



## Division of Animal Behavior

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### DAB Officers & Representatives

**Marilyn Ramenofsky**  
Chair 2010-2013

**Melissa Bowlin**  
Secretary 2012-2015

**Alison Welch**  
Program Officer 2011-2014

**Maxine Zylberberg**  
Student/Postdoc Representative  
2012-2015

**Diana Hews**  
ICB Editorial Board Representative  
2008-2013

### Winners of DAB's Best Student Oral Presentation and Best Student Poster Awards

First, thank you to all 57 students who participated in the 2012 Best Student Presentation program. The quality of both talks and posters this year was very high, and it was difficult to choose a single winner for each award!

This year's Best Student Oral Presentation Award went to graduate student Ben Dantzer for his presentation titled, *Adaptive hormone-mediated maternal effects in red squirrels*. Dantzer is currently a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Zoology and Ecology, Evolutionary Biology, and Behavior Program at Michigan State University. He received his B.S. from Northern Michigan University and M.S. from the University of Louisiana, where he worked on the behavioral and population ecology of red-backed salamanders. His current research focuses on understanding the interaction between the physiological mechanisms facilitating adaptation and the evolutionary strategies organisms use to cope with environmental change. The research he presented at the 2012 SICB Meeting focuses on the role of phenotypic plasticity and hormone-mediated maternal effects in enabling adaptive tracking of fluctuating fitness optima in North American red squirrels in the Yukon, Canada.



Ben Dantzer

This year's Best Student Poster Award went to undergraduate student Caitlin Black for her presentation titled, *Bird song behavior along an urban-to-rural gradient*. Black is a senior at the College of Charleston in South Carolina and recently spent a semester abroad in New Zealand where she was introduced to the power of conservation measures. She has long been fascinated by the many ways animals interact with each other and with their environment. Growing up in Northern Virginia, the Smithsonian's Natural History Museum and National Zoo fostered her interests in Zoology and the natural world. Her current research focuses on the effects of urbanization on bird songs, with field studies in the Phoenix, Arizona area. Caitlin will be graduating with a B.S. in Biology in May and plans to take a year to travel before attending graduate school in fall 2013. She hopes to continue research in behavioral ecology with a focus on projects that promote direct conservation efforts.



Caitlin Black

Congratulations to the winners, and a big thank you to all of the judges who volunteered to score presentations—these awards could not have happened without all of your hard work and help!



## Message from the Chair

*Marilyn Ramenofsky*

Greetings to all Division Members! I am happy to report that the Charleston Meeting was a great success for the DAB. Participation by members exceeded that of years past but see Alison's contribution below for the specifics. At the business meeting we bade fond farewell to Jordanna Sprayberry who has served as Division Secretary for the past 3 years. I am indebted to Jordanna for her help and guidance when I began my term as Chair. We will miss her sound and astute assessments of the issues, many thanks, Jordanna. With this departure, we welcome Melissa Bowlin who has easily stepped into the position. Our Program Officer, Allison Welch, has finished her first year on the job and I am pleased to have her on board. As this was one of the largest meetings ever with many division members submitting papers, posters and participating in symposia, Allison was literally thrown in the deep end and did a grand job organizing the meeting for us last fall. Owing to some extenuating circumstances, our former Student Postdoctoral Affairs Committee (SPDAC) representative stepped down and we put out a call for those interested in the position. Six DAB members stepped forward and we have selected Maxine Zylberberg, a Postdoctoral fellow at the California Academy of Sciences, for the position. Christine Bedore, a PhD student with Dr. Steve Kajiura at Florida Atlantic University, was chosen as Associate GSPD Representative. Thanks to those who volunteered.

At the end of the 2013 annual meeting, I step down as Chair and we have two strong candidates for the position - Drs. Greg Demas, Indiana University, and Diana Hews, Indiana State University. Their biographical information and photos are included at the end of this newsletter.

*On the sad front:* Just as the meeting opened, we were informed that Howard A. Bern, Professor Emeritus of Integrative Biol-

ogy, University of California, Berkeley, passed away on January 3<sup>rd</sup>. Howard served as President of the Society in 1967 and early in his career published seminal papers on the devastating effects of diethylstilbestrol (DES), a synthetic steroid, on the development of the human fetus as well as intergenerational impacts on the nervous system, disease and reproduction. Also, he was a comparative endocrinologist and along with his colleague, Aubrey Gorbman of the University of Washington, built and promoted the field. He was a mentor to many and his intellect and grand outlook on science and life will be sorely missed. For more information see the [main SICB newsletter](#).

