

Western Society of Naturalists

~ 2017 ~

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98TH ANNUAL MEETING NOVEMBER 16 – 19, 2017 IN PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

MEETING INFORMATION

WSN announces the **98th Annual Meeting of the Western Society of Naturalists!** The annual meeting will be held November 16-19, 2017 at the **Hilton Pasadena Hotel, 168 South Los Robles Ave., Pasadena, CA.** Our local host will be **Casey terHorst** from Cal State Northridge. Pasadena is an historic suburb of Los Angeles that is home to Cal Tech, the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, the Rose Parade, and museums and historic landmarks. The hotel is in Old Town Pasadena, which features great bars with craft cocktails and local breweries, and really good restaurants with well-known chefs and local vegan food.

The meeting will begin on Thursday afternoon, Nov. 16th, with a student organized workshop and student mixer. On Friday, Nov. 17th, we will feature the Student Symposium in the morning, followed by contributed paper sessions. By popular demand, **the Attitude Adjustment Hour (AAH) will be held Friday evening. This year will provide a new opportunity for students to interact with faculty and each other.** On the morning of Saturday Nov. 18th, there will be plenary talks organized by **President Jenn Caselle**, followed by contributed paper sessions. Saturday night will feature a WSN dinner, the Presidential address, and entertainment sponsored by the student committee! On Sunday, Nov. 19th, we will start the morning with a breakfast followed by the Poster Sessions just as we did for the Monterey meeting. The meeting will wrap up early Sunday afternoon following a **special plenary speaker.** As we approach the conference, we will provide more specific 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 Hilton Pasadena Hotel. For driving directions and general hotel information, visit: <http://www3.hilton.com/en/hotels/california/hilton-pasadena-PASPHHF/maps-directions/index.html>.

The hotel offers WSN attendees complimentary wireless connection in the hotel rooms, a pool and hot tub, an exercise room, and many other amenities. Parking during the day is \$10 and \$18 for overnight. We have arranged for room rates of \$179/night for a standard single or double room, \$189/night for a triple, and \$199 for a quad. **These rates will apply until October 16, 2017.** We urge all members to stay in the Hilton Pasadena 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 Hilton Pasadena Hotel. In recent years, the reserved block of rooms has sold very quickly and we anticipate that the meeting will be well attended. A special WSN reservations link for the Hilton Pasadena Hotel can be found on the WSN website and is copied here (this links to a secure URL): http://www.hilton.com/en/hi/groups/personalized/P/PASPHHF-WSN-20171116/index.ihtml?WT.mc_id=POG

WSN has an **updated website** (with thanks to Gabriel Ng, Aaron Ninokawa and Katie DuBois), 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. If you have an opportunity that would be appropriate for distribution via the WSN social media accounts (fellowships, small grants, student opportunities, etc.), please send them to Breck McCollum (breckmcc@gmail.com) and Robert Dunn (rpdudd@ucdavis.edu).

CALL FOR PAPERS/POSTERS

We will open the WSN website for online submission of abstracts for contributed papers and posters beginning August 1, 2017. **Abstracts will be accepted through October 2, 2017** 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 2016 was one for the record books, with 312 contributed papers and 199 posters! 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 a poster or 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, 2017.

WSN BUSINESS

As usual, the WSN Student Committee is seeking items to include in this year's silent auction and live auction. Money raised from these events is used to fund student travel. Previously donated items have included books, artwork, 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 **Robert Dunn** (rpdudd@ucdavis.edu), chair of the WSN student committee, or Kristen Elsmore, Gala and Auction coordinator (kelsmore@ucdavis.edu).

WSN 2017 Logo and Art Competition

Hello WSN! It's time to start thinking about designing a logo for WSN 2017 in Pasadena. Submit your designs to atninokawa@ucdavis.edu for a chance to go down in the (WSN) history books as the logo design master and win free apparel. Please also submit your best WSN-appropriate artwork (photography, drawings, etc). Winners will also be displayed on a limited release of WSN merchandise and showcased during the Undersea Gala.

