

The Murreletter

Society for Northwestern Vertebrate Biology

Volume 11, No. 1 February 2003

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Recently I was accused by a friend (jokingly I think) of having attention deficit disorder in light of how frequently my interests seem to jump around. "How can someone who was once so passionate about amphibians and reptiles move on to *lowly* slugs and millipedes?" On the surface it does appear that I've simply abandoned my vertebrate interests, but quite the opposite is true. It was my interest in one particular vertebrate, the sharp-tailed snake, which led to my desire to investigate the invertebrates I now find so fascinating.

My interest in slugs was prompted by a desire to learn which species "sharptails" preyed on. When I first delved into the subject, I was disappointed to discover how little information (e.g., not one good field guide) was available on our region's gastropod fauna. Fortunately, however, I had good teacher in Tom Burke, one of only a handful of people who qualify as an expert on the PNW's terrestrial mollusks. From Tom I learned that 20 native and at least 11 introduced species of slugs occur in the PNW. The list includes seven species of "jumping-slugs" and nine species of "tail-droppers," all of which I was determined to see and photograph! In subsequent studies, Tom Burke, Jim Baugh, Kristiina Ovaska and I made some remarkable discoveries about the distribution, behavior, ecology, and taxonomy of PNW gastropods. So much so that it will keep us all busily writing for the next couple years.

My foray into the secret lives of millipedes began after watching hatchling sharp-tailed snakes' propensity (upon being handled) to ball up and inadvertently roll over to expose the conspicuously banded belly. Thanks to the helpful insight of Dr. Robert Stebbins (Emeritus Professor, University of California, Berkeley), we concluded that the both the snake's ventral banding (exposed when rolled onto it's back) and coiling behavior, apparently acted to mimic millipedes, whose defensive secretions range from distasteful to toxic; on remarkable millipede release exudates which function first to suppress the appetite of a predatory spider and then as a narcotic, causing the predator to "nod off." I simply had to learn more about the millipedes that appeared to play such an influential role in the life of the sharp-tailed snake. Consulting Richard Hoffman's Checklist of Millipedes of North & Middle America (1999, University of Virginia) I learned that approximately 200 described species occur in the Pacific Northwest. Moreover, authorities estimate that only about 15% of the world's estimated 80,000 species of millipedes have been described. This point was driven home to me late last year when two millipede specimens I'd collected in western Washington (at Snoqualmie Pass, Kittitas County and near Copalis Beach, Grays Harbor County) were determined by Drs.

Rowland Shelley (North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences) and William Shear (Hamden-Sydney College) to be new species of chordeumid millipedes!

INSIDE:

Editor's Report	2
■ PNARC News	2
■ Elections!	3
Job opportunities :	5
■ New website	6
■ In Memoriam	6

Part of what has been so exciting is to be making new discoveries on the same ground on which I've walked so many times in the past. And I'm willing to bet that I've only scratched the surface, if I can keep my eyes open to the possibilities

in front of me.

I hope that I've convinced my friend and a few of you that my interests haven't "jumped around" much at all. I've merely followed the path in front of me, guided by a small snake.

- Bill Leonard

EDITOR'S REPORT, NW NATURALIST:



In 2002, there were 24 manuscripts submitted for publication in *Northwestern Naturalist*. Of these, 18 were articles and 6 were general notes. To date, 9 have been accepted and 2 have been

rejected. This submission rate is a bit low from what is necessary to maintain issue length around 130 to 140 pages, but fortunately several of the articles are lengthy. Please keep those manuscripts coming!

Volume 83 contained 9 articles, 10 general notes, and the abstracts from the annual meeting in Hood River. The volume contained 134 pages compared to 131 pages for Volume 82 in 2001.

New Associate Editor

Robert Hoffman, Senior Faculty Research Assistant in the College of Oceanic and Atmospheric Sciences at Oregon State University, has replaced Mike Adams as associate editor for amphibian papers. Robert's research focus has been the interaction between introduced trout and ambystomatid salamander larvae. When you see Robert, please join me in welcoming him to our editorial staff. Also, please join me in thanking Mike Adams for the great work he did as associate editor.

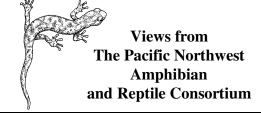
New Instructions for Authors

The spring issue of the *Northwestern Naturalist* will contain new instructions for authors, which expand on the changes former editor Stephen Corn made to bring our journal into conformance with the recommendations of the Council of Biological Editors' style manual. The new instructions have also been added to the web site. Also, I made some changes in the information on the inside back cover of the journal, especially with regard to the current sources we use for taxonomic decisions. Thanks to Barry Baker for suggesting the updates.

