



Division of Comparative Endocrinology (DCE): 2007 Spring Newsletter

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Message from the Chair

Bob Denver (rdenver@umich.edu)

We had an outstanding annual meeting of the SICB in Phoenix this year with about 1200 presentations society-wide. The turnout for the DCE was excellent and, as always there were more outstanding presentations than one could possibly attend. The highlight of the meeting was the sixth annual Howard Bern Lecture presented by Nancy Sherwood. Dr. Sherwood presented a fascinating lecture on "The endocrine system just before the backbone: genomics of the spineless." We were very pleased that Howard Bern could attend the meeting. We are very grateful to Elsevier and the SICB for support of the Howard Bern Lecture series.

Our oral and poster presentations covered a broad range of comparative endocrinology and highlighted some of the finest work in our field. Our Divisional Program Officer (DPO) Michael Romero did an outstanding job of putting together a logical and exciting program. There were no DCE-sponsored symposia at the Phoenix meeting. *As in the past, I want to strongly encourage DCE members to propose symposia for our future meetings.* We have one symposium planned for the meeting in San Antonio (see message from Michael Romero below). Symposia represent one of the most important activities of our Division and are essential for the continued development and vigor of our field. If you are considering proposing a symposium for the Boston meeting please contact Michael as soon as possible. The deadline for symposium proposal submission is **August 17, 2007** (<http://www.sicb.org/meetings/2009/index.php3>). Note that the SICB sponsors three kinds of symposia: 1) divisional or co-sponsoring society symposia, 2) society-wide symposia, and 3) mini-symposia. Also note that in the future the SICB will entertain proposals for 'late breaking', half day symposia. There is still time to propose such a symposium for the San Antonio meeting. Follow this link if you are interested: <http://www.sicb.org/meetings/2008/latesympoia.php3>.

I want to thank Creagh Breuner for chairing the best student paper award judging committee and each of the judges for their hard work in identifying suitable candidates for the awards. The competition was quite stiff again this year, with 27 students competing in the oral presentation category and 11 competing in the poster category. The quality of the presentations and posters was excellent, making the decision process difficult for the judges. Congratulations to all of the participants, and especially to the following award winners:

The **Aubrey Gorbman Award for Best Student Oral Presentation** was shared by **Susannah French** (Arizona State University) for the talk titled "Corticosterone modulation of reproductive and immune system trade-offs in female tree lizards: long-term corticosterone manipulations via injectable gelling material", and **Oliver Love** (Simon Fraser University) for the talk titled "Exposing the embryo to maternal stress: an adaptive precognitive mechanism or an unavoidable developmental cost?" Honorable mention in this category was given to **Alan Vajda** (University of Colorado) for the talk titled "Reproductive disruption of fishes by an endocrine active wastewater effluent". The **Award for Best Student Poster Presentation** was given to **Eunice Chin** (Univ. of British Columbia, Vancouver) for the poster titled "Brain and plasma steroid levels in a developing free-living songbird." Honorable mention was shared by **Molly Dickens** (Tufts University) for the poster titled "Stress and translocation success in Chukar" and **Eri Saijo** (Arizona State University) for the poster titled "Proliferation, differentiation and survival of newborn cells in adult amphibian brain."

At the annual DCE business meeting we welcomed Cathy Propper, our new DCE secretary and congratulated our new DPO-elect Stephen Schoech. We also welcomed Stacia Sower, our Chair-elect. Please note that owing to the change in the bylaws there was some confusion regarding when Stacia would take over as chair. Stacia will begin her service at the end of the Executive Committee meeting in San Antonio and I will continue as chair of the DCE until that time.

A reminder that the DCE membership approved a change to our bylaws that involves the addition of a \$4 fee to the membership dues for DCE members. This is intended to cover the cost of maintaining membership in the International Federation of Comparative Endocrine Societies (IFCES) and to generate a fund to cover requests for support for regional, national and international meetings. Regarding support for meetings, requests are made to the chair of DCE and these are placed into the divisional budget to be approved by the SICB treasurer. The budgets are formulated in the early fall, so if you are planning a meeting for which you intend to request funds from SICB please get those requests in as early as possible. It may not be possible to grant requests made after the budget is submitted.

This year, the DCE will elect a new Divisional Chair and Secretary. We have two excellent candidates for each position. Jim Carr and Mark Sheridan are nominated to stand for election to the Chair position, and Pierre Deviche and Mary Mendonca are nominated for the Secretary position. Their biographical sketches are at the end of this newsletter. The election will take place online in late Spring 2007 - please vote! I want to thank David Norris for chairing the Nomination Committee and Daniel Buchholz and Rosemary Knapp for serving on it.

