

Division of Comparative Endocrinology (DCE): 2002 Spring Newsletter

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Message from the Chair

Michael C. Moore

As most of you are aware, I am taking over from Dave Norris as chair of DCE. I want to begin by thanking Dave for his exceptional service as chair of our division. Dave was an energetic and creative chair and was always looking for new ways to move our division forward. His signature accomplishment was undoubtedly the establishment of the Howard Bern Lectureship and his recruiting of Howard himself to give the first lecture. Dave also secured a commitment from Academic Press (now Elsevier) to financially support the lectureship for the future. I would also like to thank outgoing officers, Sunny Boyd (program officer) and Robert Denver (secretary). Both gave exceptional service to the division, but I particularly want to thank Sunny for work above and beyond the call of duty during the transition in the structure of the program from a division based structure to a topic based structure. Our division has an exceptional record of individuals who are willing to step up and take on the burdens of helping to run our division and the society. Incoming officers David Borst (chair-elect), Miles Orchinik (program officer) and James Carr (secretary) continue this tradition. It is also remarkable that three of the society-wide officers come from our division. John Wingfield is president-elect of the society, Stacia Sower is program officer and Sunny Boyd is secretary-elect. We can certainly expect that this will be a time when the leadership of the society will be sensitive to the needs of our division!

The meeting in Anaheim was very successful. Burk and Associates continues to provide excellent management service to the society. The meeting continues to be very healthy and was as large or larger than the Chicago meeting, which was the largest in the society's history. Remarkably, due largely to the management of Burk and Associates, the meeting either broke even or made a small profit. This is sharp contrast to only a few years ago when the meeting deficits were in excess of 100K. Our division also made a strong showing with lively presentations and poster sessions and, of course, Howard's entertaining and informative lecture.

The Aubrey Gorbman Award for best student paper was awarded to Nicole Perfito (University of Washington; "Environmental and endocrine regulation of reproduction in song sparrows along an altitudinal gradient") with an honorable mention to Gregory Nicholson (California State University; Long Beach; "Peripheral Glucoregulation in the Longjaw Mudsucker: Insulin Regulation of Muscle Glucose Transport"). The best student poster was presented by Sharon Lynn (University of Washington; "Short-term fasting in a songbird leads to elevated free corticosterone levels due to decreased corticosterone binding globulin") with Ben Yan (University of Michigan; "Molecular interaction between fibronectin and insulin-like growth factor binding protein-5 (IGFBP-5)") receiving an honorable mention.

I would like to call your attention to a couple of issues and opportunities.

First, the society is in exceptional financial health. I have been a member of ASZ/SICB for 23 years and I was a divisional officer (program officer) a decade ago when the society discovered that the bottom had fallen out and it was over a half million dollars in debt. There was a lot of doubt about whether the society would survive. Fortunately, due to the hard work of a number of very committed people, this situation has been completely reversed and the society now has cash reserves in excess of 1.5 million dollars. This has resulted in a number of reductions in dues and fees to members (how many of you remember the \$35 abstract fee?). Given the past financial history of the society, it is understandable that the leadership is being very conservative financially. This is especially true because the primary source of income for the society is institutional subscriptions to *American Zoologist* (which will change its name shortly to *Integrative and Comparative Biology*). It is very uncertain how this income will be affected by the transition to online journals. *American Zoologist* has recently become available online through the BioOne consortium that libraries pay a subscription fee for. (By the way in addition to a flat rate, libraries pay by how much a journal is accessed. Therefore, if you have access to BioOne, you earn money for the society each time you use it to look at an *American Zoologist* article!). Despite the need for fiscal conservatism, this is also a time of exceptional opportunity. Membership in the society and in the division was greatly reduced during the financial crisis and has never fully recovered. Thus, there remains a need to provide increasing value of the society to the membership. We need your ideas and now is the time to try to push them forward. How can we make the division and the society more valuable to our current membership and to the discipline as whole in order to give more people a reason to join? For example, I think the society needs to be more involved in political activism. I think the federal funding for research situation is of great concern to people in our discipline and many would support a society that was actively doing something about it. If you have other ideas, no matter how small or grandiose, I would love to hear about them and the society is definitely in a condition to act on them.

