

Division of Animal Behavior (DAB): 2003 Spring Newsletter

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Message from the Secretary

Tom Hahn

2003 Meeting Recap

My information is not first hand (missed the meeting owing to impending paternal reasons), but all reports I've heard on the 2002 Meeting in Toronto have been very positive. Many thanks to all of you who participated in producing a great meeting. The enthusiasm for the new poster time (over lunch) was not what one could call universal, but I've not seen the results of the official questionnaires that were circulated at the meeting.

Congratulations to A.G. Ophir, from McMaster University for best student oral presentation, and to J.A. Strother, from UC-Berkeley, for best student poster at the 2003 meeting.

Symposia

Zuleyma Tang-Martinez's symposium entitled "Bateman's Principle: Is it time for a re-examination?" is still on the docket for the 2004 meeting in New Orleans. The Division of Animal Behavior is proud to sponsor this symposium, and we hope you can all attend.

The deadline for proposing symposia for the San Diego meeting (2005) is in mid-August. DAB is a small division, but we have a tradition of putting on great symposia. If you have an idea for a symposium that could accommodate 8–12 speakers, why not propose it for the 2005 meeting? If you have an idea or questions about this, please contact our program officer, Paul Cupp, (Paul.Cupp@eku.edu), our chair, David Pfennig (dpfennig@email.unc.edu), or me (tphahn@ucdavis.edu).

Officers

Peter Smallwood has now passed the baton to me as secretary of DAB. This is David Pfennig's last year as Chair. At the business meeting in Toronto, Scott MacDougall-Shackleton was nominated to stand for election as next Chair. His bio is available below, and info regarding the election will be forthcoming on the SICB website.

Opportunities for Graduate Students

Encourage Graduate Students to Join and Attend! SICB is a terrific society for graduate students interested in behavior, especially if they gravitate towards topics that combine behavior with physiology, evolution, and

ecology. The poster and talk competitions at the meetings are a great way to get experience with, and constructive feedback on, presentations. And feel free to volunteer to help with judging student talks and posters at the meetings!

Support for Meeting Attendance: If you are a graduate student or have graduate students interested in attending SICB meetings, take note of the Student Support Program. The Society generally can manage to defray a large proportion of the costs of graduate students attending the meeting. In past years, SICB has been able to provide a room (shared) or waive registration for almost all students requesting such aid. In return, the student serves for a half day as a room monitor, slide projectionist, or registration assistant.

Grants-in-Aid of Research: SICB still has its program of awards to support graduate student research. For more details and application materials, go to <http://www.sicb.org/awards.php3>

DAB Elections

Candidate for Chair

Scott A. MacDougall-Shackleton

Current Position: Assistant Professor, Departments of Psychology and Biology, University of Western Ontario

Education: B.Sc. (Biology), Queen's University, 1990; M.Sc. (Biology), Queen's University, 1991; M.A. (Psychology), Johns Hopkins University, 1994; Ph.D. (Psychology), Johns Hopkins University, 1997.

Professional Experience: 1991–92, Research Technician, Department of Biology, Queen's University; 1997–99, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Princeton University; 1999–2001, Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Toronto; 2002–current, Assistant Professor, University of Western Ontario.

SICB Activities: Meeting Participant, Divisions of Animal Behavior and Comparative Endocrinology

Other Memberships: Society for Behavioral Neuroendocrinology, Animal Behavior Society

Research Interests: Physiology and behavior; evolution of perceptual, neural and endocrine mechanisms of behaviour; neural and endocrine integration of environmental information; sex differences in brain and behavior; seasonal changes in brain and behavior.

My research addresses the interaction between neural, endocrine, and perceptual mechanisms and the evolution of animal behavior. Specifically I am interested in how songbirds integrate environmental information –such as seasonal changes in photoperiod or the courtship song of a mate– and use this information to organize their behaviour in an adaptive way. Thus, I am interested in topics such as i) how birds learn and perceive environmental cues (e.g. birdsong), ii) how these cues are processed by the brain, and how the brain then mediates changes in behavior and/or reproductive physiology, and iii) how these neural and endocrine mechanisms have been shaped by natural and sexual selection to result in adaptive behaviour.

Goals Statement: Over the last 14 years I have participated in a variety of societies and conferences dealing with animal behavior, ranging from behavioral ecology to neuroscience and psychological societies. One of

the greatest strengths of animal behavior research is that it touches on all areas of the life sciences. Because behavior is best studied from an integrative perspective, I believe the best home for animal behavior researchers is in the SICB.

If elected chair of the DAB I will work hard to continue our tradition of strong symposia and support of student research in animal behavior. As well, I will work to raise our profile internationally and in other societies in order to attract new members. I am concerned by how many animal behavior researchers who attend other meetings (such as ISBE or SFN) are unaware of the SICB. I would also like to develop mechanisms to support research and meeting attendance of postdoctoral researchers and international researchers who may not have access to research grants but are no longer eligible for student support. Thus, I hope to continue and strengthen the DAB's support of interdisciplinary and integrative animal behavior research.