

# Division of Ecology & Evolution (DEE): 2003 Spring Newsletter

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## Message from the Chair *Mary Alice Coffroth*, Secretary *Michael Temkin* and Program Officer *Emily Carrington*

Greetings from the DEE officers. We want to thank everyone for helping to make the Toronto Meeting such a successful and enjoyable meeting. DEE co-sponsored two stimulating symposia, "Patterns and Processes in the Evolution of Fishes" and "Selection and Evolution of Performance in Nature". At the Toronto meeting Mary Alice Coffroth assumed the role of DEE Division chair and Emily Carrington became the new Program Officer. We were both glad to have Mike Temkin (the current DEE secretary) to help smooth the transition. We would like to extend a big thank you to the out-going officers, Cathy McFadden and Brian Helmuth. You did a wonderful job!

At the Toronto meeting, twenty-five students competed for the DEE best oral presentation award and five students competed for the best poster presentation award. As always the judges had a very hard time selecting the winners of the competitions. This year's winner of the best oral presentation was Hannah Stewart (University of California at Berkeley) for her talk entitled "Hydrodynamic consequences of buoyancy versus flexural stiffness in the tropical alga *Turbinaria ornata*." The winner of the best poster presentation was Cynthia Lewis (State University of New York at Buffalo) for her presentation entitled "Changing horses in midstream: secondary zooxanthellae uptake by the Caribbean octocoral *Briareum asbestinum* following an experimentally induced bleaching event." Hannah and Cynthia each receive \$100 and our best wishes for continued success in their research endeavors. We thank all of the DEE members who graciously volunteered to serve as judges for the competition: Michael Angilletta Jr., Marilyn Banta, Brian Beckman, Rachel Bowden, Mary Alice Coffroth, Goggy Davidowitz, Chuck Drabek, Jen Elwood, Bobby Espinoza, Mike Finkler, Craig Frank, Mike Hart, John Hranitz, Fred Janzen, Sonke Johnsen, Frank Knight, Karen Martin, Tammy McGovern, Scott McWilliams, Bruno Pernet, Val Pierce, Bob Podolsky, Margaret Rubega, Ken Sebens, Tony Steyermark, Bob Thacker, Tim Watkins, Linda Walters, Cheryl Wilga, and Woody Woods.

We are already beginning to develop the program for our next annual meeting in New Orleans, where Michael Angilletta, Jr. is organizing a DEE symposium on "The evolution of thermal reaction norms for growth rate and body size in ectotherms". In response to the very lively discussion on the scheduling of poster sessions in Toronto, we will lobby for a sociable time slot for the poster presentations in New Orleans. It is also time to think about symposia for the San Diego, 2005. Please direct suggestions/inquiries to Emily Carrington ([carrington@uri.edu](mailto:carrington@uri.edu)).

The society has asked each division to develop a Divisional webpage and Michael Boller of the University of Rhode Island has agreed to help us with this project. However, we would like input from you, the members, as to what would be useful to include on the webpage. Please send any and all suggests to either Mike at

[boller@uri.edu](mailto:boller@uri.edu) or to one of the DEE officers.

We will soon be holding elections for the position of "Chair-elect". This term runs for one year (2004) and then the person assumes the duties of DEE Division Chair at the end of the 2005 meetings (San Diego). Fred Janzen from Iowa State University and Linda Walters from University of Central Florida have agreed to run for this office and their biographical sketches are provided below.

At the Divisional Meeting in Toronto the following amendments to our by-laws were also approved:

### **Article III. Administrative Organization**

#### **Section 1. Officers**

The Officers of the Division shall be Chair, Past-Chair, Chair-Elect, Secretary, Program Officer and Past Program Officer. The Chair-Elect shall be elected biennially and shall then automatically become Chair for the two years following his/her tenure as Chair-Elect. Upon completion of his/her term as Chair he/she shall serve as Past-Chair for one year. The Secretary and Program Officer shall be elected triennially and shall hold office for three years, but not to commence in the same year; neither shall be eligible for reelection. If for any reason a divisional office should become vacant before the expiration of the normal term and there is no officer-elect to assume the duties, the Divisional Executive Committee, in consultation with the President of the Society, will appoint a replacement for the remainder of the term.

### **Article IV. Duties of the Officers**

#### **Section 2. Chair-Elect and Past-Chair**

The Chair-Elect or Past-Chair shall assume the duties of the Chair whenever that person is unable to act.

(The full text of DEE's by-laws is available on the SICB website at:  
<http://sicb.org/handbook/bylaws.php3#deebylaws>)

### **Division of Ecology and Evolution Business Meeting Minutes**

Twenty-four people attended the meeting which was convened at 5:16 pm

After the meeting called to order, the division officers (Mary Alice Coffroth- President, Emily Carrington - Program Officer, and Michael Temkin Secretary) were introduced and the minutes from last year's DEE business meeting were approved.

