. During his time away, another birder had moved to Charlottesville, Rev. John H. Grey, Jr., minister at the First Presbyterian Church. Rev. Grey spearheaded formation of Turkey Sag Bird Club, a name which Mo suggested. In 1946, Mo took over as compiler of the Charlottesville Christmas Bird Count. The following year, Turkey Sag hosted the Virginia Society of Ornithology's annual meeting. In 1949, with Rev. Grey, Mo published an article on the birds of Albemarle County (Minor *in* Gaden et al., 2010). From that time on, he became the keeper of all things ornithological in the county for the next sixty years! These records eventually resulted in publication of a checklist of birds of Albemarle County (Minor & Stevens, 1997, 2000). Mo also benefited from his association with prominent Virginia ornithologists Dr. Ruskin Freer and Dr. J.J. Murray, both founding members of the Virginia Society of Ornithology who regularly published their bird observations in *The Raven* which Murray edited for almost 40 years, and thus included most of Mo's bird sightings and reports.

From the beginning, Mo had a strong parochial interest in Albemarle County. To get more records for the county, he started two additional Christmas bird counts, the Warren Count in 1947 in southern Albemarle, and the Big Flat Mountain Count in the Blue Ridge along the county's northwestern border in 1956. The first year of each he was the only observer! During his college years, Mo expanded his birding

activities throughout the state by participating in Virginia Society of Ornithology forays and birding trips with Bill Minor and Fred Scott, in particular. Mo was particularly enamored with the avifauna of the high mountain regions, especially the spruce-fir areas but also the many isolated old growth hemlock stands with their immense trees spared from the saw due to the fact that tanneries were mostly in West Virginia, too far away to be profitable for this otherwise unmerchantable timber. Mo published his observations regularly through the 1960s, but this habit dropped off precipitously as his interest turned to botany in the late 1960s, and took over in the 1970s. Mo had a lifetime membership in the Virginia Society of Ornithology which he joined in 1944 (Raven 62(2):84).

#### MO, THE BOTANIST

As a young man, before becoming acquainted with any botanists, Mo got interested in ferns, undoubtedly spurred by Edgar T. Wherry's popular Guide to Ferns, which Mo cherished. A registry of membership indicates that he joined the American Fern Society in 1961 (Fiddlehead Forum 1(4) - 1974).

From his early days of birding, Mo had become acquainted with and was a strong admirer of Dr. Ruskin S. Freer, a professor at Lynchburg College. Dr. Freer wrote a weekly column, "The Rambler", for the Lynchburg News, and Mo subscribed to the Sunday paper just to read his nature column. When Dr. Alton Harvill of Longwood College learned from Dr. Freer of Mo's familiarity with remote parts of the Virginia landscape, he wrote a letter of introduction. Within a few months they had arranged a foray together, initiating a friendship that lasted until Dr. Harvill passed away in 2008 (Wright, 2011). Thus began an association that took them all over Virginia as well as to the Smithsonian Institution and Philadelphia Academy of Sciences where Mo searched for "new" county records of Virginia ferns and other plants as time permitted.

After a Botany Section was formed within the Virginia Academy of Sciences by approval of its Council in October, 1969, a Flora Committee was formed with Dr. Harvill as chair, and he was eager to get Mo involved. Dr. Harvill introduced a project to produce an atlas of the plants of Virginia with the idea of eventually producing a manual of the state's flora, a model successfully employed by botanists from the University of North Carolina. He convened a meeting in November at Lynchburg College to form guidelines for publication of a Virginia flora. Towards this end, certain individuals volunteered to work on particular plant groups and to collect from various regions of the

state. These are outlined in the January 1970 issue of *Jeffersonia* in which C.E. Stevens is listed as the contributor for Pteridophyta to collect in "Albemarle Co. west, southwest, & northwest." (Newsletter, VAS Flora Committee 4(1):1-4). Mo met the task of mapping Virginia's pteridophyte flora head on. Building on the wealth of knowledge he'd acquired from rambling all over the state in search of birds, observing geology and vegetation, he was primed to contribute at a staggering pace. He quickly gained a reputation beyond the birding circles for his marathon walks into remote areas often over very rugged terrain. As with birds, it was to the mountain region that he initially turned his focus, but he soon expanded efforts to all parts of the state. He collected geological maps and Division of Mineral Resources publications that provided insights into correlations between plants and their geologic substrates, clues to finding species in counties where they hadn't yet been recorded. USGS topographic maps were cheap (\$0.25) initially, and he poured over them searching for interesting topographies and planning long walks. He eventually had 7.5" maps for most of the state on which he recorded the exact locations of many species that interested him. The accuracy with which he was able to place an "x" on his map is legendary. Botanists and ecologists relocating some of his finds in later years after the use of GPS devices became routine, found that they could not mark his records any more accurately.

