

Division of Systematic and Evolutionary Biology (DSEB): 2004 Spring Newsletter

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Message from the Chair

Kenneth M. Halanych

The New Orleans meeting in January was a big success. DSEB had a strong showing with contributed papers and posters as well as symposia. Furthermore, the integration of systematic methods across society divisions is a testament to the importance of the DSEB at SICB. The division would also like to thank Rich Mooi and Ingrid Kaatz for their stewardship over the past two years. Rich and Ingrid have done an excellent job and been helpful with easing the transition.

I encourage participation in DSEB. Given our strong membership list, we should have better participation at the annual business meeting. In particular, it would be good to generate a list of those willing to serve as officers in the future. I also have a specific request for feedback from the membership as to the scientific scope of the division. Over the last decade, the field of "Systematics/Phylogenetics" has grown considerably and now encompasses many aspects: phylogenetic methods, organismal phylogenies, gene genealogies, paleontology, intra-specific relationships, etc. DSEB is strong in some of these areas, and may wish to further develop others, perhaps through symposia or workshops. The officers of the Division would welcome thoughts or new ideas that you may have as to how best focus the division's efforts.

Message from the Program Officer

Don Swiderski

First and foremost, thanks and congratulations.

Thanks to Rob Guralnick and Jon Jeffrey for a fine symposium, "The Study of Sequences in Natural Sciences," and a boffo "Systematics for Dummies" workshop.

Thanks to the students who entered the best student paper contest and especially the judges who evaluated their talks and posters. This year, two presentations were so remarkable that the judges were hopelessly

deadlocked. Accordingly, two prizes will be awarded to:

E. B. Rosenblum: "Reptile Color Variation and *Mc1r*"

S. A. Nichols: "Does the existing classification reflect the relationships within demosponges? A molecular phylogenetic approach."

Congratulations to both, and to their respective labs at the University of California, Berkeley.

Next year, we can look forward to equally exciting symposia by Nigel Hughes and company (*Terminal Addition, Segmentation, and the Evolution of Metazoan Body Plan Regionalization*), Moya Smith (*Evolution and Development of the Vertebrate Dentition*), and our new fearless leader Ken Halanych (*WormNet: Recent Advances in Annelid Systematics, Development, and Evolution*).

Now comes the tedious semi-annual plea for symposium and workshop proposals. We especially need ideas for 2006, but we will also welcome ideas for '07 and even '08. I need to hear your ideas for '06 as soon as possible, so we can work together to polish up your idea bright and shiny for the September program officers' meeting.

Message from the Secretary

Pat Reynolds

Greetings to all. On behalf of the nominating committee, consisting of Rachel Collin (Chair), Marta de Maintenon, and myself, I would like to thank our candidates for agreeing to be nominated for the positions of Chair and Program Officer. Voting is now online, and I encourage everyone to participate. I would like to echo Ken's call for members to consider serving the Division as Officers, and invite anyone interested to send me a message to that effect. I will compile the list and pass it on to next year's nominating committee.

At the Society Secretaries meeting in New Orleans last January, Sunny Boyd (SICB Secretary) charged the Division Secretaries to review their divisional bylaws, and propose revisions to offices, terms, and other aspects with a view towards attaining consistency across the society. To this end we have attached a draft of proposed changes, for review and discussion by the membership. Please let us know your thoughts; email me or any of the Officers. The more significant changes include more explicit identification of "elect" offices and terms (which will also help in planning elections and clarifying officer transitions), extending the term of the Secretary to three years, relying upon term length to stagger elections and terms within the Executive Committee, and more explicit information on student best paper awards.

After incorporating feedback, and as provided by our current bylaws, we will present a motion for revising the division bylaws to the membership in the Fall newsletter or at the Annual Business Meeting next January.

Proposed Changes to DSEB Bylaws

Comments to DSEB Secretary, Pat Reynolds <preynold@hamilton.edu>, before September 1, 2004
Vote on final version will take place via Fall newsletter or at 2005 Annual Meeting.

The proposed bylaws with changes indicated are available in PDF format for downloading/viewing using Adobe Reader or similar software: **Proposed DSEB Bylaws (.pdf)**

Minutes of the DSEB Annual Business Meeting, 7 Jan. 2004, New Orleans

The meeting convened at 5:38 pm; 11 members were present (reaching quorum).

