



The Murreletter

Society for Northwestern
Vertebrate Biology

Volume 10, No. 2

June 2002

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The SNVB Honor Roll -- 2002

At the annual meeting in Hood River we honored both Robert M. Storm and Lawrence L.C. Jones with honorary lifetime memberships to the Society for their significant contributions to the natural history of Pacific Northwest vertebrates.

Doc Storm joined the Society after moving from De Kalb, IL to Corvallis, OR in 1939 to attend graduate school at Oregon State College. After earning his MS and PhD, Doc went on to become Professor of Zoology at Oregon State University where he advised and inspired a long and impressive list of graduate students, including the likes of Ronn Altig, Joe Beatty, Edmund Brodie, Jr., Tom Darrow, Lowell Diller, Phillip Dumas, Don Dunlap, Denzel Ferguson, Greg Green, Hugh Hanlin, Don McKenzie, and Ronald Nussbaum. Moreover, Doc's publications include pioneering work on Oregon amphibians, reptiles, mammals, and birds. Doc has also made significant contributions to our region in other ways. In the 1950s, 60s, and 70s, Doc organized and led field trips for the Oregon Herpetological Society, which inspired "youngsters" such as Douglas Burns (who as a high school student described the Larch Mountain Salamander, *Plethodon larselli*!!), Ted Davis, and Alan St. John. On one such field trip to SE Oregon, one of the "youngsters," Jim Riggs, turned up a "peculiar-looking" Del Norte Salamander, which several years later was described as a new species (the Siskiyou Mountains Salamander) and named in Doc's honor – *Plethodon stormi*. I have to end this testimonial with a quick story. Several years ago Bob told me how difficult it had been psychologically for him to turn 70. I mentioned that I'd had similar

discomfort faced with turning 40. At that he turned, looked at me with great surprise and a big, big smile, and said "FORTY --- that's when the fun really starts!! I wouldn't want to be any younger than that!!" Okay Doc, thanks for the perspective, the education, and MANY great memories!!

Larry Jones moved from California to the PNW in the 1980s to work with Bruce Bury conducting amphibian surveys in old-growth forests in Oregon. Larry (AKA "Commander Salamander") quickly became a legend in the region for his quick wit, very "unique" sense of humor, and his dedication to field studies on salamanders and marten (of the mammalian persuasion). Moreover, Larry served the Society like no previous president in my memory! It seems like Larry and his wife Janet have been a SNVB dynamic duo forever. Larry served three consecutive terms as president, while Janet served as treasurer and editorial assistant for *Northwestern Naturalist*. Larry's dynamic and energetic leadership served our organization extremely well: we saw the Journal get back on track and a run of extremely successful annual meetings.

Larry also made significant contributions to our collective knowledge of Northwest amphibians. His dedicated work on PNW salamanders led to several peer-reviewed papers published in *Northwestern*

Naturalist and several species accounts in the field guide *Amphibians of Washington and Oregon*. Despite

INSIDE:

- Election results..... 2
- Meeting reports..... 2
- Board reports 3
- 2003 Annual Meeting 4
- SNVB Expansion..... 4
- Naturalizing cities 6
- Wetlands Institute 6
- More meetings 7
- Publication alert..... 7

his recent move to Arizona, Larry continues spearheading a new book on the amphibians of Northwestern North America. We will miss Larry, but look forward to reading about his Arizona exploits. Look out Safford, AZ – there's a new 'kid' in town!

ps: Larry's new address is:
Lawrence L. C. Jones, District Biologist,
Safford Ranger District,
P.O. Box 709, Safford, AZ 85548

- Bill Leonard

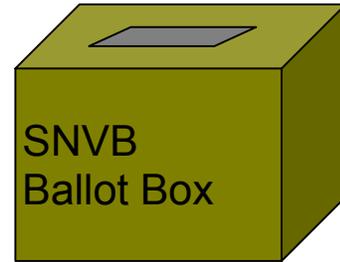


Larry Jones, Bill Leonard, and Doc Storm.