Mo's passionate interest in ferns deserves further mention. He was especially taken with fern hybrids, particularly the genus *Dryopteris*. He corresponded with well-known pteridologists Herb Wagner, Charlie Werth, and Murray Evans among others, supplying them with specimens and seeking their assistance in naming some puzzling specimens. Whenever a chance presented itself, he took both professional and amateur botanists to some of his favorite populations, rarely coming away without collecting more fronds himself which he sent to other herbaria in the region.

Mo was a prolific collector of all kinds of vascular plants, most of which he sent to Alton Harvill at Longwood College (later Longwood University) where a notable collection was being amassed. During his peak collecting years, he was also running regularly which became a cause of concern as mentioned in a letter to Alton Harvill:

"My field work stays apace of recent years, but my identification & labeling has bogged down, & I have a huge accumulation of plants stacked around the house. At least our insulation is good. The reason is that when I come home from running 6-10 miles a day after work I eat supper & then have little energy

except to read until bedtime. Meanwhile my correspondence & plant cataloguing languish. I have got to get going soon. (CES to AMH, June 13, 1975)”

Every visitor to the Stevens home at 615 Preston Place recalls the floor and dining room table stacked with plant specimens, plant manuals, maps, and his collecting ledger laid about, the space completely unusable for its otherwise intended purpose. If you stayed for dinner, you would join him and Toddy in the living room with your dinner on your lap, his good wife trying over and over to turn the conversation in a different direction with temporary success at best. He meticulously recorded his collections in ledgers, his numbers being in excess of 27,000 by September 1997, his last entry. The zeal for collecting did not diminish, however, and he continued to collect specimens for another ten years! His contributions to the herbarium at Longwood were so numerous and phytogeographically significant that the university eventually named the collection the Harvill-Stevens Herbarium at Longwood University. Mo also donated specimens to every major herbarium in Virginia and to others outside the state and region. In an introductory chapter of the Flora of Virginia, Dr. Donna Ware describes his efforts as follows:

“The Atlas also benefitted from the extraordinary expertise and high-volume collecting of Charlottesville native Charles E. (Mo) Stevens, who, though not a botanist by profession, brought to his explorations a keen eye for topography and insatiable curiosity about plants. Famous for letting suggestive place names, geologic formations, and topographic signals lead him to botanical hot spots, Stevens bought 7.5’ topo quadrangles of the state and walked, climbed, or crawled into some of the most formidable habitats and inaccessible regions in Virginia.” (Weakley et al., 2012).

Mo’s collections included scores<sup>1</sup> of species new to Virginia, and in correspondence, Alton Harvill, in typical dry humor, bemoaned the fact that Mo was rapidly making his maps obsolete.

<sup>1</sup>“scores” was a favorite word that Mo used frequently on his specimen labels.

<sup>2</sup>The scientific name for our white-barked birches is somewhat controversial and unsettled. Mo referred to paper birch as *Betula papyrifera*, though genetic studies later suggested that there were two species, and that birches in our region were *Betula cordifolia* instead. This problem is still under study.



Alton Harvill and Mo Stevens near Cressy Creek, Sugar Grove, Smyth County, Virginia, December, 1975. Photo by Doug Ogle.

When Mo got interested in a particular plant species, his searches were nearly exhaustive. Two such species that come to mind are exemplary - paper birch<sup>2</sup> and Porter’s reedgrass, *Calamagrostis porteri*. Mo found paper birch in Albemarle County early on, and with it a population of Canada bunchberry, *Cornus canadensis*, a rare northern species previously unrecorded in Virginia (Stevens, 1968). This sparked a search for more birches which he quickly discovered were associated with talus and scree slopes on Erwin Quartzite along the western flank of the Blue Ridge. He also discovered that the white bark of these trees could be spotted through binoculars from more than a mile away in winter. Unencumbered by collecting during the off-season, he would take very long, all day walks, sometimes accompanied by a friend, scanning the opposing slopes for birch populations. His telltale collections from these explorations consisted of a winter twig and a swatch of the unmistakable bark. He eventually mapped out every population in the Blue Ridge of Virginia and a few in the Alleghany ridges to the west. He left unfinished a nearly complete manuscript detailing the distribution and ecology of this species at or near the southern limits of its distribution in the eastern United States (an effort





Mo Stevens at paper birch station on the north side of Trayfoot Mountain, Rockingham County, Virginia, February 14, 1976. Note his characteristic winter attire. Photo by Gordon Webster.

is underway to publish this important work posthumously).

