Robert Helmer Macarthur Encyclopedia Article

Robert Helmer Macarthur

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Robert Helmer Macarthur

1930-1972

Canadian-born American ecologist who developed quantitative models in ecology—measuring relationships between the number of species and the size of habitat. Born in Toronto, Canada, MacArthur moved to the United States when he was 17 to study mathematics. While working toward his Ph.D at Yale University, he made an unusual choice by changing his major to zoology. He later became professor of biology at Princeton in 1965.