Front row: Doc Storm and Andy Blaustein
Back row: Don McKenzie, Butch Brodie, Tom Darrow

EXECUTIVE BOARD ELECTION RESULTS!!!



The 2002 SNVB Executive Board election results were announced at our Annual Meeting in Hood River, April 3-5, at Thursday night's banquet. The three positions that were open on the 2002 Executive Board were the Oregon Vice-President, Treasurer, and one of the Trustee positions. I am pleased to announce that Janet Erickson was elected as our new Oregon Vice-President. Janet lives in Corvallis, Oregon, and works with the Cooperative Forest Ecosystem Research Program, a cooperative venture between Oregon State University, USGS Forest and Rangeland Ecosystem Science Center, the Bureau of Land Management, and the Oregon Department of Forestry. Julie Grialou was elected as our new Treasurer. Julie lives in the Seattle area of Washington and works for a private environmental consulting firm, Parametrix. Our new trustee is Tara Chestnut. Tara works for the Washington Department of Transportation in Olympia, Washington, where she also lives. Welcome Janet, Julie, and Tara to the SNVB Executive Board!

And now onto some acknowledgements...

I want to extend a heartfelt **THANK YOU** to Dede Olson, our former Oregon Vice-President, Kelley Jorgensen, former Treasurer, and Cathy Flick, former Trustee. All three of these women dedicated countless hours of service to the Society during their terms. Thanks for a job well done! Also, special thanks to all the members that agreed to run for the 2002 SNVB Executive Board. Without your willingness to serve on the Board we would not be able to continue the good work of the Society. Thank you!

- Sally Butts, Trustee

A GREAT MEETING.....

Greetings from the outgoing Washington VP. I'm delighted to report that the Hood River meeting was a big hit – it was big, with 65 talks and 14 posters, and

it was a hit, with a great diversity of topics and well attended sessions. As the program organizer, some of the highlights for me were two excellent plenary talks by James Agee and Edmund Brodie, great sessions on forest carnivores, shrub-steppe birds, bull trout, and amphibian declines. It was also great to see the strong attendance at the invertebrate session, in which at least one talk integrated invertebrate and vertebrate biology. The Society has worked hard over the years to increase the diversity of sessions, and this year we certainly achieved that goal. I hope that the sessions at future meetings will be as diverse as they were at this year's meeting. If you have an idea for a session topic for next year, please let the Board know, and then go for it!

The meeting would not have gone as smoothly as it did without the help of many volunteers. I would like to thank everyone who helped moderate sessions and run audiovisual equipment, especially the volunteers who did not get listed in the program acknowledgments: Burr Betts, Bill Leonard, Mary Linders, Eric Lund, and David Rundio. I've enjoyed serving on the Board, but sadly cannot continue to represent Washington very well from my new home in Louisiana. So from now until the election next year, Elissa Ostergaard (who was runner-up for the position last year) will serve as Washington VP. Welcome Elissa!

- Brad Moon, *Outgoing VP for Washington*

...AND GREAT FIELD TRIPS, TOO:

Three field trips were scheduled, led by four local experts. Attendance varied but the folks who were able to stay an extra day certainly had great opportunities to get to know the flora and fauna of the Gorge. Remnants of Spotted frog egg masses were observed at both Conboy Lake and Trout Lake. The weather turned out in our favor and brought out the reptiles. Skinks, Rubber boas, and two species of garter snakes were seen at the den site at Trout Lake. No Sharp-tailed snakes though. The highlight of the day was stumbling upon courting Common garter snakes. The group of more than 20 didn't seem to mind us standing around them, watching as one female rejected one potential mate after another. Observing the behavior was an exciting first for many on the trip. Look forward to exciting field trips next year in the lovely fictitious State of Jefferson.

