

**IN MEMORIUM
AUDREY GABEL (1940-2011)**



Audrey Gabel was born on the edge of the Nebraska Sand Hills on 03 May 1940 to Earl and Ferne Coxbill of Atkinson. She obtained her BA degree from Nebraska Wesleyan University and went on to obtain her MS and PhD degrees from Iowa State University. She worked in the Plant Pathology and Agronomy departments there until she accepted a position at Black Hills State University (BHSU) in 1985. She died on 05 July 2011 of Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease.

Dr. Gabel taught biology classes at BHSU for 18 years and served as Chairperson of the Science Department for part of that time. She was best known for her fungal research, which focused on plant pathogens and mushrooms. In her later years she also included hypogeous fungi, slime molds (*Myxomycetes*), and gasteroid and secotioid fungi from sand dune areas in her research. She is the author of many scientific articles and presented papers at national, regional and state meetings.

Audrey Gabel was dedicated to her students and to her discipline. Undergraduate students appear as co-authors on many of her publications including a photographic field guide to mushrooms of the Black Hills. Her personal interests and concern for research based on the potential for biologically significant results drove her work and publications. She made significant contributions to the field of mycology with the vast majority of fungal records for the state of South Dakota.

Academic integrity and high standards were two of Audrey Gabel's virtues. She felt that hard work by both faculty and students was an integral part of higher education. She refused to compromise the department curriculum to those who wished to lower the bar in order to make biology classes easier to teach or less rigorous for students. In Audrey's mind an A was to be earned, not something to be

given indiscriminately. Her good example and strong leadership helped maintain a high quality of education in the BHSU Science Department.

Audrey was committed to the South Dakota Academy of Science, having served on the Executive Committee in 1993, 1994, 1998, 1999, 2010 and 2011. She also served on a variety of other committees and presented the results of her research during the annual meetings most years. Her last professional talk was presented at the April 2011 meeting of the South Dakota Academy of Science.

Concomitant to her passion for mycology was her passion to preserve the natural world. She often offered her professional advice to governmental agencies on issues of environmental conservation and land management. She was active in the Norbeck Society and The Nature Conservancy. Audrey was an avid backpacker, hiker and cross-country skier. She enjoyed nature and travel, especially long-distance hikes in foreign countries.

Audrey had a dynamic enthusiasm that entered all aspects of her life from her professional career to her personal relationships. Her conservation efforts in the community, dedication to teaching and research, energetic involvement with friends and family and overall spirit of curiosity and adventure will be remembered by those who had the good fortune to know her. Audrey Gabel will be greatly missed by her students and colleagues.