Second, there is continuing concern of how well DCE serves the needs of our membership and the discipline of Comparative Endocrinology. We are currently one of only two divisions in SICB that uses the annual SICB meeting as the disciplinary national meeting and that has no other national organization. The society leadership has always been very sensitive to the needs of the divisions in this situation, but many DCE members have questioned whether this is the optimal organization. Is this the best way to advance the interests of Comparative Endocrinology and to attract attention to it? For example, the shift to topic-based sessions has been greeted favorably by most people but decreases the visibility and coherence of our division. In addition, I continue to be nagged by the issue that many people skip the national meeting in favor of their regional meetings. In this vein, some people have been discussing the idea of whether it would be better to reorganize as a society of comparative endocrinology. This society could either continue to meet with SICB or could organize its own national meeting. However, there are also a number of benefits to being a division of SICB that would be lost. In addition, comparative endocrinologists have been among the leaders of the integrative biology revolution and thus we are strongly committed to the goals of SICB. Thus, this is a complex issue and there are many pros and cons involved. In addition, emotions and loyalties are likely to run high. Nevertheless, if we are to make the discipline of comparative endocrinology as strong as possible, we must constantly challenge ourselves with the question: "Are we doing the best we can?" We cannot passively accept the status quo, but must challenge ourselves to actively choose the best alternative. I would love to hear your views on this issue. Are you happy with the current divisional status of comparative endocrinology? Are there other organizations that would benefit us more?

Message from the Program Officer

Miles Orchinik

Sunny Boyd has done such a fabulous job as program director for the Division of Comparative Endocrinology that I take over the job with more than a little humility. We owe Sunny a big thanks. Sunny is now secretary–elect for the society, so we will continue to benefit from her expertise.

DCE is sponsoring two very exciting symposia at the Toronto meeting in January 2003: "**Mechanisms Underlying Life–History Transitions**" and "**Technological Innovations for the Study of Chemical Signaling**". Both of these forums feature experimental and conceptual excellence from well–established researchers and from young investigators just making their marks. The symposia highlight the potential for comparative endocrinology to produce significant advances in our understanding of basic biological processes. Both symposia should challenge and inspire us with their broad, integrative sweep.

John Hatle is organizing "**Mechanisms Underlying Life–History Transitions**," a full–day symposium, with primary support from DCE and secondary support from the Divisions of Animal Behavior and Comparative Physiology and Biochemistry. The symposium will focus on the physiology of phenotypic plasticity and polyphenism, in particular the mechanisms by which animals develop multiple phenotypes from single genotypes in response to environmental factors. John has identified the three primary goals for the symposium as: 1) Bringing together workers from diverse fields to search for common mechanisms in the developmental switches from plastic to canalized phases in vertebrate and invertebrate taxa. 2) Demonstrate the benefits of examining the regulation of critical life–history transitions, particularly to graduate students. 3) Emphasize the importance of studying the physiological and endocrinological mechanisms of inflexible phases that potentially constrain adaptation.

Sunny Boyd, with help from Juli Wade and me, is organizing a symposium on **Technological Innovations for the Study of Chemical Signaling**. For a variety of reasons, comparative endocrinologists often lag behind in adopting new techniques; the goal of this symposium is to provide the excitement, information and personal contacts necessary to minimize barriers and foster cutting–edge research by comparative endocrinologists. There will be a day of talks about state–of–the–art technology and illustrations of the types of questions the new technologies allow us to ask. This will be followed by a half–day workshop to provide more detailed and hands–on experience with two new techniques. The symposium will, of course, feature developments in molecular biology such as DNA microarray and transgenic technologies, but will also include a range of techniques, from the latest in imaging technology to tools for proteomics research. Many of the speakers work on non–mammalian or non–vertebrate model systems and they will present a theoretical overview of the strengths and weaknesses in their methods in the context of comparative research.

With two compelling symposia, the Toronto meeting promises to be a busy one for comparative endocrinologists.

