



# *The Murreletter*

Society for Northwestern  
Vertebrate Biology

Volume 16, No. 2

April 2008

## President's Message

As you all know, SNVB is a wide ranging organization that covers an enormous geographic area. When approached in 2006 about collaborating with the Montana Chapter of The Wildlife Society in 2008, the board was excited but hesitant. We considered a number of factors: participation of members from our core membership zone (west side of the Cascades between Corvallis, OR and Vancouver, BC), opportunity to reach out to current and future Inland members and financial risks to name a few, and we all agreed that it was time to head Inland!

As a board member, I anticipate the annual meeting with equal parts of excitement and anxiety. The excitement comes from seeing months of planning come to fruition. The anxiety on the other hand is in knowing that entropy is constant. This anticipation felt even greater in my first year as President. Upon walking through the door, seeing current and future colleagues and friends, any prior anxiety I had was quickly overshadowed by the familiarity of another well planned and executed meeting.

I am happy to report to those that could not make it to the 2008 annual meeting, our collaboration with Montana Chapter of the Wildlife Society (MT TWS) and NW Chapter of Partners for Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (NW PARC) in Missoula, MT was highly successful on all fronts. Special thanks to Bryce Maxell for representing SNVB and taking the lead in organizing the meeting!

The meeting theme was "Northwest Connections: Sustaining our wildlife populations in the face of climate change, human population growth, and energy development". Pre-meeting workshops sponsored by MT TWS and NW PARC addressed these topics, thoroughly covering concerns to wildlife at the local, regional, national, and international levels.

The plenary session opened with a summary of the phylogeography of northwestern North America, introduced regional population and development trends at multiple scales, and closed with a review of impacts and ecosystem responses of climate change in the Pacific Northwest. Four concurrent sessions were held and 77 talks were presented over one and one half days of the regular meeting. Sixteen universities were represented, including ten from the U.S., three from Canada, two from Europe and one from a Native American First Nation.

In addition, two presentations included co-authors from high schools, which demonstrated the recent interest among scientists in including secondary schools in academic research, and the feasibility of doing so. Government organizations were well represented at all levels, federal, state, county and city, as well as the non-profit sector. We also received generous donations from two private companies, Herrera Environmental and URS Corps. Special thanks is extended to Josh Wosniak and Len Ballak (Herrera), and Louise Kling (URS) for your support.

Daniel Kemmis, Senior Fellow at the O'Connor Center for the Rocky Mountain West gave an inspiring banquet presentation titled, "Collaboration as a Late-Succession Species of Democracy". Daniel is the former mayor of Missoula, and former Speaker and Minority Leader of the Montana House of Representatives. He has published articles in primary and popular literature on public policy in the West, democratic theory and practice, community and community building, and regionalism. He was recognized by the Utne Reader as one of its "100 Visionaries", and awarded the Charles Frankel Prize for outstanding contribution to the field of the humanities by President Clinton. We were very fortunate to have such an influential and accomplished speaker.

Our membership luncheon was very productive. We reviewed and discussed our financial statements, and the proposed mission, vision and values statements, and outlined a number of tasks that will help guide our future direction. The board was also encouraged to receive feedback from members about the meeting, what worked well and what could be improved. These comments will be provided to future meeting organizers and considered when organizing future joint meetings.

As you know, we move the location of the annual meeting every year to ensure involvement and inclusion of members throughout our geographic scope. This year we went further from our core membership than we've ever gone. The 2009 annual meeting will be held in the heart of our core membership at the Skamania Lodge in Stevenson, WA in February. We will be co-hosting the annual meeting with our new partner, NW PARC, and frequent collaborator, WA Chapter TWS. Expect a dynamic event!

---*Tara*

## Society for Northwestern Vertebrate Biology

*...the oldest scientific association devoted to the study of  
terrestrial vertebrates in the Pacific Northwest*

- established in 1920

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### Who we are...

The Society for Northwestern Vertebrate Biology was founded in 1920 as the Pacific Northwest Bird and Mammal Society. Long recognized as the pre-eminent union of ornithologists and mammalogists in the Pacific Northwest, the society adopted its current name in 1988 to reflect an expanded taxonomic scope that included amphibians and reptiles. The scope expanded again in 1999 to include fish. Today the society strives to promote close working relationships among ornithologists, mammalogists, herpetologists, and ichthyologists in our region; foster exchange of scientific information and interest in the study of vertebrates; and offer a forum for these activities through meetings and publications.