- Tara Chesnut, *Trustee*

BEST PAPER AWARD

There were many excellent papers presented at the Year 2002 annual meeting at Hood River, Oregon. Topics covered a wide range of vertebrates including bull trout, amphibians and reptiles, small mammals, shrub-steppe birds, and forest carnivores. There also were a handful of talks on invertebrates. 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 2002 best paper presentation award to Pieter T. J. Johnson for his presentation "Parasite Infection Linked to Amphibian Malformations". This paper was co-authored by Jay Bowerman and Andrew Blaustein. Thanks to everyone for their participation.

- Rebecca Thompson, *VP Inland Region*

EDITOR'S REPORT, NW NATURALIST:

The publication of Volume 83 of Northwestern Naturalist is proceeding on time. By the time this newsletter is mailed, the spring issue should be out and the autumn issue will have gone to press. The number of pages I expect for this volume will be similar to recent volumes (130-140 pages). The current rate of manuscript submission is about what is necessary to continue this same number of pages per volume, but won't allow for the type of growth that I believe we would all like to see. So, again, I and the SNVB board members all encourage all of you to turn those research projects into manuscripts, especially all those great papers presented at our recent meeting in Hood River.

- Burr Betts, *Editor, NW Naturalist*



TREASURER'S REPORT

We have many new members to welcome this time around. We'd also like to extend a hearty welcome back to those members who took a brief (or extended) hiatus and have recently renewed their membership! We are glad to have you back as active members of the Society.

Welcome New Members!

Paul Anderson	Eric Lund
Jamie Anthony	Sarah Lynch
Anne Avery	David Manuwal
Jay Bowerman	Maryjo Mazurek
David Bradford	Aimee McIntyre
Craig Broadhead	Paul Miller
Murray Brown	Brian Moser
Ryan Danby	Paul Moyer
Lyn Dehen	Sally Nickelson
Merrie Diehl	Ryan O'Donnell
Robin Dye	Dwayne Paige
Ashley Elinor	L. Ted Parker
Kris Fausti	Amber Pauley-Cawley
Laura Finley	Mia Pelletier
Stephanie Gregory	Kathleen Perillo
Amelia Gucker	Elizabeth Pierson
Vince Harke	David Pilliod
Holly Harris	Jason Reilly
William Harrower	John Richardson
Russ Haycock	Darina Roediger
Michael C. Hayes	Jina Sagar
Andie Herman	Rick Schlexer
Tiffany Hicks	Robert Schorr
Erin Hyde	Dave Schuett-Hames
Leigh Ann Isaac	Joanne Schuett-Hames
Nancy Job	Jennifer Scott
Josh R. Johnson	Shonene Scott
Pieter Johnson	Chris Sheridan
Jason A. Kerr	Keith Slauson
Niels Leuthold	Barry Stevenson
Eric Lofroth	Bets Stover
Jason Lowe	Jeff Von Kienast
	Brett Walker

Special mention for our newest Life Members!

Steve Johnson, Robert M. "Doc" Storm, and Larry Jones

- Kelley Jorgensen, *Outgoing Treasurer*

2003 ANNUAL MEETING UPDATE

Mark your calendars, SNVB's 2003 annual meeting will be held from March 19 to 22 at Humboldt State University, Arcata, California. Arcata is located along California's spectacular north coast, just 90 miles south of the Oregon border, in the heart of redwood country. Workshops and board meetings will occur on Wednesday. Keynote address and plenary session are planned for Thursday morning, with concurrent sessions and posters on Thursday and Friday. Field trips are scheduled for Saturday, March 22.

Lodging will be available from March 18 to 22 at group discount rate of \$40 per room at the nearby North Coast Inn (707) 822-4861, (800) 406-0046. The North Coast Inn will hold 66 rooms for conference registrants until February 25. Rooms come with two double beds or one queen size bed, make your reservation early for choice of room. The banquet on Thursday evening will be held at the North Coast Inn. Other lodging is available nearby, but it will be tough to beat the group rate by North Coast Inn. Conference registration will be conducted via the SNVB website in the future.

