



Société canadienne
d'écologie et d'évolution

Canadian Society of
Ecology and Evolution

Newsletter # 6

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Edited by *Marco Festa-Bianchet*

President's Message Volunteer for Science

It is Victoria Day. My hotel window overlooks Halifax's Public Gardens. Tulips and rhododendrons bloom in carefully weeded beds. Verdant lawns sparkle through early-morning mist. Legions of new leaves unfurl on winter's bare-boned branches, and promise renewal on stately centurions from Victoria's reign. An iron palisade garrisons horticultural splendour from the bustle of downtown.

I join small eclectic flocks of Haligonians strolling garden paths. I read the commemorative plaques. Each tells a tale of volunteers who support and help care for the gardens. Without them, Halifax would be different and far less attractive.

I am reminded that science too relies on volunteers. Volunteers to establish and maintain scientific societies, organize meetings, oversee journals, review manuscripts, and

adjudicate grants and scholarships. We saw science volunteerism at its best in Halifax. Sina Adl and Tamara Romanuk guided us through our largest meeting yet. Student volunteers registered guests, maintained computers and projectors, downloaded files, introduced speakers, invited questions, and kept us all on time. Behind the scenes, scores of judges and other volunteers laboured to make this one of our best meetings yet. Each session was packed with superb science, excellent discussion, and friendly camaraderie amongst our extended family of ecologists and evolutionary biologists. Please join with me in extending our Society's sincere gratitude to all who made the Halifax meeting not only possible, but a huge success.

Even so, our science garden does not bloom as vibrantly as it could. Many who walk our paths, and especially those who allocate funds, fail to appreciate the vital roles of volunteers. Governments and university administrators too frequently introduce policy that erodes science.

They prune indiscriminately by reducing our funding, targeting our research, eliminating administrative and logistic supports, and sponsoring fewer “excellent” scientists. Their rules are clear. Work harder. Join the stampede. Run wildly to keep pace with the herd. Network with fashionable colleagues. Seek only the most competitive students. Push them through quickly. Publish the minimum over and over again. Demand more from volunteers; more journals, more manuscripts, more grant applications.

What kind of science will emerge? Will the paths of science, like those in the Public Gardens, guide us through a carefully planned landscape filled with beauty, diversity, and excitement? Or will they blindly cross one another through a haphazard, overgrown maze choked with half-thought ideas and partly analyzed data?

We would do well to remember that much of the work of science is done by volunteers, and that only those volunteers can protect science from the short-sighted politics and hubris of our time. We can, if we choose, submit fewer, comprehensive, and novel manuscripts. We can publish only those papers, and fund only those applications, with potential to change our world view. We can reward research that emphasizes originality over fashion, quality over quantity, content over style, curiosity over administrative or financial priority, and discovery and invention over repetition.

Much of the responsibility for such an agenda lies in our roles as scholars, supervisors, referees, editors, and authors of science. As scholars, we should demand nothing less than original research followed by thorough, concise, and provocative manuscripts. Supervisors should instill in their students the honour and responsibilities of professional science. Referees should complete their tasks on time and to the highest professional

standard. And editorial boards and granting agencies should insist that authors contribute effectively to peer review.

The rules are not difficult. Review three times as many manuscripts and grant applications as you submit. Begin each review with a brief paragraph outlining the “big” question. Summarize how the research either contributes to the answer or falls short of expectations. Do so in a way that lets the author know you understand the manuscript or application. If you didn’t understand the material, say so. Critique the science, and never the authors. Evaluate each manuscript and application on its own merit. Be firm and decisive, but use polite and constructive language. Highlight key points requiring attention. Provide explicit examples of improved text and logic, as well as references to key papers that the authors may have missed. Praise the authors when it is appropriate to do so. When you’re finished ask, “is this the kind of review that would improve my science?” If not, revise the review until it is. When you’re done, and when the journal allows it, take ownership and responsibility by signing your name.

Similarly, when you join a scientific society, embrace it. Serve on council and on committees. Do the same when asked to serve on NSERC and other granting agencies. While you serve, demand clear, creative, original science. Ensure that the review and adjudication process is just and independent. If you serve on an editorial board, exact fair, comprehensive, constructive reviews. Accept only bold, creative science that puts ideas at risk and dares to be wrong. Our collective future depends on it.