RECAP OF THE 97TH ANNUAL MEETING: THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF WSN

The 97th meeting of the Western Society of Naturalists was held November 10–13, 2016 at the Hyatt Regency Monterey Hotel & Spa in Monterey, California. The meeting celebrated the 100th Anniversary of the Society and was a tremendous success, with approximately **938 registered attendees!** This was a very well attended meeting with a 38% increase in attendance relative to the 2015 meeting in Sacramento. In total, there were **312 contributed papers and 199 posters**, an impressive 21% increase in the number of presentations relative to the 2015 meeting. The presentations highlighted a broad range of top-notch science.

The successful **Student Workshop** kicked off the meeting on Thursday night. The workshop focused on “Story art for science communication” and presented storytelling strategies with help from Pixar Animation Studios.

The **Student Symposium** on Friday morning featured four invited speakers who each provided insights into “Communicating the value of natural history through exploration and discovery.” The Secretariat also continued a new component of the annual meeting by sponsoring **Special Topics Sessions** of contributed talks on Friday afternoon, which this year focused on **Top-Down Control (in honor of Bob Paine); Seascape Genetics; Coralline Algae of the Northeast Pacific; Evaluating Marine Protected Areas; and Conservation Technologies.**

To help celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the Society, the **Friday night AAH returned to the Monterey Bay Aquarium** for a memorable night of fun and socializing. Many thanks to our local host **Mike Graham (MLML)** and the Monterey Bay Aquarium for making this special event possible.

On Saturday morning, **Jay Stachowicz** presided over the **Presidential Symposium**, which addressed “The future of natural history: the role and relevance of natural history in the 21st century.” Four invited plenary speakers presented their perspectives. The speakers subsequently chaired Special Topic Sessions of contributed talks related to **Biogeographic Ecology; Climate Change and Phenology; Genetic and Genomic Approaches to Ecology; and Microbial and Disease Ecology.**

Also on Saturday morning, the **Naturalist of the Year** was awarded to **Jackie Sones** of Bodega Marine Reserve who shared her insights, beautiful photographs, and Natural History Heroes buttons with the audience. The **Lifetime Achievement Award** was presented to **Mike Foster** of Moss Landing Marine Laboratories. As WSN historian, Mike also gave a short presentation to summarize the 100-year history of the Society.

To encourage broader attendance at this year's Saturday night dinner, the Secretariat replaced the traditional banquet dinner with a buffet dinner. A total of **610 buffet tickets** were sold for this event –more than 3x the number who attended the Saturday night banquet at the 2015 meeting! After dinner, **Jay Stachowicz** presented his **Presidential Address**, which revealed the results of his survey of the WSN membership to establish the 100 Most Influential Papers. The WSN Auction was presided over by auctioneers Sarah Gravem and Will White, who helped raise money to support WSN students. Thanks and bragging rights go to **Cal Poly SLO** for their winning bid on the prized “tequila and trophy” at **\$3,000**. Overall, the silent and live auction and donations by members raised a total of **\$12,590 for student travel**. Following the live auction, entertainment continued with the **Undersea Gala** organized by the Student Committee. Highlights included live music by the band “**Captain Napkin and the Napkin Boys**” including WSN members **Henry Carson, Ben Miner, and Jeb Byers**.

The **poster session** was held this year in a new time slot – on Sunday morning along with a **WSN brunch**. This new scheduling contributed to a fantastic poster session with lots of lively discussion. The Sunday poster session was very well received by WSN members and this format will likely continue for the 2017 meeting.

On Sunday afternoon, **Jim Estes** (UC Santa Cruz) brought the meeting to a close with an inspiring plenary address on “Adventures in nature and pathways to ecological understanding.” Jim recounted his career path and celebrated the value of natural history. He especially encouraged early-career scientists to spend time in nature, think outside the box, and to embrace serendipitous events. Following the plenary talk, Jim signed copies of his new book “*Serendipity: An Ecologist's Quest to Understand Nature*” (UC Press, 2016).