*Calamagrostis porteri* is a species that often forms extensive, non-flowering clones in the mountains of Virginia. When Mo learned of its identity, A.B. Massey's *Virginia Flora* (Massey, 1961) listed the species with the notation "G.M.8" indicating that Virginia was within the general range as described in Gray's Manual, 8th edition, no specific counties being known for Virginia. To make it more intriguing, the species appeared on a list of potential endangered species for the Northeast Region by the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Endangered Species Program (Ripley, 1975). Apparently, the species was largely overlooked due to its infrequent flowering and display of identifying features. Mo soon learned to recognize it in vegetative condition and proceeded to document the species from nearly every mountain county in the state. He also made a point of walking south along Cumberland Mountain in the hopes of finding it new to Kentucky. It took more than one trip, however, to secure the flowering material that he figured would be necessary to convince Kentucky botanists. He once told me that, if I came back to my car while out botanizing and found a vegetative stem of *Calamagrostis porteri* tucked under my windshield wiper, I would know that he'd been by. He got just that chance some years later when we were on a fern society foray to northern Alabama. Mo was up early eager to get out and explore the acid ridgetops of Cheaha State Park. When I ventured out sometime later wondering where he'd gone, there was the grass tucked under my windshield

wiper, a new record for Alabama!

Mo was particularly keen on discovering the eastward distribution of montane species that dribble out onto the Piedmont from their mountain stronghold. This interest was likely sparked by an article published in the *Journal of the Elisha Mitchell Scientific Society* by James W. Hardin and Arthur W. Cooper in 1967 entitled, "Mountain Disjuncts in the Eastern Piedmont of North Carolina." Not only did Mo correspond with Dr. Hardin about some of these records, but tucked inside the issue where the article appeared was his own list of Virginia mountain disjuncts dated 10-31-74. In addition to north slopes of small Piedmont mountains, Mo also walked many miles of its rivers and creeks checking north-facing bluffs where such outliers were to be found. He loved to talk about this and compare notes. His recall of exactly where the easternmost populations of many species could be found was legendary among field botanists.

Other notable species on the Piedmont, such as scrub oak, occurred more locally and were found more by serendipity than anything else. The following illustrates his fascination with this species, as well as the fact that such distribution patterns had been noticed 200 years earlier by Thomas Jefferson.

"That's interesting that Jefferson didn't miss the *Quercus ilicifolia* - in fact, apparently he didn't overlook much of anything. I never saw scrub oak in downtown Milton [eastern Albemarle not far from Shadwell, home of Jefferson's father, Peter Jefferson], but it's scattered along the roadbanks by the Milton airport, the bluffs of an adjacent creek, & S along the road to Nix. Also the Buck Island Creek "barrens" is probably a reference to the population along the side of rte #53 E of Nix and .9 mile N of the Buck Is. Creek bridge. This knowledge was gained in spite of not hanging around Hierom Gaines' shop." (CES to TFW, March 3, 1981)

Mo belonged to a number of botanical organizations which he joined, in large part, to subscribe to their journals. He generally purchased a lifetime membership. He was also a member of the Jefferson Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society which he joined in 1990 (Phil Stokes, pers. comm.).

#### ANECDOTES AND RECOLLECTIONS OF THE NATURALIST

Mo Stevens' interests in natural history were diverse, and he made anecdotal observations of all sorts of organisms. He became a member of the Virginia Natural History Society in 1993, the year following its formation as an organization.

As has been said before, Mo Stevens was well-liked by all who had occasion to spend time with him. He was an eager explorer, always ready to get out into the field. As with anyone who is passionate, he was not without some idiosyncrasies, but in his case they were more amusing than annoying. In his later years, Mo made many trips, especially to Southside Virginia with retired forest pathologist, Tom Dierauf, who shared the following recollection.