### Membership

All persons or institutions interested in the study of birds, mammals, amphibians, reptiles, and fishes are eligible for membership. Individual members receive the Northwestern Naturalist and the Murreletter, our newsletter. Other SNVB publications, such as Northwest Fauna, are available at a reduced rate. Other privileges of membership include notification of all SNVB meetings, power to vote in SNVB meetings and elections, and participating as a member of the SNVB board.

**For more information or to  
become a member visit  
<http://www.snwvb.org>**

### The Murreletter

The Murreletter is published three times yearly and is distributed to the members of the Society of Northwestern Vertebrate Biology. Submission of stories, meeting announcements, and other material of interest to members of the society is encouraged. Submissions should be sent to the Murreletter Editor, Eric Lund. To receive the Murreletter electronically, which is strongly encouraged, please provide your current email address to SNVB Treasurer Tiffany Garcia.

## SNVB Mission, Vision, and Values

In 2006, the board gathered for a retreat to outline our mission, vision and values. At the moment, the only guiding documents SNVB had are what is legally required, a constitution and bylaws. Mission, vision, and values statements are far more informal than the constitution and bylaws, and are certainly not binding, but they are equally as important. They provide members with a sense of identity and direction. The mission, vision, and values statements clearly describe what we do, what we want to become, and the traits or qualities we consider worthwhile. The board developed the preliminary draft statements you will find below. If you would like to provide comments and volunteer a few hours on the committee, please let Tara know, tarachestnut@gmail.com. Thanks!

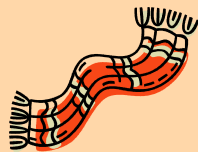
**Mission Statement:** SNVB promotes interest in the study of vertebrates and their associated ecosystems in northwestern North America through communication and education.

**Vision Statement:** As the pre-eminent society of vertebrate biologists in northwestern North America, SNVB will:

- 1) continually improve access to and dissemination of the most current and credible scientific information
- 2) inform an active and engaged membership
- 3) promote the expansion of our membership to include a large and diverse group of individuals representative of our community at-large

**Values Statement:** SNVB members value rigorous scientific inquiry, open communication, accessible transfer of information, accountability, and last but not least, an active, engaged, and long-standing membership.

## Silent Auction Donor Thanks!



Thanks to the generosity of our members we raised nearly \$400 at the silent auction. Funds generated helped support student participation at the annual meeting. The following individuals provided donations to the silent auction: Marc Hayes, Eric Lund, Elke Wind, David Pilliod, Aimee McIntyre, Bryce Maxell, Tara Chestnut, Char Corkran, Tiffany Hicks, Cathy Flick, Ryan O'Donnell, Burr Betts, Paul Hendricks, Dede Olson, Brent Matsuda, Teal Waterstrat.

## Board Member Announcements

### Welcome New Board Members!

Tiffany Garcia of Oregon State University (Treasurer), Nat Seavy of PRBO Conservation (NW Fauna Editor), and Eric Lund of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (Murreletter Editor) are the newest members of the SNVB board. Welcome aboard!

### Reelected Board Members

Elke Wind, Hart Welsh, Doug DeGross, and Hans Purdom were reelected to their board positions. Thank you for your continued service and commitment to SNVB!

### New Board Position

The SNVB board is proud to announce a new board position. In 2007 Marc Hayes, former Trustee and WA Vice President approached the board about creating a historian position. Marc presented a well developed and compelling proposal to the board and we elected to approve the position with a unanimous vote. We asked Marc if he would consider filling the position and he accepted. Welcome back to the board Marc!

### Thanks to departing board members!

Bill Leonard, Julie Grialou and Janet Jones are leaving the board after many years of service. Bill, Julie and Janet have been incredibly active and engaging members of SNVB and we are grateful for all of your contributions! Kathryn Ronnenberg is also leaving her post as Murreletter Editor, or Murreditor, although she has not left us. Kathryn will remain as the Copy Editor for Northwestern Naturalist. Thank you for all of your hard work!