### *DAB Business Meeting Events:*

At the outset of the Business Meeting, the Society Officers dropped in to introduce themselves, make announcements and answer questions: Kenneth Sebens, President, Louis Burnett, Secretary, Jon Harrison, Program Officer, Robert Roer, Treasurer, Robert Podolsky, Education Council Chair were in attendance.

Michelle Elekonich, Program Officer for Behavioral Systems at NSF, was available throughout the meeting to answer questions regarding current and future funding opportunities at NSF and the new NSF Solicitation for behavioral research.

### *Notes from the Executive Committee Meeting:*

Lou Burnett has continued to upgrade the SICB Website, which now has multiple portals with pertinent information including bylaws, election schedules, division information, photo display of the meetings, etc. Take a look, he's done a great job and you'll see a lot of familiar faces smiling and having a great time in Charleston!

### *Society Committee Reports:*

*Education Council:* **Bob Podolsky** is concen-



trating his efforts on bolstering the society's teaching database. If you have material or ideas to contribute you may contact him or the Website for further information.

*Broadening Participation:* **Cheryl Wilga's** committee had a large presence at the meeting in terms of workshops and outreach. They have consolidated their efforts into the email address of **SICBmatch.com**. Along with Brian Tsukimura this committee is working at the national level to increase funding for expanding opportunities for under-represented members of the society. If you are interested in learning more about this and/or participating, please contact them.

**Sharon Swartz**, Chair of the Division of Comparative Biomechanics (DCB), announced that in response to requests by a number of Postdoctoral Fellows that a display table would be available in the exhibition hall to present a variety of media and film technologies for research. If you are interested in this for the San Francisco Meeting please contact her: E-mail: [sharon\\_swartz@brown.edu](mailto:sharon_swartz@brown.edu)

*NSF update on repercussions of the Grand Challenges and Beyond.*

Bill Zamer, Physiology and Structural Systems, and Jane Silverthorn, Acting Division Director of BIO/IOS, presented updates and perspectives of the Grand Challenges 3 years after its inception. The 2008 request has produced 8 white papers, 2 viewpoints in Bioscience, multiple workshops, 2 plenary speakers and inclusion of two professional societies - APS, AB etc. NSF is now looking for ideas of implementation of the suggestions made by the Grand Challenges. The general areas identified include: a focus on synthetic biology, understanding brain function and genomes and environment leading to phenotypes. Suggestions were made to start building programs through summer schools, mid-career fellowships, tools to harness engineering techniques, RCNs that lower barriers across disciplines and

cyber infrastructure that invests in organismal sciences. If these are areas you find exciting you might want to look into NSF proposals that can make this happen.

*Workshops and SICB Programs:*

Throughout the meeting there were many well attended workshops and programs. The following is a brief review of these. Broadening Participating Committee held a forum entitled: Science is a 2-way Street: Mentorship and the Mentee: led by Michelle Nishiguchi.

Public Affairs Committee Workshop: Distilling Your Message, conducted by the Stony Brook Center for communicating science, Chair Jake Socha.

Broadening Participation Workshop: NSF: Demystifying the Grant Application Process, conducted by Chair Cheryl Wilga and the NSF Program Director.

Student/PostDoc Workshop: Maximizing Your Potential Through Job Applications and Interviews, conducted by Chair Peggy Biga.

**August 2012 is the due date for Symposium Proposals** for the Austin meeting in 2014. Your officers will be more than happy to offer help and guidance for such proposals; just let us know.

*High School students participate at SICB:*

The first evening of the meeting, a number of high school students presented posters of their work. I thought this was a great addition to the meeting and a wonderful opportunity for budding biologists. I hope this invention continues in future years.

Finally, here's to a successful year for all and looking forward to San Francisco, 2013.



## Message from the Program Officer

Allison Welch

*2012 Meeting Recap* – Thanks to everyone who participated in the 2012 annual meeting in Charleston, SC! Animal behavior had a strong presence at the meeting. Of over 1800 meeting registrants, nearly 500 (26%) listed Animal Behavior as an area of interest. The meeting featured four symposia co-sponsored by DAB, as well as thirteen sessions and several poster sub-sessions on behavioral topics.

*2013 Meeting Preview* – Mark your calendar for our next annual meeting to be held January 3-7, 2013, in San Francisco, CA. We will have an exceptional set of symposia, including six co-sponsored by DAB (<http://www.sicb.org/meetings/2013/symposia>), and we expect another record-breaking year for contributed presentations.

As we grow, our meetings are becoming even more jam-packed with great science. The only problem is deciding what sessions to attend! All hyperbole aside, the programming committee works hard to identify and avoid potential session conflicts. When it comes time to submit your abstract, you can help guide your presentation to an appropriate session by choosing carefully from the drop-down list of "topics." Topics A.1 - A.11 encompass animal behavior and neurobiology. The *first* of your three selected topics is most likely to determine the session to which you are assigned, especially if you select topics from a number of different areas.

