

## Division of Systematic and Evolutionary Biology (DSEB): 2005 Fall Newsletter

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### Message from the Chair

*Kenneth M. Halanych*

Greetings from the DSEB chair! It has been a quick year and the Orlando meeting is just around the corner. With the meeting coming up, I will make my annual plea to attend the business meeting this year. We need more input and ideas, especially from junior members. This is particularly true for symposia. DSEB is willing to help sponsor exciting integrative proposals. If you have a good idea please contact Michele "Nish" Nishiguchi.

In this my farewell letter, I wish to leave the divisional membership with some food for thought. Systematists and phylogeneticists who attend SICB tend to be mainly concerned with organismal questions rather than methodological issues. The field and methods have matured to such a state that DSEB should be taking a more active role in building and promoting the tree of life (whereas others talk about how to build the tree of life). The Phylogenetics for Dummies workshop has been very helpful with educating the membership about phylogenetic methods. However, it seems we need to develop a novel approach to getting the general SICB membership excited about what the systematics point of view can bring to the table. Although the workshop is useful, we need to expand our horizons. In particular we need to help arm the membership with some of tools to educate the lay public that are misinformed and misunderstand the central tenants of our field. If you have any suggestions about how to achieve this, please let me know.

Also I wish to congratulate Rachel Collin, who is our new Program Officer–Elect, and Marta deMaintenon, who is the Secretary–Elect. I also wish to pass all my glory and credit to Pat Reynolds and Don Swiderski. They did all the work and made me look good! Don will be taking over the reigns in January.

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### Message from the Program Officer, Michele Nishiguchi

Bonjour and greetings from France! As the start of my current run as Program Officer, I have been on sabbatical in France for the past semester, and have been trying to accommodate the needs of the division from here. Needless to say, thanks to Pat and Ken for reminding me of important dates, as well as Catherine (Kate) Loudon, Kathy Coates, and Sue Burke for filling in my place at the past program planning meeting for Orlando. I will be in Orlando and ready to step into the "large" shoes that Don left for me to fill.

**News from the PO meeting.** Although I was not attending, the meeting was a success and all 1054 entries were scheduled due to the efforts and hard work of all the program officers.

This coming Orlando meeting has DSEB only sponsoring one symposium entitled "Zebrafish in Comparative Context" by Jackie Webb and Tom Schilling. The list of participants for that symposium include:

- Mark Cooper (U. Washington): Comparative studies of teleost gastrulation
- Joseph Fetcho (Cornell University): Neuroethology of the escape response
- Marnie Halpern (Carnegie Institution): Zebrafish mutational analysis
- Patricia Hernandez (George Washington University): Muscle development and functional morphology of feeding
- Chuck Kimmel (U. Oregon): Craniofacial development
- Tom Kocher (Hubbard Center for Genome Studies, Univ. New Hampshire): Comparative Fish Genomics
- Paula Mabee (U. South Dakota): Fin and skeletal development
- Rick Mayden (St. Louis Univ. and PI, Cypriniform Tree of Life Initiative): Systematics of *Danio*
- Amy McCune (Cornell Univ.): Insights from natural zebrafish mutants
- Dave Parichy (U. Texas): Evolution and development of pigmentation
- John Postlethwait (U. Oregon): Comparative genomics – zebrafish & sticklebacks
- Tom Schilling (UC Irvine): Craniofacial development
- David Stock (U. Colorado): Comparative studies of tooth development
- Jacqueline Webb (Villanova Univ.): Comparative development of cranial sensory systems.

**2007 Symposia.** The 2007 symposia for Phoenix were selected from a dynamic and wide-ranging field of topics, and will include the following:

- The evolution of feeding mechanisms in vertebrates
- Key transitions in animal evolution
- Recent developments in Neurobiology
- Frontiers in learning and teaching Integrative and Comparative Biology: The SICB Digital library (Society wide status)
- Integrative biology of pelagic invertebrates
- Mini-symposium honoring Steven Vogel
- Ecological dimorphisms in vertebrates: proximate and ultimate causes
- Linking genes and morphology in vertebrates
- Evolutionary and functional genomics of sperm, sperm storage, and fertilization (Society-wide status)
- Ecology and evolution of disease dynamics: theoretical and empirical perspectives on functional mechanisms and consequences (pending revision of proposal)

If there is an interest in sponsoring any of the above symposia, please let myself or any of the divisional officers know so we can determine if there is support from DSEB available.