## You Too Can Submit Articles!

If you have an idea for an article, a seminar, workshop or training announcement, or would like to advertise a job or student announcement please submit to the Murreletter. The Murreletter is published three times per year (March/April, July/August, November/December) and reaches the entire SNVB membership. Please send articles to Eric Lund at: SNVB.murreletter@gmail.com

## Student Scholarship Announcement

The SNVB scholarship, now in its fourth year, is happy to announce the 2008 recipient, Ray Yurkewycz. Ray is a masters student at Washington State University in Vancouver, WA working with Dr. John Bishop investigating northern pocket gopher populations in the pumice plain of Mount St. Helens and their effects on plant community structure, and soil chemical and structural characteristics. Congratulations, Ray!

### Scholarship Committee Recognition

Thanks to John Pierce, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and Marty Raphael, USFS PNW Olympia Forestry Sciences Lab for serving on the Scholarship Review Committee! John and Marty have been on the review committee since the scholarship program's inception. We are grateful for your commitment and the consistency you bring to the program.

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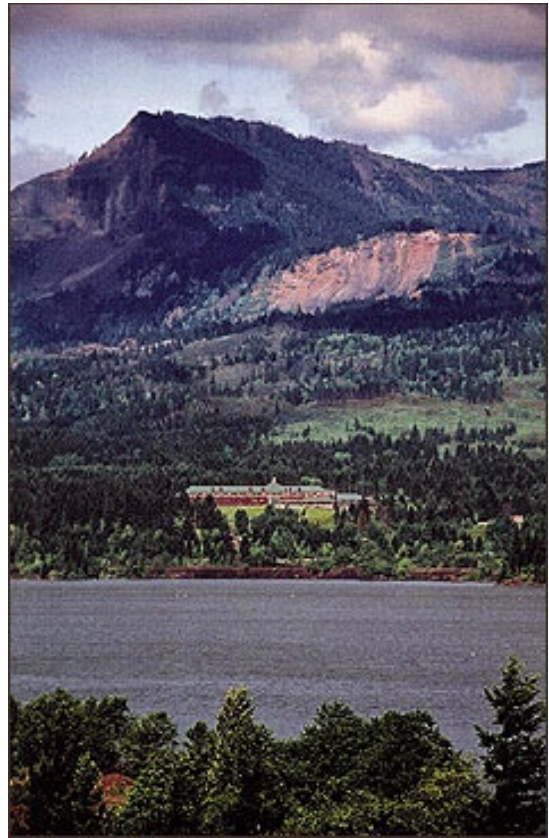
## More Thanks

### Thanks to Our Meeting Volunteers

Thanks to board members Tiffany Hicks and Aimee McIntyre for recruiting and managing volunteers, organizing the silent auction, and managing the registration and merchandise table. You did a fantastic job!

### Thanks to our at-large members...

... and board members that volunteered to staff the registration and merchandise table, and run AV. We couldn't do it without your help! Thank you again to Char Corkran, Cathy Flick, Teal Waterstrat, Eric Lund, Paul Hendricks, Elke Wind, Brent Matsuda, Laura Friis, Ryan O'Donnell, and April Barreca.



## 2009 Annual Meeting

Announcing the 2009 annual meeting at the Skamania Lodge in Stevenson, WA! The meeting will occur between mid-February and mid-March. We expect to confirm dates soon. It's never too soon to propose workshops and sessions or volunteer for the Conference Planning Committee! Please contact Aimee McIntyre (mcintam@dfw.wa.gov) if you have an idea or to volunteer.

*photo from: <http://www.skamania.com/chinook/chinook.php>*



### A BIG Thanks to Our Sponsors!

Thank you to our meeting sponsors, URS Corporation and Herrera Environmental. Their generous support contributed to the great success of our annual meeting.



Columbia Mountains Institute of Applied Ecology  
Course Announcement

## Introduction to Using "R" Software

May 28-29, 2007

Best Western Wayside Inn, Revelstoke BC

Cost: \$450.00 (plus 5% GST)

Instructor: Dr. Joseph Thorley, Poisson Consulting, <http://www.poissonconsulting.ca>

Class size: Limited to 8 people (six spots still available as of January 31)

R is a free programming environment for statistical analyses and graphics that is becoming increasingly popular among numerical biologists. R is extremely powerful, can be readily

extended to non-standard methods through the downloading of packages, and runs on a wide variety of operating systems. This two-day course will introduce users to R software, so that they are able to begin performing statistical analyses and plotting graphs on their own. The course is suitable for individuals who have never used R before as well R-users looking to consolidate their understanding of the basics. Note: this is not a statistical methods course; it is a course on how to use the software.