- Burr Betts, Editor, NW Naturalist

PNARC NEWS

News and



Wanted: Enthusiastic PNARC "education coordinator" to:

- 1) find out what educational programs and opportunities are currently available in the PNW;
- 2) find out what educational needs we may have in the PNW;
- 3) be our regional representative at the upcoming National PARC Education Meeting in Gainesville, FL, April 6-8, 2003. [PARC is Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation]
- 4) help our region get organized and more effective relative to education [perhaps begin to organize a PNW resource "center" to tier to local, regional, and national needs, etc.]

Contact Dede Olson (dedeolson@fs.fed.us) or Jeff Krupka (Jeff_Krupka@r1.fws.gov) for more information.

NORTHWEST FAUNA 5 NOW AVAILABLE

Herpetology in Montana:

A History, Status Summary, Checklists, Dichotomous Keys, Accounts for Native, Potentially Native, and Exotic Species, and Indexed Bibliography

Authors Bryce Maxell, Kirwin Werner, Paul Hendricks, and Dennis Flath

This 138-page publication represents the most thorough compilation of information on Montana's herpetofauna to date. The manuscript includes:

(1) a history of herpetology in Montana; (2) a summary of the current status of the states' herpetofauna; (3) checklists of the 12 amphibian and 17 reptile species known to be native to the state; (4) dichotomous keys for amphibian eggs, larvae, and adults, and reptile adults; (5) accounts for native species which map 4636 museum vouchers and 7003 observation records in distribution maps, list the earliest literature and voucher records, list the maximum elevation records, and list voucher specimens by county of collection; (6)

accounts for 7 species or subspecies which are possibly native to the state, but which currently lack adequate documentation; (7) accounts for 13 species or subspecies which have been reported as exotic in the state; (8) a bibliographic index for 508 abstracts, unpublished reports, theses, dissertations, and published articles containing information on species in Montana and Yellowstone National Park; (9) a form for reporting much needed observations of amphibians

and reptiles; and (10) protocols for preventing the spread of fungal and viral pathogens.

Cost to members \$10 (US); non-members (\$12); please add \$2 for shipping. Copies may be ordered from the society's treasurer. Send payment (in US dollars) to:

Treasurer, SNVB P.O. Box 22313 Seattle, WA 98122

ELECTION 2003 – SNVB EXECUTIVE BOARD

Terms will soon be ending for several Board positions. We are fortunate in having a number of qualified candidates willing to step forward, or to continue, their involvement with the Society. Brief biographies of the nominees are included below. Please vote by sending in the enclosed ballot. Election results will be announced at the Annual Meeting in Arcata in March 2003.

President Nominee:

Dede Olson

Dede earned a Bachelor's from UC San Diego in 1980 and a Ph.D. in 1988 from the Department of Zoology at Oregon State University. Currently, she is a Research Ecologist with the USDA Forest Service Pacific Northwest Research Station in Corvallis, Oregon. She also maintains two Courtesy appointments at Oregon State University: Associate Professor (Dept. Fisheries & Wildlife) and Research Associate (Dept. Zoology). She serves as Associate Editor for Herpetological Review, and Amphibian Taxa Expert for the Survey and Manage Program of the Northwest Forest Plan. Dede has been involved with the Society for Northwestern Vertebrate Biology since the Astoria, Oregon, annual meeting in 1993. She is a past Associate Editor (herps) for Northwestern Naturalist, past VP-Oregon, and past co-chair of PNARC.

Dede's research interests include examining issues of conservation biology, behavioral ecology, population and community ecology of amphibians and salmonids in western Oregon. Ongoing work includes examining the effects on various fauna of forest management practices, landscape designs and policies. However, Dede also has a broad array of past experiences with other vertebrates. For example, she worked on the population ecology of side-blotched lizards in the San Jacinto mountains in California, lek mating structure of white-bearded manakins in Suriname (Auk 100:739-742), and dominance hierarchy of captive Przewalski

horses at the San Diego Wild Animal Park. That last project, in particular, has provided pivotal skills for Dede and her husband Mike to keep their current household of vertebrates (i.e., two teenagers) herded!

