

WESTERN SOCIETY OF NATURALISTS

~ 2015 ~

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96TH ANNUAL MEETING NOVEMBER 5 – 8, 2015 IN SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

MEETING INFORMATION

This year's annual meeting of the Western Society of Naturalists will be held November 5 – 8, 2015 at the **DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Sacramento in Sacramento, California**. We plan to capitalize on the Sacramento location to highlight "**marine science informing policy**" as one theme of the 2015 annual meeting. Our local host will be the California Ocean Science Trust. We expect to dedicate several sessions of contributed talks to science related to Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), which promises to be a timely topic in light of activities around California's MPA monitoring programs in 2015.

We currently plan to begin the meeting on the evening of Thursday, Nov. 5th, with a student organized workshop and student mixer. On the morning of Friday, Nov. 6th, we will feature the Student Symposium followed by contributed paper sessions. That evening we will have the Poster Session and the ever-popular Attitude Adjustment Hour (AAH). On Saturday Nov. 7th, there will be a morning Presidential Symposium followed by contributed papers. Talks on Saturday will be followed with the Business Meeting, Presidential Banquet, and WSN Auction. On Sunday Nov. 8th, we will start the morning with contributed talks, followed by a special plenary speaker and finale event to close the 96th annual meeting on Sunday afternoon. Please plan to stay for the whole meeting, so that you do not miss these unique events. As we approach the conference, we will provide more details regarding the schedule.

All workshops, symposia, and contributed paper and poster sessions will be held in the meeting rooms of the DoubleTree Hotel. For driving directions and general hotel information, visit (<http://bit.ly/1AvxpWF>). The hotel offers a variety of services for WSN attendees, including free parking, complimentary wireless connection in the hotel rooms, discounts at the day spa, and use of the 24-hr fitness center. We have arranged for room rates of \$129/night for a standard King or double room with 2 occupants, \$139/night for 3 occupants, and \$149/night for 4 occupants per room. **These rates will apply until Wednesday, October 10, 2015.** As usual, we strongly advise you to **make your hotel reservations as early as possible and well before the meeting**, or you may be unable to find accommodations at the DoubleTree Hotel. In recent years, the reserved block of rooms has sold very quickly. We urge all members to stay in the DoubleTree Hotel so that the Society can fulfill its room commitment, which will allow us to remain financially solvent. The special discounted rate applies for three days before and after the meeting as well, if you wish to arrive early or depart later.

We will send a special WSN reservations link and phone number in an upcoming email.

The **WSN webpage** can be found at <http://www.westsocnat.com>, and we use online registration for the meeting through Cvent. In addition, we maintain a **WSN Twitter account** (Twitter Handle: @WSN_Secretariat), and a **WSN Facebook page** (<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Western-Society-of-Naturalists/263186863792393>), where you can find information about the Society & our annual meeting, and connect with your colleagues.

CALL FOR PAPERS/POSTERS

We will open the WSN website for online submission of abstracts for contributed papers and posters beginning August 1, 2015. **Abstracts will be accepted through September 24, 2015** and posted subsequently on the WSN website along with a meeting schedule. If you have problems submitting your abstract online, please contact the Secretariat. WSN continues to strongly recommend that student abstracts and talks be vetted by their major advisors to assure the high quality of the work presented.

WSN BUSINESS

As usual, the WSN Student Committee is seeking items to include in this year's auction. Money raised from the auction is used to fund student travel. The auction will be held immediately following the Presidential Banquet. Previously donated items have included books or monographs, art work, embarrassing collectibles obtained from prominent WSN members, wine, and other spirits. WSN is a non-profit organization and all donations are tax deductible. If you have items that you would like to donate or have questions of the WSN student committee in general, please e-mail Bobby San Miguel of the WSN student committee (rsanmiguel@mlml.calstate.edu).

