



Société canadienne
d'écologie et d'évolution

Canadian Society of
Ecology and Evolution

NEWSLETTER

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JANUARY 2011

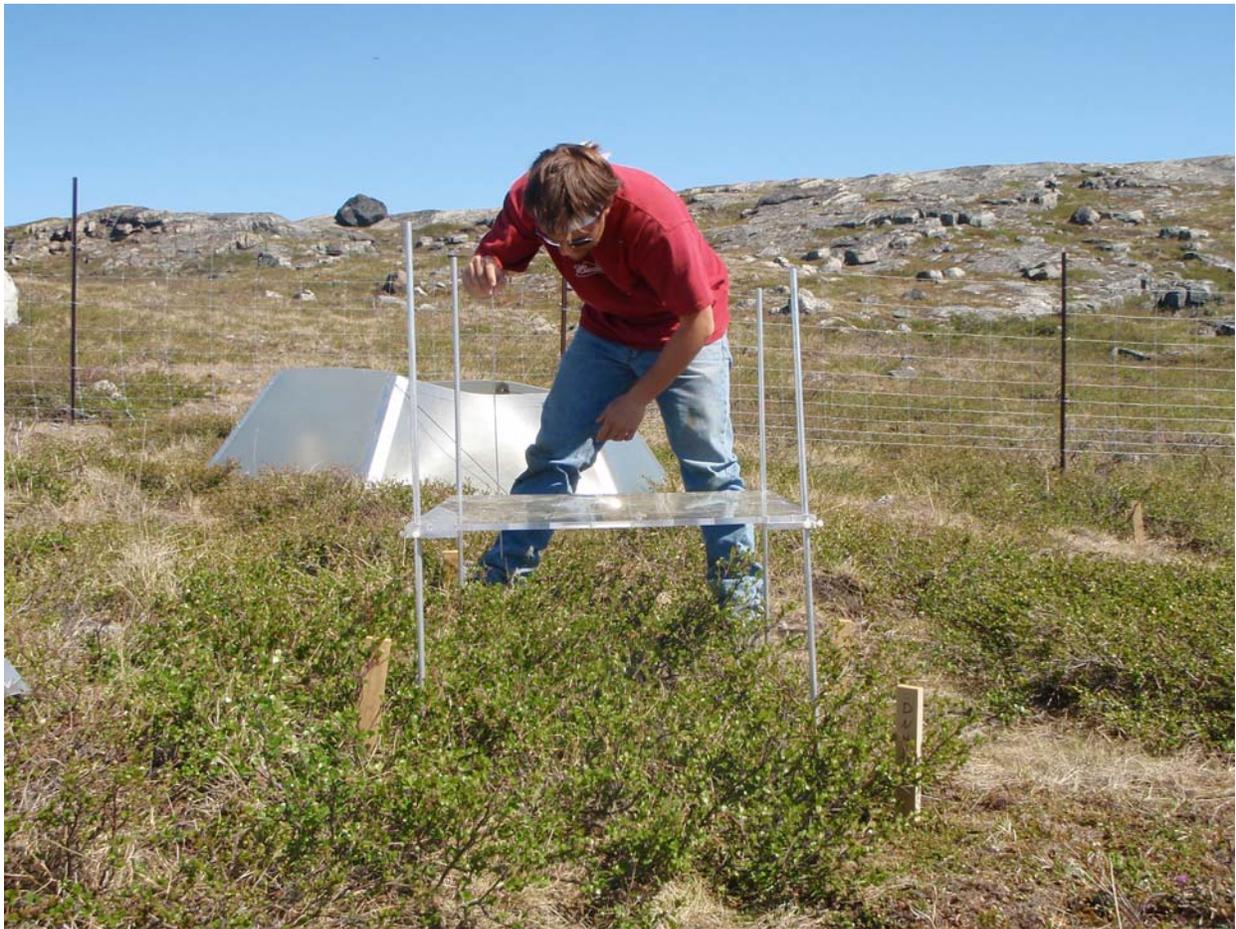


Photo credit: Émilie Champagne

CSEE NEWSLETTER

ISSUE NO. 9 JANUARY 2011

The Newsletter is published twice a year by the Canadian Society of Ecology and Evolution. Its purpose is to disseminate news and information to members of the Society. All members are invited to submit articles, news, reports and announcements of upcoming events. Short summaries of new research initiatives are also welcomed. Submissions can be in either language. Please submit your contribution by email to the Editor.

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Deadlines for contributions

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE MOVING BEYOND OUR 5TH YEAR

On November 19 (2010) the CSSE Council met in Ottawa to discuss the affairs of the society and liason with NSERC officials. This annual meeting serves to review our progress and allows us to plan for the future. It also provides an opportunity for some 'horizon gazing' so we can discuss future goals and consider what the society might look like in the medium term. Our meeting with NSERC involved a free exchange of information and ideas on the main issues that affect our membership, primarily research grants in E&E, the challenges of field research in Canada, and student and post-doctoral training. For their part, NSERC staff gave us sage advice on the realities of funding, given the current economic and political climate, and also updated the Council on the results of the 2010 competition and on new initiatives of relevance to our goals of advancing E&E in Canada. In this newsletter, I provide a summary of some of the main highlights of November's meeting and discuss several new initiatives with respect to biodiversity science and field research.

