



IN MEMORIAM: Joel Margalit (1933- 2011)

Dr. Joel Margalit (Yoel Margalith) passed away on April 1, 2011 at the age of 78 at his home in Omer, Israel. Joel was born in Yugoslavia, and survived the concentration camps of Bergen-Belzen and Terezienstadt during World War II. He immigrated to Israel in 1948, and served in the Israeli Army-Medical Research Institute in 1952-1957. He later received the BSc, MSc and PhD degrees from Hebrew University in Jerusalem where he studied development and behavior of fleas and flies. After completion of his PhD in 1971, he spent the years of 1972-1974 as Visiting Professor at Universities in the USA, and in 1975 became Associate Professor in the Department of Biological Sciences, Southern Illinois University. In 1976 he returned to Israel, first to the Israel Institute for Biological Research and later to Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Beer Sheva where he remained for the rest of his career. At Ben-Gurion University, Joel mentored several students who became active members of the invertebrate pathology community. Joel Margalit is best known for the discovery of *Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis* in soil samples collected from the Negev desert in 1976, in collaboration with Leonard Goldberg. *Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis* has become a commercial product used in many countries to control mosquitoes and black flies, vectors of malaria, yellow fever, onchocerciasis, and other serious illnesses. As a result of this discovery, Joel became active in the World Health Organization Working Group on Biological Control of Vectors of Disease, and consulted with agencies worldwide on control of mosquito and blackfly vectored diseases. He received many honors from organizations in Mexico, Canada, USA, and Europe, including the prestigious Tyler Prize for Environmental Achievements in 2003. He retired from Ben-Gurion University in 2003. Joel was preceded in death by his wife, Miriam, and is survived by his children, Ehud and Yael.

-Elizabeth W. Davidson
Arizona State University
Mitch Harman