RECAP OF THE 95TH ANNUAL MEETING IN TACOMA, WASHINGTON

The 95th meeting of the Western Society of Naturalists was held November 13 – 16, 2014 at the Hotel Murano in Tacoma, WA. The meeting was a huge success, with approximately 576 people registered. This was the 3rd consecutive annual meeting with attendance of ~600 people, reflecting exciting growth of the Society and also posing some challenges for the current meeting format. Once again the Student Committee hosted the popular “Beneath the Waves” Film Festival that screened short films about marine issues. The Friday student symposium was excellent and addressed the theme of “Conservation in the Anthropocene: Balancing Nature and Human Needs”. The Presidential Symposium on Saturday also served up a stimulating mix of talks, focused on “Challenges Bounding Traditional Marine Ecology”. On

Sunday at noon, members were treated to a thought-provoking plenary talk by **Daniel Pauly** on “Impacts of Fisheries and Global Warming in Marine Ecosystems”. The plenary talk was followed immediately by a Barbecue Lunch. Best student paper and poster awards (see below) were announced before the barbecue. The noon plenary and barbecue lunch were new additions this year, and the Secretariat generally received positive feedback from our members regarding this new Sunday format.

In total, there were a whopping **265 contributed papers and 125 posters**, highlighting a broad range of top-notch science. The poster session and AAH were held on Friday night. Other highlights of the meeting included presentation of the **Lifetime Achievement Award to Carlos Robles** of CSU Los Angeles, and presentation of the **Naturalist of the Year award to Steve Lonhart** of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. As always, the AAH and the Presidential Banquet were fun events, and outgoing **President Steven Morgan** delivered a hilarious address modeled after the Colbert Report. A total of 184 banquet tickets were sold for this event, making this the most attended banquet in at least the last 15 years. The WSN Auction was presided over by the entertaining auctioneering duo of Sean Anderson and Mark Steele, who helped to raise funding for WSN students. Several well-dressed assistants aided the performance. The auction and donations by members raised **\$6,700 for student travel**. Thanks and supreme honor go to **Cal Poly San Luis Obispo** for their winning bid on the prized “tequila and trophy” at \$1,200. Special thanks to local chair **Phil Levin** for his superb efforts towards making the Tacoma meeting a memorable success.

ELECTIONS, NOMINATIONS, AND OTHER SOCIETY BUSINESS

A number of decisions were made at the 2014 business meeting. Unapproved minutes of that meeting will soon be posted on the WSN website, but highlights included:

- **Jay Stachowicz** (UC Davis) was nominated and unanimously elected President-Elect.
- The 2014 meeting was the last meeting hosted by the outgoing Secretariat (**Mike Graham, Scott Hamilton, Diana Stellar, and Corey Garza**). We are very grateful for their superb leadership and tireless service to WSN.
- UC Davis/Bodega Marine Laboratory took over the reins as Secretariat, led by **Brian Gaylord, Ted Grosholz, Steve Morgan, Eric Sanford, and Jay Stachowicz**. We will do our best to fill the very large shoes of the outgoing Secretariat.
- The 100th anniversary of the start of the Society will occur in 2016 and the annual meeting will be held in the Monterey area. Given the importance of this milestone, many members support holding the Attitude Adjustment Hour (AAH) at the Monterey Bay Aquarium. Some members voiced support for holding the meeting in downtown Monterey, rather than other nearby venues (e.g., the Embassy Suites in Seaside). The local host (Mike Graham) and Secretariat will explore planning options for a meeting that will be both memorable and affordable for students.
- **Andrew Brooks** was nominated and unanimously re-elected to continue as our valued WSN Treasurer for the next 3 years.
- The new chair of the WSN Student Committee is **Bobby San Miguel** (MLML). Other continuing members of the Student Committee include: Thomas Bell (UCSB) and Jenn Burt (Simon Frasier University), who are joined by three new students who were elected to serve: Brittany Jellison (UC Davis), Erin Satterthwaite (UC Davis), and Angela Zepp (MLML).

TRAVEL AWARDS

Travel awards totaling **\$12,500** were given to 92 students who presented at the 2014 meeting. Payments of WSN Student Travel Awards are made two to three months following the annual meeting via PayPal. Although we are not able to fund all students who apply, or cover the majority of their expenses, students are encouraged to apply for these awards in order to attend future meetings. Preference in making awards is given to those students presenting a talk/poster and those who are in the last year of their degree. The size of awards depends on distance traveled and the amount of funds collected at the auction. All members are encouraged to contribute to the travel fund when they pay their annual dues. Details on applying for student travel awards are available on the WSN website.