Much of my last newsletter in June was devoted to considering ways in which CSEE could broaden its membership base to include more biodiversity scientists. It is my firm belief that as a society we have much to gain from including a thriving group of members with expertise in taxonomy, systematics, phylogeny and comparative biology, areas that form the foundation of biodiversity science. We have recently taken several steps that I am hopeful with make our society more attractive to scientists in these areas. Sean Rogers and the program committee of the upcoming CSEE meeting at Banff in May (see <http://www.ecoevo.ca/banff2011/>) have done an excellent job in organizing several invited symposia that should appeal to

students and faculty interested in biodiversity. These include: "*Systematics and Biodiversity* (organized by Heather Proctor); "*Canada's Pollinator Biodiversity and Pollination Services*" (organized by Risa Sargent and Elizabeth Elle) and "*Paleobiodiversity*" (organized by Jessica Theodor). Additional symposia on the genetics of speciation, mountain ecology and population ecology highlight the impressive scope of topics that are covered at our meetings. The spectacular setting of Banff is sure to attract a high attendance. I hope some of you who have communicated to me that attending more than one meeting per summer is a financial constraint will consider Banff as your number one choice in 2011 and make the most of the meeting by taking in some of the hikes and workshops that are planned.

Joint meetings with societies in which systematists are well represented is another way we can be more attractive to the Canadian biodiversity community. Two forthcoming meetings help to serve this goal. In 2012 our meeting in Ottawa will be held jointly with the *Society of Systematic Biologists* (among other societies) and in 2014 we will meet with the *Canadian Society of Zoologists* in Montreal. These meetings should provide excellent opportunities for organizing symposia and workshops that serve the biodiversity community. Elsewhere in this Bulletin there is a call for symposium topics for the Ottawa meeting where CSEE will sponsor two symposia. These should provide an excellent forum for showcasing the strength of E&E research in Canada to a much broader international audience. A model of how this can work was nicely illustrated last summer when Arne Mooers and colleagues representing our Biodiversity & Conservation Committee, and with funding

from CSEE and Environment Canada, helped to organize a 15-speaker symposium “*Conserving Canada’s Ecosystems: Threats and Prospects*” at the 2010 *International Congress of Conservation Biology* (July 2-7, Edmonton). The symposium was a great success and very well attended. I encourage members of CSEE to think about submitting proposals for our upcoming meetings. Despite the announcements we make each year encouraging submissions for symposia and CIEE workshops the number actually submitted so far has been disappointingly low. I hope in future that individuals will show more initiative and take these opportunities, which form an important component of society activities and will help the growth of a healthy and vibrant E&E community in Canada.

As we come to the end of this ‘*International Year of Biodiversity*’ several new initiatives are underway that have the potential to invigorate taxonomy and systematics in Canada, with implications for our society. In November a report “*Canadian Taxonomy: Exploring Biodiversity, Creating Opportunity*” written by an expert panel on biodiversity science commissioned by the Council of Canadian Academies (<http://www.scienceadvice.ca/en.aspx>) was released and received considerable media attention. The panel was chaired by Thomas Lovejoy and included several CSEE members. The report can be downloaded from the above website and is well worth a read. It will serve as a salutary warning to governments and universities that we ignore investment in biodiversity research and training at our peril. Several of the main conclusions of the CCA report include:

- taxonomy would benefit from integration of morphological approaches with new genetic and computational techniques. This should be a productive synergy and should

not be viewed as a transition from old to new.

