

Rachel Carson Memorial Lecture 2009

Birds and Pesticides

Is the threat of a
Silent Spring really
behind us?

A lecture by
Dr. Pierre
Mineau

with Food,
wine and
music...

From 7pm
2nd December 09
SOAS, London

for more details and to buy tickets go to

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In the minds of most people, the conflict between birds and pesticide use was resolved when developed countries agreed to phase out DDT and other persistent organochlorine pesticides. Unfortunately, the products that replaced these early pesticides have not been kind to birds either. Even in developed countries, birds on farmland and in forests have continued dying in tens of millions when exposed to the short-lived neurotoxic products that replaced organochlorines. Although some governments, notably in the UK, acted quickly to restrict the use of the most damaging pesticides, many still in use continue to take a heavy toll on birds worldwide. In the 2009 Rachel Carson Memorial Lecture, Pierre Mineau will describe the highs and lows of the ongoing struggle to protect our feathered friends from the ravages of modern pest control.

Dr. Pierre Mineau

Pierre Mineau conducts research on pesticides for Canada's federal department of the environment at the National Wildlife Research Centre in Ottawa. He also serves as an adjunct research professor at Carleton University in Ottawa and at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon, guiding graduate students engaged in environmental research.



Dr. Mineau began his career in 1978 studying the effects of persistent organochlorine compounds on birds - one thrust of the Canada-U.S. International Joint Commission's Great Lakes Contaminants Program. For a 12-year period, he was responsible for assessing new and existing pesticides in Canada to determine their impacts on wildlife. In 1994, when Canada's new Pest Management Regulatory Agency took over that function, he moved from regulatory reviews to full-time research on pesticide impacts.

Working with international collaborators, Dr. Mineau adopts a range of approaches to deepen his analyses of bird population trends in response to various patterns of pesticide use. He also studies risk assessment methodology, how agricultural practices affect wildlife more generally, and the ecological value of birds in cropland. He has written more than 100 peer-reviewed publications and has authored some 200 presentations. He has been a consultant on pesticide impacts to several international agencies as well as governmental and non-governmental organizations in Canada and abroad.



Photo: Brooks Studio, Courtesy of the Lear/Carson Collection, Connecticut College.

Who is Rachel Carson?

In 1962 Rachel Carson's ground-breaking book *Silent Spring* warned of the dangers of indiscriminate pesticide use. Its profound influence is credited with the foundation of the modern environmental movement. Trained as a zoologist, Rachel Carson worked as a scientist, editor and finally editor-in-chief of the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

She built up a picture of the devastating impact of synthetic chemical pesticides on certain species, notably birds of prey. Criticised by the chemical industry and some in

government, she continued to point out the direct threat that pesticides may pose to human health. As a gifted writer, she transformed scientific research into lyric prose for the lay public. *Silent Spring* challenged the profligate use of chemical pesticides and called for a change in attitude to the natural world. She has been voted one of the 50 most important scientists of the 20th century with *Silent Spring* listed the second most important piece of 20th century journalism.


PAN UK's annual Rachel Carson Memorial Lecture is an opportunity to celebrate her work through the promotion of public understanding of the dangers of pesticides and examination of issues affecting pesticide use.

PAN UK

is an independent, non-profit organisation. We work nationally and internationally with like-minded groups and individuals concerned with health and the environment. We promote healthy food, sustainable agriculture and an environment which will provide food and meet public health needs without dependence on toxic chemicals and without harm to food producers and agricultural workers.

PAN UK believes it is possible to eliminate the use of hazardous pesticides, to reduce dependence on pesticides and to increase the sustainable alternatives to chemical pest control in agriculture, urban areas, public health and homes and gardens.

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Programme

This year's event will be held on Wednesday 2nd December at the Brunei Gallery, School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) Thornhaugh Street, London, WC1H 0XG. (near Euston Station)

The lecture begins at 7.00pm followed by a buffet, organic wine and music.

Booking Tickets

Tickets £22.00 , £11.00 for students or £32.00 including a trial year subscription to Pesticides News (normal price £25.00), for new subscribers only.

- book online via our website at www.pan-uk.org;
- order from the PAN UK office, tel: 020 7065 0905, email: admin@pan-uk.org; or
- complete the booking form below and send it to PAN UK

Tickets will be sent out from October.



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