STUDENT PAPER AND POSTER AWARDS

From the student papers presented at the 95th Annual Meeting, awards for Best Student Paper were given in three categories: (1) Organismal and Population Biology, (2) Community and Ecosystem Ecology, and (3) Applied Ecology. WSN also presented a Best Student Poster Award, and for the first time, a Best Undergraduate Student Poster Award. Many, many thanks to **Kerry Nickols, Danielle Zacherl, Christine Whitcraft, and Tonya Huff** for chairing the Best Student Paper and Poster Awards Committee, and for doing an outstanding job of organizing the judging, helping to evaluate the presentations, and tallying up the scores of 141 presentations and 75 posters in record time! Many thanks also to all of those who volunteered to serve as judges, for their efforts.

As always, there were numerous outstanding papers that deserved awards, but this year was difficult for the judges due to the huge number of papers and posters of excellent quality. Here are the winners and those receiving honorable mention in each category:

BEST GRADUATE STUDENT POSTERS

Winner:

- Emily Jones (Coastal and Marine Institute, San Diego State University, and Bodega Marine Laboratory, University of California, Davis), “Geographic Variation in the Sensitivity of an Herbivore-Induced Seaweed Defense”

Honorable Mention:

- Daniel Swezey (Bodega Marine Laboratory, University of California, Davis), “Bryozoan Morphology and Mineralogy in a High-CO₂ Ocean: Plastic Responses and New Oceanographic Proxies”

BEST UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT POSTERS

Winner:

- Thomas Parker (California State University Fullerton), “Recruitment, Survival, and Growth of *Ostrea lurida* and *Crassostrea gigas* as a Function of Tidal Height”

Honorable Mention:

- Kyle Mundy (California State University Monterey Bay), “Effects of Lipid and Chitin Removal on Stable Isotope Ratios in Krill”
- Kelsey Swieca (Oregon Institute of Marine Biology, University of Oregon), “Are Juvenile *Pisaster ochraceus* Likely to Restore Adult Populations Post Seastar Wasting Syndrome?”

BEST STUDENT PAPERS

ORGANISMAL/POPULATION BIOLOGY

Winner:

- Brittany Jellison (Bodega Marine Laboratory, University of California, Davis), “Acidified Seawater Impairs Anti-Predator Responses of An Intertidal Snail”

Honorable Mention:

- Amanda Pettersen (Monash University), “Does Metabolism Scale with Offspring Size?”

COMMUNITY/ECOSYSTEM ECOLOGY

Winner:

- Andrew Shantz (Florida International University), “Global Nutrient Loading Jeopardizes the Performance of Key Nutrient-Sharing Mutualisms”

Honorable Mention:

- Nyssa Silbiger (University of Hawai'i at Mānoa), “The Coral Reef Balancing Act: Accretion and Erosion along a Natural Environmental Gradient”

APPLIED ECOLOGY/CONSERVATION BIOLOGY (Mia Tegner Award)

Winner:

- Whitney Goodell (University of Hawai'i at Mānoa), “Juvenile Fish Habitats: Integrating Science, GIS, and Local Knowledge to Inform Community-Based Management in Hā'ena, Kaua'i”

Honorable Mention:

- Eva Schemmel (University of Hawai'i at Mānoa), “Integrating Local Monitoring and Ecological Knowledge with Scientific Tools for Local Stewardship and Fisheries Management”
- Olivia Rhoades (Bodega Marine Laboratory, University of California, Davis), “Impacts of Fishing and Scuba Diving on Fish Flight Responses in Marine Reserves”

STATE OF THE SOCIETY AND MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL REMINDER

The membership in WSN stands at about **600 current members**. Please help promote the Society by encouraging your colleagues and students to join WSN as we continue to grow the membership. Because the Society now operates almost exclusively by e-mail, it is very important that you contact us with changes to your e-mail address and other contact information so that we can update our database. You can update your email address yourself at the Society's website: <http://www.westsocnat.com>.

Please note again that when you renew your membership you have TWO ways to make a donation in support of the Society: (1) a donation to the Student Travel/Dave Montgomery Endowment Fund, and (2) a donation to the general fund to help support the day-to-day costs of running the Society.

Also, we hope to soon have a third way that you can help support the Society at no cost to yourself! We'll be joining the AmazonSmile program, which will allow Amazon shoppers to direct 0.5 percent of their purchase totals to WSN. This money will go towards helping to keep

WSN the low-cost, student-friendly society that it has long been. We will post more information on the WSN webpage soon to instruct members regarding how they can request that Amazon donates to WSN in their behalf.

Thank you for supporting WSN and we hope to see you in November at the upcoming meeting in Sacramento, California!