Douglas Morris

Results of elections to CSEE Council

This year, elections were held electronically using Survey Monkey. The process went smoothly, both during the nomination phase and the election. Our Secretary deleted all records that would allow tracing votes to specific members. Most position attracted several candidates, a strong sign of willingness to participate in the affairs of the society. The newly elected Council members are:

- Vice-president/President – Jeffrey Hutchings (Dalhousie University)
- Treasurer – Steeve Côté (U. Laval)
- Student/post-doc member of council – Kathryn Morton (Memorial U.)
- Councilor – Arne Mooers (Simon Fraser University)
- Councilor – Nadia Aubin-Horth (Université de Montréal)
- Councilor – Stephen Heard (University of New Brunswick)

GSC 18, 2009 NSERC Discovery grant competition

This year marked a major change in the procedure used to evaluate applications. There was a broad consensus among GSC members that the merit of a proposal should be assessed (and rewarded) without reference to past funding level. A candidate that was well-funded in the past should provide a proposal commensurate to this past success, but a newcomer could also write an outstanding proposal, even though he or she was not yet established. We sought to reward performance as evidenced by the application, rather than by past funding history.

The new procedure rates candidates on a 6-point scale (exceptional to insufficient) for the same three criteria that have been used in the past (merit of the proposal, excellence of the researcher, and training of HQP). GSC members then vote and the sum of median

ranks for each criterion provides a global score. This score is then funded according to an agreed-upon distribution of grant amounts: each score is linked to a “funding bin”. The last stage involves perceived cost of research, which can be rated as low, normal or high. The vast majority of funded applications fell within the “normal” funding bin. Low-cost research generally is based on simulation modelling projects whereas high cost research may involve field work in remote locations or high lab costs. Hence, for a given rating on each of the three criteria, applicants receive slightly higher grants if their research program is deemed costly.

Implementing this change required major work by NSERC staff. During an information meeting for GSC chairs in December 2008, NSERC officials fielded a lot of questions. Putting this new procedure in practice was relatively painless after a few trial runs. Incidentally, there was a large turnover in GSC-18’s membership in 2009 and, thus, the need for “adaptation” to the new procedure was limited to a few returning members. A minor change in procedure was the reduction from 6 to 5 voting members per application. This reduction did not appear to have negative effects on the quality of assessments.

The new procedure reduces the potential for “inertia” in grant allocation, a perceived weakness of the past procedure. On the other hand, the risk of large swings in amounts allocated between successive granting periods increases. That being said, NSERC staff reviewed all decisions made by the GSC to correct particular anomalies and to ensure that the binning system did not contradict the principle of supporting excellence.

CSEE members are invited to consult GSC-18’s annual report for more details. See www.ecoevo.ca/common/GSC18_2009.pdf
Marc-André Villard and Ellie Prepas, Co-Chairs, GSC 18

CSEE 2009 meeting, Halifax, May 14-17

The joint meeting of the CSEE and the Canadian Genetics Society attracted 460 delegates to Halifax. Of these, 16 identified themselves as part of the GSC and 269 as new CSEE members. There were 239 students. The meeting offered a wide range of activities, including:

- 234 contributed talks
- 109 posters
- 4 symposia (31 additional talks)
- 3 plenaries
- 4 receptions (opening, poster, grad student/post-doc social, pier 21)
- 4 workshops (Symposium for Women entering Ecology and Evolution Today; SPECIES; Teaching dossier workshop; Students in Ecology Jobs Workshop)
- 2 NSERC presentations (one for students/post-docs, one to entire CSEE/GSC)
- Tables with material from 7 publishers: Ideas in Ecology and Evolution, Cambridge, Roberts and Company, Oxford University Press Publishers, NRC, Pearson, Wiley-Blackwell and one radio tracking company (Holohil)

An amazing group of volunteers helped make the meeting run smoothly. Thanks to everyone who pitched in to help make this conference a success! See you next year in Québec.

