

We owe the natural beauty amidst which we live at this University to the vision and efforts of many; our awareness of that beauty, and indeed of our natural heritage at its widest, we owe to no one more than John K. Terres.

A paternal grandfather was from Charlotte, and John Terres, though himself a native of Philadelphia, has spent considerable parts of his life in this state. He was educated at what is now Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Cornell, and New York University, and worked for some years as a civil engineer before becoming a field biologist with the Department of Agriculture. Following army service in World War II he turned to writing about nature; and in the succeeding forty years as editor, reviewer, and author he has been one of the nation's most prominent figures in his chosen field. For over a decade he edited Audubon Magazine, and was later editor-in-chief for the twelve-volume Audubon Nature Encyclopedia (1964-5). Some years of living in this town were marked by his loving book about Mason Farm entitled From Laurel Hill to Siler's Bog: the Walking Adventures of a Naturalist (1969), which won the John Burroughs medal in 1971.

His greatest achievement, it is generally agreed, is the Encyclopedia of North American Birds, published in 1980 after twenty-odd years of preparation. Despite its size and scope, it is not a collaborative work. John Terres wrote every one of the six thousand entries himself. Widely considered the greatest American bird book since John J. Audubon's Birds of America (1827), Terres's encyclopedia has become the standard reference source on its subject.

Combining the eye of a close and loving observer of nature with a literary felicity which has delighted countless readers, John Terres is a naturalist whom we are grateful as well as proud to be able to honor with this degree of Doctor of Letters.