



## Division of Invertebrate Zoology

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### DIZ Officers & Representatives

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*Past Chair 2015-2018*

**Sarah Berke**

*Secretary 2016-2019*

**Linda Walters**

*Program Officer 2017-2020*

**Samantha Smoot**

*Student Postdoc Representative 2017-2020*

**Jennifer Burnaford**

*Libbie Hyman Memorial Scholarship  
Committee Chair*

### Message from the Chair

*Ken Halanych, [Chair.DIZ@sicb.org](mailto:Chair.DIZ@sicb.org)*

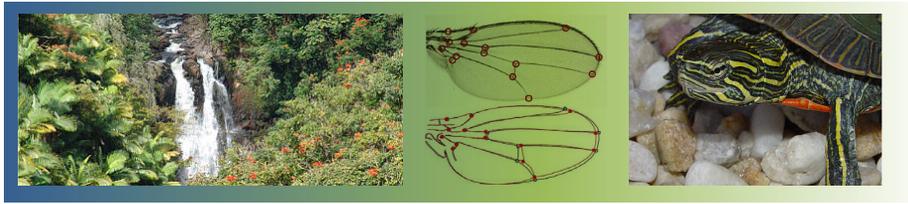
We are just a few short months away from the annual meeting in Tampa and several items are taking shape. Since last year, we have voted on changes to our programs for student presenters, and all ballot measures were approved. The best student oral contribution will honor Dr. Mary Rice and the best poster contribution will honor Dr. Alan Kohn. Also, the format for the best student oral contribution will change. Starting in 2020, students interested in competing will submit an extended abstract and the finalists will be chosen to present in a single session. The final change approved introduced a mentoring program for the students presenting at the meeting. An email will be sent soon to student participants asking them if they want to opt in. Thanks to Bob Podolsky for his efforts with these programmatic changes!

One important area where we need your help is with the Libbie Hyman auction. For those who have attended this in the past, this is a fun event where you can secure some great invertebrate swag or that needed out-of-print book. However, we need more contributions for the auction! If you have ideas or items please contact Abigail Cahill ([acahill@albion.edu](mailto:acahill@albion.edu)). You can even ship the item to Tampa ahead of the meeting! This is an important event that helps fund some of our student support.

Below, Program Officer Linda Walters discusses some exciting news about symposia that DIZ will help sponsor in Tampa. However, it is not too soon to think about the next round of symposia proposal submissions for the 2021 meeting. We would like to consider more possibilities for symposia, especially ones that could be billed as having society-wide interest. Obviously, a great time to concoct proposal plans and ask for some feedback is at the annual meeting the year before!



*An ibis on a restored oyster reef to signify research on the impact of oyster restoration on wading and aquatic birds. Photo credit: Linda Walters*



I would also like to strongly encourage all, especially early career researchers and educators, to attend the DIZ business meeting. I would like to spend time brainstorming about how DIZ can better serve its members and how we can grow the membership and interest in DIZ. The division has a very loyal core of individuals, and this has been a tremendous asset. This group is a great nucleus for identifying and bringing in diverse perspectives and interest.

Lastly, I will repeat my plea for all members to be active in their local communities. As researchers and educators, few others in society are in a better position to advocate for and explain the importance of fact-based decision making and how science impacts our daily lives. Societies, from local communities to global levels, will only be improved if individuals understand and embrace the importance that basic and applied science can bring to the human condition.

A Graduate Fellowship Fund honoring Elizabeth Balsler has been set up at Smithsonian Marine Station at Fort Pierce. If you are interested in contributing please contact Dr. Mary Rice (phone: 772-462-0987 or Rice@si.edu).

Sincerely, Ken

## Message from the Program Officer

Linda Walters, [DPO.DIZ@sicb.org](mailto:DPO.DIZ@sicb.org)

The program-sorting meeting for the 2019 SICB annual meeting is now complete. It was a very busy, sequestered weekend that set the tone and the stage for the upcoming annual meeting. And, based on the abstracts I saw and the venue we toured, I can promise you that January will be amazing!