Tamara Romanuk, LOC

First recipient of CSEE President's Award: Charles J. Krebs, University of British Columbia

Charles J. Krebs, an internationally renowned ecologist, is Professor Emeritus at the University of British Columbia. Charles Krebs began his research working on population cycles in 1959, and he remains at

the forefront of population and community ecology of terrestrial vertebrates globally, conducting research on population dynamics of small mammals in northern Canada, the US and Australia. His work on the ecology of northern vertebrates has had an enormous influence on our understanding of boreal forest ecology, climate change on northern ecosystems and ecological methodology. Professor Krebs has written 7 books on ecology and statistical analysis methods, and over 240 papers, many published in top science and ecological journals such as Science, PNAS, Oikos and Trends in Ecology and Evolution. He recently completed the 6th edition of his text book, Ecology, a standard text for ecology courses worldwide. Since his retirement in 2001, Charles continues to work at UBC, and teaches ecology in Developing Nations (Philippines). Dr. Krebs received about 20 national and international awards and distinctions, including the Eminent Ecologist Award from the Ecological Society of America (ESA, 2002), The President's Medal from the University of Helsinki, The C. Hart Merriam from the American Society of Mammalogists, and the Lifetime recognition of research excellence (Hanoi). He received the Publication of the Year Award from The Wildlife Society for his paper on Kluane Boreal Forest field experiments. Professor Krebs is a fellow of the Norwegian Academy of Sciences, the Australian Academy of Science (2002), and the Royal Society of Canada (1979). He received an honorary degree at the University of Lund, Sweden. The Scandinavian and Australian governments seek his advice on the ecology and management of terrestrial ecosystems and he has served on several high profile international panels including the Cooperative Research Centre for Vertebrate Biocontrol (Canberra). Charles Krebs is an effective spokesman and gives many lectures across the world on population and community ecology. He is highly deserving of the CSEE President's Award, as he has

helped popularize Ecology in Canada as Big Science worthy of large scale research grants. His research achievements represent the caliber of critical thinking in science that CSEE strives for.



Charley Krebs receives the first CSEE President's award from Doug Morris.

SWEET Symposium

The SWEET symposium in Halifax addressed issues encountered by women entering careers in Ecology and Evolution. Sixty-five women from a range of career stages (Masters, PhD students and Postdoctoral fellows) participated in the event and twenty-four universities and organizations were represented. There was a diversity of speakers from different career stages, career paths, and family models. The twelve presentations included issues facing women on the tenure track, becoming a full professor, building a career with family, dual hiring policies, setting up a successful research lab, writing a successful research grant, NSERC funding for women, and careers for women in federal research institutes. Many aspects to this conference will help the participants grow as scientists. Leadership was a major theme and many women emphasized the need for alternative leadership models. There were also practical

examples of the challenges of setting up a research lab, hiring students and getting grants. The symposium had many inspirational moments demonstrated by the long successful careers of the senior professors who discussed the importance of mentors as motivators. Each participant left the symposium with a unique experience that will influence their choices and directions for the future.

Katy Hind and Bronwyn Rayfield

The SPECIES Workshop

The CSEE celebrated Darwin year with a special workshop at the Halifax meeting designed to promote the SPECIES Project (Stability of Populations Evolving in Changing Integrated Ecological Systems – see the January 2009 Bulletin). Approximately 40 CSEE members attended the session. The workshop aimed to identify strategic research themes that can unite Canadian ecologists and evolutionary biologists, and help them achieve the increased funding necessary to maintain Canada's reputation as a world leader in the broad fields of ecology and evolutionary biology. President Doug Morris introduced the workshop with an overview of three significant problems that need to be addressed by Canadian ecologists and evolutionary biologists: Global warming, diminishing biodiversity, and static funding. Local Organizing Chair Sina Adl then facilitated discussion around four questions.

Q1: What are Canada's strategic research interests in ecology and evolutionary biology?

Q2: Which research themes unite ecology and evolutionary biology?

Q3: What strategy will link the answers to Q1 and Q2 with funding options?

Q4: Who are the volunteers to move this forward?