Finally, I would like to encourage members if they have any suggestions for increasing diversity within the division and SICB. My experience with a number of organizations that have sponsored minority student support has given me ideas for increasing participation at meetings as well as providing additional support for students to attend meetings and workshops. One idea that worked well at the SSE/SSB meetings was teaming up minority undergraduates with graduates in the same field as "meeting mentors". This provided undergraduates with a student who was familiar with the organization, meeting structure, and who could also introduce them to prospective graduate mentors. I am trying to research avenues on funding for running this type of program at SICB, and any helpful comments or advice would be welcome.

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### Message from the Secretary

*Pat Reynolds*

Greetings! After our work last year on updating our bylaws, it is fairly quiet in my office and there is little to report. I echo Ken Halanych in congratulating Rachel Collin (incoming Program Officer Elect) and Marta de Maintenon (incoming Secretary Elect). My thanks go also to the other candidates for running for office. May I encourage all members to consider becoming candidates: the tasks as officers are not that burdensome, and it is supportive of our division and the larger society. If you are interested, please drop me a message at [preynold@hamilton.edu](mailto:preynold@hamilton.edu). Finally, thanks to Ken for his stalwart efforts as our Chair, and good luck to Don who takes over at the end of the next business meeting. Hope to meet more of you in Orlando.

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### Message from the Student Representative

*Rena Bryan*

Hello DSEB student members!! I look forward to the January meeting and seeing everyone there.

I would like to refresh your memory and include updates on the workshops that will be held at the Orlando meeting. The two workshops will be held one after the other (last evening of meetings):

#### *Workshop 1: "Optimizing Your Graduate School Experience"*

**Saturday, January 7, 6:00–7:00 pm**

- i. dealing with funding your graduate studies (even after TAships expire)
- ii. finding a good mentor (CUR, COS, societies, web listservers)
- iii. getting research funding as a graduate student
- iv. getting to meetings and making future connections (aka, networking)
- v. building your CV to impress future hirers
- vi. how to get the "right" postdoc for the "right" job

Perhaps this will be paneled by postdocs?

#### *Workshop 2: "Strategies for Landing an Academic Job/Postdoc"*

**Saturday, January 7, 7:00–8:00 pm**

- i. Differences in the requirements for an RO1, comprehensive, and undergraduate liberal arts college (or hybrid of the above) resume.
- ii. Paneled by new and senior faculty SICB members from each of the 3 levels of academic institutions.
- iii. Each group will give a basic level of research/teaching/service expected at their college or university.
- iv. A question and answer session will follow up the panel discussions.

We are interested in ideas for panel speakers in each of these workshops. Show off your favorite professor, postdoc, or mentor with the rest of the SICB student membership. Email ideas to myself, Rena Bryan, [renabr@ufl.edu](mailto:renabr@ufl.edu) or to SPDAC Chair, Shea Tuberty, [tubertysr@appstate.edu](mailto:tubertysr@appstate.edu).

We are revamping the "First-timers Orientation" and making it a more informative program for both returning members and new members. Our revamped orientation will be entitled "The SPDAC Welcome and SICB Meeting Orientation" and will occur beginning at 5:30pm on Wednesday, January 4<sup>th</sup>. If you have been granted a student registration/housing award we remind you that you must attend.

I am sorry to say that the SPDAC Free Lunch, normally the second day of meetings, has been canceled due to budget constraints.

As always if there are any questions or recommendations concerning student programs or Student and Postdoc Advisory Committee orientation, workshops, or the social please do not hesitate to ask me and I will find the resources to get them answered in a timely manner.