“Mo had an unusual, often wry, sense of humor, and was constantly commenting on things he saw. He also had a number of amusing habits. He was addicted to Doctor Pepper - I’m not sure I ever saw him drink water in the field. He had a small, beat up cooler chest in which he carried his Doctor Pepper and a sandwich that Toddy made for him. His cooler was just long enough to accommodate 20 ounce bottles of Doctor Pepper, and when the company discontinued this size bottle it presented a crisis for Mo. I remember spending considerable time driving him around looking for stores that still carried this size bottle, and when he found a store in Dillwyn that had them, we made many trips there. The final solution was to buy the big bottles but pour them into 20 ounce bottles that he had saved. Even after his stroke, Mo could often be found at home nursing a glass of Doctor Pepper.” (TD, pers. comm., 1-27-2016)

Also from Tom Dierauf:

“The loggers were fascinated by Mo. The only reason most of them went into the woods was to cut trees or hunt, and the idea of a grown man, dressed in a sports coat, walking in the woods all day looking for plants seemed a bit strange. At the same time, they liked Mo and tried to be helpful, telling him where he might find wetlands, seepy areas, unusually big trees, and so forth.” (TD, pers. comm., 2010)

Mo often wore a tweed sports coat in the field, especially in cooler weather, sometimes also with a thin, crew-neck sweater underneath. This was a bit unusual for this day and time, but it probably seemed natural and practical for a former fraternity man at The University, especially since his father managed an elite men’s clothing store on the Corner (the Stevens-Shepherd Company) directly across the street from the UVa central campus where coat and tie was standard attire. “Old school” manners were also important to him. He always appreciated it when younger people addressed him as Mr. Stevens and answered, “Yes, sir” to his inquiries. But he wasn’t at all pretentious and quickly dropped the formalities around his birding and botanist colleagues. But he clung to old ways while they were still practical. When gas stations first started

the practice of self-serve, he would drive across town to fill up the tank at a gas station where they still pumped the gas for you and cleaned your windshield. As times changed, prices and the cost of services increased. He thought about this a lot, I found, when he asked me what cost had, in my opinion, gone up the most over the years. His well thought out opinion was a haircut which he figured now cost something like 20 times what it had from his earliest memory.

Words and their proper use were important to Mo, and his library included many dictionaries and other reference works on word use, historically and regionally. He never seemed to let the improper use of a word go by without comment, either in conversation or on paper. Place names and surnames were also frequent subjects of conversation. The following letter will illustrate this engaging and often humorous aspect of his personality.

CES to Doug Ogle, Aug. 13, 1991

Dear Doug,

Congratulations! Your assiduous (pun intended) research paid off in tracking down the original & correct name of the now euphemized “Big A Mtn.” It is interesting that my Oxford English Dictionary regards “ass” as vulgar & dialectal for “arse”, but does not say that the latter is so. “Arse” comes from Teutonic languages, and even Greek & Hittite, with a citation from English writing as late as 1880. My Random House Dictionary considers “arse” slang or vulgar, even if the British don’t.

Evidently “political correctness” came to the U.S. Geological Survey early this century. I wonder what oldtimers in the Buchanan-Tazewell area called the mountain? We shall have to form a committee to bring back the older name.

Keep up the good research, & thanks for your note.

Best regards,  
Mo

[An older edition of the 15’ topographic map shows “Big Arse Mountain” whereas later 15’ maps refer to the same feature as “Big AMountain”.]

Mo’s legacy will reside in his thousands of bird records and plant specimens, but while memories last, his zeal for exploring will be cherished by his field companions. To give a better sense of Mo’s enthusiasm, a few more excerpts may be instructive. Chip Morgan, an ophthalmologist who took up natural history as a retiree, and who took Mo all over the countryside during the last decade of Mo’s field days, has the

following recollection.

He would go anywhere as long as it was in the woods. Tough terrain was no problem. Don't let Mo out of sight because it is your responsibility to hang on. Witness hunting white birch - scrambling down scree slopes, crawling under laurel, climbing any elevation. One had to be prepared for the challenge because that is what you got. (CM, pers. comm., 2-01-2016)

Mo's correspondence provides additional examples of his exploits and the wonderful way he describes them. To wit:

On the beautiful day that followed (Sunday) I climbed Elliott Knob [Augusta County] with Geo. St. John [Charlottesville lawyer]. We ascended via the eastern route (Falls Branch) to the summit rather than take the route from the north col, which was used by the ill-fated French party. Not establishing a base camp, we gambled & did not take crampons for the first icefall. However, it turned out that we didn't need them after all. The downed timber was hell to negotiate, though. (CES to TFW, 5-04-1980; note added)

