

The Murreletter

Society for Northwestern
Vertebrate Biology

Volume 10, No. 3

October 2002

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

At the Summer Board meeting, we addressed the issue of expanding the taxonomic scope of SNVB to include invertebrates. So as not to keep you in suspense, the proposal lacked sufficient support to get a resolution passed by the Board and, consequently, there will be no membership vote on this issue. I now realize that I broke what is reported to be LBJ's (*i.e.*, Lyndon B. Johnson, 36th president of the U.S.) cardinal legislative rule: Never propose legislation without first being certain there are sufficient votes to assure its passage. Despite my personal disappointment, I do believe that the discussions caused many of us to reflect on who we are currently as a Society and what we want SNVB to be in the future. This is healthy for the Society and indicates to me how much you care about the Society's future. I hope that it will also cause some of you to consider serving on the Board.

I also want to inform you that I have decided not to run for another term as the Society's President. It has been both my honor and great pleasure to serve alongside so many talented and dedicated people. It has been the most rewarding 10 years of my professional life. However, there comes a time when new people are needed to infuse an organization with new energy and fresh ideas. In my case, I believe it is a good time to move aside to let others assume a leadership role. I do plan to continue as the managing editor of *Northwest*

Fauna so I will not be entirely disappearing from SNVB activities.

In closing, I want to say that I am amazed by the positive changes that I've observed since attending my first "Pacific Northwest Bird and Mammal Society" meeting back in 1983. Attendance at the annual meetings has soared, the Society is financially strong, and the journal on a solid footing. However, we cannot afford to rest on our laurels if we are to remain a vibrant and vital organization. We must continue pressing to have the *Northwestern Naturalist* once again indexed by indexing services—a step that will be critical to maintaining the loyalty of our existing authors and for luring manuscripts from other potential authors. (This is a particularly prickly problem without a clear-cut solution. Persistent nagging along with

maintaining a track record has got to be successful at some point.) We must also continue encouraging members representing all taxonomic interests to serve on the Board and to organize

sessions at the annual meetings. I trust that the new Board will tackle these challenges with great enthusiasm and vigor.

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- Bill Leonard

EDITOR'S REPORT, NW NATURALIST:

The winter issue of Volume 83 has gone to press. Total pages for this volume will be about 130 to 140, which is about the same as the last couple years. I have two papers scheduled for next spring's issue, but there are only about 12 more manuscripts under review. We started out the year with a good rate of manuscript submission, but it dropped off like a rock at the start of the summer. That's not unusual, given everyone's workload in the field season, but the influx of manuscripts that normally starts in August hasn't happened as of yet (mid-September). So, please finish up those projects and submit them as soon as possible.



- Burr Betts, Editor, NW Naturalist

OPENING FOR ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Michael Adams, our associate editor for amphibian papers, is stepping down. If anyone is interested in this opening, please contact the editor by mail or phone. While the majority of manuscripts this person handles will be about amphibians, they may also have to handle a few reptile manuscripts.

Contact Burr Betts at: bbetts@eou.edu
Phone: (541)962-3330

ABOUT THAT NEWSLETTER.....

Our apologies for the appearance of the last newsletter. There was a printing error at the US Postal Service mailing-online service, and a number of US copies were mailed with some of the pages inverted. USPS has assured me that this should not happen again.

USPS now accepts "Booklet self-mailers" so we're trying that with this newsletter, to save paper and postage (US members only).

Please let me know if there continue to be problems!

- Laura Friis, Secretary

NOMINEES WANTED!!!

The SNVB Executive Board will be in for big changes in 2003. We have **six** positions open on the Board! Now is your chance to get involved and help shape the future of our Society. We are seeking enthusiastic people with a desire to share their ideas and skills by serving on the Executive Board. The following positions are open in 2003:

- President
- Vice-President for Northern Region
- Vice-President for Washington
- Vice-President for Inland Region
- Secretary
- Trustee

Term duration is two years for President, Vice-Presidents and Secretary, and three years for Trustee.