- Hart Welsh, *VP, Southern Region*

INVERTEBRATES AND SNVB

Over the past year I have written about and advocated for expanding the Society's scope to include invertebrates. In these articles, I also asked you, as members, for your thoughts, ideas, and opinions on this subject. I have talked with some of you, and have read and listened to arguments both for and against. I thank those of you who have made time to share your views on this subject. To expand this discussion, I have asked two friends and fellow SNVB members, Greg Green and Kelly McAllister, each to write an article about why we should or should not expand SNVB to include invertebrates. In his article, Greg explains his opposition to further expansion at this time, while Kelly shares his reasons for supporting the inclusion of invertebrates. It is my hope and intention that the SNVB Board will authorize a vote on this measure for 2003. So please read Greg's and Kelly's pieces, and take a few moments to consider this important issue.

- Bill Leonard

SNVB EXPANSION? A VOICE IN FAVOR

The Board of the Society for Northwestern Vertebrate Biology is pondering whether the scope of the Society should include invertebrates. I would like to see invertebrates included in the scope of the Society and, to accommodate such a change, I would like to see adoption of a new name, something like the Society for Northwestern Natural History or the Society for the Study of Northwestern Natural History.

Such a change in scope would expose existing members to much that is new, refreshing and incredibly relevant to the uniqueness of Northwest ecosystems. When this organization was the Bird and

Mammal Society, it produced The Murrelet which was little more than a newsletter in the early days. Many bits of bird observation trivia were included in the newsletter and, today, these historical observations may be more important than ever. Despite the value that such observational records develop with time, such material would likely not be considered for publication in a journal today. When the study of birds and mammals in our region was a fledgling field, even the simplest natural history observation was a valued contribution and the scientific basis for understanding birds and mammals of the region benefited through the inclusion of these observations in a regional journal.

I maintain that, for most invertebrates, the Northwest needs a journal that will fill the same need that The Murrelet filled for bird and mammal study over 5 decades ago. Think about how few guides to northwest birds were available at that time. Think about the explosion in interest that occurred when Roger Tory Peterson put together the first really user friendly field guide to western birds.



With invertebrates, we are approaching a similar explosion in interest. Dennis Paulson has produced references, both book and on the World Wide Web, that will make Northwest dragonflies more accessible. Cris Guppy and Jon Shepard have produced "The Butterflies of British Columbia" and Robert Michael Pyle has created "Butterflies of Cascadia", both books full of color photos that will allow many to accurately put names on the butterflies they see while in the field. Other such guides can be expected for our diverse slugs and snails and, perhaps, our freshwater mussels. Of course, there are seemingly endless other invertebrate taxa to get to know but the important thing is to get started learning about them and their unique roles in the ecology of our region. The invertebrates are an important part of what makes the Northwest unique. They are fascinating in their own right and we as a Society can, as we always have, decide the kinds of papers that are appropriate for the journal and the annual meetings. Believe me, those choices will bring the richest, most enlightening aspects of invertebrate natural history to our members.

- Kelly McAllister, District Wildlife Biologist
Thurston and Pierce counties, Washington

SNVB EXPANSION? THE OPPOSING VIEW

Why I oppose, for now, expanding SNVB to include invertebrates can best be told (forgive me) in a sports analogy. Some of you have heard of the controversy in baseball concerning contraction, or simply reducing the number of teams in the major league. This contraction revolves around one problem: failed expansion. Over the past decade or so, baseball expanded teams into cities that did not have a strong tradition of baseball. Examples include Montreal, Tampa Bay, and Miami. You can even cross over to basketball and add Vancouver and Charlotte. The intended consequence was that baseball traditions would develop and the cities would fully embrace their new team.

What actually happened can be summed up in one word: dilution. These teams initially did not have the talent to win. Without winning they could not draw the fans. Without fans they could not generate revenue. Without revenue they could not sign impact players, so they kept losing. Losing fans and losing money. Soon other teams from cities with strong baseball tradition also became talent-diluted, and too began losing money. What remains are a few well-financed powerhouses, with long-standing traditions, but members of a system annually tottering on the brink of collapse. The argument is baseball needs not to expand, but to contract in order to survive.