*Call for Symposia* – Please consider proposing a symposium for an upcoming meeting. The Program Committee is especially interested in symposia that are conceptual in focus, forward-looking and that aim to broaden participation in science. Symposium proposals for the 2014 meeting in Austin, TX will be due in mid-August, so now is the time to start planning! I would love to discuss your symposium ideas with you; please contact me at [welcha@cofc.edu](mailto:welcha@cofc.edu).

## Message from the Secretary

Melissa Bowlin

Hello everyone! I would like to start my official tenure by thanking my predecessor, Jordanna Sprayberry, for all of her hard work. She coordinated all of the judging for the best student presentation awards in addition to making certain that your newsletters got to you on time. Thanks, Jordanna!

I would like to call your attention to the Researchers Database on the SICB website. SICB members can include a photograph, a description of their research, and, most recently, their teaching interests/responsibilities in this searchable database. If you would like to include or update your information in this database, please send me a Word document that includes your name, a short descriptive paragraph about you and your research, a list of your teaching interests, and a high-resolution .jpg photograph of yourself. My e-mail address is [melissabowlin@gmail.com](mailto:melissabowlin@gmail.com).

Finally, as Marilyn noted above, DAB is having an election for Chair this year. Please keep an eye on your e-mail and remember to vote!

## Introducing your new Student Postdoctoral Affairs Committee representative

The DAB Executive Committee has recommended Maxine Zylberberg, a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the California Academy of Sciences, as the new DAB representative on the society-wide Student Postdoctoral Affairs Committee (SPDAC). She was officially appointed by SICB President Ken Sebens for a term ending in January 2014. The DAB Executive Committee also selected Christine Bedore, a PhD student with Dr. Steve Kajiura at Florida Atlantic University, as the alternate representative. She will step in if Zylberberg is unable to attend a meeting or other event.

Zylberberg has been a member of SICB since 2005. She has been a student representative to both the Advising Committee and Executive



DAB SPDAC Representative, Maxine Zylberberg

Committee of the Animal Behavior Graduate Group, a representative to the Graduate Student Association, as well as the coordinator of the Animal Behavior Graduate Group first year seminar at UC Davis. Her research interests fall at the intersection of behavior, physiology and disease ecology. Ultimately, she aims to develop a research program that draws on our understanding of individual and group level behavior, life history strategies, and immune variation both across species and spatially, to inform our understanding of disease dynamics, disease emergence, and zoonoses. She is particularly interested in how these topics relate to issues of public health and conservation in the light of human land use and climate change. The focus of her graduate research with Dr. Tom Hahn at UC Davis was on the ecology of avian pox as it relates to behavior and immune function in Galápagos finches.

Bedore has been a member of SICB since 2008. She has been involved with the American Elasmobranch Society student committee since 2008, first as the auction coordinator and now as the chair of that committee. She is currently investigating the behavioral and physiological responses of sharks and rays to visual and electric stimuli in order to better understand how the sensitivity and behavioral responses of these systems may be influenced by morphology, environment, non-sensory

related behaviors (like schooling), and diet preferences. She is also working on the behavioral responses of sharks to underwater electrical cables that are now found throughout the ocean to help determine how we can make the cables insulated so that sharks have fewer en-



DAB Alternate Representative, Christine Bedore

counters with them.

## 2012 DAB Business Meeting Minutes

[Click here for PDF file on www.sicb.org](http://www.sicb.org)

## Candidate Biographies

DAB will be electing a new Chair in 2012. Below you can find information on the two candidates for the position.

### DAB Chair

#### Greg Demas

**Current Position:** Associate Professor of Biology, Director, Center for the Integrative Study of Animal Behavior, Indiana University.



**Education:** B.A., Psychology, Millersville University (1991); M.S., Experimental Psychology, Villanova University (1993); Ph.D., Biopsychology, Johns Hopkins University (1998).

**Professional Experience:** Post-doc, Center for Behavioral Neuroscience, Biology, Georgia State University (1998-2001); Assistant/Associate Professor, Biology (2001-present); Member, Program in Neuroscience, Indiana University; Associate Editor, American Naturalist; Editorial Board Member, Hormones and Behavior; Secretary, Society for Behavioral Neuroendocrinology; Organizing Committee, Behavior 2011.