Vice-President Nominee – Washington:

Richard Weisbrod

Richard Weisbrod was born at an early age under clear skies in the rim rock country of sunny central Oregon. A few years later his family moved to the wet side of the Cascades along the mighty Willamette. Once again his family moved, this time east to the prairie- forest edge in the Land-of-Sky-Blue-Waters. In that land he was schooled in diverse ways, finally achieving a university degree (U of Em - history and philosophy) while hired to collect and prepare vertebrate specimens for the state museum. After completing military service (USA) he was lured to graduate school high above the Finger Lakes at Public-Private University, where anyone can learn anything he's a mind to. While studying there he made a meager living teaching laboratory and field classes, and curating amniote specimens for the university museum. Upon completing his graduate degrees in general biology and vertebrate zoology, he was hired by the USDI - National Park Service as a research zoologist and assigned to a newly established cooperative research unit at U Dub in the Emerald City by the Sound. For a decade he and his students pursued zoological researches, mostly mammals and birds -- but some echinoderms and molluscs, on federal lands and waters in Alaska and the Pacific Northwest. He was also a member of, and served as an officer in, an obscure scholarly society devoted to the study of Pacific Northwest birds and mammals. Fate sent him east again to the other Washington – during the Reagan era – where he served briefly, but heroically, as an Endangered Species Biologist. However, he soon was forced (along with

many others) to enter the USDI's little known "Biologists Protection Program". He was secreted away among the forests, lakes, and prairies back in the Land-of-Sky-Blue-Waters. There along with his students and technicians at his first alma mater, he studied migrating birds, disease bearing acarines, parasitic protozoans, and endangered fresh water molluscs. After more than three decades he retired from federal public service (USGS) and returned to his native Pacific Northwest once again. He now ekes out a subsistence living lovingly harvesting naturally killed vertebrates – for food, fun, and profit – along the roadsides and byways of his island home.

As Vice President for Washington, he will seek (in no particular order) to broaden the Society's membership base to include more science educators at the 2 -year college and high school levels; encourage these educators and their students to submit manuscripts of their observations and researches to the Northwestern Naturalist; increase Society revenues by developing a mass market for logo inspired gewgaws, trinkets, and whimmy diddles, and instigate a process for providing free beer at all annual meetings.

Vice-President Nominee – Inland Region *David Pilliod*

After graduating from the University of California Santa Cruz, I spent five years working on forest predator projects in the West. While working for the Forest Service in 1994, I developed an interest in aquatic ecology and entered graduate school to study the effects of non-native salmonid introductions on the ecology of high mountain lakes. In 2001, I began a post-doc research position with the University of Montana to coordinate Amphibian Research and Monitoring Initiative (ARMI) projects in Montana and North Dakota. Currently, I am a post-doc with the US Forest Service Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute conducting research on the effects of wildland and prescribed fire on headwater stream communities in Idaho, Montana, and Oregon. I am also continuing to assist with ARMI and other projects including investigations on aquatic disease transmission in mountain lakes, non-native fish removal from mountain lakes, genetic structure of amphibian populations in heterogeneous landscapes, and testing GAP analysis for amphibians and reptiles. I want to serve on the SNVB Board because I enjoy the natural history focus of the society and want to participate in the administration of the organization. I will bring an aquatic ecological,

herpetological, and conservation perspective to the Board.

Secretary Nominee:

At the moment we have no one who has stepped forward for this position. If you're interested, please contact Sally Butts at sbutts@quinault.org or Laura.Friis@gems8.gov.bc.ca!

Trustee Nominees (two positions):

Aaron Holmes

Aaron received a Bachelor of Science from The Evergreen State College, Olympia, WA where he focused on natural history of the northwest and vertebrate zoology. For the past 9 years he has worked with PRBO Conservation Science (founded as Point Reyes Bird Observatory) in various capacities. He has served as lead investigator for PRBO's shrub-steppe research program since 1995, and currently oversees avian monitoring programs in 6 Western states. He is active in the Partners in Flight Program and recently co-authored a bird conservation plan, "Conservation strategies for landbirds of the Columbia Plateau of Eastern Oregon and Washington."

Current projects include spearheading the development of a multi-agency, cooperative monitoring network to coordinate research on, and monitoring of sagebrush birds throughout Western North America and updating bird conservation plans. Ongoing research and monitoring projects include studies of the impacts of natural gas development to sagebrush birds in SW Wyoming, response of songbirds to fire in high and low elevation sagebrush systems at multiple spatial and temporal scales (OR, NV), impacts of Off-Highway Vehicle use to songbirds (CA), the role of fire suppression in shaping avian communities in sagebrush ecosystems (OR, CA), and effects of fuel treatments on wildlife in a sagebrush – juniper woodland (OR).

His involvement with SNVB to date has been limited, but includes organizing and chairing a session on shrub-steppe songbirds at the 2002 annual meeting.