Much of the discussion centered on the need for a proper inventory of Canadian biodiversity mimicking the detailed maps that have been developed through forest and geological surveys. It was not clear what sort of spin-off research programs might be generated by this effort, what the respective roles of government and universities might be, and whether government and industry would recognize the value of the program. Governments appear to typically support “big” science not because they are committed to advancing knowledge, but because the research often produces substantial indirect economic benefits. One of the challenges to the SPECIES Project is thus to overcome the perspective by many that ecologists cost governments and industry money. Members agreed that the SPECIES Project requires more careful and reasoned consideration that can only be provided in an extended workshop through the Canadian Institute of Ecology and Evolution. The Institute’s Director, Art Weis, agreed to invite top Canadian scientists to the workshop, and to report its progress and recommendations to the CSEE.

Doug Morris

CSEE/SCEE 2009 Student Presentation Awards Report

The student presentation competition was exceptionally well supported with a total of 332 students entering the CSEE/SCEE student presentation award competition in 2009, including 222 talks and 110 posters. A total of 46 judges (faculty and postdocs) volunteered to evaluate the student presentations. Dr. Jeremy Lundholm from St. Mary’s University organized the competition and allocated judges to the talks/posters, based on disciplinary preferences and to avoid conflicts. Most student presentations received 2 or 3 evaluations. The high standard of

presentations made the selection very challenging. First prize winners received \$500, second \$300, and third \$200 and a congratulatory letter from the Chair of the Awards and Recognition Committee.

Oral Presentations:

First Prize:

Jessica MacKay Ward, Biology, McGill University

Email: jessica.ward@mail.mcgill.ca

Supervisor: Anthony Ricciardi

Title of Presentation: A meta-analytical test of the ecological naïveté hypothesis.

Tie for Second Prize:

Shawn Leroux, Dept of Biology, McGill Univ,

Email: shawn.leroux@mail.mcgill.ca

Supervisor: Michel Loreau

Title of Presentation: Consumer-mediated recycling and cascading trophic interactions.

And **Richard Vogt**, Dept Sciences Biologiques, UQAM, Email: richvogt@gmail.com

Supervisor: Bea Beisner

Title of Presentation: Investigating the interaction between functional diversity and eutrophication in modulating phytoplankton community productivity.

Third Prize:

Magdalena Bartowska, Dept Biology, Dalhousie,

Email: mbartkow@dal.ca

Supervisor: Mark O Johnston

Title of Presentation: Quantitative genetic variation in populations of *Amsinckia spectabilis* that differ in rate of self-fertilization.

Honourable Mention

Danna Gifford, Dept of Biology, University of

Ottawa. Email: dgifford@uottawa.ca

Supervisor: Rees Kassen

Title of Presentation: The effect of wild-type fitness on the properties of adaptive walks in *Aspergillus nidulans*.

Poster Presentations:

Ties for First prize

Leanna Lachowsky, Biol Sciences, Univ of Calgary,

Email: leanna.lachowsky@gmail.com

Supervisor: Mary Reid

Title of Presentation: What's sex got to do with it?
Differential mortality during development as a cause
of female-biased sex ratios of mountain pine beetles

And **Claude Leroux**, Biologie, Université Laval,

Email: claudel.1@ulaval.ca

Supervisor: Ladd Johnson

Title of Presentation: Potential differences in the
growth rate of a marine snail across the intertidal
zone: potential for local adaptation?

Second Prize

Russell Dinnage, Ecology & Evol Biol, Univ. of
Toronto, Email: russell.dinnage@utoronto.ca

Supervisor : Peter Abrams

Title of Presentation: Herbivory is negatively
associated with phylogenetic diversity at a
community scale

Third Prize

Lucia Kwan, Dept of Biology, Univ Ottawa,

Email: luciakwan@uottawa.ca

Supervisor: Howard D. Rundle

Title of Presentation: Adaptation to desiccation
resistance fails to generate pre- and postmating
isolation in *Drosophila melanogaster*

The Awards and Recognition Committee and the
CSEE/SCEE executive wish to thank all students
for your participation in and contributions to the
2009 CSEE/SCEE conference.