I am afraid the dilution factor will kick into play if the Society expands to include invertebrates. Yes, it will generate a few more papers for our annual meeting and journal just like expanding baseball generated a few more teams. But will the interest be there? Will papers be presented to audiences of only 5 or 6? Will any synergy or tradition develop? Will entomologists join our Society to read that invert paper that gets published every blue moon or so? Our expansion to include fish says maybe not.

Before I sound like too much the traditionalist, let me say I enthusiastically endorsed expanding the Society to include reptiles and amphibians. For fish, I was ambivalent at best. For invertebrates, I think we are opening a can of worms.

For me, an alternative to expanding is to concentrate harder on what we do represent. We have made the commitment to include fish, let's work to really INCLUDE fish and fisheries biologists. Put our

energies there, or contract. Further, our tradition is birds and mammals. We need to regenerate the interest in them that has been waning for some time. If we don't, it's like pouring good wine on the floor. It's still wine, but you can't drink it anymore.

- Greg Green

REGIONAL REPORT: NORTHWEST REGION

Naturalizing our Cities

I read a disturbing article in last month's Vancouver Courier (p. 11, April 21, 2002), describing how an individual living in the east end of the city poisoned a backyard pond with Comet to kill off the noisy frogs (the species isn't mentioned but they were likely *Hyla regilla*). The owner of the backyard pond was quite shocked by this behaviour because he had received only positive feedback from passers-by and neighbours that enjoyed hearing the frogs chorus each evening. They claimed that the sound was very peaceful to them in the noisy urban setting where they live. When a tenant discovered the Comet, numerous neighbours rushed over to help flush out the pond. About 24 frogs were caught and put into buckets while the pond was cleaned. Luckily, it had been raining heavily for a few days, so the Comet was likely diluted quickly. The article ends with the confirmation of new egg masses in the pond, suggesting that the frogs had either survived or new ones had moved in.



This article reminded me that what one person perceives as beautiful, another may not. This is a challenging dilemma for wildlife conservationists and educators promoting backyard ponds and naturalization projects – the presence of guano under bat houses, raccoons and rats hovering around compost bins, and the spread of 'weeds' from naturalized lawns are just a few things that can cause neighbours to butt heads. I recall one of my undergraduate professors describing how his neighbours were not impressed with his annual lawn burning activities to promote the native wild flower garden he maintained...

Although it's not clear why the person in Vancouver poisoned the noisy frogs (I doubt that s/he had anything against frogs per se.... perhaps s/he just couldn't sleep...), there are many different attitudes and values in our multicultural society that must be

considered. For example, in Cameroon owls are seen as evil, the Celts see them as a sign of the underworld, while the French see them as an omen that a woman's child will be a girl, and the Inuit see them as a source of guidance and help. The majority of people in our culture do not warm up to the notion of bringing snakes, spiders, bats, coyotes, and rodents into their neighbourhood. Unfortunately, the media and Hollywood have continued to perpetuate false information surrounding these animals. The media is very powerful and can influence the way we think about nature. We've all witnessed the increased attention amphibians have received over the past decade, which has elevated them out of the 'icky' critter section into the cute (and cuddly?) section of societies' collective brain. Education, open communication, and a good dose of patience will be needed to maintain harmony in our multicultural environment, especially in our endeavours to bring nature into our urban centres.



2002 Wetlands Institute: Glaciers to Goose Nests

Business leaders, concerned citizens, educators, First Nations, planners, and youth are invited to attend the 2002 Wetlands Institute (WI) in Invermere, BC. Following a successful WI in Nanaimo last year, the 2002 Institute will move east to the Columbia Basin. The Institute will run from July 7th to 13th. This is the first time the WI has examined the interplay between wilderness, rural and urban land-use issues. Participants will explore the connectivity of aquatic ecosystems starting at their upland sources, glaciers, and ending at lowland wetlands (don't step on the goose nest!). The health of these seemingly remote watersheds will be investigated. Solutions to development and land-use impacts will be highlighted.