Details and registration at: [www.cmiae.org](http://www.cmiae.org)

Jackie Morris

Executive Director, Columbia Mountains Institute of Applied Ecology

Phone/Fax: 250-837-9311

Box 2568 Revelstoke BC Canada V0E 2S0

Email: [office@cmiae.org](mailto:office@cmiae.org)

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## Central Washington University Herpetology Research Grant

The Amphibian Decline Research Fund supports research and dissemination activities related to amphibians and reptiles. Qualified applicants include Central Washington University students, alumni, or faculty engaged in any aspect of herpetological research and/or education. Awards up to \$200 will be made to support the purchase of supplies, equipment, services, and travel. Priority of funding will be given to projects based on need, merit and available funding. Proposals may be made at anytime. Limit one request per year for a researcher. Contact Steve Wagner ([wagners@cwu.edu](mailto:wagners@cwu.edu)) for more information or to donate to the fund.



## Road Ecology Field Course

June 2 - 4, 2008

Roslyn, WA

The course location at Snoqualmie Pass—the site of a major planned transportation and wildlife crossings project on Interstate 90—provides an exceptional opportunity to learn from a project that is currently underway. By using this project as a case study and the focus of a field trip on the second day of the course, participants will have the opportunity to experience first-hand the hurdles as well as the achievements that have resulted in a comprehensive proposal to construct a suite of wildlife crossings along this stretch of interstate.

We are limiting the course participants to approximately 150 in order to maintain productive group discussions. To ensure representation from across western North America, including Canada, we will be encouraging participation from all the western state and Canadian provinces.

Registration, draft agenda, and lodging information is online at: [http://www.restoretherockies.org/field\\_course\\_WA.html](http://www.restoretherockies.org/field_course_WA.html)

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## The Northwest Regional Working Group of Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation was Launched in Missoula!

NW PARC Co-chairs:

Elke Wind, E. Wind Consulting, Nanaimo, BC.; ewind@telus.net

Dede Olson, US Forest Service, PNW Research Station, Corvallis, OR;  
dedeolson@fs.fed.us



The first annual meeting of the Northwest Regional Working Group of PARC was held in Missoula, Montana, on 25-26 February 2008.

- There were 48 participants representing 10 U.S. States and Canadian Provinces or Territories: Northern CA, OR, WA, BC, YK, AK, AB, ID, MT, WY.
- Presentations were made by State/Province representatives and invited speakers on key issues, programs, projects, priorities and partnerships.
- Four task teams were convened to address the most important topics selected by the entire group: funding, development of a NW PARC website and compilation of regional projects, training needs, and inventory. Each team developed approaches to address their topics over the next year.
- Co-Chairs, Steering Committee, and several other posts were selected.
- The 2009 meeting will be held in the spring in conjunction with the Society for Northwestern Vertebrate Biology in the lower Columbia region near Portland, OR.
- NW PARC also plans to have a presence at the Joint Meeting of Herpetologists and Ichthyologists in Portland, OR, 22-27 July 2009.
- After the NW PARC meeting, two additional events of note occurred.
  - Kris Kendell (Alberta Conservation Association) organized an evening session to address Ranid reintroductions in Alberta, British Columbia, and several northwest US States, and 27 persons attended either in person or via conference call.
  - The joint annual meetings of the Society for Northwestern Vertebrate Biology and the Montana Chapter of The Wildlife Society began. Five reptile and 18 amphibian talks were presented on aspects of the biology and management of northwestern species.

If you would like to learn more about NW PARC contact either Dede Olson (dedeolson@fs.fes.us) or Elke Wind (ewind@telus.net).

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## Community Science Project in Pollinator Conservation

Great Student Project or Fun with Kids!

We have just launched The Great Sunflower Project, a community science project with the goal of increasing our understanding of where bees are doing poorly and how the pollination of our garden and wild plants are being affected. We're hoping you will join us by planting sunflowers in your garden. Community, demonstration, and school gardens are invited to participate.

We'll send you some free native sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*) seed and twice a month, we'd like you to time how long it takes for 5 bees to visit one flower on that sunflower. This information will give us an index of pollination that we can compare across the United States.

You can see the details about the project and register at [www.greatsunflower.org](http://www.greatsunflower.org) or contact us at [sfbec@sfsu.edu](mailto:sfbec@sfsu.edu).