Kathy Martin, Chair

CSEE/SCEE Awards and Recognition Committee

CSEE 2010 Fifth Annual Meeting, Québec City

It is with great pleasure that we invite you to
attend the CSEE fifth annual meeting, to be
held from 9th-12th May 2010, in Québec City.
Suffice it to say that 400-year-old Québec
City is of unequalled historical and cultural
heritage value, with its architecture,
pedestrian streets and fortifications, unique in
North America. The meeting will be hosted
by Université Laval, approximately 10km

from « Vieux Québec », which is very easily
accessible by public transport. In keeping
with what is becoming a standard for CSEE,
we propose a full three-day meeting from
Monday 10th through Wednesday 12th, with
an opening evening cocktail on Sunday the 9th.
Other social activities will include a banquet
on a cruise ship on the majestic St. Lawrence
River and an optional field trip to Cap-
Tourmente, a major snow goose staging area,
on the 13th. The meeting will feature a mix of
plenary talks, symposia, targeted workshops,
contributed talk and poster sessions. The
following CSEE members compose the LOC:
Nadia Aubin-Horth, Louis Bernatchez,
Stéphane Boudreau, Nathalie Brodeur
(student member), Steeve Côté, Christian
Landry, Julie Turgeon all from Université
Laval, and Spencer Barrett (CSEE council
representative). Mark these dates in your
agenda now! We look forward to welcoming
you in Québec in 2010. *À bientôt...*

Louis Bernatchez

CSEE 2011 Sixth Annual Meeting, Banff

It is a great pleasure to invite you to attend the
sixth annual CSEE meeting on May 12th-15th
2011 in Banff, AB, a unique mountain
community located in Canada's first National
Park and UNESCO World Heritage Site. The
meeting, officially hosted by the University of
Calgary, will be held at the Banff Centre, a
globally respected education institution and
conference facility located just minutes from
town in the Rocky Mountains. The Banff
Centre offers unparalleled facilities with over
400 guest rooms, 60 exceptional meeting
spaces, lecture theatres, and auditoriums to
accommodate our members. We propose a
three full-day meeting from Friday the 13th
through Sunday the 15th, with an opening
reception on Thursday evening on the 12th.
We are planning plenary talks, symposia,
workshops, and general talk and poster

sessions. Because our meeting is being held in a National Park, we will maintain an emphasis on the fact that we are gathering in an environmentally protected area. The following CSEE members will compose the LOC: Sean Rogers, Jeff Hutchings (CSEE representative), Jana Vamosi, Mary Reid, Jessica Theodor, Heather Proctor and Brian Kopach. Be sure to keep these dates open in your calendar so you can be a part of what promises to be a very inspirational and memorable CSEE meeting. We look forward to hosting your visit to Banff in 2011!

Sean Rogers

2013: A very special year for the British Ecological Society

The Canadian Society for Ecology and Evolution accepted a kind invitation from the British Ecological Society (BES) to be an Academic Sponsor for the 2013 INTECOL Congress (*entitled 'Ecology – Into the Next 100 Years' to be held in London between 18 – 23 August*) which the BES is hosting as part of its centenary celebration. Our sponsorship, which involves no financial commitment, provides us with an opportunity to publicize our Society in the promotional materials for the meeting, to submit a proposal for a society symposium, and to arrange free exhibition and meeting space for our members.

The BES (www.britishecologicalsociety.org/) is the world's oldest ecological society, publishes some of the discipline's most important and highly rated journals, and has approximately 4,000 members worldwide. The CSEE Council congratulates the BES on its unparalleled record, is honoured that the CSEE will participate in the centennial celebration, and hopes that many of our members will be able to attend this memorable event. Stay tuned for more information on the congress, and on our participation, as plans develop.

Douglas Morris

CSEE supports student scientific meetings

Over the last few months, three scientific conferences organized mostly by and for ecology and evolution students in Canada have received financial support from the CSEE. Here are their brief summaries, with thanks to Ann McKellar, Krista Zala and Roland Vergilino for providing text:

Queen's University hosted a very successful *Ontario Ecology and Ethology Colloquium* (OEEC) from April 26th to 28th with over 80 registrants, including 56 oral and 18 poster presenters. Dr. Christina Caruso (University of Guelph); Dr. Lauren Chapman (McGill) and Dr. Paul Martin (Queen's) presented thrilling plenary talks on topics ranging from biodiversity and conservation in African fish to latitudinal trends in patterns of evolution.