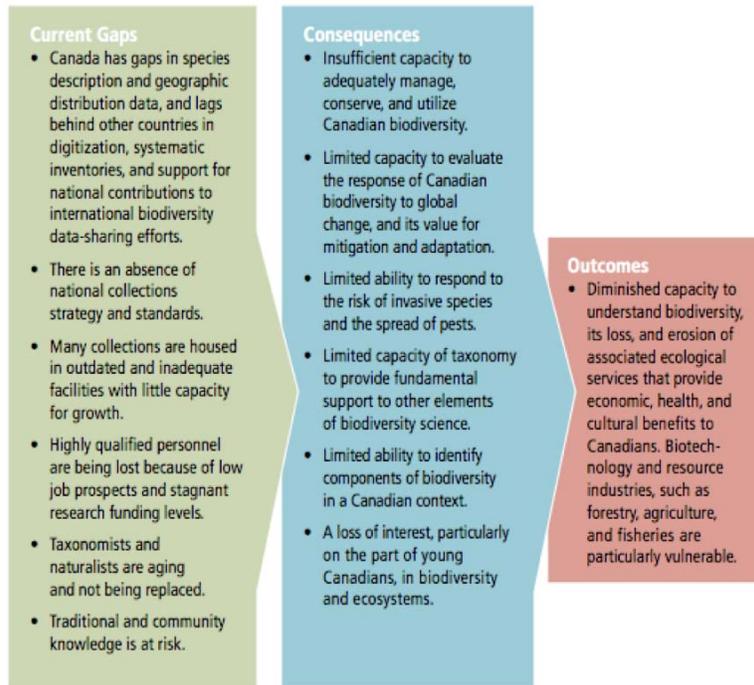
- Canada was once a leader in taxonomy but over the past 30 years its position has slipped. For example, Canada ranked 6th in new species descriptions during the 1980’s but is now 14th.
- Student interest in taxonomy remains high across the country but existing expertise is not being replaced and job prospects for Ph.D. students are currently low.
- Research funding for taxonomy is stagnant and combined with the lack of jobs this will limit our ability to manage biodiversity and lead to lost opportunities in species discovery.
- Although Canada has impressive biodiversity collections (including over 50 million specimens conservatively valued at over 0.25 \$billion) and a strong digital infrastructure, most information is not available on the internet with ~80% of Canada’s online biodiversity information held outside Canada.

CCA Expert Panel Reports are not prescriptive and do not make recommendations. However, they do provide organizations like ours with the ammunition needed to influence policy makers and governments. Our Biodiversity & Conservation Committee is currently discussing how we can best do this. In addition, Rees Kassen on behalf of the CSEE Council has submitted a short brief to the Ministry of Industry titled “*Canada’s Biodiversity Opportunity*” that proposes a Canadian Biodiversity Survey, a large scale national collaboration of universities, industry, governments, aboriginal communities, NGO’s and the public. During the coming year the CSEE Council will consider how we might facilitate a multi-

stakeholder working group to explore the feasibility of this proposal.

A Canadian Biodiversity Survey requires a network of field stations, research centers and natural history museums. One exciting small step towards this goal was proposed at a workshop sponsored by the *Canadian*

Institute of Ecology and Evolution (CIEE) at the Koffler Scientific Reserve (KSR) this November. As many of you are aware, CIEE sponsors synergy workshops and thematic programs to explore basic ecological and evolutionary principles and their applications for solving Canada’s environmental problems.



(Council of Canadian Academies)

Gaps in Canadian taxonomy, the consequences of those gaps and potential long-term consequences.

Fig. 2 in *Canadian Taxonomy: Exploring Biodiversity, Creating Opportunity. The Expert Panel on Biodiversity Science*. Council of Canadian Academies

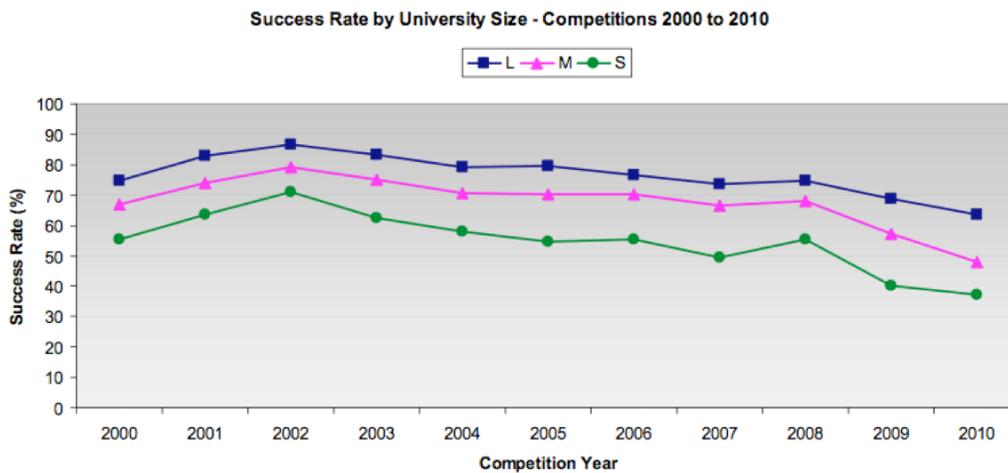
The November workshop “*The Future of Scientific Research Stations in Canada*”, organized by Albrecht Schulte-Hostedde, Frank Phelan and Mark Forbes had among its goals to explore options and opportunities for networking among Canada’s field stations, as well as producing a white paper that could inform provincial and federal governments on the value of field stations and the need for sustained funding. Directors from 18 field stations in Canada, along with representatives from LTER and NEON programs in the USA,

met for three days and from this meeting came a proposal for a *Canadian Field Research Network (CFRNet)*, a national-scale integrated platform for coordinated field research to meet the challenges of global environmental change. This is an encouraging development and illustrates the value of CIEE sponsored workshops and programs. As I write, a second meeting at KSR is underway on “*Predicting Ecological Change: Multi-Scale Analysis of Plankton Diversity and Dynamics*” organized by Jeremy Fox and

colleagues. The goal of this thematic research program will be to produce a framework for predicting how climate change will influence the diversity and function of plankton communities. CIEE is beginning to have an important influence on E&E in Canada through its programs and workshops and next year may be an opportune time to use this forum to explore how a Canadian Biodiversity Survey might become a reality. It also may be time for faculty from various universities to collaborate on teaching a short summer graduate-level course so that students might benefit from intensive training in an

area of E&E where we have particular expertise.