Last Saturday (June 21) I got in the mail, from Janet Partridge of the Nature Conservancy, a copy of a Unique Ecosystem Report on Panther Knob, along with a copy of Core's 1952 Wildflower article. Receipt of this, plus outstanding weather, caused me to cancel my previous trip plans for the next day & substitute Panther Knob. After the fairly short, but strenuous, ascent from the gap on the W side I made the summit of the knob and met with a big black rattler in the open rocks by the fallen triangulation tower, & was rattled at. This encounter caused me to mince around the huckleberries for a while, but I soon got my old bravado back & was crashing & blundering as usual.... Like Core's party, at one point I had to resort to tree climbing to get my bearings, however, I couldn't see over the other vegetation, so I had to dismiss the specters of Frog Level & Riven Rock & trust my built-in compass, which turned out to be adequate [reference to localities in Caroline and Highland counties where CES & TFW had gotten sufficiently "turned around" to be quite memorable!]. (CES to TFW, 6-27-1980; note added)

While birds, plants, geology, and phytogeography were Mo's primary interests, he also made anecdotal observations of other natural history subjects.

When I began pressing my Prince Edward plants at home in the living room last week, I noticed the *Chrysosplenium* move several times. Investigation of this peculiar activity revealed a tiny 1-inch

salamander which I plopped into a juice glass of shallow water with a piece of paper napkin in it. I have since transferred him to less sterile & more agreeable quarters in another juice glass with a rock, two leaves & a modest amount of grit. At this point I have still not been able to identify it. He, or she, is sandy gray, has no lungs (which would probably be handy for running up hills) & is translucent. With a hand lens one can see his little red heart (104-107 beats per min.), his aorta & part of his G.I. tract. I hope the apparent lack of genitalia is no more of a handicap than the lack of lungs. (CES to TFW, 4-15-1982)

### HONORS AND AWARDS

In recognition of his outstanding efforts and lifetime accomplishments, Mo was recognized on several occasions. As has been mentioned, his prolific herbarium specimens were sent primarily to Longwood College joining the equally numerous collections of Alton Harvill. In August 1985, the herbarium was officially named the Harvill-Stevens Herbarium honoring its chief contributors. Documentation of this event was signed by both men (Wells, 2015).

Mo was one of the recipients of the 1993 Donald and Minnie Windler Award presented to authors of the best systematic botany paper published in *Castanea* during the previous year, "Vascular flora of the James River Gorge watersheds in the central Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia" (Ramsey et al., 1993).

In 2014, the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors recognized Mo for his lifetime achievements which benefited the county as well as the Commonwealth. The statement is reproduced below:

Albemarle County Board of Supervisors Meeting,  
November 12, 2014

#### ATTACHMENT 2 RECOGNITION

WHEREAS, Charles E. "Mo" Stevens has made many significant contributions to ornithology in Albemarle County, including his annotated checklist of birds of Albemarle County, which was a "milestone in ornithological history of Albemarle County" (The Birds of Albemarle County and Charlottesville Virginia, p. 1); and

WHEREAS, Mo made remarkably extensive discoveries in botany in Albemarle and throughout the state, and added over 25,000 specimens to the Longwood Herbarium (now the Harvill-Stevens Herbarium) and was a significant contributor to the recently published Flora of Virginia (Flora of Virginia, p.19); and



WHEREAS, Mo's participation with the Biodiversity Workgroup, as well as his explorations and remarkably extensive notes, have been invaluable to the County by documenting many of our most special places and species; and

WHEREAS, Mo served as a mentor to some of the Commonwealth's most respected field specialists;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors recognizes and honors the considerable life achievements of Charles E. "Mo" Stevens as a citizen, scientist and naturalist who has greatly deepened our understanding of the natural world in Albemarle County and the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Signed and sealed this 12th day of November, 2014.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to acknowledge generous personal communications from Tom Dierauf, Chip Morgan, and an anonymous individual. Their thoughtful recollections helped to "flesh out" the character traits of this remarkable man, and to stimulate my own personal recollections from the many days I was privileged to share with Mo exploring rock outcrops, forests, fields, swamps, and yes, plenty of rhododendron hells.

Thanks to Ryan S. Mays for providing citations of articles Mo published in *The Raven*, journal of the Virginia Society of Ornithology.

A special thanks to Mo's family for allowing access to his correspondence. These letters and those of other members of the Virginia Botanical Associates (VBA) are now preserved in the VBA Archive at the Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library at the University of Virginia.

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<sup>3</sup>Alton Harvill is known to have sought assistance from Mo Stevens in writing the introductory chapters which appear in *Atlas of the Virginia Flora, Part I* (1978). No authorship is indicated in the publication, but the familiarity with numerous places mentioned, coupled with the fact that he collected plants from all of them, strongly suggests that Mo Stevens authored the chapters on Physiography and Geologic History and Vegetation Types and Plant Communities.

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