For three days, budding field scientists, from undergraduates to postdocs, shared their work and ideas at the 30th annual *Pacific Ecology and Evolution Conference*, 20-22 February 2009 at Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre. The conference packed 36 talks and half as many posters into a day of sessions. Most of the 100 participants were from universities, but a few hailed from environmental consulting groups, Environment Canada and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. Students came from all over the west, including some northwest American universities.

La biologie dans tous ses états is a group of graduate students from the Université du Québec à Rimouski (UQAR). It promotes research through scientific communication and public outreach. Its 2009 meeting on March 12-14 included an evening debate on "Darwin : l'Évolution d'hier à demain". Cyrille Barette (Université Laval), Daniel Baril (editorial writer for *Forum*, the newspaper of the Université de Montréal), Kamal Bouarab (Université de Sherbrooke)

and France Dufresne (UQAR) debated this topic with an audience of 300 UQAR and cégep students, in addition to members of the public. Over the following two days, evolutionary ecology was the subject of several student posters and presentations, as well as invited presentations by Jean Bousquet (Université Laval) and Pierre Blier (UQAR). Participants came from several Québec universities.

How do I know if my membership is good for the next year?

Around New Year's day, CSEE sends out membership renewals. If your membership needs to be renewed for the upcoming year, you will receive an email with the header "CSEE membership renewal/renouveler votre adhésion à la SCÉE." If you have a two-year membership that will continue to be valid for the next year, you will receive a different email with the header "CSEE/SCEE," acknowledging that you have already paid for the upcoming year.

Student and post-doc member activities

Workshop:

Our second annual student workshop, on non-academic jobs, was a great success with approximately 100 members attending in Halifax. I would like to thank the local organising committee for helping me plan this event. Our panel members generously gave their time and wisdom, without which this workshop would not have been possible: Don Bowen, Research Scientist, Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), Bedford Institute of Oceanography; Melanie Dionne, Research Scientist, Ministère des ressources naturelles et de la faune du Québec (MRNF); Chris Miller, National Manager of Wilderness Conservation and Climate Change for Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society

(CPAWS); Darren Sleep, Senior Forest Ecologist, Canadian Operations for the National Council for Air and Stream Improvement (NCASI); and Fred Whoriskey, Vice President Research & Environment for the Atlantic Salmon Federation (ASF). I was very humbled by all of the positive feedback I received during and after the workshop. Being a student myself, I share your questions on future job opportunities. I think it is imperative that we be well informed before making a career decision, and so, I would like to thank everyone who attended the last two student workshops, in Vancouver (academic jobs) and Halifax (non-academic jobs), thereby making them a success.

Travel awards:

Twenty student members were awarded a \$500 travel award to come to the Halifax meeting. These awards were based on a random draw. Congratulations to the lucky winners and thanks to all that applied!

New Student/Post-doc councillor

I have been fortunate to have been elected as your representative (2008-2009) and thank you all for the great opportunity you have given me. I am happy to announce that Kathryn (Kes) Morton will be representing you from January 2010 to December 2011. She is very dedicated to the CSEE and I know I'm leaving my position in good hands. I will still be on council from now until December. If you have any questions do not hesitate to email me nathalie-n.brodeur.1@ulaval.ca.

I hope to see many of you again next year at Laval University. A cruise on the Louis Jolliet boat has been planned for the banquet on the St-Lawrence River. Another student workshop will also be offered during the meeting. I wish you all a productive year and see you in Quebec City in May 2010.

Nathalie Brodeur

Update on the CSEE Outreach Committee

The CSEE Outreach committee welcomes two new members, Erika Crispo and Suzanne Grey of McGill University. The committee met in Halifax to discuss future efforts to promote public awareness of ecology and evolution in Canada. Please visit our website, maintained by Rowan Barrett (rbarrett@zoology.ubc.ca), to keep up to date on our most recent efforts. If you are involved in the promotion and education of ecology and evolution of Canada, we would like to hear from you. You can also visit our Facebook page and join in on the discussions about the CSEE and outreach. This group has grown to over 325 members in just a short time and is an excellent forum for expressing your views and suggestions. The Outreach Committee will continue to work for the CSEE to extend the activities and initiatives towards promoting public awareness of ecology and evolution in Canada.

