

Division of Invertebrate Zoology (DIZ): 2004 Spring Newsletter



(Photo by Patrick Erwin)

In this newsletter:

- [Message from the Chair](#)
- [Message from the Program Officer](#)
- [Message from the Secretary](#)
- [Message from the Graduate Student–Postdoctoral Affairs Committee Representative](#)
- [Message from the Student Awards Committee Chair](#)
- [Minutes of the 2004 Annual Business Meeting](#)
- [Elections: Candidates for DIZ Program Officer](#)

Message from the Chair

Thomas Wolcott

Once again we had our annual meeting in New Orleans, and what a meeting it was! It was the largest in many years, with more participants and more presentations than, um... let's just say that those of us who have been around long enough to remember meetings this big can't any more. The venue carries stronger memories for

me than for many of you, perhaps, because the very first ASZ meeting I ever attended (as an associate professor!) was in New Orleans. Coming from a strongly vertebrocentric land-grant university, I was stunned to find that all the people whose land crab papers I'd been citing were sitting in my audience. Not only that, they were enthusiastically interested in my research! It was, literally, the first such encouragement I'd received in my career, and I never forgot the experience. This society has been Donna's and my professional family ever since. For (gulp) a quarter of a century it's been a continual source of stimulation, encouragement and good fellowship. I am honored to be able to serve as an officer and help ensure that it continue to serve those roles for our colleagues, especially the newer ones.

One of the roles DIZ plays for those newer colleagues is presenting the Libby Hyman Awards. Amy Johnson has ably chaired the selection committee for several years, and will be rotating off this year. I am delighted to report that Isidro ("Sid") Bosch, who has been a long-standing member, has accepted appointment as the incoming chair and will continue the proud and pleasant tradition of helping send our best and brightest off for their first experience at a field station.

A highlight of the meeting was the interdivisional social held by DIZ, TCS, AMS and DEE. Not only did we have munchies, good company and opportunities to network by having our people speak to other peoples' people, we had the Great Auction in support of the Libbie Hyman Awards Endowment. Rachel Merz and her co-conspirators deserve a Grand Commendation and Very Large Medal for organizing this raucous event. The increment to the endowment was further augmented by an unprecedented "attagirl!" (or "attadiv!") from the SICB Executive Committee. They felt that this is exactly the sort of initiative that will help build divisions, the society, and its impact on the profession, and they chose to recognize the effort by matching what the auction brought in, bringing the endowment up by a total of about \$12K, or over 60%! Thanks to all of you who participated (and made off with sundry treasures, books, and memorabilia).

Several hot-button issues were discussed at our well-attended DIZ business meeting, foremost among them the proposal by the collective Program Officers to reduce the length of oral presentations to 15 minutes. The objectives would be to increase the number of papers that could be accommodated in a reasonable number of concurrent sessions, and to facilitate synchronization with 20-minute symposium schedules. Strong opinions were expressed on both sides, and the issue probably will continue to be discussed, especially if numbers at the meetings remain as high as in N.O. Let your officers know your views.

As this newsletter goes to e-press, I thank you for the chance to participate in your society and wish you successful completion of the spring term, mild cases of spring fever, and a relaxing and/or productive summer!

Message from the Program Officer

Penelope Barnes

The 2004 SICB meeting in New Orleans was a great success! The total number of presentations was an impressive 1103 and DIZ, as always, was well represented in both oral and poster sessions. DIZ sponsored three, very successful symposia in New Orleans. Neil Blackstone's *Model Systems for the Basal Metazoa: Cnidarians, Ctenophores, and Placozoans* symposium was frequently a "standing room only" situation. *Sponges: New Views of Old Animals*, organized by Scott Nichols and Gert Woerheide, included a truly impressive diversity of presentations by some of the world's leading sponge biologists. DIZ also joined DCE, DDCB, the National Science Foundation and The Crustacean Society in sponsoring the highly successful

symposium entitled *EcoPhysiology and Conservation: The Contribution of Endocrinology and Immunology*, organized by Robert Stevenson and Shea R. Tuberty.

Following on the success of the DIZ/AMS/DEE social in Toronto, the social at the New Orleans meeting was expanded further to include the Crustacean Society. The social was deemed a great success, due in no small part to the well executed and highly entertaining auction in support of the Libbie Hyman Awards endowment. Congratulations to organizer Rachel Merz and her assistants!