Message from the Program Officer

L. Michael Romero (Michael.romero@tufts.edu)

The 2007 Meeting in Phoenix, Arizona

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I hope everyone agrees that the 2007 meeting in Phoenix, Arizona was a great success. The Comparative Endocrinology sessions were well attended. The highlight of the meeting was the terrific Howard Bern Lecture presented by Nancy Sherwood.

Symposia at the 2008 meeting in San Antonio, Texas

Information on the symposia for the 2008 meeting in San Antonio is now posted on the home page of the SICB web site. DCE is the primary sponsor for an exciting symposium, "Consequences of maternally-derived yolk hormones for offspring: current status, challenges and opportunities" that is being organized by Rachel Bowden and Matt Lovern. DCE is also cosponsoring a symposium, "Evolution vs. Creationism in the classroom: evolving student attitudes" that should be of interest to many of us. In addition, two other symposia promise to be interesting: "Aerocology: probing and modeling the aerosphere - the next frontier" and "PharmEcology: integrating ecological systems and pharmacology." All in all, it is shaping up to be an exciting meeting.

!!Call for Symposia, 2009 meeting in Boston, Massachusetts!!

Information on submitting symposia for the 2009 meeting in Boston is now a link on the home page of the SICB web site. Please think about developing exciting and engaging symposia in your field. DCE-organized symposia have been few and far between lately. Symposia are a major draw for our annual meeting and can be extremely rewarding for the organizers as well. Symposium papers are often published together in an issue of *Integrative and Comparative Biology*. Deadline for submissions is August 17, 2007. If you have an idea for a symposium, please do not hesitate to contact me (michael.romero@tufts.edu).

Message from the Secretary

Cathy Propper (Catherine.Propper@nau.edu)

Minutes of the Phoenix 2007 SICB Division of Comparative Endocrinology Business Meeting:

Introductions: Bob Denver introduced the new officers: Stacia Sower, Chair-Elect; Steve Schoech, Program Officer Elect, and Cathy Propper, Secretary.

Minutes: Cathy called for the approval of the minutes from the 2006 business meeting. They were unanimously approved.

Thanks: We thanked Bob Denver (Chair) and Kevin Kelley (Secretary) for their wonderful service for division for the past years and we recognized Michael Romero (Program Officer) and Darren Lerner (Post-doctorate/Graduate Student rep) for their current service. Please see Bob Denver's note above regarding the bylaws and term of service.

SICB is developing its webpage: Soon there will be a place for a Researchers' database under each Divisional heading. When this site opens, please include your information. In the meantime, checkout the new look and spend some time in the different areas.

We are trying to develop a History of Divisional Officers. If you have served, please send Cathy your name, affiliation, office served, and dates of service as soon as possible (best to do it now while you are thinking about it!). She will compile the information for our Division.

SICB general news from the officers: SICB is trying to double its endowment fund to support symposia and foreign speakers. The Journal of Integrative and Comparative Biology has sped up its review process and the manuscripts will be posted on the website within two days following copy-editing completion. Also, the Journal should now be picked up on Medline and Google Scholar, but is available (back to the first issues of American Zoologist) to SICB members at: <http://www.sicb.org/journal/>.

News from NSF: William Zamer from the NSF gave a brief overview of ongoing changes in structural organization at the NSF to reflect the importance of Integrative Systems. For details you may wish to view Jim Collins' presentation titled: *What is integrative biology at the start of the 21st century?* at: <http://www.sicb.org/meetings/2007/>. The NSF is looking for a new Divisions Director. Contact Jim Collins if you may be interested.

Regarding your presentations at SICB: To help the Program Officers, please make sure that you note you want your talk to go in a DCE session and carefully choose the subareas of interest. If you do not note DCE for your abstract, our program officer may never see it.

Symposia: There are already two symposia set up for next year's meeting in San Antonio: One on Yolk Steroids and the other (jointly sponsored on Teaching Evolution). Please see Michael's report above for more information.

Grad and Post-doc Affairs: Darren Lerner discussed issues important to Graduate Students and Post-docs. We had 250 students registered for the meeting (1/2 were new). Please contact Darren for new ideas and workshops for San Antonio.

GCE News: Bob Dores, Editor-and-Chief reported on the current state of the journal *General and Comparative Endocrinology*. This year the journal received 342 manuscripts. The rejection rate is 48%. The journal now has an impact factor of "2," and is in the top 25% of endocrine journals. It takes about 5 months to go from receipt of a manuscript to acceptance (including 3-6 weeks in review), 8 months from receipt to on-line and 10 to print. The aim is to significantly decrease this timeline.