Sean Rogers

Vignettes: basic research in ecology and evolution benefits Canadians

High quality research depends on our ability to obtain funding, which increasingly requires that we actively convince Government that basic research in ecology and evolution benefits Canadians. In conversations with the CSEE executive, the president of NSERC suggested that we provide clear examples of such benefits, which would then aid NSERC in securing additional funding for the Discovery Grants program. To this end, we will produce vignettes highlighting a few key examples. These will be posted on the CSEE website and used for communicating to media and the general public.

As a start to this process, the CSEE council has produced four vignettes on several topics in ecology and evolution:

<http://www.ecoevo.ca/en/vignettes.htm>. We now need more – particularly from a much

broader range of topics in ecology and evolution. We therefore ask you, the CSEE membership, to provide additional vignettes of how research funded by NSERC Discovery Grants has benefited Canadians. Such benefits can be diverse, ranging from direct practical applications to human health and well being (e.g., medicine, agriculture, fisheries) through to biodiversity, conservation, and sustainability (e.g., endangered species, climate change). Our goal is to show how **basic** research in ecology and evolution can have important practical benefits, even if such benefits are not necessarily envisioned at the outset. Many good examples will come from the past, because the benefits of basic research are often apparent only after it has been completed. We are also interested in stories of how basic research funded by NSERC Discovery Grants has contributed to the career development of individuals who now make direct contributions to the benefit of Canadians.

Please send your vignettes, comprising a paragraph or two, and optimally including a photograph or other key illustration, to the Chair of the CSEE Communications Committee (andrew.hendry@mcgill.ca). Remember that you are writing for politicians and the public, rather than fellow scientists.

Andrew Hendry

A journal for CSEE?

Since the beginning of the CSEE, discussions have taken place as to whether or not the society should have its own journal and what such a journal might look like. The CSEE council has discussed this topic several times, but it was only **formally** addressed for the first time at the council meeting this May. We first decided that, under the right circumstances and at the right time, a journal would be something that would benefit the society and its members. We next decided that now was not the right time to proceed

actively toward a society journal. Opinions were divided in the council as to how best to develop this possibility but we universally agreed that more input was needed from the membership.

We therefore encourage your input on whether or not the society should have a journal, what the potential benefits and costs might be, and at what time we should begin to work toward such a journal – if at all. We would also like your input as to what such a journal might look like. Should we affiliate ourselves with an existing journal? Should we start a new journal? Should it focus on primary research, reviews and syntheses, or some combination of both? Should it focus on Canadian research or should it strive to compete internationally? Your input on any and all of these questions should be directed to the Chair of the CSEE Communications Committee (andrew.hendry@mcgill.ca). Council is also considering the possibility of an online survey to poll the membership on this important issue.

Andrew Hendry

CSEE and the CCAC

The CSEE is now a limited-term member of the Canadian Council on Animal Care, the “national peer review agency responsible for setting and maintaining standards for the care and use of animals used in research, teaching and testing throughout Canada”. The CSEE is allowed two three-year terms on the CCAC, and I have been appointed the CSEE representative. My background includes a 3 year stint as Chair of the Animal Care Committee at Laurentian University, as well as involvement with animal care issues since my research career began.

Many members of the CSEE use vertebrates in their research, and so are affected by the CCAC and their local Animal Care Committees. I would like to hear about the challenges that members have had with

respect to animal care issues, their local ACCs, and CCAC guidelines (e.g for wildlife and fish), especially given that members of these committees rarely have experience with vertebrates outside of traditional laboratory models (e.g. mice, rats, rabbits etc). Please contact me (aschulte@hostedde@laurentian.ca) with your comments/questions/concerns.

The CCAC meets twice a year, and the first meeting is in October, 2009. I will be reporting to CSEE Council on the meeting, and will raise any issues that the CSEE membership brings to my attention. In the meantime, you can check out the CCAC at www.ccac.ca.