Mary Alice reported that winners of the best student presentation competitions from the Anaheim meeting were Vance Vredenburg (Univ. of California, Berkeley) for his talk entitled "Exotic Species and the Decline of Amphibians: Unintended Consequences on a Global Scale" and Adam Reitzel (Univ. of Florida) for his poster on "Maternal Investment and Morphological Plasticity: Insights from Subtropical Echinoids".

Mary Alice related the news from the meeting of the Division Presidents and Executive Committee. The first item was that the Society is in good financial shape, although Society wide membership is declining. Consequently, there is a need to recruit new members and all members were urged to try and get more

students and colleagues involved in the Society. The second item was that the publishing backlog has been reduced and that the Symposia from the Toronto meeting would hopefully be published within a year. In addition, the Society was planning to publish the journal electronically. The Society is in the process of deciding on the location of the 2006 meeting and the current front runner is Washington, D.C. Lastly, the division is looking for new initiatives, so if you have any ideas please pass them along to Mary Alice ([Coffroth@buffalo.edu](mailto:Coffroth@buffalo.edu)).

Emily reported that the symposia for the meeting in New Orleans are set. She is working with Catherine Loudon, the new Society Program Office on the symposia and funding for the meeting in San Diego in 2005. Emily also related how the Society is trying to expand the number of exhibitors (vendors and publishers) at the meeting because they help to pay the costs of the meeting. Emily asked the division members to review the keywords that are used to describe papers and posters at the meeting. Apparently, some members of the Society have been unsatisfied with the list of keywords to describe their work. Lastly, Emily asked those present at the meeting for suggestions to improve the next meeting. One suggestion was made to clarify the process of using a computer for the presentation of talks. The second set of suggestions concerned the schedule of the meeting, especially the poster sessions. One problem with scheduling the poster presentations at around lunch time is that many of the members felt overwhelmed trying to attend talks, see posters, meet with people and eat lunch. A second problem was that the last poster session was scheduled after the talks were completed. The feeling was that this scheduling would cause a limited attendance at the last poster session.

Mike reported that this year we had 28 students enter the best student presentation competition (23 oral, 5 poster). In support of the best student presentation competition, 30 members volunteered to serve as judges. The support of the membership in judging the student presentations was greatly appreciated.

The attending members then voted on changes to the bylaws of the division. Sally Woodin moved to strike the wording in the proposed bylaws that included the past program officer as part of the executive committee of the division. The vote on her motion was 8 to strike, 10 not to strike, and 6 abstentions. Sally noted that although her motion went down in defeat, all of the past division officers present voted to strike the wording. The subsequent vote on the changes to the bylaws passed unanimously.

Jeff Goldman of the American Institute for Biological Sciences (an association with 87 members, <http://www.aibs.org/core/>) spoke to the members about the NSF plans to establish the National Ecological Observatory Network (NEON) ([http://www.nsf.gov/bio/bio\\_bdg04/neon04.htm](http://www.nsf.gov/bio/bio_bdg04/neon04.htm)). Jeff is interested in hearing from the SICB membership on the following:

1. What do you think about NEON?
2. How might you use it?
3. Are you interested in applying for instrumentation money (300 million over 7 to 8 years)?
4. Are you interested in using data from the project?

Several members commented on the lack of NEON to address watershed and coastal issues. Jeff thought that this type of input was important to the success of NEON and hoped to receive more comments.

Members of the SICB Executive Committee (Marvalee Wake, Brett Burk, and John Wingfield) stopped by the meeting to say hello and listen to the comments of division members at the business meeting. Members related their comments concerning the schedule of the meeting. Brett stated that we had 1050 participants at the Toronto meeting. However, dues were down. Brett also reported that the elections went very well with a substantial number of SICB members casting votes. Marvalee spoke to the fact the Society bylaws need to be changed to allow for electronic voting over the internet.

After the members of the executive committee left, Mary Alice asked if there were any suggestions for increasing participation in the divisional symposia. Diana Padilla suggested a joint symposium with the Western Society of Naturalists for the San Diego meeting in 2005.

Linda Walters reported that the student support committee received 72 proposals from students, about 50% were from students affiliated with the division of ecology and evolution. Linda said that the committee awarded money to about 30 of the proposals. In addition, the committee awarded several Travel grants. She strongly recommended that our students apply for support.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:11pm so that members could attend the joint DIZ/AMS/DEE social.