Report on General and Comparative Endocrinology

Robert M. Dores and Ian W. Henderson, Editors–in–Chief

2001 was a year of transition for *GCE*. Academic Press, the long-time publisher for the journal, merged with Elsevier Science. The Academic Press name will be retained, and the staff at San Diego headquarters for the journal was left virtually intact. Roslyn Carlson will continue to handle manuscripts through the San Diego office, and the staff has been expanded to facilitate the publishing of the journal. One change that did occur in the Academic Press staff is that Chuck Crumly, senior editor, has moved on to new duties within Elsevier, and will be replaced by Tari Paschall. Chuck was instrumental in moving the journal to the larger format size, encouraging the greater publishing of color figures, expanding the number of issues per year from 12 to 15 (2002), and hence increasing the number of pages that we are able to publish each year, and obtaining the grant from Elsevier Science to help support the Howard Bern Lecture Series at the SICB meeting. Many thanks to Chuck for his dedication to the journal, and best wishes to him on his new assignments within the company.



In 2001 the journal received 252 manuscripts for review, and to streamline and facilitate the process, a team of 30 editors was assembled to assist the editors-in-chief with the review process. After nearly six months of operation the new review system is getting established, and we are committed to shortening the review time for manuscripts. We have introduced the Short Communications in Genomics and Proteomics section, and we encourage authors to send ideas for mini-reviews, large reviews, and for the Current Perspectives section to Frank Moore, the Editor for Review Articles. In 2002, the journal will publish 7 mini-reviews from the Satellite Symposium on Amphibian and Reptilian Endocrinology held in Camerino, Italy in June 2001. We encourage organizers of future symposia to consider publishing reviews in *GCE*.

Inaugural Howard Bern Lecture

The 2002 meeting in Anaheim was highlighted by the first annual Howard Bern Lecture graciously delivered by Howard himself. The lectureship will be an annual event and was established to recognize one of the founders and leaders of the field of comparative endocrinology. Howard is currently an Emeritus Professor of Integrative Biology and Research Endocrinologist in the Cancer Research Laboratory at the University of California at Berkeley, where he has been since 1948. Howard's contribution to the field includes serving as major professor for 46 Ph.D. students and sponsoring approximately 90 postdoctoral students and visiting professors from about 20 countries. He co-authored (with Aubrey Gorbman) the first textbook in comparative endocrinology and as authored and co-authored approximately 600 scientific papers. Howard was elected to the National Academy of Sciences in 1973, holds numerous honorary doctorates, and has received a number of awards including the Hatai Medal for marine biology (1999) and the 2001 Beverton medal (Fisheries Society of the British Isles) for fish physiology/endocrinology. Thanks to Dave Norris for organizing this first Howard Bern Lecture and securing the funding and support from SICB and Elsevier to see that this lecture series continues in the future.

Message from the Secretary

Jim Carr (jacarr@ttacs.ttu.edu)

Minutes of the DCE Business Meeting
Anaheim, California
January 4, 2002

Marvalee Wake, the current SICB president, thanked DCE members for attending the meeting and mentioned that an important goal was to increase and broaden society membership. Marvalee announced a call for service in the society and invited everyone to attend the SICB business meeting. Extensive changes are proposed to the SICB constitution and by-laws so that current practices match procedures outlined in the societies by-laws.

Mike Moore announced the results of the 2001 DCE elections and thanked outgoing officers Dave Norris (Chair), Sunny Boyd (Program Officer), and Bob Denver (Secretary). The newly elected officers are David Borst (Chair-Elect), Miles Orchinik (Program Officer), and Jim Carr (Secretary). DCE members now hold numerous elected offices within SICB including John Wingfield (SICB President-Elect), Penny Hopkins (SICB Secretary), Stacia Sower (SICB Program Officer), and Sunny Boyd (SICB Secretary-elect).