Elections: Cathy announced that we would be holding elections for Chair Elect and Secretary Elect in the spring and called for nominations to be sent to David Norris, Rosemary Knapp, Dan Buchholz or Kevin Kelley (Note: this process has been completed thanks to those on the nomination committee. The nominees' bios and goal statements are listed below).

Other: Members should be aware of Dr. David Norris' recently published new Edition (4th) of Vertebrate Endocrinology.

Upcoming Conferences:

Western Regional Conference of Comparative Endocrinology will be held at Friday Harbor Labs on March 23-24. Contact Lynn Riddiford (lmr@u.washington.edu) or Penny Swanson (penny.swanson@noaa.gov) for details.

International Symposium of Amphibian and Reptile Endocrinology and Neurobiology will be held in Berkeley, CA on March 25-28. For more information go to: <http://isaren2007.berkeley.edu/overview.php>

The Society for Behavioral Neuroendocrinology's annual meeting will be held at the Asilomar Conference Center in Pacific Grove, CA (Barney Schlinger, local organizer) from 21 June (pre-meeting workshop) through 24 June 2007. For more information go to: <http://www.sbne.org/meetings/program.php>

The Endocrine Society's annual meeting will be held on June 2-7th in Toronto, Canada. For more information go to: <http://www.endo-society.org/endo/>

The American Water Resources Association will be holding a Specialty Conference: Emerging Contaminants of Concern in the Environment: Issues, Investigations and Solutions on June 25-27, in Vail, Colorado. For more information go to: <http://www.awra.org/meetings/Vail2007/index.html>

Message from the Graduate Student and Post-doc Representative

Darren Lerner (lerner@hawaii.edu)

The most recent SICB meeting in Phoenix was a success in many respects. Many thanks to Stephanie Cross for heading up the Student Support Program and Shea Tuberty, Kevin Kelley and Larry Riley, the new faculty chair of SPDAC, for organizing the excellent and well-attended workshop: "**What editors want: Paving the way to publication**". Of course many thanks to the journal editors who served on those panels!

This year approximately 15% of the Grants in Aid of Research (GIAR) went to DCE students. Congratulations to Jonathan Atwell, Timothy Greives, Corrine Kozlowski and Rachel Seabury Sprague!! If you haven't received an award previously, don't forget to apply in November!

On to San Antonio 2008. Don't miss the 1st Timers Orientation after the welcome social on the first night. This gathering is NOT just for 1st timers. The venue in 2008 will include information on how to get the best out of your time at the meeting, provide information on student work for the **Student Support Program**, and a special hello from the current SICB president. Don't forget to sign up when you submit your abstract. Students presenting a poster or oral presentation are eligible for discounted housing or free registration for no more than 4 hours of work.

For the last evening of the meeting, before the dessert social, we are planning a great workshop tentatively entitled: "**More than just science: What other skills are needed to be a successful graduate student and job applicant**". A panel of recently hired faculty and post-docs will discuss and field questions on various topics including: 1) the unspoken realities about the necessary skills, other than your science, that are needed to be successful in running your lab and/or preparing you for a doctoral degree or post-doc position 2) discussions focused on the importance of collegiality, interpersonal skills, and 3) how to manage your budgets, time, students, service, and oh yah, courses! Don't miss out! Graduate students and post-docs are encouraged to attend.

Finally, if you have any comments or suggestions regarding the meeting or any of the student/post-doc activities please feel free to contact me: lerner@hawaii.edu I look forward to seeing you in San Antonio!

DCE Elections

Candidates for Chair-elect, in alphabetical order

1. James Carr

Current Position:

Professor, Department of Biological Sciences, Texas Tech University

Education:

1982, B.S. with Honors, Cook College, Rutgers University; 1986, M.A., Department of E.P.O. Biology, University of Colorado, Boulder; 1988, Ph.D., Department of E.P.O. Biology, University of Colorado, Boulder

Professional Experience:

1988-1989, Research Associate, Department of Anatomy, School of Medicine, University of New Mexico; 1989-1991, NIH Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of Anatomy, School of Medicine, University of New Mexico; 1991-1997, Assistant Professor, Department of Biological Sciences, Texas Tech University; 1997-2004, Associate Professor, Department of Biological Sciences, TTU; 2005- Present, Professor, Department of Biological Sciences, TTU. Served as a panelist for the NSF Integrative Animal Biology Program, 2003; Served as an Associate Editor for General and Comparative Endocrinology since 2003.