1. There was discussion on 3 items brought by Chair Rich Mooi from the SICB Executive Committee:
 - a) Consideration of support being resumed for a Congressional Fellow. The body was in general agreement.
 - b) Consideration of SICB sponsorship of a symposium at an international conference being held in North America. Views were mixed, and the discussion wide-ranging on issues of symposium support.
 - c) Consideration of SICB holding a future meeting outside of the US. Rich noted that the 2007 venue was being left open for the moment to allow for the possibility of finding a venue in South or Central America, e.g., Mexico. Some discussion ensued.
2. Rich Mooi welcomed the new Chair of DSEB, Ken Halanych.
3. Rich Mooi appointed the 2004 nominating committee, consisting of Rachel Collin (Chair), Marta de Maintenon, and Pat Reynolds.
4. Ken Halanych, standing in for Program Officer Don Swiderski who unexpectedly couldn't attend the meeting, reviewed programming items:
 - a) A proposal from the Program Officers' meeting to change duration of oral presentations in future meetings from 20 min to 15 min, due to the large size of the current meeting (1300 abstracts); symposium presentations would be set at 30 mins. Some discussion ensued.
 - b) Ken reviewed the DSEB sponsorship for SICB symposia for the 2005 meetings in San Diego:

Primary sponsorship of the symposium "Evolution and Development of the Vertebrate Dentition," organized by Moya Smith (King's College London Dental Institute).

Secondary sponsorship for the Society-wide symposium "Terminal Addition, Segmentation, and the Evolution of Metazoan Body Plan Regionalization," organized by Nigel Hughes (U. of California/Riverside) and David K. Jacobs (UCLA), and of the regular symposium "WormNet: Recent Advances in Annelid Systematics, Development, and Evolution," organized by Kenneth M. Halanych (Auburn University)

DSEB is an additional sponsoring division for the American Microscopical Society symposium of "The New Microscopy: Toward a Phylogenetic Synthesis," organized by Ruth Ann Dewel (Appalachian State University), Kathy Coates (Bermuda Biological Station), Mary Beth Thomas, Clay Cook (Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institution), and Julian Smith (Winthrop University)

- c) Ken urged those interested in organizing a symposium for the 2006 meetings in Orlando to contact the Program Officer, Don Swiderski. He noted that nothing was currently on the slate, and proposals would be due mid-September.

d) The best student paper award competition, organized by Don Swiderski, comprised 12 entrants and 4 judges; the award would be given before the next meeting.

5. Rich Mooi brought several issues from the SICB Editorial Board, to which he is a representative:

a) should the Editorial structure remain as at present

b) the speed with which symposia are published, and if the rate of submission could be speeded up

c) whether the students receiving an accommodation subsidy from the society (250 at the current meeting), who no longer are operating slide carousels, could be used in an editing or type copy role. Ken Halanych suggested that the subsidized students could chair sessions, perhaps partnered by a senior member to help drive discussion.

6. A delegation from the SICB Executive Committee, including John Wingfield (President), Sarah Woodin (President–Elect), Brett Burk (Executive Director), and Ron Dimock (Treasurer) visited the meeting, bringing salutations. John noted that the meeting was the biggest in many years, with 1520 registrants, including 600 students, and was a sign of expansion of the society. He further noted that there were several issues on which he wanted to hear from the membership, including:

a) student support by the society, in terms of travel, research, and undergraduates

b) diversity in the society, and particularly the possibilities for outreach to Central and South America

c) the society's role in issues of conservation biology

The meeting adjourned at 6:28 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Pat Reynolds

DSEB Secretary

Upcoming Meetings of Interest to the Division

The Evolution Conference 2004, jointly sponsored by the Society for the Study of Evolution, Society of Systematic Biologists, and The American Society of Naturalists, will be held June 26–30, 2004, in Fort Collins, Colorado, at Colorado State University, and hosted by faculty in the Department of Biology (Lisa Angeloni, Mike Antolin, Shanna Carney, Cameron Ghalambor, Mark Simmons and Colleen Webb) and the Department of Bioagricultural Sciences and Pest Management (Ruth Hufbauer). Further information at: <http://evolution04.biology.colostate.edu/>

Elections: Biographies of candidates for DSEB Chair and DSEB Program Officer

Candidates for DSEB Chair

Donald Swiderski

Current Position: Research Assistant, Kresge Hearing Research Institute, and Adjunct Research Investigator, Museum of Zoology, University of Michigan.

Education: Ph.D., Zoology, Michigan State University, 1990. M.S., Geology (Paleontology), Michigan State University, 1986. B.S., Geology, Michigan State University, 1981.

Professional Experience: Instructor, Life Science, Washtenaw Community College, 2003. Lecturer, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, University of Michigan, 2002. Visiting Assistant Professor, Zoology Department, Michigan State University, 2001. Research Assistant, Division of Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine, Department of Internal Medicine, and Thoracic Surgery Research Laboratory, Department of Surgery, University of Michigan Medical Center, 1991–1996. Research Assistant, Department of Geological Sciences and Museum of Paleontology, University of Michigan, 1990–1991.