There were 1835 abstracts submitted. Of these, 855 will be oral presentations and 980 posters. Hence, the meeting will be packed with great symposia, contributed talks, plenaries, and posters. Save some money and remember to register by the **early registration deadline of Tuesday, December 4.**

The conference runs from the evening of Thursday, January 4 through Monday, January 7 at 6 PM. Please note that this year the conference does not end on a Sunday — in case you are scheduled to be in a class on Monday morning! There will be multiple concurrent sessions each day, with poster sessions each afternoon from 3:30PM–5:30PM. Poster presenters, remember that poster size this year will be 42" x 42" and that posters will be displayed for one day of the conference.



SICB Divisional Program Officers hard at work on the 2019 program. If you see Linda, thank her for her service! Photo credit: Linda Walters.



Linda Walters with UCF alumni at a living shoreline stabilization event, De Soto National Memorial in Bradenton, FL.

Photo credit: Linda Walters

DIZ is contributing to four exciting symposia for the 2019 meeting, and this includes our first true welcome to our integrative botanical friends.

DIZ-supported symposia include:

- **January 4:** Integrative Plant Biology (Society-Wide Symposium)
- **January 5:** Adaptation and Evolution of Biological Materials (Society-Wide Symposium)
- **January 5:** Beyond the powerhouse: integrating mitochondrial evolution, physiology, and theory in comparative biology
- **January 7:** Allometry, Scaling and Ontogeny of Form

DIZ will host the Libbie Hyman auction again this year as part of our evening divisional social. As the room and date plans



are being firmed up, please get all your great stuff together to donate to this very important cause. There will be a cash bar at the event to help everyone spend more money!

### New this year

SICB will provide **FREE childcare** through a licensed provider as long as you **register by December 4**. Also new this year is a large comfortable room close to the meeting set aside for nursing mothers that has power outlets, a sink, and a refrigerator.

Tampa is the conference host city and we will be along the edge of Tampa Bay, commuting on the Riverwalk paths that link the conference hotels to the new convention center. The convention area has plenty of outdoor areas, including some where socials and other SICB functions will be held. Within a mile or two are the area's public aquarium, art museum, history museum and the University of Tampa campus, which includes one of Henry Flagler's massive hotels that is now used as classroom space. One warning — in this new convention zone, food options are somewhat limited, and this may be especially true for lunch. Fortunately, there is a Publix Grocery Store about a 10-minute walk down the road and they have really good sub sandwiches. Ybor City is the main gathering spot for those who like the microbrewery scene; you will need to take the trolley or Uber to get there. Finally, to get to Florida's theme-park attractions (Disney, Universal), it is 1 to 1.5 hours of driving on the I-4 interstate. Try to plan your visit and travel for off-peak times as much as possible as I-4 can be crazy.

I wish everyone a great conference — and please let me know if I can answer any additional questions.

Best wishes, Linda Walters

### Message from the Secretary

Sarah Berke, [secretary.diz@sicb.org](mailto:secretary.diz@sicb.org)

Greetings, DIZ members!

The 2019 meeting promises to be an outstanding experience for invertebrate-ophiles, and I hope you're all as excited as I am.

In the Spring of 2018, we held elections for the next DIZ Secretary. We had two outstanding candidates, Abbie Cahill and Justin McAlister, and I am pleased to congratulate Justin on being elected. He will assume the secretary-ship at the end of this year's meeting, and the division is lucky to have him. I am also pleased to report that Abbie is now serving the division as



*Promotional shot for "Two Scientists Walk Into a Bar", an outreach event bringing scientists to the public during happy hour. Your fearless secretary is at left. Photo Credit: Siena College*



*A rapt audience learns about invasive species while drinking beer at a Science on Tap event in Albany NY. Photo credit: Sarah Berke*

chair of the Libbie Hyman Auction Committee, and under her leadership it promises to be a fantastic event. Please think about what contributions you can make this year — collectible books, artwork, jewelry, and handmade goods are always popular. In past years, we have also had people auction off weekends at their homes or on their boats as a BB experience! The auction is a major fundraising initiative for the Libbie Hyman fund, which supports students in a first field experience. It's a cause near and dear to all our hearts, so please contribute, and come to the auction with open wallets!

