

Division of Animal Behavior (DAB): 2004 Spring Newsletter

In this newsletter:

- [Message from the Chair](#)
 - [Message from the Secretary](#)
 - [Election Candidates](#)
-

Message from the Chair

Scott MacDougall–Shackleton

The 2004 meeting in New Orleans was my first acting as the DAB chair–elect/chair and I enjoyed meeting with many of you and getting involved in the executive committee of the society. As chair, I can act as a conduit between DAB members and the society executive committee so please feel free to contact me with concerns and suggestions.

The meeting was a wonderful success, and animal behavior was –as usual– well represented in the scientific program. Zuleyma Tang–Martinez organized an excellent symposium entitled "Bateman's Principles: Is it Time for a Re–evaluation?" and I look forward to its publication. Please extend congratulations to the winners of the best student presentations in DAB: Kathleen Lynch, Jordanna Sprayberry, and Christopher Leary. It is clear that the scientific activity of our division is vigorous, and I have no doubt this will continue at the San Diego meeting.

Business items that I hope to accomplish this year are to update the division by–laws to match those of the society and increase communication between the division and the executives. If you have comments on these initiatives please let me know. We also hope to update the division's web page, so send in suggestions and contributions. At the San Diego meeting I plan to hold a division social concurrently with the business meeting to encourage attendance.

Our division has a strong history of excellent symposia. You may wonder when is the best time to approach the DAB with ideas for symposia you'd like to organize. The answer is ANYTIME. If you'd like to organize a symposium for the 2006 meeting in Orlando you should contact us soon.

Best wishes for a productive summer,

Scott.

Message from the Secretary

Tom Hahn

I only have a few things to add to Scott's comments. First, on behalf of everyone in DAB, I would like to extend our gratitude to Paul Cupp for his excellent service as program officer. The time has come for him to pass the baton, and we have one candidate, Sarah Humfeld, who has kindly agreed to serve. Please be sure to cast your ballots when the time comes. There should be a copy of Sarah's CV available on the website for your perusal. She was awarded "best student paper" for her presentation at the 2002 meeting, and we are delighted that she is willing to contribute her enthusiasm and ideas as our new program officer. There were many important topics discussed at the meeting of divisional secretaries in New Orleans. As noted by Scott, updating division bylaws is a high priority that we will be working on over the coming months. We also will be putting together "operations manuals" for all of the different officers' positions, to help new officers carry out their responsibilities. We are particularly interested in updating and streamlining the process by which papers and posters are evaluated, clarifying how many times individuals can compete in them, and so forth. You can send your thoughts and suggestions to me. Regarding Scott's comment about the website: One idea that we are exploring is to highlight the research of one or more DAB members on the website. This would be something that rotates periodically, and could include a brief description of the research, perhaps a bio of the researcher, a few figures or photos ... it need not be super complicated, but something to give visitors to the website a taste of what some of our division members are doing. If any of you have suggestions for good folks to begin with on this, please let me know.

DAB Elections

Candidate for Program Officer

Sarah C. Humfeldt

Current Position: Senior Research Technician, Division of Biological Sciences, University of Missouri–Columbia

Education: 2003: University of Missouri–Columbia Ph.D., Division of Biological Sciences; Advisor: H. Carl Gerhardt. 1991–1995: Trinity University (San Antonio, TX), Bachelor of Science, Biology *magna cum laude* and Departmental Honors.

Professional Experience: *Research:* 1996–2003: Signaling, intersexual dynamics and the adoption of alternative male mating behaviors in green treefrogs, *Hyla cinerea*. Ph.D. dissertation. Advisor: H. Carl Gerhardt. Division of Biological Sciences, University of Missouri–Columbia, Columbia, MO. 1995: Social organization of *Neotoma micropus*, the Southern Plains woodrat. Senior honors research. Advisor: David Ribble. Department of Biology, Trinity University, San Antonio, TX. *Teaching:* 1997–2003: Teaching Assistant. University of Missouri–Columbia. Introductory Biology Lab for Majors (BIO 42), Introductory Biology Lab for Nonmajors (BIO 10), Ecology (BIO 362). 2001–2002: Preparing Future Faculty Fellow. 2001: University of Missouri team member at SENCER (Science Education for New Civic Engagement and Responsibility) Workshop, San Jose, CA. *Other:* 2001: Co-organizer of 2001 Midwest Regional Meeting of the Animal Behavior Society, University of Missouri, Columbia, MO. 2001: Organizer of symposium on "Alternative Mating Tactics" at 2001 Midwest Regional Meeting of the Animal Behavior Society.

SICB Activities: Attended 2001–2004 annual meetings, participated in 2003–2004 DAB business meetings

Other Memberships: Animal Behavior Society

Research Interests: My research interests lie in the area of phenotypic flexibility, or the ability of organisms to adaptively change their phenotype in response to changing environments. My dissertation research focused on the individual behavioral decisions made by male anuran amphibians regarding adoption of alternative mating tactics. Male green treefrogs (*Hyla cinerea*) may call to attract females or silently position themselves near other callers and attempt to intercept females. Given the observation that individual males can adopt different tactics within the same night, males probably make these mating tactic decisions over a very short timeframe. Males assess their condition in the context of the acoustic environment. Several characters of the advertisement call are condition-dependent, and if males cannot produce effective or attractive advertisement calls relative to their nearest neighbors, they switch to the silent satellite tactic. My future research interests involve looking at the genetic architecture underlying this conditional mating strategy. Do all males have identical switchpoints, or do some males have a greater propensity to switch mating tactics? If switchpoints do have heritable variation, I predict that populations in different environments might have evolved different average switchpoints. I am especially interested in looking for variation in conditional tactic adoption in populations that breed syntopically with a close congener, the barking treefrog (*Hyla gratiosa*). I am also interested in the proximate mechanisms involved in mating tactic switches (energetics and hormones).

Goals Statement: I began attending Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology meetings as a young graduate student after several years of encouragement from a friend. I wish I had become a member much earlier! I look forward to and value the annual meeting for two reasons. First, the atmosphere at the meeting is fantastic; students are made to feel welcome, comfortable and valued. Secondly, I love the breadth of topics that are pursued integratively throughout the society. I always return from the meeting with my head filled with new research ideas. As program officer, I hope to continue and improve upon the tradition of encouraging the scientific pursuits of student members. I believe we can do this through a continued commitment to the student paper competition. I think we can also increase the networking opportunities of students by instituting a DAB social activity at the annual meeting. This latter proposal also speaks to the goal of increasing the integration of animal behavior with other divisions in SICB. Many meeting attendees list DAB as a secondary affiliation. We should attempt to reach out to these members, both through social opportunities and special symposia. I would like to work to increase the numbers of special symposia that DAB hosts, especially those that are integrative in nature.