The January 2005 SICB meeting in San Diego promises to be a particularly exciting one for DIZ members, as the Division is sponsoring or co-sponsoring six symposia! DIZ is primary sponsor, with DEE as additional sponsor, of "*Complex Life—histories in Marine Benthic Invertebrates: A Symposium in Memory of Larry McEdward*" organized by Ben Miner and Diana Padilla. DIZ and DAB are primary sponsors, along with DEE as additional sponsor, of Janet Leonard's symposium, "*Mating Systems and Sexual Selection in Hermaphrodites*". DIZ, DESB and DEDB join together as primary sponsors for Ken Halanych's symposium entitled "*WormNet: Recent advances in Annelid systematics, development and evolution*." Five SICB divisions, including DIZ, will be additional sponsors for the American Microscopical Society's symposium, "*The New Microscopy: Toward a Phylogenetic Synthesis*". The AMS symposium will be organized by Ruth Ann Dewel, Kathy Coates, Mary Beth Thomas, Clay Cook and Julian Smith. DIZ is also additional sponsor on the two society-wide symposia: "*Terminal addition, segmentation, and the evolution of metazoan body plan regionalization*" organized by Nigel Hughes and David Jacobs and "*Desiccation tolerance in animals, microbes and plants: comparative mechanisms and evolution*" organized by Peter Alpert, Jim Clegg, Brent Mishler and Mel Oliver. The San Diego meeting will definitely be a busy one for DIZ members!

Because symposia are now planned more than one year in advance, proposals for the 2006 SICB meeting are scheduled for submission now with a deadline of August 20, 2004. Please start thinking about symposia ideas for the 2006 meeting in Orlando and e-mail me with any questions you may have. Let's keep up the momentum and ensure that DIZ continues to be well represented!

Message from the Secretary

Bob Thacker

The 2004 meeting in New Orleans was extremely successful, with excellent feedback for all three of the DIZ-sponsored symposia. Thanks to Rachel Merz, Linda Walters, Judy Williams, Amy Johnson, and Kyle Aveni for organizing the popular Invertebrate Auction, with special thanks to all who donated and purchased items. If you travel to an exciting field station this summer, consider bringing back artwork or a T-shirt to auction at a future meeting!

The society has asked each division to improve the divisional web pages. I would like to receive suggestions on what you, the members of DIZ, would like to see on our web page. In addition, we are in the process of updating the divisional by-laws, which are available for review on the SICB website. Please send any and all comments or suggestions to me at thacker@uab.edu.

We have two candidates for the position of Program Officer. Biographical sketches for Amy L. Moran (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill) and Michael William Hart (Dalhousie University) are provided at the end of this newsletter. Please participate in the election!

Message from the Graduate Student–Postdoctoral Affairs Committee

Ben Miner

Hello fellow students and postdocs. The New Orleans meeting is behind us, and I would like to extend the Division's thanks to all the graduate students who worked to make this meeting such a success. I would also like to congratulate Alex Cheroske for winning the best student oral presentation, Collin Johnson for winning the best student poster presentation, and Michelangelo Von Dassow for winning the Adrian Wenner Strong Inference Award. I encourage all undergraduate, graduate, and recently graduated (< 1 year) students to enter these competitions in 2005. The next meeting will be held in San Diego January 4–8, 2005 at the Town and Country Hotel. So, break out the sunblock.

To ensure SICB continues to consider the needs of graduate students, I encourage comments and suggestions for improving future meetings. In particular, I am interested in whether people have suggestions for additional student tasks. Student support is currently provided in exchange for a half–day's service, such as working a half–day session, practice room, or registration desk. Please email suggestions to me at bgminer@ucdavis.edu.

Good luck with your studies and research!

Message from the Student Awards Committee Chair

Sara Lindsay

Thank you to all those who judged student presentations at the New Orleans meeting, and special thanks to Will Jaeckle for serving as the "Go to Guy" in my absence. Thanks also to the students, for your fine efforts. Twenty–two students competed in the DIZ student paper competition this year, once again displaying a wonderful diversity of topics ranging from sensory biology, physiology and development to feeding ecology, host–selection, genetics, and evolutionary biology. Alex Cheroske won the Best Student Oral Presentation award for his paper "*Phenotypically plastic color vision in a stomatopod crustacean and its potential effects on color signaling in variable light environments*." One judge commented on Alex's paper "This was...a splendid paper deserving of the highest honors. I am not usually given to superlatives in my grading (just ask my students!), but I give this paper a 10 across the board." Great job, Alex! The close Runner–Up for the Oral presentation was Jeff Riffell, who spoke on "*Sex and the single cell: Mechanisms of sperm chemoattraction in laminar shear flows*". Collin Johnson won the Best Student Poster award for his poster, "*Assessing the energetic and ecological benefits of dissolved organic matter (DOM) for the marine bryozoan Bugula neritina*". Last year's winner, Constance Rogers–Lowery was the Runner–Up with her poster "*Encapsulation of the glochidium larva of freshwater mussels on naive and resistant host fish*".