Respectfully submitted,  
Michael Temkin  
DEE Secretary

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## **DEE Candidates for Election**

### *Candidates for DEE Chair–Elect*

#### **Fredric J. Janzen**

**Current Position:** Associate Professor; Department of Ecology, Evolution, and Organismal Biology (as of 1 July 2003); Iowa State University

**Education:** B.A., Biology, North Central College, 1985; M.S., Zoology, Colorado State University, 1987; Ph.D., Ecology and Evolution, University of Chicago, 1992

**Professional Experience:** Visiting Professor, "Tropical Biology: An Ecological Approach (Course #92–1)", Organization for Tropical Studies, Costa Rica; Postdoctoral Fellow, Center for Population Biology, University of California–Davis, 1992–1994; Visiting Assistant Researcher, Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, University of California–Irvine, 1998–1999; Assistant Professor, Department of Zoology & Genetics, Iowa State University, 1994–2000; Associate Professor, Department of Zoology & Genetics, Iowa State University, 2000–Present

**SICB Activities:** 1st place in Best Student Paper competition, Division of Ecology, 1988; 3rd place in Best Student Paper competition, Division of Ecology, 1990; Session Moderator, Division of Ecology, 1995; Chair of Best Student Paper Committee, Division of Ecology, 1995; Program Advisory Committee, Society–wide, 2000–2001; Chair of Program Advisory Committee, Society–wide, 2002–2003; Judge for Best Student Paper Committee, Division of Ecology and Evolution, 2003

**Other Memberships:** American Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists, Ecological Society of America, Herpetologists' League, Sigma Xi, Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles, Society for the Study of Evolution

**Research Interests:** Experimental evolutionary ecology and physiology; phenotypic selection and quantitative genetics; molecular ecology and evolution; phylogenetics (see

<http://www.public.iastate.edu/~fjanzen>)

**Statement of Goals:** SICB does a great job supporting student participation and fostering cross-disciplinary interactions. But we can and must do better to ensure a healthy long-term future for the Society. The DEE, which is inherently integrative and committed, is positioned well to lead on these fundamental matters. I wish to continue promoting the importance of SICB membership to our non-SICB ecological- and evolutionary-oriented colleagues and students. One way to do so is to incorporate novel activities at SICB meetings (e.g., an Adopt-A-Student program where a voluntarily matched pair of new student and SICB veteran exchange e-mail prior to the meeting, meet at the opening social, share a SICB- and/or DEE-supported meal together on the first day, or whatever seems best). We can also lead by supporting creative, cutting-edge symposia. Let me briefly mention two possibilities. First, we might consider exploring the fast-growing roles of computational biology in our discipline (How much should we rely on computers? Will organismal biologists and natural historians, among others, be sidelined by this change of emphasis? Will/should we lament the loss of those noncomputational fields?). Second, we might consider becoming more involved in targeted recruiting and support of specific individuals for Society membership and career guidance (Should we be pro-active in extending SICB's reach to new members from underrepresented groups and to engage these individuals in integrative and comparative scientific activities?). Both student-oriented activities and research/education opportunities that focus on national priorities such as these will promote life-long membership in and commitment to SICB.

### **Linda J. Walters**

**Current Position:** Assistant Professor, Department of Biology, University of Central Florida, Orlando, FL

**Education:** B.S., Bates College, 1983; M.S., Ph.D., University of South Carolina, 1986, 1991.

**Professional Experience:** Postdoctoral Fellowships: Kewalo Marine Laboratory, University of Hawaii (1992-1994); Cochin University of Science and Technology, Cochin, India (1994-1995); Universite Laval, Quebec, Canada (1995-1996). Assistant Professor of Biology, University of Central Florida (1997 - present); Director, Fellers House Field Station in Canaveral National Seashore (1997 - present).

**SICB Activities:** Secretary, DEE (1999-2001); Chair, DEE Outstanding Student Presentation Judging (2000-2002); Society-Wide Student Support Committee (2003 - present); Judge, DEE student presentations (1998 - 2003).

**Other Memberships:** Sigma Xi, Ecological Society of America, Estuarine Research Federation, National Marine Educators Association.

**Research Interests:** Ecology of marine invertebrates and macroalgae, including the dispersal and success of sexual propagules and asexual fragments, exploration behaviors of competent invertebrate larvae, and human impacts on oysters in estuaries and biodiversity on coral reefs.

**Statement of Goals:** I have benefited tremendously from SICB since becoming a member as a beginning graduate student. As a student, professionals at SICB provided me with contacts for postdoctoral fellowships, and advice on experimental design, grant writing and job interviewing techniques. Now, as a faculty member, I rely on SICB even more to learn about the latest research in my field and in scientific disciplines far

removed from my own, as well as new and innovative ways to improve my teaching. I also strongly encourage my students to attend and present at the annual meetings.

As a society, I think that SICB has done an excellent job for its members in recent years and I would like to help it continue on this track. DEE fills a very important role to members, especially in breaking down perceived barriers between botanical and zoological research. We need to keep this division strong so DEE can continue to fill this important role in future years. Specifically, we need to continue to recruit and mentor new students (both undergraduate and graduate students), foster interactions that can lead to new research and/or teaching collaborations, and promote interdisciplinary symposia that will excite and draw in both new and established members.