At our liaison meeting with Isabelle Blain (Vice-President Research and Scholarships) and colleagues at NSERC we emphasized several important issues of concern to our members: 1) many productive scientists, especially at smaller universities, are now without NSERC Discovery Grants because of changing success rates. This problem is illustrated by the figure below, provided by NSERC.



(2) The need for national initiatives in biodiversity science at a time when other countries are forging ahead in these areas; and (3) The increasing difficulties of funding large-scale field research and the general problem of field station funding. NSERC was supportive of the CIEE proposal to establish a Canadian Field Research Network, and indeed in previous liaison meetings had encouraged this type of initiative as an effective means of securing funding. They also pointed out that a new discovery program established in the Federal Budget of 2010 and involving \$8M could provide a means to fund future initiatives in biodiversity. The first 'Discovery Frontiers' funded program involving Northern Earth Systems is underway and it would certainly be worth

considering whether this new source of funds could provide funding opportunities for E&E-based research. We will continue to hammer home to NSERC the importance of the Discovery Grants Program to E&E members and its value to Canadian science. Indeed, at our meeting we suggested that NSERC might attempt to demonstrate to parliamentarians by objective criteria the societal and economic value of the program in an effort to stave off further reductions in the proportion of budget allocated to basic research.

To conclude, I look forward to meeting some of you at our next annual meeting in Banff and I encourage you to engage in the activities of the society. We are a relatively young society in its 5th year, but we have

grown and diversified enormously during this time and now have ~ 900 members. Our successes would not have been possible without committee members and volunteers who have worked tirelessly to get us where we are today. In addition to our annual meetings, we support a wide range of activities including outreach programs, travel grants to students, funding for local meetings and symposia, and awards to both senior and young investigators. In addition, our sister organization CIEE this coming year will run several workshops at Banff on techniques and

analysis in E&E for those interested in broadening their toolkit of research methods. Let's keep this momentum up in 2011 and plan ahead for the Ottawa meeting in 2012 when we will welcome the E&E communities of many countries.

I wish you all a pleasant holiday season and a productive New Year.

Spencer C.H. Barrett
President CSEE

SIXTH ANNUAL CSEE MEETING, BANFF, ALBERTA, MAY 12-15, 2011

The University of Calgary is pleased to host the CSEE/SCEE meetings from May 12-15 2011, at the Banff Centre, in the beautiful mountain town of Banff, Alberta.

Registration and an opening reception/mixer will be held on the evening of Thursday, May 12. The theme of the meeting, “**Canada’s Biodiversity: Past, Present and Future**” is reflected in the tremendous scientific program that will consist of:

- A plenary address by **Dr. Philip Currie** (University of Alberta), Canadian palaeontologist and co-founder of the Royal Tyrrell Museum.
- A plenary address by **Dr. David Schindler** (University of Alberta), the 2011 recipient of the CSEE President’s Award
- A public Outreach lecture by **Dr. Robert Barclay** (University of Calgary) on Canada's bat diversity

Six half-day symposia from May 13-15 will feature over 40 invited speakers representing leaders in the field as well as rising stars from over 30 different institutions from across



Canada and internationally. The topics include:

1. Systematics and Biodiversity (Organizer: Heather Proctor, Sponsored by the Council for Canadian Academies)
2. Mountain Ecology: Climate change and challenges in high-altitude ecosystems (Organizers: Kathy Martin, Isla Myers-Smith, and Brian Starzomski)
3. Canada’s pollinator biodiversity and pollination services (Organizers: Risa Sargent and Elizabeth Elle)
4. The genetics of evolution and species isolation (Organizer: Amanda Moehring)

5. Population Ecology: Evaluating changing Canadian ecosystems (Organizer: Judy Myers, Charley Krebs, and Kim Dawe)
6. Paleobiodiversity (Organizer: Jessica Theodor)

The Canadian Institute of Ecology and Evolution (CIEE), in association with the UBC Biodiversity Research Integrative Training & Education program (BRITE), will be hosting three one-day workshops (9am - 3pm) on May 16th for a nominal fee of \$50 (including lunch). A minimum of 15 will be required to hold the workshop with a maximum of 30 participants in each. Registration will be open to everyone but in the event of oversubscription priority will be given to students and postdocs:

The workshops (and instructors) include:

- * Mathematical Modeling in Ecology and Evolution (Sarah P. Otto)
- * Statistics in R (Dolph Schluter)
- * Phylogenetics in R (Luke Harmon)

For students, on May 13, there will be a traditional lunchtime workshop for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows - contact Kathryn Morton kathryn.smith@utoronto.ca for more information.