General duties of board members include:

Attending two to three board meetings per year (by phone or in person) and the annual meeting (in person), and soliciting society memberships & submissions to the *Northwestern Naturalist*. All members are encouraged to contribute to the journal & newsletter and assist on *ad hoc* committees.

Specific duties for each position follow:

- **President:** Presides over the Society and Executive Board meetings; calls special meetings, designates dates of all meetings; appoints and serves as Chair *ex officio* of special committees; maintains the purpose and welfare of the Society.
- **Vice-President:** Serves as the primary representative for members living within their region; writes a regional report for the *Murreletter*. When the annual meeting falls within the region of the VP, they are the primary oversight contact for the meeting but utilize a local organizing committee and other board members. The VP also has the option of holding regional meetings and field trips.
- **Secretary:** Keeps accurate minutes of all meetings of the Executive Board; serves as editor of the Society's newsletter, the *Murreletter*; conducts the correspondence of the Society.

Trustee: Assists on annual meeting and nomination committees; solicits newsletter submissions; helps the society prosper as outlined in the general duties or by other means. This is a great position for learning the ropes of the society.

Please give some considered thought as to whether you, or another SNVB member you know, would like to serve on the Executive Board. This is a great opportunity to participate in the Society! Send names, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses of potential nominees to: Sally Butts, email: sbutts@quinault.org or by phone at (360) 276-8215 ext. 299.

- Sally Butts, Trustee

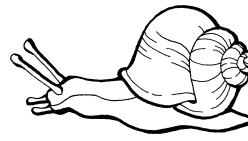
2003 ANNUAL MEETING IN ARCATA!



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.

The theme for this year's meeting is **Biotic and Abiotic Processes in Headwaters Streams**, which certainly play a central role in vertebrate ecology throughout much of the Pacific Northwest. In addition, we are soliciting papers for sessions on mammals, birds, amphibians and reptiles, fishes, wildlife as disease vectors, and non-native vertebrates in aquatic systems. Final session topics will depend on papers submitted. Submission deadline is February 01, 2003. Papers will be considered in the order received. See the official "Call for Papers" for format and submission details.

The meeting will begin on Wednesday, March 19, with society board meetings and a Survey & Manage Mollusk workshop (an additional workshop on forest amphibians may be added if interest warrants). On



Wednesday evening we'll host a social mixer.

Thursday morning begins with the Keynote address and plenary session followed by concurrent sessions for submitted papers. Posters will be displayed in the

lobby adjacent the session rooms on Thursday and Friday. Thursday's activities will conclude with a catered banquet. Forest and coastal field trips are scheduled for Saturday, March 22. Other special events include a member photo contest, best student paper award, best poster award, and a silent auction. Numerous recreational opportunities are available in the area, although some are weather dependant; we are in the Pacific Northwest after all.

Lodging will be available from March 18 to 21 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 offered by the North Coast Inn.

The North Coast Inn provides a free shuttle to and from the Eureka/Arcata Airport (ACV). Rental cars are available at the airport. The Inn is about 4 miles north of the University; we can arrange for a shuttle bus between to University and the Inn if there is enough demand. Indicate your need for a shuttle with your pre-registration. Conference registration will be conducted via the SNVB website beginning in January. If you have any immediate questions about the conference, transportation, accommodations, or wish to express interest in either suggested workshop, please contact Don Ashton <dashton@fs.fed.us> (707) 825-2984.

FIRST CALL FOR PAPERS!!!

We are currently soliciting abstracts for 20-minute oral presentations and posters for SNVB's 2003 Annual Meeting. We are soliciting papers for sessions on Biotic and Abiotic Processes in Headwaters Streams, mammals, birds, amphibians and reptiles, fishes, and wildlife as disease vectors, however all papers on appropriate wildlife topics relevant to the Pacific Northwest will be reviewed and considered. Final

concurrent session topics will depend on papers submitted. The deadline for submitting abstracts is February 01, 2003, but early submissions will help guide the selection of session topics. Papers will be considered in the order received. See abstract guidelines for abstract submission instructions.

