

Dr. Esther Pauline Railton Rice
December 29,1929- April 21, 2023

Esther Railton Rice was born to William and Adeline Roossinck on December 29,1929 in Sheridan Township, Michigan. Growing up on a farm, she learned to appreciate and understand the wonders of nature. She shared this enthusiasm with her many students over the years. From 1951 to 1958 she taught various grades in elementary education ranging from grade one to grade four, including work at an outdoor education center. In subsequent years, she taught at various institutions of higher learning including University of Northern Iowa; University of California, Berkeley; University of California, Los Angeles; Central Michigan University; and Western Michigan University. She also worked as a Seasoned Naturalist for D.C. National Parks.

Dr. Esther Rice taught in the Department of Teacher Education at California State University, East Bay (CSU Hayward) from 1960 until 1997. She was a brilliant scientist and teacher and an inspiration to all who knew her. Esther was ahead of her time in educating students and colleagues about the importance of caring for the environment. She wrote several books and publications on the topic and truly appreciated and respected nature. She was a popular presenter on topics relating to ecology and was frequently called upon as a consultant for local, state, national, and international institutions.

Esther's enthusiasm for caring for the earth was reflected in her teaching and also in the work of her students over the years. She touched the lives of many in a very positive way. As a devout Christian, her devotion to science and nature had a spiritual dimension. She had a heart that loved deeply, especially for her husbands, family, students, and many friends.