NSERC will also be holding a 2 hour workshop on "How to write a successful NSERC PGS scholarship application" on May 15th for students.

Information about the meeting is available at <http://www.ecoevo.ca/banff2011/>

Early registration will be open from January 1 - March 1, 2011. Register early so that we can plan accordingly (and more importantly so you can be sure to reserve accommodations in one of the limited rooms available directly on the Banff Centre campus). Check the website often as more details will be posted as they become available.

We look forward to seeing you in the beautiful Rocky Mountains!

Local Organizing Committee: Sean Rogers (Main Organizer, UofC), Jeff Hutchings (Dalhousie University), Brian Kopach (UofC), Leanna Lachowsky (UofC), Heather Proctor (UofA), Mary Reid (UofC), Kathreen Ruckstuhl (UofC), Jana Vamosi (UofC).

about the logo: Marrella splendens, an arthropod and the most common fossil in the Burgess Shale, against the backdrop of Mt. Rundle in the Rockies (designed by Rob Furr, UofC)



CALL FOR SYMPOSIA PROPOSALS FOR 2012 JOINT MEETING IN OTTAWA

The 2012 CSEE meeting will be held in Ottawa (7-12 July) in conjunction with four other professional scientific societies of ecologists, evolutionary biologists and systematic biologists: European Society for Evolutionary Biology, Society for the Study of Evolution, American Society of Naturalists, and Society of Systematic Biologists. The joint meeting represents an excellent opportunity to showcase Canadian research in the areas represented by the societies hosting the meeting.

The CSEE Council is planning on submitting proposals for two symposia for the 2012 meeting. In this regard, Council wishes to solicit proposals from the CSEE membership. Please adhere to the following criteria when submitting your proposal (which should be

sent to the Vice-President, Jeff Hutchings; jeff.hutchings@dal.ca):

1. Title
2. Brief description of symposium (150-200 words)
3. List of six(6) suggested speakers with tentative presentation titles and affiliations (to deliver talks of 30 minutes each)
4. Indicate whether the speakers have confirmed their participation

Council will identify the symposium proposals to be submitted to the organizers of the 2012 meeting at the CSEE Council Meeting during the May meeting in Banff.

Jeff Hutchings
Vice-President CSEE

ELECTIONS FOR CSEE COUNCIL

Elections will be held in March to fill the following positions on the CSEE Council:

- 1) Vice President (2012-2013) to become President (2014-2015)
- 2) Secretary (2012-2015)
- 3) Three Regular Council Members (2012-2015)
- 4) One Student/Post-doctoral Council Member (2012-2013)

All positions run for the calendar years mentioned and will begin January 1, 2012. The slate of candidates was developed by the Nominating Committee, following a general call for nominations in the last Bulletin #8.

Biographies of all candidates are now available at <http://www.ecoevo.ca/en/elections.htm>

Elections will be held electronically. In March, you will receive an email with a link that can be used once (and only once) to vote for your preferred candidates. Instructions will also be made available on the CSEE website (<http://www.ecoevo.ca>). We encourage all society members to vote. Results of the election will be announced at the General Business Meeting at the Banff meeting and posted on the CSEE website.

Sarah Otto
Secretary CSEE

SUPPORT FOR REGIONAL CONFERENCES

The CSEE will consider requests for financial support from the organizers of regional Canadian conferences in ecology and evolution. Requests must include a statement on how the funds will be used and how the conference meets the broad mandate of the CSEE. Meetings that receive financial support must promote the Society on all promotional material associated with the conference and submit a brief report to the CSEE following the meeting. In the past year, the CSEE supported two graduate-student focused meetings. The first was the 31st annual Pacific Ecology and Evolution Conference,

held March 5-7 at the Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre in British Columbia. The second was the Ontario Ecology & Ethology Colloquium, held July 14-16 at Laurentian University in Sudbury, Ontario. If you have a relevant regional meeting and are seeking sponsorship from CSEE, contact Andrew Hendry (andrew.hendry@mcgill.ca) for details.

Andrew Hendry
CSEE council member

CSEE OUTREACH - ACTIVELY PROMOTING ECOLOGY AND EVOLUTION IN CANADA

Who we are

The Outreach Committee was formed in 2009 to uphold the CSEE's purpose of "raising public awareness about the importance of ecology and evolution in Canadian society". The Committee advises the Executive and Council on issues regarding the promotion of public awareness in Ecology and Evolution in Canada. Your Outreach Committee includes Sean Rogers (University of Calgary), Fanie Pelletier (Sherbrooke University), Crispin Jordan (University of British Columbia), Erika Crispo (McGill University) and Suzanne Gray (McGill University).