ABSTRACT GUIDELINES

Abstracts may be submitted by email, or regular mail on a floppy disk with a hard copy. Abstracts will be published in the Society journal *Northwestern Naturalist* (unless otherwise requested). Please include the following information:

- Name, affiliation, mailing address, phone, and email of lead author.
- Names and affiliations of additional authors.

Abstract format:

- Type title in all capital letters.
- Use Microsoft Word version 7.0 or lower, WordPerfect, or RTF format.
- Type authors' names (first name, middle initial, last name) in title case (first letter of each word capitalized, remaining letters in lower case).
- Type affiliation and address in italics; include city, state (province), zip (postal code); and email address of presenting author.
- Use a semicolon (;) between authors of different affiliations.
- Single space.
- Indent first paragraph of abstract with 1 tab.
- No hard returns within a paragraph.
- No more than 250 words (abstract should fit into a 16 x 11 cm space).
- Deadline for submission is February 01, 2003.

Submit abstracts to:

Hartwell H. Welsh, Jr.
Redwood Sciences Lab
1700 Bayview Drive
Arcata, CA 95521
phone: (707)-825-2956
fax: (707)-825-2901
email: hwelsh@fs.fed.us

SNVB TEMPORARY WEBSITE

We'll have our own website soon, but in the meantime, you can find SNVB information at our temporary website at

<http://www.olywa.net/bnbnc/>

PNARC NEWS

News and

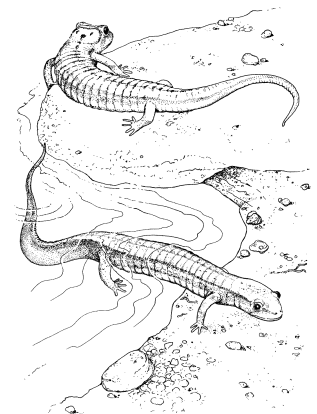


Views from The Pacific Northwest Amphibian and Reptile Consortium

THE AMPHIBIAN RESEARCH AND MONITORING INITIATIVE

Have you ever wondered if the decline in amphibian populations is just part of the general decline in populations of freshwater plants and animals or if there is somehow more to it? In response to this question and others, the Amphibian Research and Monitoring Initiative (ARMI) was created by the Department of the Interior (DOI) to study potential causes of decline and to monitor trends in amphibian populations on DOI lands. ARMI is a nation-wide program involving the Biological, Water Resources, and Mapping Disciplines of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) all working in close partnership with other agencies.

ARMI monitoring has three levels, which follow a pyramid design: Apex Monitoring, which involves intensive monitoring at a small number of sites with a research focus; Base Assessments, which are broad assessments of the distribution and status of a species; and Mid-level Monitoring Areas, which use probabilistic sampling to monitor the proportion of sites occupied by amphibians in a defined area. Mid-level Monitoring areas typically encompass dozens of amphibian breeding sites and are the primary focus of ARMI monitoring. ARMI uses an unbiased estimate of the proportion of sites occupied as its primary response variable so that changes in the detectability of amphibians caused by weather or observer skill will not affect results.



Current research and monitoring activities are taking place on the Olympic Peninsula, in the Canyonlands of Utah, in the northern Great Basin Desert, and in the Willowa Mountains of eastern Oregon. The Bureau of Land Management, the Forest Service, and several National Parks are partners in these areas. Combined, the monitoring areas cover 6,674,000 ha of federal lands and will provide status and trends information on eight species of amphibians in five western states. Current research addresses the effects of cattle grazing, fire, non-native species, and ultraviolet-b radiation on amphibians.

