

The Murreletter

Society for Northwestern
Vertebrate Biology

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PRESIDENT'S INAUGURAL MESSAGE

I would like to use this space to reflect upon a few of the things that make the SNVB such a special organization. Above all else, the talent and energy of our membership is inspiring. Whether the subject matter be fish, birds, mammals, reptiles, or amphibians, our membership have shown tremendous commitment to their work. We have members that are professional biologists who conduct their work as part of their job, but we also have many members who conduct their studies either on their own time or despite job employment rather than because of it. Years ago I read a quote about a young student who approached the great ornithologist Robert Cushman Murphy about his desire to become an ornithologist. Murphy's warning to the student read something along these lines: "Do not get into the field of ornithology if it is at all humanly possible. The workload is overwhelming, the pay terrible, and support from administrators nonexistent. However, if you absolutely cannot resist your urge, do not worry as you'll probably do quite fine." I think that Murphy was right yet many of us went down our career paths anyway. We simply cannot resist the urge to learn more about "our" organisms! It is this kind of passion that makes our organization so wonderful.

Remarkably the SNVB currently has an 82-year tradition publishing the region's premier journal dedicated to the natural history of the Northwest vertebrates. There is no doubt that the *Northwestern Naturalist* is the Society's Crown Jewel. What a wonderful connection it provides us to our past. A listing of the names of members who have authored

papers published in the Journal serve as a veritable "Who's Who" of the Northwest's best vertebrate biologists. "Old timers" to name only a few include the ranks of: Gordon Alcorn, J.H. Bowles, Alan Brooks, D.E. Brown, I. Gabrielson, Steven ("and the Hermanites") Herman, Stanley Jewett, Murray Johnson, E.A. Kitchin, Earl Larrison, Theo Scheffer, Victor Scheffer, John Slipp, Robert ("The Venerable One") Storm, Arthur Svihla, Ruth Svihla, Walter P. Taylor, P.A. Taverner, C.F. Yocum. We have such a rich and vibrant history! And with each new issue we continue to grow that tradition a bit more.

Northwestern Naturalist is the Society's living, breathing legacy. It is appropriate to take a moment to point out, however, that the continuation of the Journal depends on each of us to keep submitting quality notes and papers.

Arguably the most enjoyable thing that the Society does is the holding of its annual meetings. I went to my first annual meeting at the Seattle Aquarium around 1987, back when a truly big meeting was about 50 people. Small though those "early" meetings were, I quickly learned two things: 1) SNVB members were very friendly and approachable, and 2) these people really knew how to party. I have since learned that this too is part of

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SNVB culture. The meetings provide one of the best opportunities for students, recent graduates, and “well-seasoned” biologists to present papers and socialize in what I have always found to be a safe and supportive environment. Okay, maybe just once in a while one or two “graybacks” go at each other, but at least the younger and less experienced are made to feel safe. I believe that it is this mixing of the young and “young-at-heart” in the paper sessions and at the social events that makes our meetings so interesting and enjoyable.

So it is now my charge to carry on the traditions and you have my word that, with all of your help, I will do so to the best of my ability. Thanks to the excellent stewardship and efforts of recent Board members, my job has been made considerably easier.

- Bill Leonard, President

BEST PAPER AWARD

There were many excellent papers presented at the Year 2001 annual meeting at Victoria, BC. Topics ranged from salamanders to sturgeon and jumping slugs to sasquatch. All taxa were represented, including some of the more obscure. Papers were judged by meeting attendees and an award was given to one presenter.

The Society for Northwestern Vertebrate Biology is proud to present its 2001 best paper presentation award to **Steven Wagner** for his presentation “Genetic Tools for the Management of Forest Associated Amphibians.” Steve’s primary research interests are focused on using molecular markers to address evolutionary, ecological, and conservation questions. He has worked on a number of different taxa, from bacteria to birds, and continues to have diverse taxonomic interests. Steve received his PhD in Genetics from Oregon State University, where he focused his dissertation research on the phylogeny, population genetic structure, and conservation unit designation in six forest-associated PNW salamander species. He recently accepted a tenure-track position in the Biological Sciences department at Central Washington University in Ellensburg, Washington, where he will teach and continue his genetics research.

- Rebecca Thompson, Vice-President, Inland Region

EDITOR’S REPORT

The manuscript submission rate is back up this year after a poor performance last year. Although submissions have dropped off some since the first of the year, we are still slightly ahead of most previous years. But, we need to maintain this rate throughout the year, so please get those papers you presented at our annual meeting into final form and get them to me.