Albrecht Schulte-Hostedde

CSEE Committee on Biodiversity and Conservation

The CSEE Council established a standing committee on Biodiversity and Conservation, to advise Council on issues of biodiversity and conservation, especially those national and international issues and policies that preserve, or threaten, biodiversity. The Committee will liaise with other international, national, and like-minded organizations, and provide advice to Council and others on the status of biodiversity and Canada’s role in its preservation. Marco Festa-Bianchet, U. de Sherbrooke, is interim Chair until December 2009 and Arne Mooers, Simon Fraser U., will be Chair from January 2010. One of the Committee’s first tasks will be to encourage suggestions and ideas for a Symposium proposal to the meeting of the Society for Conservation Biology in Edmonton on July 3-7, 2010. The CSEE wishes to host a symposium on either a uniquely Canadian conservation problem, or an issue in Conservation Biology where Canadian research is a global leader. If you are interested in participating in this Standing Committee, e-mail M.Festa@Usherbrooke.ca

Marco Festa-Bianchet and Kathy Martin

RESEARCH UPDATES

(Ed. note: this section will report new research initiatives. Please provide short notes on what you are up to – photos are welcomed!)

Migratory caribou in Québec-Labrador



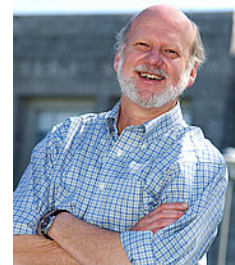
The research program Caribou Ungava will examine population dynamics and space use by migratory caribou of Québec-Labrador in a context of climate change. Collaborating institutions include Université Laval (S. Côté, L. Bernatchez and J.-P. Tremblay), Université de Sherbrooke (M. Festa-Bianchet) and the Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune du Québec (C. Dussault). The first five years (2009-2014) of the research program will be conducted in collaboration with the Ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune du Québec, Hydro-Québec, Xstrata Nickel - Mine Raglan, First Air, Makivik Corporation, Quebec Outfitters Federation, and the Fédération québécoise des chasseurs et pêcheurs through a Collaborative Research and Development Grant from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada. This project is part of the research program of the Arcticnet Network.

Our research program seeks to identify the factors influencing variation in caribou abundance, to improve the management of their populations and to understand the impacts of industrial activities on their ecology. Caribou play a central role in the ecology of the North, where they are at the heart of local culture and economy. In

Québec, sport hunting for caribou generates \$20 million annually in direct revenues. The subsistence harvest is very important for Aboriginal people. The limited knowledge of caribou population dynamics and of the impacts of industrial activities, notably hydroelectric and mining developments, makes the management of these populations problematic. We will document the spatial, demographic and genetic structure of the two herds of migratory caribou of Northern Québec and Labrador, by monitoring cohorts of caribou of known age and analyzing existing data. Our study will determine how caribou and climate affect the vegetation, and document the interactions between industrial activities, climate, habitat productivity and space use by caribou. See www.caribou-ungava.ulaval.ca.

Obituary

Don Thomas, 1953-2009



Don Thomas, Professor of Ecology and Dean of Science at the Université de Sherbrooke, died of a stroke while doing fieldwork in Corsica on May 30, 2009. Don was a great colleague, an outstanding teacher, a motivating mentor, a world-class ecophysiologist, a friend, and a passionate scientist. He wanted science to be based on strong theory and strong data, but also fun. He was a leader in promoting ecological research in Sherbrooke. A foundation has been set up to honor his memory, please see <http://www.usherbrooke.ca/sciences/fonds/fonds-donald-w-thomas/>
Marco Festa-Bianchet

EDITOR'S NOTES

This Newsletter is a vehicle to disseminate news and information to members of the CSEE. I thank all those that contributed to this issue and Méliissa Lieutenant-Gosselin for translations.

I invite all members to provide either short articles, announcements or ideas for what should be in the Bulletin. We are particularly interested in conference announcements and other newsy items. Short summaries of new research initiatives are also welcomed. Submissions can be in either language.

Marco Festa-Bianchet m.festa@Usherbrooke.ca

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