SICB Activities: Program Officer, DSEB, 2002–2005. . Workshop Co–organizer (with C. Sheil) "Systematics for Dummies, 2: Finding the Right Tree in the Forest," 2001. Symposium Organizer "Beyond Reconstruction: Using Phylogenies to Test Hypotheses about Vertebrate Evolution," sponsored by DSEB, 2001. Workshop Co–organizer (with A. Maglia) "Systematics for Dummies, 1: Mapping and Optimization," 2000.

Other Memberships: American Society of Mammalogists, Society for the Study of Evolution, American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Research Interests: My research focuses on the relationship of morphological diversity to ecological and functional diversity, encompassing both variation within species and differentiation between species. I am particularly interested in the morphological diversity that is due to differences in shape.

Statement of Goals: My primary goal as an officer of this division is to foster a growing awareness of the importance of systematics. A society that bills itself as "integrative and comparative" needs a strong division of systematic biology. As program officer, I have tried to promote programs that highlight the role of systematics in comparative studies, and then teach methods and provide resources for researchers interested in similar studies. These projects have helped raise the visibility of our division and attracted some active younger members. Now is time to turn our attention to more directly building membership and encouraging more active involvement of our existing members.

Candidates for DSEB Program Officer

Michele K. Nishiguchi

Current Position: 1999–present Assistant Professor, New Mexico State University

Education: 1994 Ph.D., UC Santa Cruz. 1989 M.S., Scripps Institution of Oceanography, UC San Diego. 1985 B.S., UC Davis.

Professional Experience: 1997–98 Postdoctoral Research Scientist, Earth & Space Sciences, UCLA. 1994–97 NSF Postdoctoral Fellow, U Hawaii and USC. 1994 Teaching staff, McMurdo Station, Antarctica. 1989–93 Teaching Assistant, Biology, UC Santa Cruz.

SICB Activities: Member since 1987.

Other Memberships: American Malacological Union, American Society of Microbiology, Sigma Xi, Society for the Study of Evolution.

Research Interests: Evolution of animal and bacterial associations; development and specificity of symbiotic relationships. Specifically, the mutualistic association between sepiolid squids (Cephalopoda) and their *Vibrio* symbionts. Mechanisms of host–symbiont recognition, and assessment of environmental factors and inherent genetic characters affecting speciation and diversity among *Vibrio* bacteria.

Statement of Goals: As program officer for DSEB, I would promote more "between discipline" symposia, as well as recruitment of underrepresented minorities into the fields of integrative and comparative biology. Since SICB changed its name from ASZ some time ago, I have felt the need to actually start "integrating" many of the disciplines that are represented (but usually in separate forums) at our annual meetings. In this manner, we can then combine research foci from groups that may not regularly have the chance to meet or exchange ideas and form new collaborations. At New Mexico State University, where our undergraduate student body is represented by > 50% ethnically diverse groups, I have been heavily involved in recruitment of underrepresented students to science, and feel the need to increase their involvement at our meetings. While seeking funding in their support, I would like to initially incorporate special symposia that would focus on the research from these students, and eventually have this as a regular event within the society.

Francesco Santini

Current Position: Marie Curie Research Fellow, Museum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris.

Education: 1997 Laurea degree in Biological Sciences, University of Pisa, Italy. 2003 Ph.D. in Zoology, University of Toronto, Canada.

Professional Experience: May 2003–present, Marie Curie Research Fellow, Museum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris.

SICB Activities: Member since 1999; presentations at 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004 Annual Meetings; co–organizer of the symposium on "Patterns and processes in the evolution of fishes" held during the 2003 annual meeting in Toronto and sponsored by SICB, DSEB, DVM, DEE, DEDB, and the Paleontological Society; co–organizer of the "Phylogenetics for dummies" workshop held during the 2003 annual meeting.

Other Memberships: Society of Systematic Biology, Society for Conservation Biology, European Society for Evolutionary Biology, National Association of Science Writers.

Research Interests: Phylogenetic relationships of acanthomorph (spiny–rayed) fishes, with particular emphasis on pufferfish and allies (Tetraodontiformes); evolution of key morphological structures in fishes; problems associated the use of model organisms in studies of evolutionary biology and genomics; historical biogeography of the marine biota; theoretical aspects of the use of incomplete fossil taxa in phylogenetic analyses.

Statement of Goals: I would like to see DSEB increase the number of its members, and I think that in order to do this the Division should try to recruit new members outside the traditional membership of SICB, a

society that has historically been dominated by zoologists. As program officer of DSEB I would try to attract a greater number of botanists, microbiologists, and paleontologists to SICB meetings through symposia, workshops, and other activities in which DSEB is traditionally involved. As most members of SICB reside in the US and Canada, I would also try to develop ways to encourage the participation of fellow systematists from other countries to our annual meetings.