I’m pleased to welcome Mike Rochelle to the editorial staff. Mike will mostly handle papers about reptiles and dryland habitats. He’s had extensive research experience with viper behavior. Mike is a wildlife biologist for Willamette Industries, Inc.

- Burr Betts, Editor *Northwestern Naturalist*

ELECTION RESULTS

The following new executive board members began their terms following the annual meeting in March:

- Bill Leonard, President (2 yr. term)
- Brad Moon, Washington VP (2 yr. term)
- Elke Wind, Northern Region VP (2 yr. term)
- Hart Welsh, Southern Region VP (2 yr. term)
- Rebecca Thompson, Inland Region VP (2 yr. term)
- Laura Friis, Secretary (2 yr. term)
- Brent Matsuda, Trustee (3 yr term)

Thanks to all those who ran, and to retiring board members Greg Green, Kirk Lohman, and Bruce Bury.

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

The Executive Board met during the Annual Meeting in Victoria, B.C. on March 28, 2001. The minutes are posted at the SNVB website:
<http://www.eou.edu/SNVB/>



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2001 ANNUAL MEETING

Alice in Wonderland, corsets, and karaoke?!...What kind of annual meeting is this? Victoria, BC March 28-30, 2001

This year's annual meeting was held in Canada for the first time in over a decade. Our board had to work a few things out before the meeting took place, that hadn't been anticipated (e.g., how to get SNVB items across the border without having to pay Canadian taxes...), but everything came together with only a few minor glitches.

The meeting started with a workshop, held on Wednesday. The session was jam-packed with information, with almost as many instructors as instructees. We learned about marking and radio-tracking wildlife, and measuring and monitoring downed wood. That night there was a mixer at the Harbour Towers Hotel, where people got a chance to register early and chat with people they hadn't seen in some time.

The sessions were kicked off on Thursday with an energetic keynote address presented by Dr. Fred Bunnell from the Centre for Applied Conservation Biology at UBC. He presented a humorous analogy between Alice in Wonderland / The Wizard of Oz and the state of resource management today. This was followed by two concurrent sessions, held throughout the meeting, with few technical difficulties (Yes! We conquered Power Point, thanks to the excellent technical support of Mary Linders and Doug DeGross!) The sessions were well attended at this years meeting (that may have been partially 'enhanced' by the amazing door prizes Brent Matsuda drummed up for us, that were given away at the beginning of each session - e.g., whale watching tickets, a bird house, numerous books, passes to the Vancouver Aquarium, etc.), and the voting for the best paper award was tight (see Rebecca's announcement in this issue). One of the 50 presenters was the youngest speaker we've ever had at a meeting; Michael VanInsberge presented his Biodiversity 2000 project. Look for all of the abstracts in an upcoming issue of Northwestern Naturalist.

That evening we loaded up two buses and headed out to Sooke, a small coastal town northwest of Victoria. The



New Society president Bill Leonard and future member Michael VanInsberge

local seniors group organized a salmon barbeque and logger show for us in the community centre. We were seated in two groups, where we cheered for our respective team members and loggers. The first part of the show was the 'Canadian beauty pageant'...ahem...I mean 'ladies' hammer contest'. Seven of our most courageous female members subjected themselves to the 'challenging' task of hammering 3 nails into a board as fast as they could (we can swing 'em with the best of 'em girls!). For the next contest, 3 'couples' were asked to come forward. Little did Larry and Janet know, as they innocently volunteered for the event, that this would be like any other Friday night for them....



Former Society president Larry Jones ready for an evening out

...some of the guys seemed awfully familiar with the intricacies of ladies apparel.

Eventually we got to watch the loggers do their thing with axes and chainsaws. I heard gasps from the men in the crowd when one of the loggers pretended he was going to start his chainsaw while holding the blade between his legs...youch! that's not even funny. The artistry of the loggers and the tools of their trade came through when former president Greg Green was presented with a miniature wooden chainsawed chair – ah, Greg, the chair was meant for your son....



Former president Greg Green 'takes his seat'

Once the show was over we ate some dinner and held our raffle draw (is it a cozy blanket Janet?). Kristiina Ovaska, Brad Moon, Char Corkran, Rebecca Thompson, and Elke Wind were presented with prizes for their art and photo contest entries.

Lastly, we asked people to tell their most humorous field/lab/office stories for the first annual Broken Back award. Congratulations to Greg Green for his 'bull on the grill' story (you'll have to ask him...its a beauty!). I think some people were feeling a tad shy, because as soon as the microphone was gone the stories were flying! Remember them for next year's meeting. Those of us who didn't have to present the next morning (or who wanted to drink...) stuck around to listen to a few tunes by the band, do a little dancing, and to watch (certainly not listen to) some spontaneous karaoke by Rich Nauman and Doug DeGross - just kidding guys,

way to go!