Gretchen LeBuhn, Associate Professor  
San Francisco State University



# Pacific Northwest Wildlife Connections

*“Uniting biologists, planners, designers and conservationists towards a common goal of connecting wildlife across the landscape.”*



## October 19-23, 2008 at Oregon Zoo

Presented by Oregon Zoo, Oregon Department of Transportation, Washington State Department of Transportation, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, USDA Forest Service and Federal Highway Administration

**October 19, Sunday: Evening Speaker Event**—Free and open to the public

**October 20, Monday: Wildlife Crossings Conference**—Learn about the importance of protecting wildlife linkages through ecologically responsible planning and land use practices. \$25 (includes lunch)

**October 21-22, Tuesday-Wednesday: Wildlife Connectivity and Safety Considerations in Highway Design**—Join us for a two day workshop focusing on highway crossing structures and the best available tools for allowing animals to make safe crossings. There will be a half day field trip on October 22. (Nominal cost to be announced)

**October 23, Thursday: Transportation Planning Workshop**—Transportation planners and land use planners can take positive steps for the future of wildlife by learning ways to incorporate ecological considerations into transportation planning. \$25 (includes lunch)

If you have questions or would like more information, please send an e-mail to Suzanne.Rosen@oregonzoo.org or visit <http://www.oregonzoo.org/Events/Calendar/2008/08oct.htm>.

## Amphibian Ark Global Campaign: “2008 Year of the Frog”

During 2008, AArk is leading a globally coordinated public awareness campaign “The Year of the Frog.” The main goal of this campaign is to generate public awareness and understanding of the amphibian extinction crisis. AArk’s webpage has a wealth of materials and tools in several languages that you can use to get involved in the campaign, generate media interest, and/or lead campaigns in your community.



The main goals for the 2008 Year of the Frog Campaign are:

- To engage the public in amphibian conservation and gain financial support for AArk activities.
- To create partnerships among Zoos, Aquariums, Botanical Gardens, private and public institutions (universities, etc.) around the world to ensure the global survival of amphibians.
- To raise funds for implementing the ex situ aspects of the ACAP (Amphibian Conservation Action Plan).
- To highlight ways in which the public can make positive contributions to conservation through activities in their daily lives.
- To draw the attention of zoos towards the importance of amphibian ex situ conservation.
- To stimulate a sustained and long-term interest in amphibian conservation and related interactions with the wider environment.
- To raise increased awareness about the protection of biodiversity through the conservation of amphibians.
- To strengthen zoo communities as fund raisers and global promoters of conservation.

For more information go to: <http://www.amphibianark.org>

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## Graphics Corner: Time for Photography!

It’s finally spring, and the field season is accelerating into full swing around the Pacific Northwest. Though you may not always think about photography when you’re battling your way through wet brush or thigh-deep in a pond, this IS the time to take good pictures of your field work.

Whether your research is eventually presented as a talk or a poster, in a journal article or a thesis, good photographs of the organism you are studying, its habitat, and your field methods in progress are invaluable for documenting and explaining your work to your peers and the public. They’re especially critical for slides and posters—a visual demonstration of your methods is much more compelling to look at than a boring old bullet list of your process.

If you wait until you’re ready to pull a talk together to think about photographs, you’ll be kicking yourself. Take some now!

And if you intend to publish any of your pictures in a journal article later, make sure you take, and keep, higher-resolution versions of the photos. Almost all journals require that photographs be a minimum of 300 dpi at final publication dimensions. This may mean taking the highest-density photos your digital camera will support. They’ll use up more memory,

but it will be well worth it later when you have high-quality images to publish with your results.

If you use a film camera and scan photos later, you will need to scan them at high resolution, too (minimum of 600 ppi is best). The same images can later be downsampled for slides if necessary, but you can never add resolution after the fact.

How about video, you ask? It’s great if it works, at least for PowerPoint presentations, but in my experience at meetings, it’s rather unreliable. Make sure you have stills to back up your video. Also, video takes a lot of hard drive space to store and process, and will eat up camera memory fast if it’s done on a regular digital camera rather than a real video camera. And if you do take video, keep the camera still or pan *very slowly*, or you’ll risk making your future audience motion-sick.

