

# WESTERN SOCIETY OF NATURALISTS

~ 2016 ~

President

**Jay Stachowicz**

*Dept. of Evolution & Ecology*

*UC Davis*

*Davis, CA 95616*

*jjstachowicz@ucdavis.edu*

President-Elect

**Jenn Caselle**

*Marine Science Institute*

*UC Santa Barbara*

*Santa Barbara, CA 93106*

*caselle@msi.ucsb.edu*

Website

<http://www.wsn-online.org>

Secretariat

**Brian Gaylord**

**Ted Grosholz**

**Steven Morgan**

**Eric Sanford**

**Jay Stachowicz**

*UC Davis, Davis, CA 95616*

*Bodega Marine Laboratory*

*Bodega Bay, CA 94923*

*secretariat@wsn-online.org*

Treasurer

**Andrew Brooks**

*Dept. of Ecology, Evolution,*

*and Marine Biology*

*UC Santa Barbara*

*Santa Barbara, CA 93106*

*brooks@msi.ucsb.edu*

Member-at-Large

**Michael Graham**

*Moss Landing Marine Labs*

*Moss Landing, CA 95039*

*mgraham@mlml.calstate.edu*

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## 97<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MEETING NOVEMBER 10 – 13, 2016 IN MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

MEETING INFORMATION

This is a milestone year for the Society, as our annual meeting will celebrate the **100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Western Society of Naturalists!** The annual meeting will be held November 10–13, 2016 at the **Hyatt Regency Monterey Hotel & Spa in Monterey, California.** Our local host will be **Mike Graham (MLML).**

We currently plan to begin the meeting on Thursday afternoon, Nov. 10<sup>th</sup>, with a student organized workshop and student mixer. On Friday, Nov. 11<sup>th</sup>, we will feature the Student Symposium in the morning, followed by contributed paper sessions. By popular demand, **a special Attitude Adjustment Hour (AAH) will be held Friday evening at the Monterey Bay Aquarium!** On the morning of Saturday Nov. 12<sup>th</sup>, there will be plenary talks organized by **President Jay Stachowicz**, followed by contributed paper sessions. Saturday night will feature a WSN dinner, the Presidential address, and a special **Undersea Gala** of entertainment sponsored by the student committee! On Sunday, Nov. 13<sup>th</sup>, we will start the morning with a breakfast and the Poster Session, followed by more contributed paper sessions. The meeting will wrap up on Sunday mid to late afternoon with a **special plenary speaker.** Note that to accommodate a large meeting in Monterey, many posters, talks, and other events will be scheduled on Sunday. **Please plan to stay through Sunday afternoon.** As we approach the conference, we will provide more details regarding the schedule on the WSN website.

All workshops, symposia, and contributed paper and poster sessions will be held in the meeting rooms of the Hyatt Regency Hotel. For driving directions and general hotel information, visit

(<http://monterey.hyatt.com/en/hotel/home.html>). The hotel offers WSN attendees free parking, complimentary wireless connection in the hotel rooms, complimentary tennis court time, and many other amenities. We have arranged for room rates of \$199/night for a standard King or double room with 1–2 occupants, \$224/night for 3 occupants, and \$249/night for 4 occupants per room. **These rates will apply until October 1, 2016.** We urge all members to stay in the Hyatt Regency Hotel so that the Society can fulfill its room commitment, which will allow us to remain financially solvent. 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 Hyatt Regency Hotel. In recent years, the reserved block of rooms has sold very quickly and we anticipate that the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of WSN will make for a very well attended meeting. Also, please note that our annual meeting will be held the same weekend as the Big Sur Half Marathon on Monterey Bay, so finding lodging in the area may be challenging. A special WSN reservations link for the Hyatt Regency can be found on the WSN website and is copied here: <https://aws.passkey.com/event/14511857/owner/4475/home>

WSN has an **updated website** (with thanks to Haley Carter, Brittany Jellison, and Erin Satterthwaite!), which can be found at <http://www.wsn-online.org/>. Later in the summer, the webpage will have links to online registration and abstract submission 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 and 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, 2016. **Abstracts will be accepted through September 29, 2016** and posted subsequently on the WSN website along with a meeting schedule. Given that the abstract deadline is only 6 weeks before the meeting, **please be aware that WSN is unable to accept any late abstracts (sorry, no exceptions).**

The size of the annual meeting in 2015 was one for the record books, with 285 contributed papers and 138 posters! The 2016 meeting in Monterey is likely to be even larger. Although continued growth of the Society is welcome and exciting, the current meeting format is unable to accommodate an increase in the number of oral presentations. Therefore, WSN strongly encourages its members to only present findings from mature projects that are in their later stages or are completed. **If you only have preliminary data, please consider waiting to present at a later WSN meeting.** WSN asks that major advisors continue to review and approve all student abstracts, talks, and posters to assure the appropriateness and high quality of the work presented.

### **CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR WSN AWARDS**

WSN invites nominations for the **Naturalist of the Year Award** and the **Lifetime Achievement Award**. For details regarding these awards, past winners, and how to nominate candidates, please follow these links:

**Naturalist of the Year Award** (<http://www.wsn-online.org/about-wsn/naturalist-of-the-year/>)

**Lifetime Achievement Award** (<http://www.wsn-online.org/about-wsn/lifetime-achievement-award/>)

Please submit your nominations no later than July 1, 2016.