For more information on the ARMI program go to <http://www.mp2-pwrc.usgs.gov/armi/index.cfm>.

for specific information on ARMI in Washington,

Oregon, Nevada, and Utah, contact Mike Adams, Research Ecologist, USGS Forest and Rangeland Ecosystem Science Center, Michael_Adams@usgs.gov;

for northern California contact Gary Fellers, Research Biologist, Western Ecology Research Center, Gary_Fellers@usgs.gov;

for Montana, northern Wyoming, and Idaho north of the Snake River, contact Steve Corn, Research Zoologist, USGS Northern Rocky Mountain Science Center, Steve_Corn@usgs.gov; and

for southern Wyoming and Colorado contact Erin Muths, Research Zoologist, USGS Fort Collins Science Center, Erin_Muths@usgs.gov.

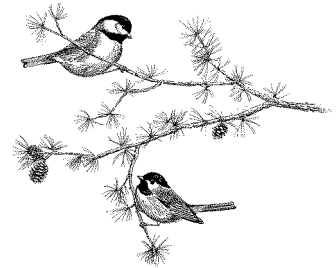
- Danielle Jarkowsky

EFFECTS OF GROUPED RETENTION ON AVIAN COMMUNITIES IN COASTAL FORESTS OF VANCOUVER ISLAND, BRITISH COLUMBIA

On Vancouver Island, variable retention forestry is becoming the primary harvest method for Weyerhaeuser, gradually replacing clear-cut methods over the period 1999-2003. The resulting retention, classed as "Grouped", "Dispersed", and "Mixed", is expected to serve three primary functions: 1) provide refugia to maintain biodiversity that might otherwise be lost in clear-cut methods; 2) provide structural enrichment that might otherwise be lost in clear-cut methods; and 3) increase connectivity between forested units to facilitate dispersal and migration. This study, which uses birds as predictor variables, was completed on northern Vancouver Island, to assess the use of

"Grouped" retention sites. There were four objectives of this study: 1) compare richness and abundance for species and guilds between grouped retention and control sites; 2)

compare abundance of selected species between grouped retention and control sites; 3) assess major structural characteristics and their effects on species and guilds; and, 4) quantitatively summarize the use of grouped retention features.

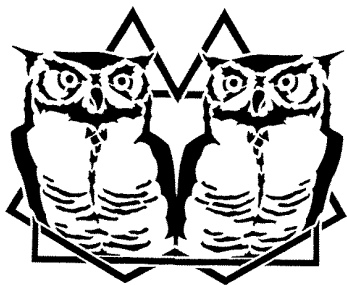


From 388 point counts, 48 species were detected. Twenty-three were unique to grouped retention, two were unique to controls, and 23 occurred in both treatments. Total richness and abundance did not differ between treatments, owing in part to inter-site variability and unequal sample sizes between treatments. Non-old-growth species richness and abundance was greater in grouped retention sites. There was no difference in old-growth species richness between treatments, thus suggesting the maintenance of biodiversity in retention sites. However, old-growth species abundance was generally lower in grouped retention sites than in controls. The American Robin, a non-old-growth species, was more abundant in grouped retention sites than controls. The Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Hammond's Flycatcher, and Varied Thrush are all considered old-growth species, and all were more abundant in control sites. Abundance of the Hammond's Flycatcher decreased with increasing proportions of patch, while for the Varied Thrush, abundance decreased with increasing proportions of clearcut. Proportions of patch and clearcut are not inversely linked as connected fragments and matrix habitats are also part of the sampled area. Grouped retention sites on Vancouver Island do maintain most of the diversity of species that are initially present in pre-harvest forests. However, relative abundance is generally lower for all species that were retained, and likely results from reduced habitat availability and increased competition with species that utilize habitats created by retention harvest practices.

- Michael I. Preston Victoria, B.C.
(mike-preston@shaw.ca)

FOREST OWLS AS INDICATORS OF RETENTION OF BIODIVERSITY IN COASTAL BRITISH COLUMBIA

The owl research project is part of the Enhanced Forest Management Pilot Project (EFMPP) that is directly operated through the Adaptive Management Working Group of Weyerhaeuser, Nanaimo, British Columbia. In early 2001, four primary objectives, which build on previous research, were identified. These are: 1) refine methodology for monitoring nocturnal forest owls in coastal British Columbia habitats; 2) assess the abiotic and biotic factors affecting detectability, distribution, abundance, movement, and density of owls; 3) provide data for spatial analysis and predictive modeling, and; 4) provide recommendations for indicator species and long-term monitoring programs as they pertain to variable retention (VR) forestry. Owl surveys were completed from 23 February to 23 March 2001. There were 23 transects on Vancouver Island (each with 25 count stations) and 12 on the Sunshine Coast (each with 13 count stations). A playback experiment was used to census for owls, with each count station having a survey duration of 8.5 minutes.



