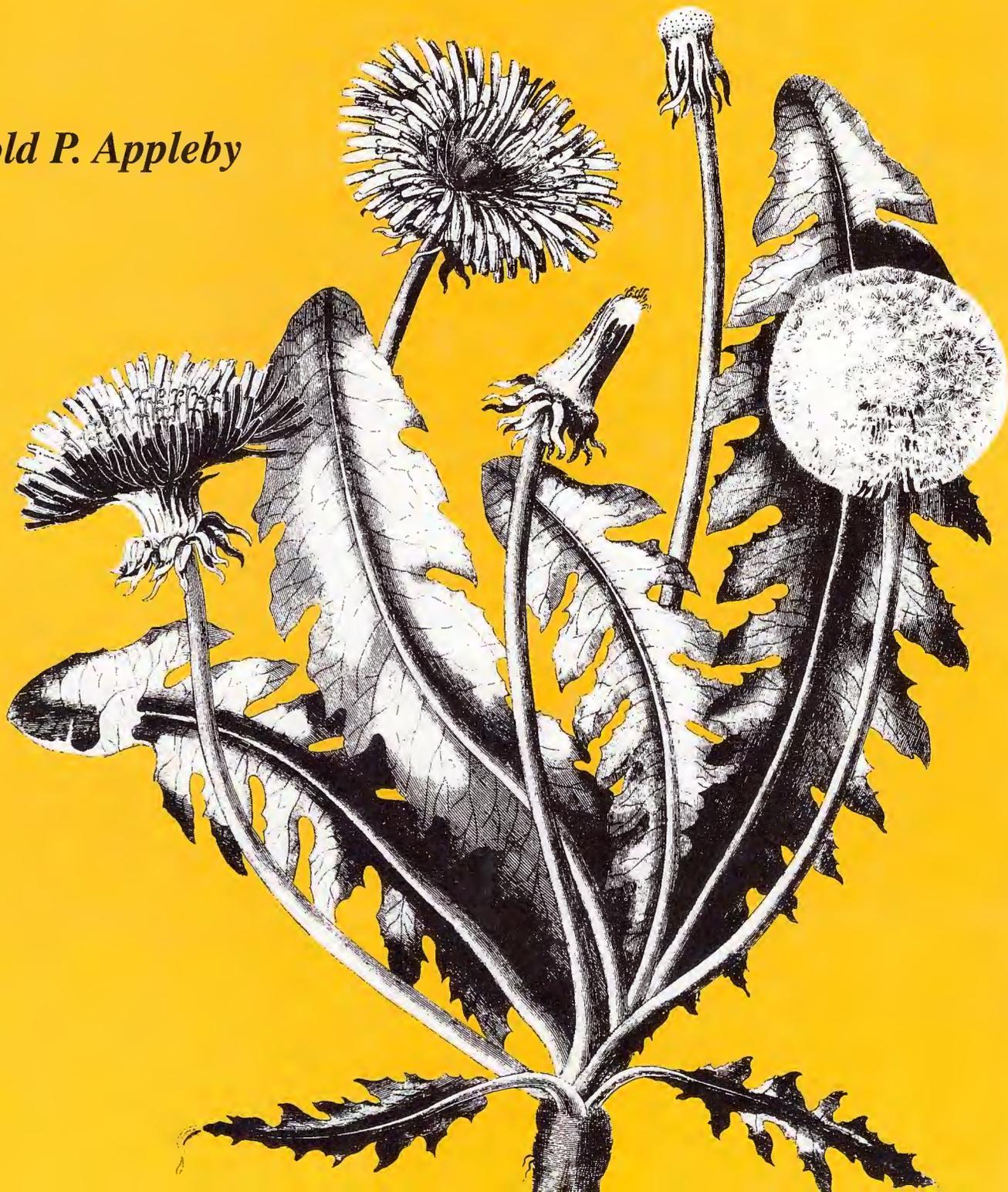


# *The Western Society of Weed Science*

*1938-1992*

*Arnold P. Appleby*





**Art H. Lange**  
Fellow, 1977

My first introduction to Western Weed Science was during a job screening herbicides for the Pineapple Research Institute of Hawaii in 1958. The challenge of keeping the few registered herbicides straight, along with the difficulty of trying to find something to control purple nutsedge (*Cyperus rotundus*), bitter melon (*Momordica charantia*), and flora's paint brush (*Emilia sonchifolia*), gave me a new respect for weed science.

Armed with many testing techniques learned from Dr. Don Gowing of the H.R.I. and Dr. Noel Hansen of the Hawaiian Sugar Planter Association, I accepted a job as weed control specialist with Cooperative Extension, University of California.

My second day on the job at U.C. Davis, I attended the 1962 California Weed Conference in Santa Barbara. There I was introduced to the many weed problems in California's many crops. My head was still spinning when I had my first meeting with Harold Kempen, Harry Agamalian, and Bill Fischer at lunch the first day of the conference. I'm sure my new colleagues were wondering what the U.C. administration were thinking, hiring a Hawaiian with only pineapple credentials and little else. However, these three weed scientists, along with Dr. Dave Bayer and the late Bill Harvey, helped acquaint me with the enormity of my new job. Over the years, their counsel and friendship turned out to be invaluable.

A Weed Control Specialist's job, like many in academia, is "open ended" and impossible to accomplish, but with plenty of room to contribute. For the many crops, there seemed to be very little state funds and not enough practical research directed at the most pressing problems. The answers for selecting weed control in California crops seemed to

lie primarily in the fields where the weeds were competing so effectively. This meant many plots on many crops in many locations, i.e., much travelling. With the novitiate of youth, I set out to do the impossible.

In 1965, my job was transferred to U.C. Riverside where I had the fortune to work with the late Dr. Boysie Day and the world authority on nutsedge control, Dr. Lowell Jordan. Here I was exposed to their outstanding weed control research. In addition, I was given the opportunity of participating in a sizable screening program headed by Dr. Ed Stillwell and later by Mike Lavallo. This program gave us an excellent opportunity to develop an insight into many botanical and chemical relationships. Some of the herbicides reached the market, many did not, but in the process we learned a lot about herbicide selectivity in crops.

After spending a sabbatical leave in a few parts of South America in the early 1970's, where I found many more opportunities for weed science to increase world food production, I returned to the center of the San Joaquin Valley, the Kearney Field Station. With the help of many chemical companies and grower groups, the remainder of my career in weed control was relatively productive. My travel distances were reduced and my technical assistance was greatly increased. Much of my progress was the result of many California Farm Advisors, Weed Specialists, and four excellent technicians; Jack Schlesselman, Les Nygren, Royce Goertzen, and Dana Edson.

We spent the next few years battling johnsongrass, bermudagrass, perennial bindweed, yellow and purple nutsedge, and the nightshades in horticultural crops.

Unfortunately, much of what we have learned has been discarded for the present, in favor of environmental concerns, while we continue to overlook the real problems of smog, saturated fat, and industrial pollution.

One can only look forward to the day when science and truth will prevail. If all the information developed on chemical and botanical relationships has not been lost, society can take off again and solve the production so necessary for the world's good health. Fortunately, we have recorded a portion of the progress in our national, regional, and state journals. It would be desirable if the rest of our unpublished work was filed in computers for the day when the majority and the media realize that scientific progress is the hope of mankind.