The Adrian Wenner Strong Inference Award was also a close race this year. The winner is Michelangelo Von Dassow for his paper "*Development of a fluid transport system: An example from colonial organisms*". Sheri Johnson is the Runner–Up; she presented a paper on "*Sperm longevity and fertilization in the colonial*

ascidian, Botryllus schlosseri". Congratulations to all! Students should learn more details about their awards from DIZ president Tom Wolcott soon. We look forward to seeing more outstanding student presentations next year in San Diego.

Minutes of the 2004 Annual Business Meeting

Thomas Wolcott (DIZ Chair) opened the meeting by requesting approval of the minutes of the previous year's meeting. Bob Thacker was introduced by the Chair as the Secretary–elect and will assume the role of Division Secretary at the end of the conference.

Chair Wolcott introduced DIZ Program Officer Penny Barnes, who announced DIZ sponsorship of 3 symposia at the current meeting (1) "*Model Systems for the Basal Metazoa: Cnidarians, Ctenophores, and Placozoans*" organized by Neil Blackstone, (2) "*Sponges: New Views of Old Animals*" organized by Scott Nichols and Gert Woerheide, and (3) co–sponsorship of "*EcoPhysiology and Conservation: The Contribution of Endocrinology and Immunology*" organized by Robert Stevenson and Shea Tuberty. For the 2005 Annual Meeting in San Diego, DIZ will be the primary sponsor of 3 symposia, and a secondary sponsor for 3 other symposia.

Since only 1 proposal has been submitted for the 2006 Annual Meeting, Program Officer Barnes requested that DIZ members submit symposium ideas by August, indicating that she would be available to help with formatting the proposals.

Past DIZ Chair Rachel Merz reminded all members to attend the Invertebrate Auction at the AMS–DIZ–DEE–TCS Social to enhance the endowment of the Libbie H. Hyman Memorial Scholarship.

Members were reminded to submit program ideas, such as the Invertebrate Auction, to the Program Officer by August, prior to the joint meeting of all POs at which the program schedule is set.

The SICB Executive Committee visited our business meeting and SICB President John Wingfield requested feedback on the future directions of SICB. He raised the issue of enhancing participation by Central and South American scientists and students, perhaps by holding a future meeting in Mexico or by providing additional funds to offset the travel costs of international participants.

Chair Wolcott initiated a discussion of this issue, noting that a meeting in Mexico may have increased travel costs for North American participants, but that these costs may be offset by lower facility fees. Concerns were voiced that fewer North American scientists would attend a meeting in Mexico, but several DIZ members indicated that a novel location could enhance attendance.

Chair Wolcott next addressed the issue of increasing SICB's international visibility through the sponsorship of international congresses. Several DIZ members objected to such sponsorship if allocating these funds would (1) decrease funds available to DIZ symposia and (2) decrease funds to bring international speakers to SICB annual meetings. The membership did not agree with a clear dichotomy between funding international congresses and funding international travel for SICB symposia speakers, stating that both would be priorities, but that the group lacked enough financial information to make a sound judgment. Chair Wolcott posed a second choice: support for international meetings vs. support for SICB annual meetings. 25 members made support of the SICB annual meeting the top priority, while none supported other meetings as a top priority. All were agreed that SICB should support other meetings only if enough funds are available and if this

support would benefit the society as a whole.

Program Officer Barnes reported that the lack of international travel funds caused 2 speakers to cancel their attendance at the current DIZ sponge symposium. Diana Padilla requested that Chair Wolcott inform the executive committee that DIZ would rank increased travel support for international speakers as a high priority.

Chair Wolcott initiated a discussion of support for a Congressional Fellow. SICB supported a fellow in the past but has not recently. Mary Rice indicated that the Fellow would be a shared cost with AAAS and/or other societies, and that the Fellow would make a report of activities to the executive committee. The membership strongly supported this proposal.