Rich Nauman and Doug DeGross entertain the crowd

We had some excellent speakers Friday morning to finish the meeting off. Those who didn't have ferries, etc. to catch joined us on the field trip to Bob Min's sustainable woodlot and a guided tour of Somenos Marsh. We learned a lot from our guides - thanks Kristiina Ovaska and Christian Engelstoft for organizing the trip! Although we didn't see a lot of wildlife (it figures...take a guided walk through a woodlot and all Society members can do is turn over logs...), but the company was grand!

Due to the 'unique' location of this years meeting (i.e., Canada), we had the greatest number of new memberships to the Society at one gathering. Hope to see all new members down in Hood River next year!

Thanks to all of the great volunteers for making this years meeting such a success!

Elke Wind, Northern Region VP

THANKS!

This years' annual meeting was a great success, and it couldn't have been achieved without the hard work and assistance of the meeting planning committee, SNVB executive board, general members, attendees, volunteers, and contributors. The Society for Northwestern Vertebrate Biology would like to thank the following people and organizations for their

generous contributions of gifts and/or time to this years meeting:

British Columbia Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks, Coast Mountain Sports, David Suzuki Foundation, Dave Cunnington, Doug DeGross, Christian Engelstoft, Foster Wheeler Environmental Corporation, Laura Friis, Kim Goddard, Jeff Goodyear, Harbour Publishing, Janet Jones, Ben Koop, Jeff Lewis, Mary Linders, Peter Marshall, Brent Matsuda, Bob Min, Mountain Equipment Co-op, Kristiina Ovaska, John Parminter, Susan Pollard, Stephen Price, Prince of Whales Whale Watching Tours, Reifel Bird Sanctuary/BC Waterfowl Society, Royal BC Museum/IMAX theatre, Somenos Marsh Society, Robert C. Stebbins, Thaw Unlimited, UBC Press, Vancouver Aquarium Marine Science Centre, Whitecap Books, Wild Birds Unlimited.

- SNVB Board

2002, 2003 and 2004 ANNUAL MEETINGS!

There were several wonderful offers from members interested in hosting the 2002 annual meeting. The locations considered by the Board included Arcata CA, Corvallis OR, and Hood River OR. After some discussion it was agreed that it would be best to hold the 2002 meeting in Hood River, primarily due to its central location and to the excellent field trip and workshop opportunities it provides. It was further agreed to hold the 2003 meeting in Arcata (hosted by Hart Welsh and the Humboldt State University chapter of The Wildlife Society) and the 2004 meeting in Corvallis (hosted by Dede Olson and Bruce Bury).

Hood River is located in the Columbia River Gorge, and as such there are wonderful opportunities for sightseeing, field trips and workshops. As always we will be interested in getting a good balance of papers from each of the five vertebrate groups. Two paper sessions are already being planned: Shelly Spalding (USFWS) is organizing a session on the biology of the bull trout, *Salvalinus confluentis* and Greg Green a session on small mammals. Currently we are looking for additional volunteers to organize sessions on birds, amphibians, and reptiles. These sessions can be general (e.g., PNW mammals) or more specific (e.g., Western

Pond Turtle Conservation) in nature. Don't be afraid--if you think you have a good idea and are willing to volunteer please let us know. Email Bill Leonard (mollusca1@home.com) with ideas or for more information. We are also looking for volunteers to lead field trips (contact Cathy Flick – stewart@gorge.net).

- Bill Leonard, President

Common Nighthawks: Living with Dive-Bombers

Nighthawks conjure up all kinds of colorful images for most of us - they frequent places in both cities and rural open forests. Learn a bit more about nighthawk folklore and ecology in a 2-page cardstock brochure that is now available for distribution. This brochure also provides tips on working alongside breeding nighthawks and is targeted toward resource persons who work one-on-one with private landowners, ranchers, orchardists, and nursery managers. The nighthawk brochure meets an educational outreach objective developed by Partners in Flight. Contact CJ Flick for copies: (509) 493-1195 or stewart@gorge.net

PNARC NEWS

News and



Views from
The Pacific Northwest
Amphibian
and Reptile Consortium

PARC ANNUAL MEETING REPORT

Partners in Amphibian & Reptile Conservation (PARC) had their Annual Workshop in Chicago, Illinois on March 27 – 29, 2001. More than 100 professionals representing government agencies, academia, industry and environmental groups from North America interested in non-regulatory herp conservation attended. The purpose of the workshop was to prepare management guides for the conservation of amphibians

and reptile habitat in each major geographic region of the United States. These guidelines are to be of practical use by a variety of land managers and owners.