Bob Dores (Editor in Chief, USA) updated the membership on the status of General and Comparative Endocrinology (please see the [accompanying report](#) in this volume of the newsletter). Approximately 250 manuscripts were submitted in 2001, and the journal currently has room for 300. The acceptance rate is roughly 70%. Approximately 25% of the manuscripts received come from the European Union, 20% from Asia and Oceania, and the rest from North America. The current turnover rate can be 9 months, but not for every manuscript. Latency to publication is only 3–4 months when Academic Press receives the final manuscript. Two reasons were cited for the long turnaround:

- a. A delay in the return of revised manuscripts to the editor.
- b. A delay in returning editorial reviews back to the editor.

Bob thanked Chuck Crumly for his service and dedication to the journal during his tenure at Academic Press.

Chuck Crumly addressed the membership regarding the change in his duties at Elsevier. Elsevier's merger with Academic Press was finalized in August of 2001. Chuck also expressed his support for publishing DCE symposia in General and Comparative Endocrinology and announced that Elsevier will contribute \$2000 a year to sponsor Bern Lectureships.

Dave Norris mentioned that the deadline for nominations for the 2003 Bern lectureship have been extended for a few weeks. The DCE Executive Committee will make the final decision. Two years of funding from SICB for the lectureship as well as \$2000/yr from Elsevier will allow the Bern lectureship to continue for the foreseeable future.

Mike Moore briefed the membership on the SICB executive committee meeting held from 7–9 am on January. Chairs from all nine SICB divisions attended. SICB membership is stable at 2200, about the same as last year but about half of what it was 10 years ago. There has been an astonishing turnaround in the financial status of SICB, as the society currently has \$1.6 million in assets. The society is currently engaged in a strategic planning process, and Mike encouraged DCE members to bring innovative ideas forward. Currently, the SICB program innovation fund is underutilized. The society is seeking nominations for members at large; submit nominations to Mike (michael.moore@asu.edu) or Marvalee Wake (mhwake@socrates.berkeley.edu). Input also is welcome on the usefulness of the Society (www.sicb.org) and DCE (www.sicb.org/divisions/dce.php3) websites.

Sunny Boyd announced that DCE had 42 oral presentations and 35 posters at the 2002 Anaheim meeting,

about the same as last years meeting in Chicago. With the new system for topic-based sessions, presenters must pick DCE as their first choice in order for talk to be scheduled with other DCE talks. Sunny announced plans for three symposia at the 2003 meeting in Toronto, two of which are primary DCE symposia. The first, entitled "Mechanisms Underlying Life-History Transitions", is being organized by John Hatle (hatle@ilstu.edu). A second symposium, entitled "New Millennium Approaches to Comparative Endocrinology", will be organized by Sunny (boyd.1@nd.edu), Miles Orchinik (m.orchinik@asu.edu), and Julie Wade. A third symposium, co-sponsored by SICB and the Canadian Society of Zoologists, is entitled "Hormones and Metabolism—A Fishy Perspective" and will be organized by M.M. Vijayan. SICB will meet in New Orleans in 2004 and ideas for new symposia are welcome (m.orchinik@asu.edu).

Kevin Kelley reminded everyone to attend the DCE-sponsored binding protein symposium at the 2002 meeting. The symposium papers will be published in the Journal of Endocrinology.

Stacia Sower announced that the 15th International Congress of Comparative Endocrinology will be organized by Burk and Associates and will be held May 23–28, 2005 in Boston. There is a \$1000 prize for grad student to design the best logo and have their registration paid for. Check the website (www.bu.edu/ICCE15/boston.html) for details. The 16th ICCE will be held in Brisbane, Australia, in 2009.

Upcoming meetings: The International Ecdysone workshop will be held in July, 2002. Contact Penny Hopkins for details (phopkins@ou.edu).

The Fourth Intercongress Symposium of the Asia and Oceania Society for Comparative Endocrinology will be held in China this year— contact Jean Joss for details (jjoss@rna.bio.mq.edu.au).

The 21st meeting of the European Society for Comparative Endocrinology will be held in Bonn, Germany August 26–31, 2002, (www.esce2002.uni-bonn.de).

The 6th Annual Meeting of the Society for Behavioral Neuroendocrinology will be held June 26–30, 2002 in Amherst, MA (www.sbn.org/Meeting/2002/2002mtg.html).