Marc Hayes

Marc Hayes, a research scientist for the Habitat Program of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, has spent the last 12 years in the Pacific Northwest. He obtained a BA at the UC Santa Barbara, an MA at California State University Chico, and a PhD at University of Miami (Florida). A herpetologist by training, besides the recent stint in the PNW, he has spent the remainder of the last 28 years teaching and doing research across North America, ranging from Costa Rica and Florida to Arizona, California, Mexico, and Oregon. He has special interests in educating the

public about amphibians and reptiles, and research foci in ranid frog ecology and amphibian dynamics in headwater systems.

BALLOT – SNVB EXECUTIVE BOARD PLEASE VOTE

President (check 1)
Dede Olson
Write In
Vice-President – Washington (check 1)
Richard Weisbrod
Write In
Vice-President – Inland Region (check 1)
David Pilliod
Write In

Secretary	
Write In	
Trustee (check 2)	
Aaron Holmes	
Marc Hayes	
Write In	

Please send or email completed ballot to: Julie Grialou

SNVB, PO Box 22313 Seattle, WA 98122 e-mail jgrialou@parametrix.com

JOB OPPORTUNITIES: ARIZONA

The USDA Forest Service, Safford Ranger District, Arizona, is wanting to hire 2 or more assistants for the District Biologist, to help with a variety of field- and office-oriented tasks, during spring and summer 2003. Internships are also being considered.

The Safford Ranger District is part of the Coronado National Forest, one of the most biologically diverse areas in the United States. Ecotourism is an important aspect of the Coronado. There are many plant and animal species found in Southeastern Arizona that are otherwise known only from Mexico, or are found nowhere else in the world. The Safford District has four small mountain ranges (commonly known as "sky islands") – the Pinaleños, Galiuros, Santa Teresas, and Winchesters. Most work is done in the Pinaleños (Mt. Graham), because it has the district's only paved road and is a popular destination for recreationists. Also, it spans numerous life zones, from Chihuahuan-Sonoran Desert Mix at the base to the subalpine forests up top – a nearly 7,000 foot climb in fewer than 20 miles!

Positions: Paid positions include Biological Aids and/or Biological Technicians, GS-02 to GS-05 (\$8.90-12.20/hr), depending upon duties. Interns (volunteers) may be given a negotiated daily stipend. Paid and volunteer positions may be part- or full-time temporary positions, starting as early as April through October 2003, but not to exceed 6 months. Often the starting dates are negotiable, to accommodate student's schedules.

Duties: Field positions include serving on a crew to survey and monitor Mexican Spotted Owls, Northern Goshawks, native ranid frogs (Chiricahua, Lowland, and Plains Leopard Frog), Mt. Graham Red Squirrels, and other animal and plant species. Crews will work 4 or 5 days per week, often at night. Office work includes collection of reference materials, doing literature searches, compiling a bibliographic database of biological reference materials, filing, storage, database entry, and other similar duties. The work may be a mix of office and fieldwork.

Housing: We hope to provide housing for field crews, and are looking into possibilities.

How to Apply: Students working toward a biological sciences or related degree can be easily hired, without going through the internet system. Volunteers are even easier to pick up. Call Larry Jones (below) for details. Others need to apply through the standardized on-line application system (AVUE/ASAP). The website is: http://www.fs.fed.us/people/employ/asap/index_nw_ce ntralized_temporary_hiring.htm . Be sure to apply for non-fire temporary biological aid (general) and/or biological technician (general) positions, GS-02 to GS-05. Check recruitment notices for the job announcement number – use T001 to T004, then click on "Apply to Announcement" to get to the online application process. If you haven't used this program before, click on "New User" to register. If you are narrowing you application to particular geographic areas, be sure to include the Coronado National Forest, Southwest Region, as a choice. For more information, contact:

Larry Jones, District Biologist, US Forest Service, PO Box 709, Safford, AZ 85548. Phone is 928-428-4150.

SUMMER JOBS IN FOREST ECOLOGY IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Field crew positions are available to assist with ecological studies in forests of the Pacific Northwest. Crews will participate in the Demonstration of Ecosystem Management Options (DEMO) project, a long-term study of forest ecosystem responses to structural retention harvests in the Pacific Northwest.

During summer 2003, we will be assessing patterns of tree growth and mortality (both overstory and regenerating trees) in a diversity of experimental treatments and forest types. Field sites are located in western Oregon and Washington.

These positions are best suited to mature, upper-level undergraduates or recent graduates who are giving serious consideration to advanced study or professional work in forest ecology or silviculture. The nature of the work requires extended periods in the field (up to 8 consecutive days). Bunkhouse space is available for portions of the summer, but camping may be necessary at other times.