There were 116 owls detected from 771 count stations and 25 owls recorded as incidentals. The Barred Owl and Northern Saw-whet Owl were most

frequently detected (46.9% each) on the Sunshine Coast and the Western Screech-Owl was most frequently detected (40.6%) on Vancouver Island. Of the weather and lunar variables recorded, temperature, cloud cover, presence / absence of the moon, and moon phase were significant factors affecting owl activity, with considerable similarity across species. Each owl species was mapped using the variant-level habitat distribution of the Biogeoclimatic Ecosystem Classification system. The Barred Owl and Northern Saw-whet Owl were most frequently detected in the "very dry maritime" and "dry maritime" subzones. The Western-Screech-Owl was most frequently detected in the "very dry maritime" and "very wet maritime" subzones.

The results of this years' research and methodology

yields strong evidence that monitoring owls for retention of biodiversity is feasible. It is apparent that unique conditions exist for developing an efficient survey protocol for most owl species, which in turn will reduce costs and increase efficiency. In this report we identified the Northern Pygmy-Owl, Barred Owl, Northern Saw-whet Owl, and Western Screech-Owl as indicator species. Consideration of management objectives and logistics for monitoring is evaluated for each species. Future research at the current level should include an increased number of transects, possible replication (for segregation in owl activity by time of year) and assessment of remote areas (away from mainline roads). For monitoring owl presence / absence in variable retention sites, the replication of surveys will be essential to the success of the project. With the increasing number of observations for some owls, we recommend that density mapping and predictive modeling by variant or site-specific habitat be pursued.

*Michael I. Preston and R. Wayne Campbell
Victoria, B.C. (mike-preston@shaw.ca)*

CANADA LYNX IN UTAH

A Canada lynx was identified this September from hair samples collected on the Manti-La Sal National Forest in central Utah. This is the first confirmed lynx report in Utah since 1991. The origin of the lynx is still in question. Possibilities range from an escapee from a fur farm, somebody's pet, or one of the recently introduced Colorado lynx. A radio signal of one of the missing Colorado lynx was detected during a recent aerial survey in Utah. However, the signal was irregular and subsequent flights and ground surveys did not pick the signal up again.

Lynx surveys have been conducted in the northern United States as part of the interagency developed, National Lynx Survey. The hair sample from the Manti-La Sal was collected from a hair snare on the third year of the three-year lynx survey and verified by DNA analysis. Snow track surveys will be conducted this winter to verify the location of the lynx and hopefully obtain new information. If day beds are found during snow surveys, hair samples will be collected and analyzed to determine species and individual. Comparisons of DNA from any collected hair samples will be made with those from the Colorado releases to

further investigate the origin of this animal. In addition, the Forest Service may conduct radio-tracking surveys in an attempt to pick up a signal from one of the missing radio-collared, reintroduced Colorado lynx.

For more information on the Utah lynx report, contact Rod Player, at the Manti-La Sal at 435-637-2817. For information on the National Lynx Survey, contact the USFS Rocky Mountain Research Station in Missoula, Montana at 406-542-4150.

Submitted by Rebecca Thompson, Inland VP

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Society for Northwestern Vertebrate Biology Membership Form

Name: _____

Affiliation: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

Renewal ____ or New Member ____ (check one)

Area of Interest/Expertise _____

Mail your payment (US funds) and this application form to:

Treasurer, SNVB
PO Box 22313
Seattle, WA 98122

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)

For membership information, call Julie Grialou at:
425-822-8880, or e-mail to: jgrialou@parametrix.com