What we do

Our objective is to organize and facilitate events associated with public outreach.

Kids Outreach

Reaching out to kids is one of the best ways to educate the public about ecology and evolution in Canada. Our "ecology and evolution for kids" event was a big success at the 2010 meeting and was run entirely by volunteer members, including undergraduate

students, graduate students and faculty. The Outreach committee is now in the phase of planning a 2011 event for Banff, including a "Know Your Bees Workshop". If you are planning to attend the Banff meeting and would like to help make our 2011 ecology and evolution for kids event a success, please contact us.

Public lecture

The 2011 public lecture will be given by Dr. Robert Barclay (University of Calgary). Robert has many years of experience researching bat behavior and ecology and during this time has made a number of remarkable discoveries on the roosting and foraging behaviour, thermoregulation, reproduction and life histories of bats. Robert is well known locally and internationally for his research on the effects of environmental disturbance and urbanization on bats, particularly the causes and consequences of migratory-bat fatalities at wind energy facilities, and the impact of urbanization on prairie bats. The public lecture; "Canada's Bat Diversity: past, present, and threatened

future”, will be held on Friday, May 13, at 6pm in the Kinnear Building at the Banff Centre.

Highlighting Canadian research made possible by the NSERC Discovery program

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 our conversations with NSERC they have repeatedly suggested that one of the best ways the CSEE can help is to provide clear examples of how ecology and evolution research, made possible by the NSERC Discovery program, benefits Canadians.

To this end, the CSEE is actively developing vignettes of how research funded by the NSERC Discovery program has and continues to benefit 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.

The CSEE Outreach committee coordinates the publication of vignettes on our website www.ecoevo.ca/en/vignettes.htm. We are interested in stories of how basic research funded by the NSERC Discovery Program contributed to the career development of individuals who now make direct contributions to the benefit of Canadians. We are actively reviewing ideas for new vignettes

and highly encourage all of our members to submit your ideas or vignettes for review (ideas/vignettes can be submitted to srogers@ucalgary.ca). Remember that you are writing for the public rather than fellow scientists. Please also note that your contributions may be edited or rewritten as necessary.

Call for Outreach proposals

In efforts to expand Outreach initiatives, the CSEE will now consider Outreach proposals from our members. Applications for funding will be considered for initiatives that promote education in ecology, evolution or conservation, public outreach seminars, public exhibitions, etc. Proposals should include the title, location, a brief description of the activity, expected participation and/or size of audience, proposed date and the names of the main organizers. A brief justification of the funding requested should also be included. Preference will be given for innovative proposals that fulfill a clear need for outreach and have the potential for renewal or could be reused in other areas of Canada. Please email your proposals to Sean Rogers (srogers@ucalgary.ca)

Interested in CSEE Outreach Committee?

We are looking for enthusiastic individuals interested in raising public awareness about the importance of ecology and evolution in Canadian society. If you are interested in joining the committee please contact Sean Rogers (srogers@ucalgary.ca). Up to five committee members from the general membership of the Society can serve a two-year renewable term on the Committee. We have a limited number of spots that will become available in May 2011.

*Sean Rogers
CSEE council member*

STUDENT AND POST-DOCTORAL MEMBERS

Voting: Nominations are now closed for the 2011 elections, and you will soon be contacted to vote for the 2012-2013 student and post doctoral candidate. Don't forget to vote!

Career pipeline update: I have been working to review the career pipeline of young CSEE scientists, and the project is well underway. Have your voice heard - email me to get involved.

Student Travel Awards to Banff: The time has come to start making your travel plans for the 2011 annual general meeting, in Banff! Again this year the society is please to offer 30 student travel awards worth \$500 each for student members to attend the annual meeting (unfortunately post-docs are not eligible). Winners are expected to present at the meeting via either a poster or a talk. The awards will be drawn at random from among all eligible students who have registered and checked the box indicating eligibility for the travel award by February 24, 2011. Graduate students who are members of CSEE and not within 500km driving distance of Banff are eligible to apply.

Presentations & Prizes: This year, to assist students in preparing a great poster or oral presentation, the awards committee has posted the judging criteria in advance on the CSEE website (<http://www.ecoevo.ca/en/meeting.htm>). The Society will also grant separate oral and poster prizes, which will be awarded to student members with the three best oral

(\$500, \$300, \$200) and three best poster presentations (\$500, \$300, \$200). In addition, New Phytologist will sponsor a prize for a student (details coming soon).

Third Annual Student and Post-Doctoral Lunch-Workshop: A workshop on networking will be taking place at the Banff meeting, scheduled for Friday May 13, at lunchtime. Food and beverages will be provided to participants who register on the CSEE 2011 meeting registration form. Previous workshops including non-academic jobs and speaking to the media have been very successful, so I hope to see you there.

Activities during the Banff meeting: The following activities are planned at this year's meeting and more are to come. Please see details by clicking on the Social Events link on the CSEE 2011 meeting website.

