

Glover Morrill Allen

President

Glover M. Allen, son of Reverend Nathaniel Allen and Harriet Ann (Sehouler) Allen, was born on 8 February 1879, in Walpole, New Hampshire. He developed a keen interest in natural history at an early age and by the time he was in high school had become an expert in bird identification and an authority on local mammals. He attended Harvard College on a John Harvard Scholarship, was elected to Phi Beta Kappa in his junior year, and graduated magna cum laude in 1901. He remained at Harvard for graduate studies, receiving an A.M. in 1903 and a Ph.D. in 1904. His doctoral thesis was on the heredity of pelage color in mice. In addition to scientific subjects, he studied several foreign languages and acquired broad knowledge of classical European and Russian literature. He was married in 1911 to Sarah Moody Cushing, and they had one daughter, Elizabeth Cushing Allen (Mrs. Arthur Gilman).

Upon receiving his doctorate, he was appointed Secretary, Librarian, and Editor of the Boston Society of Natural History. He returned to the Harvard Graduate School in 1906 and 1907 and in the latter year began work on the mammal collections of the Museum of Comparative Zoology. In 1924, he became Lecturer in Zoology at Harvard and Curator of Mammals in the Museum of Comparative Zoology, where he remained for the remainder of his career.

His research involved both mammals and birds. He had a keen interest in the fauna of New England and also conducted research in the Bahamas, Labrador, Africa, West Indies, Brazil, and Australia. Although small and slight of build, he had unusual stamina and capacity for work when in the field. His mammal research was primarily concerned with taxonomy and distribution, and he also published a number of papers on fossil sirenians, cetaceans, and bats. Among his major contributions were the books *Bats*, *Checklist of African Mammals*, *Mammals of China and Mongolia*, and *Extinct and Vanishing Mammals of the Western Hemisphere with Marine Species of all Oceans*. His ornithological work included *The Birds of Massachusetts* coauthored with R. H. Howe, Jr., and *Birds and Their Attributes*. He also published numerous distributional records and regional checklists of birds and was a prolific reviewer of ornithological works.

He was a charter and life member of the ASM and, in addition to the presidency, was Vice-president, a Director, and member of a number of standing committees. The Life Histories and Ecology, Conservation of Land Mammals, and Nomenclature committees were established during his presidency. He was a Fellow of the American Ornithologists' Union and Editor of the *Auk* and also served as Editor of the *American Naturalist* and Secretary and President of the Nuttall Ornithological Club.

Glover Allen was known for his modest nature, kindly presence, diplomacy, and accessibility to all who wished his advice or help. Although not given to "hearty camaraderie," as one of his friends put it, when encouraged he would greatly entertain listeners with whimsical and humorous tales of his travels, often enhancing his accounts with appropriate quotes drawn from his vast knowledge of literature. W. M. Tyler (1943) cited an example of Allen's ability to

come up with a quote from the classics to fit the occasion. After they had gone to bed in a hotel on Cape Cod after a day in the field, someone in the room above tramped heavily across the floor. Allen, nearly asleep, muttered: "The Wild Ass stamps o'er his Head, but cannot break his Sleep." Glover Allen died on 14 February 1942 in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Obituaries

Barbour, T., B. Lawrence, W. E. Schevill, S. L. Washburn, and M. B. Cobb. 1943. Glover Morrill Allen 1879–1942. *Journal of Mammalogy*, 24:297–304.

Tyler, W. M. 1943. In memorium: Glover Morrill Allen. *Auk*, 60:163–168.