This is my last newsletter as Secretary of DIZ, and it has been an honor to serve the division. In parting, I would like to pick up on Ken's plea to become engaged in your local community. Science skepticism is becoming mainstream in a way I never thought would be possible. As a society, we cannot thrive if we ignore science and abandon evidence-based decision making. In the



past 18 months, I have worked with friends and colleagues to establish a non-profit organization devoted to science outreach in the New York Capital Region. Together we navigated the long process of incorporating and obtaining 501c3 certification, and we are currently running multiple types of outreach events for people of all ages. This work has been challenging and, at times, frustrating — but overwhelmingly, it is good for the soul. If you are engaged in similar efforts, or want to start something new in your community, then I'd love to talk with you! Forming a supportive network within SICB for this kind of outreach would be great.

Drop me a line at [sberke@siena.edu](mailto:sberke@siena.edu).

Best wishes, Sarah

## Message from the Student and Postdoctoral Affairs Representative

Sammi Smoot, [scsmoot@gmail.com](mailto:scsmoot@gmail.com)

The goals of the SICB Student Postdoctoral Affairs Committee (SPDAC) are to improve student and postdoctoral experiences both at the annual meeting and throughout the year by offering workshops. At the annual meeting in Tampa this year, the SPDAC will host a brown-bag lunch workshop to help you improve the quality of your poster presentations. This workshop will be lead by Dr. Zen Faulkes who has created a blog called 'Better Posters' ([betterposters.blogspot.com](http://betterposters.blogspot.com)) that gives examples of how to make your poster both informative and beautiful. During this workshop, he will cover the basics of poster design, will go through the process of modifying and improving posters (students will walk through their own poster transformations), and will help students critique their own posters. More information about the time and location of this workshop will be circulated before the meeting. Check out Zen's blog before the conference to get some tips on making your poster the best it can be. Hope to see you there!

If you are interested in other resources that SPDAC has to offer, check out our link on the SICB website for advice on applying to postdocs and grant and fellowship opportunities at [www.sicb.org/resources/studentpostdoc.php3](http://www.sicb.org/resources/studentpostdoc.php3) and the DIZ Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/SICBDIZ](http://www.facebook.com/SICBDIZ). Have any questions or ideas for future SPDAC events? You can email me at [scs0051@auburn.edu](mailto:scs0051@auburn.edu).

## Message from the Libbie Hyman Auction Committee

Abbie Cahill

Preparations are underway for the auction to benefit the Libbie Hyman Memorial Scholarship, to be held at the meeting in Tampa this January. Libbie Hyman was a pioneering invertebrate biologist and a longtime SICB member. The memorial scholarship in her name, sponsored by the Division of Invertebrate Zoology, supports students in a first field station experience. Libbie Hyman auctions are held roughly every three years.

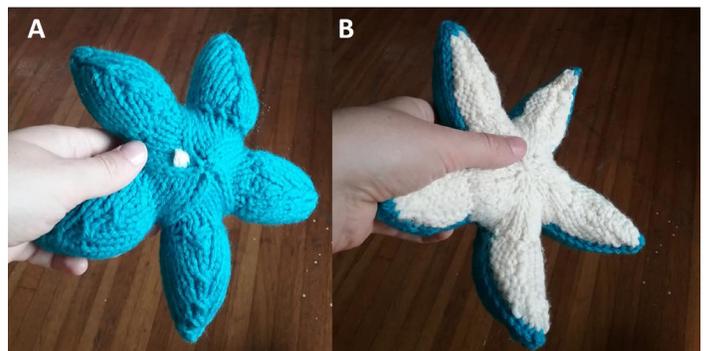
We already have some exciting contributions for this year's auction, but we still need your help in a couple ways. First, please consider donating items to the auction. In the past, auctions have featured invertebrate-themed books, artwork,

hand-crafted items and more. We also would gladly accept other items, large or small.