### **WSN BUSINESS**

As usual, the WSN Student Committee is seeking items to include in this year's silent auction and auction. Money raised from these events is used to fund student travel. Previously donated

items have included books or monographs, art work, clothing, items of historical interest 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 for the WSN student committee in general, please e-mail **Erin Satterthwaite** ([evsatterthwaite@ucdavis.edu](mailto:evsatterthwaite@ucdavis.edu)), chair of the WSN student committee.

### **RECAP OF THE 96<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MEETING IN SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA**

The 96<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Western Society of Naturalists was held November 5–8, 2015 at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Sacramento in Sacramento, CA. The meeting was a huge success, with approximately **677 registered attendees**. This was the 4<sup>th</sup> consecutive annual meeting with attendance of ~600 or more people, reflecting exciting growth of the Society.

Taking advantage of the location in a state capitol, several components of the annual meeting highlighted “**Marine Science Informing Management**” and showcased opportunities for the work of WSN members to aid decision makers. On Thursday, the successful **Student Workshop** focused on “Linking science and policy: Practical skills for early career scientists.” The **Student Symposium** on Friday morning featured 4 speakers who each provided insights into “Critical issues and innovative approaches in marine policy along the Northeast Pacific.” With the help of our local host (**California Ocean Science Trust**), the Secretariat also added a new component to the annual meeting by organizing four **Special Topics Sessions** of contributed talks (focused on **Evaluating Marine Protected Areas; Long-term Monitoring for Long-term Change; Broadening Participation in Research and Monitoring; and Human Dimensions**). These Special Topic Sessions were very well attended and this year’s meeting in Monterey will offer some contributed talk sessions organized around other special topics.

On Saturday morning, the **Presidential Symposium** provided a change of pace as **President Gretchen Hofmann** assembled six former students of Bruce Menge (OSU) to address “Global Change Ecology”, while paying tribute to their illustrious mentor.

On Sunday at noon, **Steve Gaines** (UC Santa Barbara) brought the meeting to a close with an inspiring plenary address on “Moving from defining problems to driving environmental solutions.” Steve challenged us to focus on novel and effective solutions to pressing environmental problems by building interdisciplinary teams and embracing imperfections in our science. Following the plenary talk, best student paper and poster awards were announced (see below), and attendees were treated to a “South of the Border” buffet lunch.

In total, there were a whopping **285 contributed papers and 138 posters**, highlighting a broad range of top-notch science. The poster session and AAH were held on Friday night. On Saturday morning, the **Naturalist of the Year award** was presented to **Milton Love** of UCSB. A total of 187 banquet tickets were sold for this event, making this the most attended banquet in at least the last 15 years. During the banquet, President Gretchen Hofmann entertained the audience with recent anecdotes and videos from the Antarctic ice. Thomas Bell (UCSB) and members of the student committee paid tribute to Rafe Sagarin by taking bets on a recreation of the **Nenana Ice Classic**. The WSN Auction was presided over by auctioneers Sean Anderson and Mark Steele, who helped raise money to support WSN students. Thanks and bragging rights go to **CSU Northridge** for their winning bid on the prized “tequila and trophy” at \$3,500. Overall, the auction and donations by members raised **\$10,300 for student travel**.

We are grateful to **California Sea Grant** for providing a \$5,000 grant to President Gretchen Hofmann to support the workshop and symposia events. Many thanks to our local host, **Haley Carter** and other members of the **California Ocean Science Trust** for their help with organizing the meeting. Special thanks go to the **WSN 2015 Student Committee (Bobby San Miguel,**

**Jenn Burt, Thomas Bell, Brittany Jellison, Erin Satterthwaite, and Angela Zepp**). We are also grateful to twenty UC Davis student volunteers who assisted with meeting preparations and staffing, especially **Brittany Jellison, Chris Kwan, Jason Sadowski, Eric Satterthwaite, and Matt Whalen** for their many hours spent organizing websites, registration, and abstracts before the meeting. The efforts and enthusiasm of all of these students made the Sacramento meeting a memorable success!

### **ELECTIONS, NOMINATIONS, AND OTHER SOCIETY BUSINESS**

A number of decisions were made at the 2015 business meeting. Unapproved minutes of that meeting will soon be posted on the WSN website, but highlights included:

- **Jenn Caselle** (UC Santa Barbara) was nominated and unanimously elected President-Elect.
- The **98<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting** will be held in the **Pasadena** area in November 2017. The local hosts will be **UCSB** and **CSU Northridge**.
- The new chair of the WSN Student Committee is **Erin Satterthwaite** (UC Davis). Other continuing members of the Student Committee include: **Brittany Jellison** (UC Davis) and **Angela Zepp** (MLML), who are joined by three new students who were elected to serve: **Robert Dunn** (SDSU/ UC Davis), **Breck McCollum** (UMass Boston), and **Mallory Rice** (UCSB).