SICB Membership and Activities:

SICB member since 1984; Council member, International Federation of Comparative Endocrinology Societies (IFCES, 2001-2005); Secretary, Division of Comparative Endocrinology, Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology (SICB, 2002-2004); Co-organizer, NIMH/NSF funded symposium for the Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology, 2001, Annual Meeting. Symposium entitled: Stress- Is it more than a disease? A comparative look at stress and adaptation; Best student paper/poster judge, annual SICB meeting, Division of Comparative Endocrinology (1996, 1999-2000, 2007); Co-organizer, Southwestern Regional Conference on Comparative Endocrinology held at TTU (1994).

Other Memberships:

American Heart Association (1995- present); European Comparative Endocrinology Society (1998-present); International Neuropeptide Society (1997-2003); J.B. Johnston Club (1995-2004); National Center for Science Education (NCSE, 2001-present); New York Academy of Sciences (2003-present); Society for Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry (2002-2006); Society for Neuroscience (1989-present).

Research Interests: Our research is focused in the areas of neuroendocrinology and environmental endocrinology. We study the endocrine and neural mechanisms that allow animals to cope with changes in their environment, in particular how amphibians respond to stressors and contaminants in their environment.

Goals Statement:

Although reductionist approaches to understanding the molecular and cellular basis of endocrine function have provided tremendous advances, SICB and the Division of Comparative Endocrinology are unique in providing a forum for understanding how these advances can be incorporated into an integrated view of organism function. The ability of DCE to support the discussion of endocrine research in light of recent advances in ecology, developmental biology, evolutionary biology and toxicology is critical for my research program as it is for many others in our field. As DCE chair I will encourage the development of interdisciplinary symposia that draw on the unique strength of the integrative framework provided at the annual SICB meeting. I will work to continue DCE's excellent track record in fostering graduate student participation in our annual meeting. Finally, I will work to recruit new members to our division and encourage those whose participation may have lapsed over the past few years to revisit our organization.

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2. Mark Sheridan

Current Position: James A. Meier Professor, North Dakota State University, Fargo, ND

Education: A.B., Zoology, Humboldt State University, 1980; M.A., Biology, Humboldt State University, 1982; Ph.D., Zoology, University of California--Berkeley, 1985.

Professional Experience: Assistant Professor of Zoology, North Dakota State University (NDSU), Fargo, ND., 1985-1991; Graduate Program Coordinator, Department of Zoology, NDSU, 1986-1990; Associate Professor of Zoology, NDSU, 1991-1997; Director, Regulatory Biosciences Center, NDSU, 1991-2000; Visiting Professor, University of Tokyo, Ocean Research Institute, Japan, 1994; Professor of Zoology, NDSU, 1997-present; Visiting Professor, University of São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil, 1998; James A. Meier Professor, NDSU, 1999-present; Director, North Dakota Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR), 2000-2003; Editor, General and Comparative Endocrinology, 2001-present; Associate Editor, Comparative Biochemistry and Physiology, 2002- present.

SICB Activities: SICB member since 1982; Organizer, Midwest Regional Conference on Comparative Endocrinology, 1989; DCE Nominating Committee 1990-1991 & 1994 (Chair); Chair, DCE Best Student Paper Award Committee, 1991-1993; 2006, 2007; Chair, Graduate Student-Postdoctoral Affairs Committee, 1994-1996; DCE Program Officer 1996-1999; Symposium co-organizer, *A Tribute to Erika Plisetzkaya: New Insights on the Function and Evolution of Gastroenteropancreatic Hormones*, 1999.

Other Memberships: AAAS, American Fisheries Society, Endocrine Society, North Dakota Academy of Science (President, 1999-2000), Sigma Xi (NDSU Chapter President, 1993).

Research Interests: Hormonal regulation of growth, development, and metabolism in vertebrate animals. My current research examines the function and evolution of the somatostatin signaling system.

Goal Statement: As the main association of comparative endocrinologists in North America, DCE should strive to make the annual SICB meeting a premier gathering for the field. We also should continue and strengthen our commitment to the professional development of students and postdoctorals. These goals can be realized by offering a diverse and relevant scientific program, including topical symposia and mini-symposia as well as workshops that address methods and approaches in the field. We also must expand means to support student travel and enhance opportunities for "networking" with established scientists at the meeting.

Candidates for Secretary-elect, in alphabetical order

1. Pierre J. Deviche

Current position: Professor of Environmental Physiology, Arizona State University (<http://sols.asu.edu/faculty/pdeviche.php>)

Education: B.S., Biology, University of Liege (Belgium), 1975; Ph.D., Behavioral Neuroendocrinology, University of Liege (Belgium), 1980.

