

# SICB Newsletter



Volume Fall 2006

## Division of Vertebrate Morphology (DVM): 2006 Fall Newsletter

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### Message from the Chair

*Beth Brainerd*

I'm looking forward to seeing many of you at the SICB meeting in Phoenix Arizona in January. Jeff Walker, DVM Program Officer, has just returned from the program meeting in Phoenix and reports that the venue seems excellent and many exciting symposia and sessions are planned (see message below).

The 8th International Congress of Vertebrate Morphology will be held this summer in Paris, France from July 16–21. The Congress will take place at three institutions close to each other in the center of Paris: the University P. &M. Curie, the National Museum of Natural History and the University of Paris. Many superb symposia and workshops are planned, as well as contributed oral and poster presentations. The deadline for abstract submissions is February 10, 2007 (<http://icvm8.snv.jussieu.fr>). Thanks to the ICVM–8 Convenor, Jacques Castanet, and the Chair of the Scientific Program Committee, Peter Aerts, for carrying on the tradition of ICVM excellence.

Last year the DVM membership voted to amend the bylaws to allow program officers to serve two, two–year terms rather than just one. As always, there is no term limit for the secretary position (we may consider parole after excruciatingly long service). Both Jeff Walker and Gary Gillis agreed to run as incumbents for Program Officer and Secretary, respectively, and were reelected. Thanks so much to Gary and Jeff for their service and spirit of volunteerism.

This coming year we will hold an election for DVM Chair Elect, in keeping with the plan to stagger the terms of the officers to ensure that the DVM leadership does not turn over completely in any given year. Members of the Nominating Committee will be announced at the DVM Business meeting in Phoenix.

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### Message from the Program Officer

*Jeff Walker*

The 2007 annual meetings in Phoenix will sizzle. All sessions will be held in a new convention center that is located directly across from our host hotel, the Hyatt Regency. All session rooms are lined along a single, wide hall, which should allow easy movement among sessions. As in recent SICB meetings, oral sessions will end at 3PM and everyone will move upstairs to the poster sessions for good drink, food, and science. The list of symposium and contributed talks should keep us busy. DVM sponsored symposia include Galis and Carrier's "Linking Genes and Morphology in Vertebrates", Vincent, Lailvaux and Herrel's "Ecological Dimorphisms in Vertebrates: Proximate and Ultimate Causes", and Higham and Wainwright's "The Evolution of Feeding Mechanisms in Vertebrates." Daniel and Loudon's Mini–symposium honoring Dr. Steven Vogel will have more than a few vertebrate talks among its 67 presentations. Additionally, there will be the ever–popular swimming, flying, and feeding sessions. In all, there will be 25 sessions with a substantial DVM component. This means that, on average, DVMers will need to be in 3.6 rooms at once! Again, moving from room to room will be greatly facilitated by the layout of the new convention center.

Society wide events will be held in the Hyatt. Everyone in DVM should be excited to hear Mimi Koehl give the Plenary Lecture on ecological biomechanics. The DVM business meeting and social is scheduled for Friday evening. Not coincidentally, the social ends just as the Vogel mini–symposium celebration begins. For everyone interested in exploring downtown Phoenix in the evenings, be sure to seek guidance from the men and women wearing bright orange shirts. These friendly people are the Copperstone Ambassadors and they are there to help visitors find what they need downtown. Warning: if you are returning from a bar and need to find the hotel at 2AM, don't count on the Ambassadors helping; their hours are 7AM – 11PM. If you have a few extra days before or after the meeting, bring your hiking boots but leave your snowboard. Days should peak around 65 degrees while nights should dip down to 40. Good luck preparing your presentations. I look forward to seeing everyone in Phoenix.

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### Message from the Secretary

*Gary Gillis*

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Hi all, I trust that everyone is excited for the upcoming meeting in Phoenix; I can think of few better places to spend early January than the desert southwest. Moreover, just looking over Jeff's description of planned symposia makes it clear that we'll have more to look forward to than the sun in Arizona. As a prelude to this meeting, many of us in the Northeast will gather Saturday, November 4th at Brown University for a full day of "5-minute talks" on our research. This novel presentation format has been a great success in years past, and I'm really looking forward to spending time in Providence, R.I. While on the topic of meetings, as Beth notes above, the 8th International Congress of Vertebrate Morphology will be convening this summer in Paris, France from July 16–21. The deadline for abstract submissions is February 10, 2007. So, find that black beret in the back of the hall closet, and find a way to get there. For more information, you can visit <http://icvm8.snv.jussieu.fr>

In other news, in September/October, we hosted an online discussion of potential modifications to the D. Dwight Davis award. Although there were few comments posted, many people at least visited the site and saw the issues at stake:

1. Any student should be allowed to compete for the D. Dwight Davis Award only once. Students would still be permitted to compete for the DVM Poster Prize as many times as they like, and students would be permitted to petition the DVM Chair for permission to compete for the Davis Award a second time with a substantially different project, such as initially competing with a Master's project, followed later by a Ph.D. project. To make these changes to the Davis Award rules would require a DVM bylaws change.
2. All of the students "competing" for the Davis award should be grouped into a single session that would be unopposed by any other DVM sessions or symposia. This would showcase student excellence and emphasize the significance of the award. To do this would require instruction from the DVM membership to the DVM Program Officer.

We'll soon be conducting an online ballot to vote on the two issues. Please participate! Note that for the 2007 meeting in Phoenix, the Davis Award rules will remain the same as in previous years.

Finally, the division's election season has come and gone, and I'm pleased to report that Jeff Walker and I (albeit running unopposed for our respective positions) were re-elected as Program Officer and Secretary, respectively. So we'll continue doing our best to support the division, and will welcome Chair-Elect Kurt Schwenk when he takes over for Beth at the upcoming meeting. I look forward to seeing everyone in Phoenix!