Big Thanks! We are very grateful to **California Sea Grant** for providing a \$5,000 grant to President Jay Stachowicz to support the workshop and symposia events. Thanks again to our local host, **Mike Graham**, for all of his assistance. Special thanks go to the **2016 WSN Student Committee (Erin Satterthwaite, Brittany Jellison, Robert Dunn, Breck McCollum, Mallory Rice, and Angela Zepp)** for their critical contributions to the meeting. We are also grateful to twenty-two UC Davis student volunteers who assisted with meeting preparations and staffing, especially **Jason Sadowski, Matt Whalen, Nicole Kollars, Aaron Ninokawa, and Kristen Elsmore** for their many hours spent before the meeting on websites, registration, and abstracts. The efforts and enthusiasm of all of these students made the Monterey meeting a memorable success!

ELECTIONS, NOMINATIONS, AND OTHER SOCIETY BUSINESS

A number of decisions were made at the 2016 business meeting. Highlights included:

- **Ginny Eckert** (University of Alaska Fairbanks) was nominated and unanimously elected President-Elect.
- The **99th Annual Meeting** will return to **Tacoma, WA** in November 2018. The local host will be **Bonnie Becker at UW Tacoma**.

- The new chair of the WSN Student Committee is **Robert Dunn** (SDSU/ UC Davis). Other continuing members of the Student Committee include: **Mallory Rice** (UCSB) and **Breck McCollum** (UMass Boston), who are joined by three new students who were elected to serve: **Kristen Elsmore** (UC Davis), **Aaron Ninokawa** (UC Davis), and **June Shrestha** (MLML).
- Members discussed ideas regarding how to accommodate the increased number of contributed talks and posters associated with growth of the Society. It was decided that the Secretariat should poll the membership to gather data regarding how members view various options for changes to the meeting format and schedule. The Secretariat sent out an electronic survey in December 2016 and received responses from >280 WSN members. Thanks for your valuable feedback, which is being considered as we plan the upcoming annual meeting in Pasadena.

STUDENT PAPER AND POSTER AWARDS

From the student papers presented at the 2016 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 was established in 2015 as a new annual best paper award presented in memory of Rafe Sagarin (<http://www.wsn-online.org/sagarin-award/>). For posters, WSN presented a Best Student Poster Award, and a Best Undergraduate Student Poster Award.

Many thanks to **Tonya Huff, Christine Whitcraft, and Danielle Zacherl**, 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 142 presentations and 106 posters in record time! Special thanks also to the ~90 members who volunteered to serve as judges.

As always, it was a challenging task 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 STUDENT PAPERS

OBSERVATIONAL ECOLOGY (Rafe Sagarin Award)

Winner:

- Dana Morton (UC Santa Barbara) "Parasite diversity and niche overlap of common kelp forest surfperches (Embiotocidae)"

Honorable Mention:

- Madison Heard (CSU Monterey Bay) "Effects of climate change on the larval development of *Haliotis rufescens*"

ORGANISMAL/POPULATION BIOLOGY

Winner:

- Joseph Curtis (University of South Florida) "Resource use of invasive lionfish and a native predator compared using stable isotope analysis of eye lenses"

Honorable Mention:

- Sarah Merolla (California State University Northridge) "Effects of water flow on calcification for different morphologies of coralline algae"

COMMUNITY/ECOSYSTEM ECOLOGY

Winner:

- Jenn Burt (Simon Fraser University) “Ecological transitions in sea otter-induced regime shifts”

Honorable Mention:

- Joe Morton (Duke University) “Parasites enhance ecosystem functions and resistance to drought in a coastal ecosystem”
- Elan Portner (Stanford University) “Variability in the trophic ecology of a mesopelagic predatory fish across the North Pacific subtropical gyre”

APPLIED ECOLOGY/CONSERVATION BIOLOGY (Mia Tegner Award)

Winner:

- Danielle Frechette (University of Quebec) “Everyone in the pool: Thermal refuge use by Atlantic salmon during in-river migration”

Honorable Mention:

- Ana Sophia Guerra (UC Santa Barbara) “The worth of giants: putting a price on an endangered fish”