Be aware, too, that JPG format files can lose resolution every time you edit them, unless you make sure to save them in an un-lossy format. It’s safest to download pictures, resave archival versions in TIFF format, and then make un-lossy JPG files as needed from the TIFFs. Some science publishers will require photos to be in TIFF format for just this reason.

Get those cameras out. Ready, aim, smile!

— Kathryn Ronnenberg, USFS PNW Research Station

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## Member Photo



Photo by Ryan O'Donnell.

Ryan O'Donnell photographed these two Gray Wolves (*Canis lupus*), here cautiously approaching a fresh elk kill, on March 1st in the Lamar Valley in Yellowstone National Park. Ryan was among 11 society members attending one of several field trips that concluded the 2008 conference held in Missoula. The two wolves are members of the "Druid Peak" pack, which had killed a Rocky Mountain elk (*Cervus elaphus nelsoni*) next to the road earlier that morning. Tour-goers watched and photographed at least six members of the pack for over an hour as the wolves interacted with each other and the resident ravens while waiting in the distance to feed on the elk carcass. Judging that the kill was located a little too close to the road and the park visitors for the animals to safely feed, park biologists decided to drag it away from the road, prompting the slow approach of these two individuals.

In addition to the abundant elk and two different wolf packs observed, the group observed numerous other large mammals including: North American Bison (*Bison bison*), Pronghorn Antelope (*Antilocapra americana*), Bighorn Sheep (*Ovis canadensis*), Coyote (*Canis latrans*), and Mule Deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*).

The tour, led by the Yellowstone Association, also included an informative lecture on wolf ecology and an overview and history of the reintroduction program. Attendees learned that the wolf population in the park currently includes 12 packs and 173 individuals, including the first animals to migrate into the park from Idaho. Some biologists believe the current population size may represent the carrying capacity for the species within park boundaries. It was an exciting and informative day for all tour members, many of whom were visiting the park for the first time. The tour also included a visit to the Mammoth Hot Springs area and was capped off by some with an evening soak in the Boiling River Hot Springs beneath the spectacular, snow-covered Absaroka Range. This was a memorable trip indeed.

Many thanks to Bryce Maxell of SNVB and Caroline Simes of the Montana Chapter of The Wildlife Society for arranging the tour with the Yellowstone Association as well as accommodations in Gardiner, and to Bryce for leading the trip.

## Attention Shutterbugs

The incoming editor of the Murreletter would like to make the Member Photo a regular feature of future issues. Any photos used will include a statement indicating that the image should not be used without the photographer's consent. Image may be resized to limit the overall file size of the newsletter to accommodate email capacity. All subjects are welcome. If you would like to have your photo(s) considered for the upcoming issue, please send a digital file of any submissions as well as a narrative to: [snvb.murreletter@gmail.com](mailto:snvb.murreletter@gmail.com)

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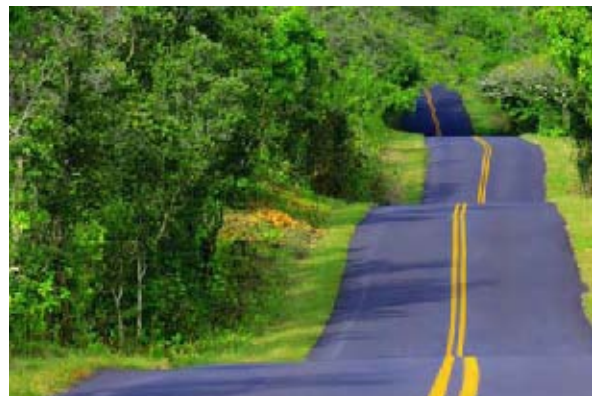
## Where the Dead Things Are

Submitted by Dede Olson

In Oregon, "linkage areas" for wildlife are being identified along paved roads. These are key areas where management may improve conditions for animal movement. ODFW and ODOT are now identifying and prioritizing these areas. Do you know of some? For example, where are there stretches of roads that bisect habitats and the consequence is fragmentation or road kill, especially of state sensitive species? Audrey Hatch, ODFW Conservation Strategy Monitoring Coordinator, wants your input now!

Office: (541) 757-4263 ext 242;

email: [Audrey.C.Hatch@state.or.us](mailto:Audrey.C.Hatch@state.or.us)





For more information about the

**Society for Northwestern Vertebrate Biology**

check out our Web site:

<http://www.snwvb.org>