Qualifications: Previous experience in vegetation sampling; familiarity with basic surveying and mensurational tools (compass, clinometer, diameter tape); and course work in silviculture, forest ecology, or a related field. Candidates must be in good physical condition; able to work long hours; and capable of

navigating steep, slash-covered slopes. We seek individuals who are detail oriented, have legible handwriting, and can work and live cooperatively with others.

Salary: \$9.00/hour or more, depending upon

experience/qualifications.

Duration: late June through September 2003

Closing Date: March 1, 2003

To Apply: Send (1) handwritten cover letter; (2) typewritten resume; (3) copies of either college transcripts or professional work products; and (4) two letters of reference. The cover letter should include information about your interests and qualifications, your dates of availability, and the names and phone numbers of those who will provide letters of reference.

ALL MATERIALS SHOULD BE SENT TO:

Shelley Evans

Division of Ecosystem Sciences College of Forest Resources

Box 352100

University of Washington Seattle, Washington 98195-2100

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Email: saevans@u.washington.edu

Phone: 206-543-9792

ANNUAL MEETING INFORMATION ARCATA CA MARCH 19-22, 2003 CHECK OUR NEW WEBSITE!!!

http://www.snwvb.org

IN MEMORIAM

Chris Thoms died in early October of a brain tumor diagnosed 1½ years ago. You probably knew her as a wetland specialist and co-author of *Amphibians of Oregon, Washington and British Columbia* and the basic amphibian survey chapter in *Sampling Amphibians in Lentic Habitats*. I also knew her as my closest friend for 23 years.

Fighting to save a wetland and forest near our homes was the way we first met. Chris astonished me with her ability to see right to the core of a person or an issue. She was a scientific illustrator at that time, with a scientist's observational skills, and an artist's perceptiveness in showing the essence of a subject. Her great whales, drawn for the British Museum, were

living beings undulating through the water. She had even drawn a trilobite that crawls through the rocks.

But scientific illustrating was not enough. Chris wanted to do science. One year we worked together on Dan Holland's radio telemetry study of Western Pond Turtles in the Columbia Gorge. There were more rattlesnakes around the ponds than you can imagine, which terrified Chris, but she persevered. Then we monitored turtle nests, and she sketched the awkward but determined hatchlings in just a few pencil strokes. The turtles were fun, but the ponds were even more interesting to Chris. She was fascinated by wetlands, which appealed to her education in geology and her passion for figuring out processes. She wanted to know more, and with typical persistence waded through courses in chemistry, grass identification, and wetland delineation until she passed the certification test and became a wetland scientist, working for the Bonneville Power Administration and then for the Army Corps of Engineers.

When amphibians first entered our lives, we were so ignorant about the larvae it was absurd. Bob Storm was our mentor and cheerleader. We sketched and photographed and watched to see what things turned into. Pretty soon both of our homes were full of small wet creatures in mayonnaise jars, dog dishes, and Nancy's Yogurt tubs. When we started conducting training sessions, Chris made me do all the talking because public speaking terrified her more than snakes. But she joined Toast-Masters and developed the selfconfidence to give talks herself. How we ended up writing a book together is still a miracle, since our operating styles were totally different. My mind would plod along methodically and slowly. Chris's mind would go off like a Chinese firecracker, and I will tell you truly that every single new or clever idea in our book was hers.

Anytime my phone rang and Chris said in her conspiratorial voice, "Char, you've got to help me with..." whatever, I knew I was in for some fun. The craziest one was riding a young racehorse being trained for the track. She rode him every day for months, with me spelling her now and then, and you know, in its first race that horse came in third, and we only ended up with one bloody nose and a few gray hairs. Persistent, persuasive, perceptive, creative. That was Chris Thoms. I miss her a lot.

- Char Corkran

EXECUTIVE BOARD 2002-2003

President: *William Leonard*, 223 Foote Street NW, Olympia, WA 98502. (360) 357-5030; E-mail: mollusca1@attbi.com.

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Society for Northwestern Vertebrate Biology Membership Form

Name:	Renewal or New Member (check one)
Affiliation:Address:	Area of Interest/Expertise
City: State: Zip: Phone: Fax:	Mail your payment (US funds) and this application form to
Membership Category (check one) Student (\$12 annual dues) Regular (\$20) Additional family member (\$10) Contributing (\$30) Sustaining (\$45) Life (\$300 one-time payment) Institutional (\$50)	Treasurer, SNVB PO Box 22313 Seattle. WA 98122 For membership information, call Julie Grialou at: 425-822-8880, or e-mail to: jgrialou@parametrix.com