**SICB Activities:** Meeting Participant, Judge, Best Student Presentation/Poster (DAB, DCE).

**Other Memberships:** Animal Behavior Society; Society for Behavioral Neuroendocrinology, North American Society for Comparative



### Endocrinology

**Research Interests:** The primary goal of my laboratory's research is to understand the interactions among the nervous, endocrine and immune systems and behavior within an ecologically relevant environmental context. More specifically, my laboratory investigates how environmental factors influence seasonal changes in morphological, physiological and behavioral adaptations and the physiological mechanisms underlying these adaptations. The ongoing research in my laboratory focuses on several areas of investigation including aggression, reproduction, stress and immunity. Our goal is to apply an integrative approach to the understanding of physiology and behavior.

**Goals Statement:** I have been attending the SICB meeting for the past ten years as a faculty member at IU. The unique strength of SICB, and DAB, is its focus on animal physiology and behavior for a broad integrative perspective that includes ecological and evolutionary approaches. A key strength of DAB is its integration of ideas across disciplines and experimental approaches while focusing on the "common themes" of animal behavior. If elected, my primary focus will be to build upon the research diversity with the division by encouraging the development of innovative and creative divisional and society-wide symposia. Another important role for DAB is the intellectual and financial support of students and post-docs. DAB has been very "student-friendly," providing an ideal forum for students at every level of research to present their work and interact with each other. Students have limited budgets to attend meetings; I will work hard to ensure that that SICB remains an affordable option. I will explore opportunities to increase travel awards by pursuing additional funding opportunities. I will also strive to enhance opportunities for professional development and student networking (e.g., meet-the-professor lunches, forums on funding opportunities within animal behavior). If elected, I will work hard to ensure that DAB maintains its prominent role within the society.

### Diana K. Hews

**Current Position:** Professor of Biology, Indiana State University.

**Education:** B.A. Zoology, Pomona College (1979); M.Sc., Zoology, Oregon State University (1984); Ph.D., (Zoology, University of Texas at Austin (1990).

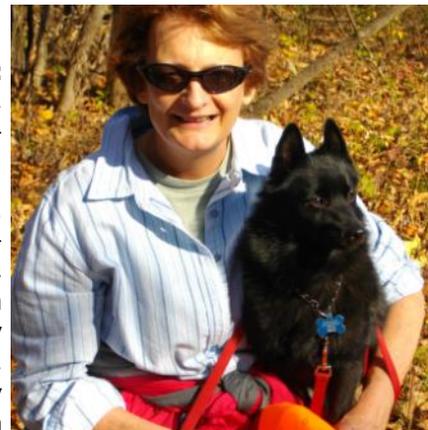
**Professional Experience:** Graduate TA (1980-1989); University Graduate Fellow (1990); Maytag Postdoctoral Fellow, Arizona State University (1990-1991); NIH Postdoctoral Fellow Individual NRSA, Arizona State University (1991-1994); Assistant, Associate, Full Professor of Biology, ISU (1995-current); Assistant Departmental Chairperson, ISU (2003-2007).

**SICB Activities:** Editorial Board Member, *Integrative and Comparative Biology* (2008-2013); Meeting Participant in Division of Animal Behavior, Division of Comparative Endocrinology; Division of Ecology and Evolution; Best Student Paper or Best Student Poster Judge (multiple times, DAB, DCE, DEE).

**Selected Relevant Professional Activities:** Program Officer, ABS (2007-2009); Junior Program Officer, ABS (2005-2007); Associate Editor, *Animal Behaviour* (2002-2005); Editorial Board, *Journal of Herpetology* (1993-present).

**Other Memberships:** ABS; ASIH; SBN; SSAR; SSE

**Research Interests:** I study physiological control of sex differences and species differences in sexual dimorphism (broadly defined), and how these differences are shaped by selection. Differences in behavior, particularly aggression and territoriality, and in related morphological traits (body size, body mass,





color signals) are the focus of work in my lab. We study trade-offs between signaling traits and other physiological systems, including immunocompetence, stress and reproductive axes. My currently focus on repeated evolution of the male loss of sexual coloration in fence lizards (*Sceloporus*), and study both color and chemical signals.

**Goals Statement:** I find the breadth and integration of disciplines in SICB very stimulating and valuable. SICB meetings also are an important place for me to bring graduate students, especially early in their career, as one way to set expectations for them, and also to engage them in the interdisciplinary nature of our research. I especially value the division of Animal Behavior as a natural home for integrative and comparative approaches for studying behavior. DAB and its sister divisions (e.g. DCE, DEE) draw on multiple disciplines and are key in preparing students to be aware of challenges animal populations face and strategies for assessing and addressing challenges that face animal populations and species.

As chair I would aim to extend the diversity and strengths of the DAB. One aim would be to foster symposia pursuing innovative approaches in animal behavior. I also would seek more financial support for research and meeting attendance for young scientists. I would also explore avenues for disseminating information on DAB research to the public.