BEST GRADUATE STUDENT POSTER

Winner:

- Emily Resner (California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo) “Effect of oxygen limiting tidal conditions on hemolymph parameters in the giant acorn barnacle, *Balanus nubilus*”

Honorable Mention:

- Kaitlyn Lowder (Scripps Institution of Oceanography) “Assessment of ocean acidification and warming on the growth, calcification, and biophotonics of a California grass shrimp”

BEST UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT POSTER

Winner:

- Tanya Prinzing (Simon Fraser University) “Age distributions of a long lived kelp reveal the timing of algal recovery following sea otter range expansion”

Honorable Mention:

- Rachel Cuizon (California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo) “Commercial topical sunscreens are detrimental to development of the purple sea urchin, *Strongylocentrotus purpuratus*”
- Erica Chang (Williams College) “Fluctuating temperatures and thermal stress in mussels: Time-dependent responses in respiration, gene expression and growth”

TRAVEL AWARDS

Travel awards totaling **\$12,590** were given to 96 students who presented at the 2016 meeting. Payments of WSN Student Travel Awards are made two to three months following the annual meeting via PayPal. Students are encouraged to apply for these awards in order to attend future meetings, although we regret that we are not able to cover the majority of a student's expenses or fund all who apply. 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 register online for the annual meeting. Details regarding how to apply for student travel awards are available on the WSN website.

RAFE SAGARIN FUND FOR INNOVATIVE ECOLOGY

A new fund was established in 2016 in Rafe Sagarin's name to support research fellowships for early-career scientists conducting creative research in ecology. The memorial fund was established through the work of a Steering Committee composed of **Ben Halpern (Chair), Kim Selkoe, Moose O'Donnell, Eric Sanford, Andy Brooks, and Steve Gaines**. The first call for proposals was posted in Summer 2016, and the first two fellowship winners were announced at the Monterey meeting. Congratulations to **Andrea Haberkern** (CSU Northridge) for her proposal entitled, "Spider Form and Function: Foraging Guild, Morphology and Natural History," and **Amy Collins** (UC Davis) for her proposal entitled, "Determining Drivers of Decline in Tanzanian Mangrove Forests." **A new call for research proposals will be posted by Summer 2017.**

Proposals were reviewed in 2016 by a **Selection Committee** consisting of **Danielle Zacherl (Chair), Moose O'Donnell, and Eric Sanford**. **Ben Miner** was nominated and approved to serve as the newest member of the Selection Committee and he will replace outgoing member Eric Sanford.

The Rafe Sagarin Fund received \$2,475 in generous donations made during online registration for the Monterey meeting. An additional \$1,730 was raised through the sales of raffle tickets at the meeting. The raffle winner received a first-edition copy of Steinbeck and Rickett's book *Sea of Cortez* (1941), donated by Jackie Sones and Eric Sanford. Thank you to all who donated to support this fund.

Additional donations are needed to support future fellowship awards. Please consider making a tax-deductible donation. All donations (large or small) are welcomed! For more information about the fund (including instructions on how to submit a research proposal or how to donate to the fund), please visit the website for the **Rafe Sagarin Fund for Innovative Ecology** at: <http://www.rafeinnovativeecologyfund.org/>. We hope that this new fund will build on Rafe's legacy by supporting WSN students and post-docs who are addressing ecological and/or societal questions through observational approaches applied in novel and creative ways.

STATE OF THE SOCIETY AND MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL REMINDER

The membership in WSN continues to grow and the state of the Society is stronger than ever. The Society operates exclusively by e-mail, so please contact the Secretariat with changes to your e-mail address and other contact information so that we can update our database. If you would like to join this list, please also email us.

Please note that when you renew your membership, you now have THREE ways to make a donation in support of the Society: (1) a donation to the Student Travel/Dave Montgomery Endowment Fund, (2) a donation to the general fund to help support the day-to-day costs of running the Society, and (3) a donation to the Rafe Sagarin Fund for Innovative Ecology.

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



Logo credit: Andrea Dingeldein