Professional Experience and Relevant Activities: A. von Humboldt Post-doctoral Fellowship, Ruhr-University Bochum, Germany (Juan Delius, Mentor), 1982-1984. Research Associate, University of Liege, Belgium (Jacques Balthazart, Mentor), 1984-1985; NIMH Research Associate, Oregon State University (Frank Moore, Mentor), 1985-1988; Associate Professor, University of Alaska Fairbanks, 1988-1998; Professor, University of Alaska Fairbanks, 1998-1999; Associate Professor, Arizona State University, 1999-2003; Professor, Arizona State University, 2003-pres. Chair, Scientific and Local Organizing Committees for the 8th International Symposium on Avian Endocrinology (2004) held in Scottsdale, Arizona. Chair, ASU Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee, 2003-2006.

SICB Activities: Regularly participated in SICB annual meetings since ~1984. I generally bring several students to these meetings and many of these students give poster or oral presentations.

Other Memberships: American Association for the Advancement of Sciences; Society for Neuroscience; Sigma Xi; Society for Behavioral Neuroendocrinology; American Ornithological Union; Ornithological Societies of North America.

Research Interests: Research in my laboratory focuses on the environmental regulation of vertebrate reproductive physiology and behavior, using birds as experimental models. We are especially interested in the reproductive adaptations of birds inhabiting extreme environments such as the Sonoran Desert. Most of our work combines field and laboratory experiments. Ongoing projects include: (a) studies of the mechanisms that mediate effects of day length and non-photoperiodic factors on the neuroendocrine reproductive axis, with particular attention to the GnRH system; (b) investigations on the hormonal and non-hormonal regulation of neural plasticity in the avian brain song control system; (c) research on the basis of differences in endocrine, behavioral, and immune functions between urban-adapted passerines and rural conspecifics; (d) work on the role and regulation of avian corticosterone binding globulin. We are also investigating the hormonal and environmental control of hemoparasite infections and the relationships between these infections and immunity.

Goals Statement: Regular attendance to SICB annual meetings over the past 20 years has allowed me to forge strong, long-lasting professional relationships with many members of the Division of Comparative Endocrinology and to keep in touch with the rapid and exciting developments in this area. During my tenure as DEC Secretary, my goals will be to promote the power and utility of using comparative approaches to investigate endocrinology-related issues, promote education of scientists in this and related fields, stimulate participation in the Division activities through appropriate advertising of workshops and symposia, advertise comparative endocrinology-related positions that become available nationwide, and manage the DCE Newsletter.

2. Mary T. Mendonça

Current Position: Associate Professor, Department of Biological Sciences, Auburn University

Education: BA Rutgers University, Newark
MS University of Central Florida
PhD University of California, Berkeley

Professional Experience: Associate Professor, Auburn University (1998-present); Assistant Professor, Auburn University (1992-98); NIMH Individual (1989-91) and Institutional (1987-89) NRSA Post-doctoral Fellowships, University of Texas, Austin; Australian Research Grants Scheme (ARGS) Post-doctoral Fellowship (1985-87), University of Western Australia. Served as panel member for NSF

Integrative Animal Biology (IAB), Ecological and Evolutionary Physiology (EEP), Integrative Graduate Research and Education Training (IGERT) review panels, and EPA STAR Fellowship review panel.

SICB Membership and Activities: Have attended and presented at majority of annual meetings since first meeting in 1980. Served as session chair, 1994-1997, 1999, 2000, 2002, 2004- 2006. Judged student oral and/or poster presentations (1999, 2000, 2002). Participated in Endocrine Disruptor Symposium (1999). Served on DCE Nomination Committee (2005).

Other Memberships: American Association for the Advancement of Science; Animal Behavior Society, Society for Behavioral Neuroendocrinology, American Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists

Research Interests: My investigations center on how proximate environmental parameters and physiological mechanisms are integrated at the neural level to control the timing of seasonal reproduction in bats. I also study the integration of the stress response and immune response of vertebrates from disturbed habitats in reptiles and amphibians. Other lines of study include the effects of xenobiotics on wildlife species as well as the maternal contribution to offspring quality and sex ratio in avian species

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Goals Statement: Membership in the DCE division of SICB has been one of the most intellectually beneficial aspects of my career. I would enjoy repaying this debt, in a small way, by serving the division as secretary. I would continue to facilitate the dissemination of the latest divisional news, promote the exciting research of its members, and act as a contact point for concerns, advertisements, and collegial exchange.