May 12: Opening mixer

May 13: Student workshop, Pub night (tentative)

May 14: Movie competition (tentative)

May 15: NSERC information session for students, Banquet Gala

Stay in touch!

Got a great idea? Complaints? Questions? Please send me an email about absolutely anything to kathryn.smith@utoronto.ca

Kathryn (Kes) Morton

CSEE student and post-doctoral council representative

FIRST CSEE EARLY CAREER AWARD

Award Description: The CSEE Early Career Awards recognize outstanding accomplishments and promising future research potential in ecology and evolution by scientists early in their career. Awards will be given to two candidates every 2 years. They consist of a 10-year membership to CSEE/SCEE, \$500 cash award, travel support to the annual meeting of CSEE/SCEE and an invitation to give a keynote lecture.

Eligibility: Applicants must have received their doctorate in the five years preceding the application deadline and must be active researchers in the field of ecology and evolutionary biology. Candidates need to be Canadian citizens, or landed immigrants, or have completed their PhD at a Canadian University, or be currently working at a Canadian University.

Application/Nomination Procedures: Candidates may apply directly or may be nominated. **Established researchers are encouraged to nominate outstanding young scientists.** Nominations **must** contain **all** of the following supporting materials: (1) a curriculum vitae, (2) a summary of research accomplishments (maximum 2 pages), (3) a 2-page statement of research plans for the next 5 years, (4) three recent publications, (5) names and addresses of 3 referees (including the nominating

scientist where applicable) who will provide supporting letters. The 3 letters of reference should be sent separately from the candidate's nomination package. All nomination materials and reference letters must be sent as PDF e-mail attachments.

Time lines: The deadline for receipt of all materials for the inaugural Early Career Awards including letters of reference is 15 November 2011 (Candidates must have received their PhD degree on or after 15 November 2006; time since PhD degree can be extended by 1 yr for each child if the applicant was the primary care giver and took official parental leave). Subsequent deadlines will be on the same date in odd-numbered years. Materials for the 2011 competition must be sent to the CSEE/SCEE Chair of the Awards & Recognition Committee, Steve Heard sheard@unb.ca

The recipients will be notified of the award in mid-January 2012 and they will receive their award at the following annual meeting.

Steve Heard
CSEE council member

Did you know?

NSERC's Peer review manual for research grant programs is available on their web site. This is a must read for scientists preparing an application.
http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/Reviewers-Examineurs/IntroPRManual-IntroManuelEP_eng.asp

CALL FOR SYMPOSIUM PROPOSALS FOR THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY MEETING OF THE BRITISH ECOLOGICAL SOCIETY AND 11TH CONGRESS OF INTECOL, AUGUST 2013, LONDON, UK

In celebration of its centenary, the British Ecological Society (BES) will be hosting the 11th Congress of INTECOL (International Association of Ecology). The meeting is entitled *Ecology: Into the Next 100 Years* and will be held in London on 18-23 August 2013.

The Call for Symposia for this meeting, to which the CSEE has been invited to participate, is scheduled for March 2011. This meeting, following on from the joint meeting with four other societies in Ottawa 2012, represents an excellent opportunity to showcase Canadian research on the international stage in the areas of scientific endeavour represented by the CSEE.

The CSEE Council is planning on submitting a single proposal for a CSEE symposium for the 2013 meeting of the BES. In this regard, Council wishes to solicit proposal suggestions from the CSEE membership. Please adhere to

the following criteria when submitting your proposal, which should be sent to the Vice-President, Jeff Hutchings; jeff.hutchings@dal.ca

1. Title
2. Brief description of symposium (150-200 words)
3. List of six (6) suggested speakers with tentative presentation titles and affiliations (to deliver talks of 30 minutes each)
4. Indicate whether the speakers have confirmed (even if tentatively) their participation

Council will identify the symposium proposal to be submitted to the organizers of the 2013 meeting at the CSEE Council Meeting during the May meeting in Banff.

Jeff Hutchings
Vice-President CSEE

NEWS FROM NSERC

Research Performance Indicators

As reported in the October "Contact Newsletter"

http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Media-Media/Contact-Contact_eng.asp

the Minister of Industry has asked the Council of Canadian Academies to conduct an assessment of performance indicators for basic research. This report, due in 2012, will provide NSERC with an evaluation of international indicators of research performance that can be used to compare areas of research in science and engineering. The indicators will then be available to NSERC to assist in determining appropriate

future budget allocations across evaluation groups. It is not anticipated that there will be any major changes in allocations before the assessment is completed. We can thus anticipate that success rates and average funding levels within EG 1503 (Evolution and Ecology) will remain more-or-less static for the foreseeable future.

