

## Mir S. Mulla

Distinguished Professor, Emeritus, Univ. of California, Riverside, USA

Professor Mir S. Mulla joined the University of California, Riverside in 1956 and retired in December 2006. Affiliated with the department of Entomology for more than 50 years, he has conducted basic and applied research on arthropods of medical importance. His work as one of the world's leading entomologist in public health entomology has taken him around the globe, tackling vector-borne diseases in California and throughout the world.

Professor Mulla has a long and distinguished record of service to vector-control agencies and health departments in California and numerous international agencies. His work in the lab and in the field has developed practical control strategies for mosquitoes, biting flies, eye gnats, nuisance aquatic midges, and other insects of public concern. He has served as science advisor and member of the expert advisory panel on vectors and vector-borne diseases for the World Health Organization (WHO). As a WHO consultant, he had the opportunity to promote and establish research programs, training courses, and build the research capacity of scientists in numerous developing countries. He spearheaded a research program for 6 years in Colombia and California on house-dust mites (20 families) in relation to atopic allergy (asthma and rhinitis) in humans resulting in publication of many papers and a book in Colombia in Spanish and English.

At UC Riverside, he has taught Medical Entomology courses, instructed graduate students in medical and veterinary Entomology, and presented lectures in other courses in entomology for non-majors. Under his supervision, five students have obtained MS degrees and 25 their Ph.D. degree. Many visiting scientists and postdoctoral researchers from both developed and developing countries have also worked in the Mulla Laboratory. He is the author of more than 550 peer reviewed and technical publications with his students, colleagues and visiting scientists.

Professor Mulla's dedication to managing insect vectors of human disease and noxious pest<sup>s</sup> and improving the quality of life of the people everywhere has earned him many accolades. His honors include elections as a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and of the Entomological Society of America. In 1986, Professor Mulla received the Distinguished Service Award from the Society for Vector Ecology and in 2006 their Distinguished Achievement Award. In 2009, his accomplishments were further recognized when the Society for Vector Ecology presented Professor Mulla their first-ever Lifetime Achievement award, the highest award given by the society. In 2018, the Society dedicated their 49<sup>th</sup> annual meeting at Yosemite in California to Professor Mulla. Earlier, he received the Meritorious Award of the Science Society of Thailand and the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment. For his extensive work in reducing the number of noxious and pestiferous insects in the Coachella Valley, the Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District honored Professor Mulla by naming their new state of art biological control facility after him during a dedication ceremony in April 2006. In retirement, he was awarded the UC Endowed Chair Edward A. Dickson Professor Emeritus for 2008-09. In 2010, he was honored by the American Mosquito Control Association bestowing upon him the Medal of Honor, the highest award given by the association.

Born in the village of Zangawat, province of Kandahar, Afghanistan, Professor Mulla came to the United States after high school to continue his education- originally hoping to pursue a medical degree. When he took his first entomology course, he was hooked. In 1952, he earned his B.S. in Entomology and Parasitology from Cornell University and, in 1956, a Ph.D. from Univ of California at Berkeley. He then accepted a position at UC Riverside to develop the research regimen and teaching curriculum for the department's newly formed Medical Entomology program.

Entomology remains Professor Mulla's passion. He continues to be involved in collaborative research with former students and colleagues, and serve scientific and professional societies that strive to improve the health of all people.