And second, please come to the auction during the meeting to bid on these great items. We plan to have books (including at least one set of The



*Also up for auction will be this fabulous knit scyphozoan! Photo credit: Abbie Cahill*



*This knitted sea star will be available at the auction in Tampa. A) Aboral view. B) Oral view. Photo credit: Abbie Cahill*



Invertebrates by Hyman), invertebrate art in various media, invertebrate-themed clothing, knitted invertebrate toys and more.

Donations can be brought to the meeting or shipped ahead of time to:

Michael Middlebrooks, PhD  
Assistant Professor of Biology  
The University of Tampa  
401 W. Kennedy Blvd., Box 3F  
Tampa FL , 33606  
[mmiddlebrooks@ut.edu](mailto:mmiddlebrooks@ut.edu)

If you are planning to bring items, please send an email to Abigail Cahill ([acahill@albion.edu](mailto:acahill@albion.edu)), who is compiling a list. Please also send your questions to Abigail, and many thanks for your continuing support of our scholarship fund. Let's make this a great auction.

## Message from the Libbie Hyman Scholarship Selection Committee Chair

*Jennifer Burnaford*

In 2018, two awards were made from the Libbie Hyman Memorial Scholarship fund.

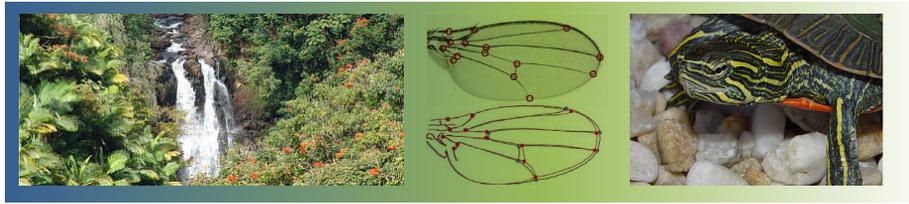
Matthew Boot, a Ph.D. student at Ohio State University in the lab of Rachele Adams, had this to say about his experience: "The Libbie Hyman Scholarship has provided me with the opportunity to conduct fieldwork at the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute in Panama. For my Ph.D. I am studying the evolutionary ecology of a context-dependent ant-ant mutualism. The fungus-growing ant host is protected from a raiding predatory ant by its co-habiting social parasite. My goal is to use this explicit interaction to better understand how our perspective of ecological interactions can shape the way we perceive species evolutionary trajectories.

Assistance from the Libbie Hyman Scholarship was crucial to help me finance my field season, providing access to transportation to distant field sites which have not been surveyed. At these sites I collected whole colonies, as well as specimen samples for genetic data for population analyses. To this end, my summer fieldwork was a large success. I have collected samples from eight sites (five new) representing a rough transect across the Panamanian isthmus along the canal. My next step will be to define populations using genetic data to guide

further ecological work including population surveys and behavioral analyses between populations.

Although I learned a great deal about the natural history of my species, this experience has helped me comprehend the scale of fieldwork that will be feasible during my Ph.D. This experience also taught me a lot about the realities of tropical fieldwork. I came to realize how fieldwork is a delicate balance between field logistics and collection management. I found value for a robust system of organization and being prepared for the specifics of the day ahead. However, despite the rigors of the field itself, I found myself rewarded with new myrmecologist colleagues and friends. My memories are that of a summer well-seasoned with moments of quiet splendor; the electric excitement of an approaching tropical thunderstorm, PB&J scarfed beside stage-lit forest creeks, the sensation of reverence stepping along the cobbles of a forgotten conquistador's road beneath a vaulted green ceiling — moments caught like the sigh of wind through the forest, turning it into a thing alive."