### **STUDENT PAPER AND POSTER AWARDS**

From the student papers presented at the 96th Annual Meeting, awards for Best Student Paper were given in four categories: (1) Observational Ecology, (2) Organismal and Population Biology, (3) Community and Ecosystem Ecology, and (4) Applied Ecology. The category of Observational Ecology is a new annual best paper award presented in memory of Rafe Sagarin (<http://www.wsn-online.org/sagarin-award/>). For posters, WSN also presented a Best Student Poster Award, and a Best Undergraduate Student Poster Award.

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 135 presentations and 72 posters in record time! Special thanks also to the ~70 members who volunteered to serve as judges.

As always, it was a very challenging task for the judges to select winners from the huge number of excellent papers and posters. Here are the winners and those receiving honorable mention in each category:

#### **BEST GRADUATE STUDENT POSTERS**

##### **Winner:**

- Elizabeth Cerny-Chipman (Oregon State University), "Whelk predators consume fewer prey in acidified water"

##### **Honorable Mention:**

- Joshua Manning (California State University Northridge), "Effect of ocean acidification and warming on three crustose coralline algae species found on the reefs of Moorea, French Polynesia"

## **BEST UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT POSTERS**

### **Winner:**

- Julia Bingham (Oregon State University), “Sensitive barnacles: Quantifying life history processes of *Pollicipes polymerus* to inform sustainable harvest management”

### **Honorable Mention:**

- Nina Finley (Whitman College), “Is ocean acidification melting sea stars? The effect of lowered pH and wasting disease on the health of four Puget Sound species”

## **BEST STUDENT PAPERS**

### **OBSERVATIONAL ECOLOGY (Rafe Sagarin Award)**

#### **Winner:**

- Stephanie Benseman (California State University Northridge), “The secret life of baby giants: the recruitment of the endangered giant sea bass”

### **ORGANISMAL/POPULATION BIOLOGY**

#### **Winner:**

- Hayley Cameron (Monash University), “Why do larger mothers produce larger offspring? A test of classic theory”

#### **Honorable Mention:**

- Hannah Nelson (California State University Northridge), “Allometry and integration constrain Caribbean octocorals morphology”

### **COMMUNITY/ECOSYSTEM ECOLOGY**

#### **Winner:**

- Arie Spyksma (The University of Auckland), “Direct and indirect effects of predators on sea urchin behaviour and morphology: Implications for kelp forest trophic cascades”

#### **Honorable Mention:**

- Jenn Burt (Simon Fraser University), “Sea urchin abundance and predator-avoidance behaviour regulate kelp consumption in high latitude temperate reefs”

### **APPLIED ECOLOGY/CONSERVATION BIOLOGY (Mia Tegner Award)**

#### **Winner:**

- Olivia Rhoades (Bodega Marine Laboratory, University of California Davis), “Feed or flee: Impacts of fishing and diving on fish foraging and ecological function across marine reserves”

#### **Honorable Mention:**

- Michael Esgro (Institute for Applied Marine Ecology, CSU Monterey Bay), “Danger zone: Role of a military restricted area in protection of demersal fish and invertebrate communities at San Clemente Island”

## **TRAVEL AWARDS**

Travel awards totaling **\$10,300** were given to 87 students who presented at the 2015 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.

### **RAFE SAGARIN FUND FOR INNOVATIVE ECOLOGY**

Since the tragic loss of Rafe Sagarin in May 2015, there have been many thoughtful discussions about ways to honor Rafe and his unique approach to science and life. A group of Rafe's friends and colleagues gathered to continue these discussions at the annual meeting in Sacramento. **There was broad enthusiasm for the idea of establishing a memorial fund in Rafe's name to support fellowships for early career scientists conducting creative research in ecology.**

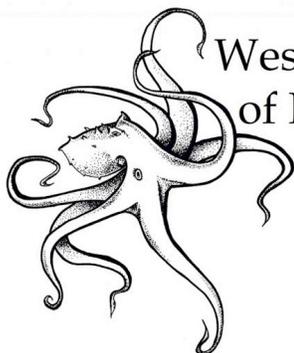
To explore a possible memorial fund, a steering committee was formed composed of Ben Halpern (Chair), Andy Brooks, Steve Gaines, Moose O'Donnell, Eric Sanford, and Kim Selkoe. The steering committee is pleased to announce that the new fund has now been established. In the near future, we will reach out to you with more details about the fellowship program, including an invitation to donate to the fund. **We anticipate that the first call for student proposals will be posted this summer.** A committee of WSN members will review the applications, and the winner(s) will be announced at the annual meeting in Monterey. Overall, we hope that this fund will build on Rafe's legacy by supporting graduate students who are addressing ecological and/or societal questions through observational approaches applied in novel, creative, and (last but not least) fun ways.

### **STATE OF THE SOCIETY AND MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL REMINDER**

The membership in WSN continues to grow. Because the Society now operates exclusively by e-mail, it is 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: [www.wsn-online.org/](http://www.wsn-online.org/)

Please note 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.

Thank you for supporting WSN and we hope to see you at the upcoming meeting in November to celebrate our 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in Monterey, California!



Western Society  
of Naturalists