Discovery Grant Statistics in Evolution and Ecology

The table below illustrates that the number of applicant for NSERC Discovery Grants appears to have stabilized within EG 1503. Although success rates were near historical

values in 2009 (reflecting, in part, differences in the proportions of different categories of applicants), we can anticipate continued pressures on limited funds for Discovery Research in Evolution and Ecology. Full

statistics for the 2010 competition can be accessed at http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/doc/Professors-Professeurs/2010-DG-CompStat_e.pdf;

Recent Discovery Grant Statistics for EG 1503 (Evolution and Ecology)

Year	Total Applicants	First-time Applicants	Returning Unfunded Applicants	Discovery Grants Awarded	Success Rate	Mean Discovery Grant Size
2011	199*	36*	45*			
2010	196	35	45	118	60.2%	\$32,798
2009	188	44	29	137	72.9%	\$33,351

*Number anticipated in November 2010.

An Underexploited Opportunity: Research Tools and Instruments

Ecologists and evolutionary biologists do not appear to use NSERC’s Research Tools and Instruments funding opportunities as frequently as some competing evaluation groups. Research Tools and Instruments funding is based on need, so it is essential for the common good that ecologists and evolutionary biologists apply to this program.

NSERC Frontiers

Details on other NSERC initiatives are outlined in the October 2010 Contact Newsletter. The call for Discovery Frontiers proposals on “Northern Earth System Research”

http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Professors-Professeurs/Grants-Subs/DFProposal-FDPropositions_eng.asp; http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Professors-Professeurs/Grants-Subs/DFProposal-FDPropositions_fra.asp is particularly good news for some members of the ecology and evolution community. Invitations for full proposals to this \$4 million funding opportunity will be made on 14 January 2011, with a deadline for receipt of applications on 18 March. NSERC intends to announce the winning application during summer 2011.

Douglas Morris

CIEE/ICEE ACTIVITIES

The year came to a busy end for the CIEE/ICEE, with two events at its Jokers Hill headquarters, and planning for training workshops to be held in conjunction with the CSEE meeting in Banff this May.

Field station workshop

In November, representatives from Canada's field research facilities attending the CIEE workshop, *The Future of Scientific Field Research Stations in Canada*, voted unanimously to form the Canadian Field Research Network (CFRNet). The CFRNet's vision statement affirms its commitment "to facilitate and promote understanding of Canada's natural legacy in a changing world through field research, training and outreach". Its mission will be to 1) Provide facilities that support cost-effective world-class field research across Canada, 2) Foster the next generation of experts who will be called upon to solve Canada's most pressing environmental problems, and 3) Build and maintain long-term studies crucial in valuing and sustaining Canada's natural capital.

CFRNet will integrate over 50 Canadian field research stations into a 'hub and spoke' network model that will enable the ecology and evolution research communities to build, from ready-made components, vehicles for biodiversity monitoring, distributed large-scale experiments, and the stewardship of long-term data sets. CFRNet will also facilitate the sharing of best practices to enable cost-effective delivery of research outcomes. A White Paper on the state of Canadian Field Stations and the possibilities opened by CFRNet's formation is in preparation.

Working group on plankton dynamics

The Thematic Program, *Predicting Ecological Change: Multi-Scale Analysis of Plankton Diversity and Dynamics*, organized

by Jeremy Fox (Calgary), Andrew Gonzalez (McGill), Bill Nelson (Queens), Jon Shurin (UC-San Diego) and Jim Rusak (OMNR), held their first session in December. This working group met to synthesize data sets from lakes around the world to investigate the interplay of density-dependent (competition, consumer-resource interactions) and density-independent (climatic change, disturbance events) processes that cause natural communities to fluctuate on timescales ranging from days to decades. By integrating information from a large number of datasets they tested for covariance among species, correlations with environmental drivers at multiple timescales, comparing the results to theoretical predictions. The group identified novel scale-dependent fluctuations in species abundances and fitnesses linked to species' body sizes. Further results are forthcoming and will be submitted for publication in the coming months. A second session to build on these results is planned for June.

Training workshops

The CIEE/ICEE, in conjunction with the BRITE program of the UBC Biodiversity Research Centre (www.biodiversity.ubc.ca/BRITE/) is pleased to announce three training workshops to be held in conjunction with the upcoming CSEE meeting, May 12-15 at Banff National Park. These are:

- *Statistical Analysis of Biological Data in R* by Dolph Schluter
- *Phylogenetic analyses in R* by Luke Harmon
- *Mathematical Modeling in Ecology and Evolution with Mathematica* by Sally Otto.

This will be an outstanding opportunity for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows to expand their quantitative tool kits. Registration for each workshop will be \$50. Details on registration, dates and times are

available on the CSEE meeting website (<http://www.ecoevo.ca/banff2011/en/workshop.htm>).

Call for proposals

Watch for the 2011 call for proposals for

Thematic Programs and Graduate Mini-courses, which will be sent directly to the CSEE membership shortly.

Arthur E. Weis

CIEE director

New Competitive Grant to fund research at Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre

Deadline : February 15th 2011

For more information :

<http://www.bms.bc.ca/research/BMSC%20Grant%20Announcement.pdf>

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