

Division of Vertebrate Morphology

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Kiisa Nishikawa

Chair-Elect 2010-2011

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Lara Ferry-Graham

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Jeffrey A. Walker

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Tobias Landberg

Student/Postdoc Representative
2008-2011

Melina E. Hale

ICB Editorial Board Representative
2006-2011

Message from the Chair

Mark Westneat

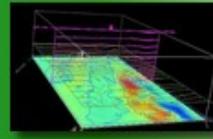
Greetings Vertebrate Morphologists, to our Fall newsletter. Our news starts off on a sad note, as we report that Karel Liem passed away on September 3, 2009. Karel was one of our most charismatic leaders, a former President of the Society, and influenced the careers of many of us. He was also hilarious, and a fan of practical jokes, so I anticipate that at the upcoming Seattle meeting we will have the opportunity to discuss Karel's legacy, recall some of his antics, and make plans to recognize his intellectual impact on our science in more depth. A more substantive piece on Karel will come in the spring newsletter and a symposium in his honor will be held at this summer's ASIH meeting in Providence.



Karel Liem, Henry Bryant Bigelow Professor of Ichthyology, Curator of Ichthyology in the Museum of Comparative Zoology, and Honorary Associate and Former Master of Dunster House, Harvard University.

In other news, as I write this report, the Northeast Regional Meeting of DVM + other interested SICB folks will be happening in just a couple days out at Brown University, organized by Beth Brainerd, Steve Gatesy, Christine Janis, Tom Roberts, and Sharon Swartz. Also, the Southeast regional meeting was recently held at the University of North Carolina, organized by Ty Hedrick. Many thanks to our DVM members for keeping these regional meetings going, and we look forward to hearing the highlights of those gatherings.

I understand that the Seattle SICB meeting is shaping up nicely, and encourage you all to look up from your busy teaching and other fall activities to plan for attendance and presenting your latest



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work. Jeff Walker's Program Officer report indicates that morphological research is again a strong component of these meetings, so we look forward to those sessions. Thanks Jeff! Jeff points out that one organizing component of our meetings for a while will be the development and exploration of some of the Grand Challenge ideas across the society and within DVM. An article for Integrative and Comparative Biology on a vertebrate morphology themed set of Grand Challenges is being developed, and we look forward to discussing these ideas.

In other exciting news, the SICB and DVM election results are in, and I am pleased to report that Kiisa Nishikawa will be the next chair of DVM. Kiisa will be Chair-elect for the coming year, and then I'll hand over the gavel, crown or whatever at the end of the 2011 meeting. Hurray for that! Congratulations Kiisa, and many thanks to John Bertram for standing for election as well. Also, please recall that Gary Gillis (our intrepid Secretary) and Jeff Walker (our fearless Program Officer) are being replaced in January by the equally brave and inimitable Lara Ferry-Graham and Rick Blob as our new officers. Thanks to all for your service to the Division and Society.

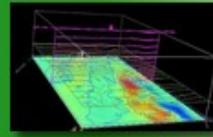
See you in Seattle!

Message from the Program Officer

Jeff Walker

The leaves are falling, nights are short, and the air is cool, sure signs that abstracts have been submitted and the divisional POs have gathered to organize a conference. The Seattle Sheraton and the Washington State Convention and Trade Center play host to our 2010 annual meeting. 1318 abstracts were submitted making Seattle 2010 our 2nd largest meeting. As in previous years, "morphology" submissions swamped other topics and using 99% inspiration and 1% perspiration, Frank (Fish, the DCB PO) and I overcame some Grand Challenges and hammered out many, many lovely sessions. In addition to contributed sessions, there are several symposia of interest including two that DVM is supporting financially, Alexa Bely's "Animal Regeneration" and Jeff Walker & Rita Mehta's "Fish Body Shape."

A very special workshop at the Seattle Meetings will be on the implementation of the Grand Challenges. NSF is very excited about the development of these Challenges and its implementation. Indeed, NSF expects future SICB symposia to be organized around these Challenges, so read the series of Grand Challenges papers (one by your Chair!) in Integrative and Comparative Biology. Then at the meeting, buy your colleagues a round of beers at the Pike Pub & Brewery and brainstorm exciting, integrative, and cutting edge symposia.



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Finally, I want to thank the membership of DVM for electing me Program Officer – twice! OK, I think I ran unopposed the 2nd time. First year POs have a very difficult time efficiently organizing talks and this task is trebled for DVM POs because of the sheer number of morphology talks to organize. Bret Tobalske was on target when he suggested the change to the DVM bylaws to allow two terms for the PO position. But I'm also writing up a "Divisional PO for Dummies" book that I'm handing off to our next PO, Rick Blob, to ensure that morphology talks continue to get the best rooms at the best times.

Message from the Secretary

Gary Gillis

Wow, four years have passed, and this is my last newsletter contribution as DVM secretary (don't fear, I'm good at burying my emotions so you won't have to feel my pain). Lara Ferry-Graham will ably take over starting in January. However, until then I need to continue to build my legacy. As I see it, this will be our researcher database, which at this point consists of five entries (including my own...). Not exactly something to be proud of (yet) but hey, we can't all leave giant footprints wherever we go. Nevertheless, I will not stop trying until my term is over, or maybe a little after that. By the time you read this you will have probably heard from me about contributing your own info to the database. I hope I will have made

you feel guilty enough to do it at the time, but if not, perhaps in reading this and considering my legacy (and its utmost importance to me) you will reconsider. An email (ggillis@mtholyoke.edu) with a photo and brief description of your lab's research is all I need.

Seattle is where I grew up and I haven't been back in years, so I'm really looking forward to the meeting in January. If memory serves me, we can look forward to temps in the forties and ample drizzle. If that doesn't psych you up, then the many DVM talks and posters should. I'll look forward to seeing you there and if you plan on leaving the hotel I've got one word for you: umbrella.

To wrap up, I want to thank the chairs under whom I've served. Beth Brainerd showed me how all this officer/administrative stuff works. Kurt Schwenk ensured that I remembered what Beth taught me, and Mark Westneat is such a natural that he doesn't need my help. Jeff Walker, my compatriot over the last four years as program officer, has always made sure our sessions and symposia are great and work together fluidly. I need to put in a word for Lou Burnett, the Society's secretary; he exemplifies organization, not one of my strengths (hey, I didn't elect myself secretary, I voted for the other candidate). He has kept me and every other aspect of DVM and other divisions in line for as long as I've been on board. And finally, speaking of not electing myself secretary, thanks to all of you that did, it has been a good four years and I appreciate having had the opportunity to get a better perspective on how the division and society function.

See you all in Seattle.