

Kenneth Allan Neil, of Sheffield Mills, Kings County, Nova Scotia, passed away peacefully surrounded by his loving family on 5 July 2011 in Valley Regional Hospital, Kentville, after a courageous battle with cancer. Born on 29 October 1952, in Halifax, he was the son of the late Walter and Dorothy (Flynn) Neil.

Ken's lifelong passion was entomology. As an aspiring entomologist he was actively involved with the Young Linnaeans, a youth group run by Pierre Tashereau at the Nova Scotia Museum. At the Museum he met entomologists such as Douglas C. Ferguson, Barry Wright, and Philip S. Ward with whom he remained friends and corresponded throughout his career. Ken maintained a wide circle of contacts with Lepidopterists such as Don Lafontaine at the Canadian National Collection of Insects, with whom he corresponded and exchanged specimens.

He graduated from Dalhousie University in 1975 with a BSc in Biology, followed by studies at Carleton University in Ottawa, before returning to Dalhousie to obtain his PhD in 1981. This was followed by a postdoctoral fellowship at Simon Fraser University in Burnaby, British Columbia. Ken also followed his entomological interests abroad on a number of field collecting expeditions which took him to Guyana, Surinam, Trinidad, Ecuador, and Colombia.

Ken published papers on both Lepidoptera and Coleoptera and described both *Agrotis arenarius* Neil 1983 and *Orgyia leucostigma sablensis* Neil 1979. He had a particular interest in the larvae of Lepidoptera, reared many species, recorded host plant information, and published descriptions of nine species of larvae. Over the years Ken amassed a large personal collection of approximately 15 000 Lepidoptera specimens. There are plans to donate this collection in the future to the Nova Scotia Museum.

For many years Ken worked at the Kentville Research Station on various projects for fruit and vegetable growers. While there he worked particularly closely with Harold B. Specht on biocontrol studies. He also identified marine invertebrates for the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and was a part-time lecturer at St. Mary's University for several years. In later years Ken became interested in Coleoptera and worked on contracts for Acadia University helping to identify saproxylic beetles. He developed a particular interest in tiger beetles and received assistance from the Nova Scotia Museum to better document their distribution in the province, discovering two new species for the Nova Scotian fauna in the process. Ken was also a past employee of Hillaton Foods and Nova-Agri.

He is survived by his wife, Irene (Belliveau) Neil, as well as their children, David, Dartmouth, and Denise (Justin) Longley, Toronto. Also surviving are Ken's brother, William (Joan) of Lower Sackville; his sisters, Cathy (Laurie Browning) Riley, Lumby, British Columbia and Heather (Andre) Belanger, Timberlea; two nephews, two nieces, two great-nephews and one great-niece. Ken's hobby was military modeling and painting miniature figures and he spent many happy hours diligently working on his creations.

Ken continued his research on insects, and wrote online entomological articles until the final stages of his illness. Ken's long-interest in the entomology of Nova Scotia, and his particular love of Lepidoptera, have had an enduring impact on the knowledge of insects of the province. His enthusiasm for collecting moths never flagged over the many years of his activity, and he will be missed by the many entomologists with whom he collaborated and who he assisted over the years.

Christopher Majka, Halifax



Kenneth Allan Neil
(1952–2011)