Chair Wolcott requested two volunteers for a nominating committee for the post of Program Officer, as Penny Barnes will complete her term at the 2005 Annual Meeting in San Diego. Past Chair Rachel Merz, Ken Halanych, Susie Balsler volunteered to serve as the nominating committee.

Chair Wolcott initiated a discussion on the proposal to reduce the time allotted for contributed oral presentations from 20 minutes to 15 minutes. A major benefit of this proposal would be an increased number of presentations in the current facility size, but disadvantages would be less time for presentation, discussion, and moving between concurrent sessions. Alternative proposals include increasing the number of concurrent sessions (and possibly venue size) and/or limiting the number of oral presentations. Program Officer Barnes reported that the program committee had agreed not to add an additional day to the conference, and that oral presentations should not be scheduled during the evening hours, when there are already many separate evening functions. Chair Wolcott and Program Officer Barnes requested that the members discuss these issues and make suggestions to them during the remainder of the meeting.

The meeting closed with a reminder to attend the AMS–DIZ–DEE–TCS Social and Invertebrate Auction.

Submitted by RW Thacker

Elections: Candidates for DIZ Program Officer

Amy L. Moran

Current Position: Research Assistant Professor, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Department of Marine Sciences and Curriculum in Ecology.

Education: 1990, B.A. (Biology, and Music), Bates College, Lewiston, ME. 1997, Ph.D. (Biology), University of Oregon.

Professional Experience: Postdoctoral Fellow, University of Southern California and Wrigley Institute for Environmental Studies. Postdoctoral Fellow, Friday Harbor Laboratories, University of Washington. Short–Term Fellow, Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute. Visiting Instructor, Invertebrate Zoology, Oregon Institute of Marine Biology (University of Oregon).

SICB Activities: Member and presenter at Annual Meetings since larval phase. Student Presentation Judge for DIZ and DEE.

Other Memberships: AAAS, Western Society of Malacologists, Society for the Study of Evolution.

Research Interests: Larval physiology, ecology, functional morphology, reproductive ecology and evolution of marine invertebrates. Evolution of reproductive modes, behavior and reproductive ecology of echinoderms and molluscs.

Statement of Goals: I have been a member of DIZ since my early days in graduate school and I, like many in DIZ, have moved in and out of other divisions at SICB as well. DIZ is by nature a diverse and integrative division that contains many interests, representing some of the best traditions of SICB. I hope to continue in this vein by encouraging new themes for symposia, sessions, and workshops that bring together diverse interests under the umbrella of Invertebrate Zoology. The major responsibilities of the Program Officer are to organize symposia and arrange the programs for future annual meetings, and I look forward to the opportunity to facilitate the continued excellence of the DIZ sessions I have attended over the past decade. I also look forward to interacting with other Division leaders, and I would carry out the administrative aspects of the position (program and workshop scheduling, newsletter contributions) with enthusiasm.

Michael William Hart

Current Position: Associate Professor, Department of Biology, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Canada.

Education: 1984, B.S. (Zoology), University of Alberta. 1987, M.S. (Biology), Dalhousie University. 1993, Ph.D. (Zoology), University of Washington.

Professional Experience: 2004, 2002, 2000, Visiting Assistant/Associate Professor, University of Washington. 1996–1998, Postdoctoral Research Associate, Section of Evolution & Ecology, University of California, Davis. 1994–1995, NSERC Postdoctoral Fellow, Institute of Molecular Biology & Biochemistry, Simon Fraser Univ

SICB Activities: Best Student Paper judge for DIZ, DEE; symposium participant.

Other Memberships: Society of Systematic Biologists; Society for the Study of Evolution; American Microscopical Society.

Research Interests: population genetics; phylogenetics; larval ecology; comparative embryology.

Statement of Goals: My modest ambitions as Program Officer will be to do as well as other recent POs at the development of interesting, topical divisional and interdisciplinary symposia at the annual meeting, and the smooth unfolding of those symposia. I would particularly like to encourage symposia that could bring traditional marine invertebrate zoologists together with specialists on other organisms (especially botanists and entomologists) who study comparable problems in physiology, ecology, or development. I would also like to see more graduate students invited to participate in these symposia wherever possible. I'm willing to serve as Program Officer as a way to give something back to the Society that sponsors my favourite conference. And, on the advice of Tom Wolcott, I pledge not to raise taxes.