For more information, please contact:

Lisa Mose, Assistant Coordinator
Wetlands Education Program
email: wetlands@netidea.com

Habitat Restoration for Endangered Fish

In Langley and Abbotsford, British Columbia, academics from the University of British Columbia

are working with local stream stewardship groups and industry to restore habitat for two of Canada's most endangered fish, the Salish sucker (*Catostomus sp.*) and the Nooksack dace (*Rhinichthys sp.*). The global distribution of both species is limited to a handful of drainages in the lower Fraser Valley and Puget Sound Lowlands. They have been declining in recent years due to habitat loss from urbanization, agricultural drainage, and other development pressures.

Habitat restoration projects are spearheaded by the stewardship groups, in particular the Pepin Brook Streamkeepers and the Langley Environmental Partners Society with design input from UBC graduate students and contributions of material from local gravel pits. The graduate students then monitor how the suckers and dace colonize and use the new habitat. In conjunction with a parallel research program on basic life history and distribution of these fish, the work is contributing to their recovery using an adaptive management approach.

For more information, contact Mike Pearson at mpearson@portal.ca.

- Elke Wind, Vice-President, Northern Region

COURSE AND CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Course Announcement:

DNA-Based Wildlife Studies: Study Design, Field Methods, Genetic Analysis, and Analysis of Mark-Recapture Data

November 18-21, 2002 Nelson, British Columbia
The Columbia Mountains Institute of Applied Ecology is hosting this course, which consists of three consecutive sessions. Cost: \$175 (Canadian funds) per session.

Session One: Study Design and Field Methods for DNA-Based, Mark-Recapture Inventories

Session Two: Genetic Analysis of Individual Identity in DNA-Based Inventories

Session Three: Advanced Mark-Recapture Analysis of Genetic Data

Conference Announcement

Mountain Caribou in 21st Century Ecosystems

October 16-18, 2002, Revelstoke, British Columbia
A three-day conference focussing on the ecology and management of Mountain Caribou. Mountain Caribou are an ecotype of Woodland Caribou living in the snowy mountains of southeastern British Columbia,

and a red-listed species. Cost for conference including field trip: \$255.00 (Canadian funds).

For more information or to register for either event, contact the Columbia Mountains Institute of Applied Ecology, Revelstoke, BC V0E 2S0
Phone 250-837-Email: cmi@revelstoke.net Visit CMI on the internet at: www.cmiae.org

PNARC NEWS

News and



Views from
The Pacific Northwest
Amphibian
and Reptile Consortium

NEW "GOTTA-GET-ONE" PUBLICATION ALERT

Reptiles of the Northwest: California to Alaska, Rockies to the Coast. Text and photos by Alan St. John. 2002. Lone Pine Publishing, Renton, Washington & Edmonton, Alberta. 272 p. (\$18.95 US / \$25.95CAN)

I am delighted to report the arrival of the long-awaited field guide by fellow SNVB member and good friend Alan St. John. As some of you know, Al has been working on this book for decades, and I can tell you that it has been well worth the wait. The book represents a distillation of Al's considerable knowledge of reptiles that he has gained while studying these animals over the past 50 years. The book contains an introductory chapter, simple keys, and 42 individual species accounts. The entire book is lavishly illustrated with color photos of both the animals and the habitats in which they're found. I am genuinely impressed by the quality of Al's photographs, which, with the text, really bring the book to life. This book contains a wealth of information that will soon become an indispensable reference for both herpetologists and reptile aficionados of all ages---very appropriate since Al dedicates the book to young herpetologists, naturalists, and SNVB's very own Doc Storm, Emeritus Professor of Zoology, Oregon State University.

- Bill Leonard

EXECUTIVE BOARD 2001-2002

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Society for Northwestern Vertebrate Biology Membership Form

Name: _____

Affiliation: _____

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City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

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E-mail: _____

Renewal ____ or New Member ____ (check one)

Area of Interest/Expertise _____

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)

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