Scholarship recipient Andre LaBuda, in the M.S. program at CSULA, described his summer as follows: "Thanks to the support of the Libbie H. Hyman Memorial Scholarship, I was able to spend a month at the Hawaiian Institute of Marine Biology (HIMB) field station on Coconut Island. This opportunity allowed me to study photosynthesis by tropical sacoglossans, or "sap-sucking" sea slugs, for my master's thesis. I am testing the hypothesis that slug fitness is maximized by feeding on algae while also photosynthesizing, using functional chloroplasts sequestered in digestive cells. By comparing slug species with differing photosynthetic capabilities and algal hosts, I aim to better understand acquired phototrophy from an ecological and evolutionary standpoint. With the help of my HIMB host Dan Shar, graduate student Rachael Wade, and my advisor from CSULA, Dr. Patrick Krug, I learned to collect cryptic slugs and algae in surging waves. I maintained slugs for a month on wet tables just ten feet away from a pool filled with hammer-head sharks! Specimens were sorted into treatment groups of high or low light, and fed or starved, and their weight and egg production scored over time. I also used a PAM fluorometer to measure photosynthetic efficiency, as the coral researchers on Coconut Island would do, only my subjects crawl around. I found out that there are bound to be surprises along the way when working out of a field station, but the most exciting was discovering a new species of sea slug in the genus *Caliphylla*. I was able to work through challenges with the help of many



amazing scientists and collaborators I met at HIMB, so I'd like to thank SICB and everyone I met for making my first field station experience a good one. I look forward to sharing the knowledge and experience I've gained with others."

These accounts describe transformative experiences that the Libbie Hyman Scholarship is intended to support. We again acknowledge the generous support of our fund donors, whose recent contributions have allowed us to offer substantial scholarships to two to three students per year. Contributions to the Scholarship Fund will help us to continue to expand our support for students as they explore the field of invertebrate biology. To make a contribution, click on 'Donate to SICB' on the SICB home page (<http://sicb.org>) or send donations to:

SICB Business Office  
Libbie H. Hyman Memorial Scholarship Fund  
950 Herndon Parkway, Suite 450  
Herndon, Virginia 20170

Checks should be made payable to SICB and marked as a "Contribution to the Libbie H. Hyman Memorial Scholarship Fund." All contributions are tax deductible.

I thank Will Jaeckle and Shanna Haynes for their service on the committee, and Ruedi Birenheide for making the web-based application process work smoothly. **Applications in 2019 will be due on Monday February 4**, so mark your calendars! The application form is available at [sicb.org/grants/hyman](http://sicb.org/grants/hyman).

If you or your students have questions about the application process, please feel free to contact me via email (my address is available at that site). Please encourage your best students to apply!



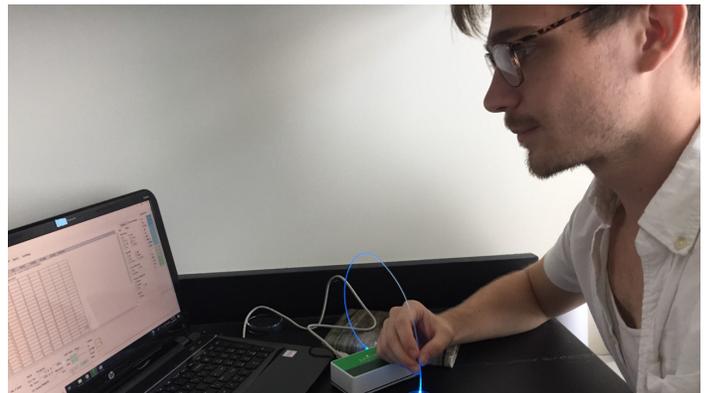
A partially dug colony showing fungus and ants. Photo credit: M. Boot



2018 Libbie Hyman Scholarship recipient Andre LaBuda measuring photosynthetic efficiency of his slugs. Photo credit: P. Weiss



2018 Libbie Hyman Scholarship recipient Matthew Boot, kneeling next to a large colony of *Sericomyrmex* ants with stakes marking nest entrances. Photo credit: R.M.M. Adams



A close up of Andre's study organisms. Photo credit: A. LaBuda