Representing the Northwest region were Steve Corn with USGS Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute, Missoula, MT; Chuck Peterson, Idaho State University, ID; Brian Smith, Black Hills State University, Spearfish, SD; Linda Ulmer, U.S. Forest Service, Northern Region Missoula, MT; and myself. The region we are covering ranges from the Badlands of western South Dakota to the Pacific Ocean in Washington, then south to the Siskiyous of Northern California and Southern Oregon.

The work program was highly ambitious and the work schedule intense starting at 7:00 in the morning and often running through 5:00 in the afternoon. Optional evening programs, and "homework" for some, extended the workdays through the evening hours. There was lots of work and daily session deadlines to keep us on track and productive.

The program jump-started with Whit Gibbons' (of the Savannah River Site, Aiken, SC) informative and witty review of PARC's activities and progress to date. The first presentation each morning thereafter was also initiated with an "inspirational" speaker including Ray Semlitsch who spoke on Management Principles for Pond Breeding Amphibians and Chris Phillips who presented a program on the management implications from a radio-telemetry study of the eastern massassauga in Illinois. The first morning we also heard overview presentations describing purposes, goals and products expected from workshop participants by Monica Schwalbach, Kurt Buhlmann, and Joe Mitchell, followed by a practical example of our expected approach and activities. This was illustrated by a working model developed for the herptiles and habitats of the Savannah River Site.

From that afternoon and for the next two days we broke out into our regional work groups and carried out the following tasks:

- 1) Identify up to 20 broad representative habitat types for each region,
- 2) Review and confirm species lists for each region,
- 3) Characterize each species by habitat,

- 4) Provide a narrative description of each habitat,
- 5) Prepare management guidelines for each habitat.

For the Northwest, we have initially settled on the following habitats:

Dry Coniferous Forest, Moist Coniferous Forest, Mixed Forest, Broadleaf, Pinyon/Juniper, Shrub, Grass, Barren (e.g., lava flows, sand dunes, badlands), River, Streams, Temporary Ponds, Permanent Ponds, Marshes, Riparian, Agriculture, Urban, Special Habitats (e.g., springs, seeps)

We all reviewed The Nature Conservancy's species list for herptiles within our respective regions. In our northwest breakout group we spent considerable time discussing the taxonomy of some species and determining the presence of others. Using our adjusted species list and our knowledge of northwest herps and habitats, we then attributed each species to one or more habitats.

When the entire group reconvened to summarize their activities, certain habitats (e.g., permanent and temporary ponds) were represented in each region whereas others (e.g., arroyos), remained unique to only one or a few regions. Consequently, habitat lists were somewhat standardized and total numbers of habitats reduced. Each group then spent the following session writing narrative descriptions for habitat types. Our final task included the preparation of management narratives. These essentially were suggestions and recommendations for landowners and managers that could be implemented to protect and preserve the varied habitats used by northwest species.

Prior to adjourning we committed to a series of follow-up activities including:

- 1) Refining regional herpetofauna species lists by habitat - specifically checking the taxonomic accuracy of species and the habitat of occurrence,
- 2) Reviewing and refining our habitat descriptions and characterizations,



- 3) Obtaining and assembling photographs, illustrations and other visuals for the conservation management publication, and
- 4) Refining our preliminary management guidelines.

Clearly, a project this broad with an opportunity to influence the conservation of herpetofauna and their habitats (and thereby many other species) could benefit from additional help. We are specifically in need of taxonomic and habitat use review, high quality images of the diverse habitats representing the Northwest and overall participation and help in producing this document. We especially could use help at our proposed regional workshop tentatively planned for this autumn, perhaps in Missoula or Idaho. If you would like more information please contact me at Klaus.Richter@metrokc.gov.

- Klaus Richter, Department of Natural Resources
King County, Washington

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Society for Northwestern Vertebrate Biology Membership Form

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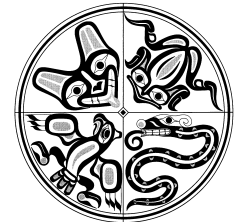
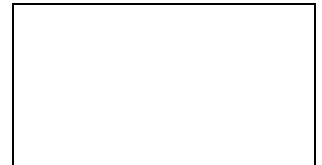
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