



Division of Systematic and Evolutionary Biology

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Message from the Chair

Anne Maglia

The meetings in Boston were outstanding, with many great talks and posters, including several excellent presentations by our divisional students. Congratulations to this year's DSEB best student presentation award winners:

Best Student Paper: Liam Revell, Harvard University: The Measurement and Interpretation of Phylogenetic Signal.

Honorable mention goes to Nicole Cox, Clemson University: Trans-Pacific phylogeography: geographic isolation and speciation in *Nucella lima*.

Best Student Poster: Molly Schumer, Reed College: hCGH Detects Genomic Architecture Among African Cichlids Species of the Genus *Julidochromis*.

The SICB Executive Committee discussed several interesting issues at the Boston meeting. As a result, SICB will not hold the 2011 annual meetings in New Orleans ([read the letter from SICB President Rich Satterlie on the SICB website](#)) and a white paper for NSF was formulated to identify the grand challenges in organismal biology facing us now and in the near future. I would be happy to provide additional information or hear your feedback about these issues---please feel free to email me (magliaa@mst.edu).

I'd like to give special thanks to Rachel Collin, our outgoing Program Officer, for her hard work over the past several years, and welcome Mike Alfaro as our new Program Officer. Thanks to Mike and Marguerite Butler for their hard work in putting together a great Phylogenetics for Dummies workshop. In addition, big thanks are in order to Rich Mooi for his past service, and for agreeing to continue as our divisional representative to the ICB Editorial Board.

Finally, it is never too early to start thinking about the January 2011 meeting! If you have ideas for symposia or topics for the Phylogenetics for Dummies series, please contact one of the divisional officers.



Message from the Program Officer

Michael Alfaro

DSEBers, I had a great time at the 2009 meeting in Boston and hope you did too. DSEB co-sponsored two interesting symposia (Biology of Parasitic Crustacea and Insect Evolution). Special congratulations to Liam Revell (Harvard U) for winning the DSEB best student paper award and Molly Schumer (Reed College) for winning the DSEB best student poster award. Nicole Cox (Clemson U) also received honorable mention. Thanks to all who contributed papers and posters to the event.

The Phylogenetics for Dummies Introduction to R was well-attended with about 85 attendees over two days. If you missed the sessions you can still get the course materials [here http://www2.hawaii.edu/~mbutler/Rquickstart.html](http://www2.hawaii.edu/~mbutler/Rquickstart.html). If you attended and have feedback, please drop me an email (michaelalfaro@ucla.edu). We are considering an expanded version of the workshop for future meetings, so let us know what topics you would like to see covered in greater depth. I'd also like to thank Marguerite Butler and Sam Price for their efforts in organizing the workshop and NESCent for financial support.

I encourage all of you to take a look at letter from [SICB President Rick Satterlie to LA Governor Bobby Jindal](#) on the SICB homepage explaining why the 2011 meetings will not be held in New Orleans. I'm proud that our society is willing to take this action to oppose anti-science initiatives.

Message from the Secretary

Marta deMaintenon

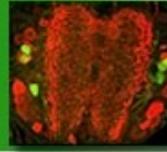
Aloha! It was good to see everybody in Boston! As usual, the presentations were excellent, and Boston, though chilly, had some great food.

Two primary secretarial issues this time. We are again posting the proposed by-laws changes, which will be up for a vote when ballot measures are sent out later this spring... So do check them out and vote! Again, the primary purpose behind these is to align DSEB's by-laws with those of the society at large. We do not have any divisional elections this year. The second issue, as usual, is that our web site is a little dull, and could be made much more exciting by the addition of pictures, and member bios to the researchers database (you will note we don't have any of these yet).

Minutes of the DSEB Business Meeting, 4 January 2009

The really bad news with the DSEB business meeting this year meeting was that almost nobody showed up. Admittedly, it was at an odd time, and that couldn't be helped because of conflicts with other meetings and our own Phylogenetics for Dummies sessions. Please try to come to this meeting next year!

The first people to come were the Society-wide officers, but there were at that point fewer DSEB people than there were officers... They reported on issues as discussed by Anne



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above. The typically unread status of the newsletter is another continuous contentious issue; no solutions on that at this point, but if you have any, let me know and I will pass them on!

The program officer's report was given by Rachel Collin. Among others, the division will be supporting the Strathmann-Fest and the Cnidarian Tree of Life symposia in Salt Lake City. It's time to start thinking about symposia for 2011, so get your ideas to Mika Alfaro. Many thanks to Rachel for her service for the past two years!

Another problem issue – we continuously lack enough judges to handle the student presentation and poster awards. Ruedi Birenheide conjured up a neat new way to get judges assigned this year, but it didn't really work for us – we only had three judges sign up (for 17 presentations)! Part of this is probably because judges didn't sign up to judge particular divisions, but were assigned according to their primary divisional affiliation – and DSEB is a secondary division for most people. But hopefully this can be remedied for next year. On the subject of student awards, kudos to Wiley-Blackwell, who financed this year's student awards and gave winners a one year subscription to a journal – in our case *Evolution*. A very nice prize!

Finally, owing to our small divisional meeting turnout, the enormous difficulty of scheduling all the meetings and presentations, and continuing frustration with trying to see talks that are inevitably in competing sessions, the suggestion was made that SICB should go back to having a full fourth meeting day. For

many of us, the only option to get home is to leave in the morning anyway, so we stay the entire last day. An issue to consider for next year?

Upcoming Meetings of Interest to the Division

Evolution 2009, the joint annual meeting of the Society for the Study of Evolution (SSE), the Society of Systematic Biologists (SSB), and the American Society of Naturalists (ASN), will be held June 12-16, 2009, hosted by the Department of Biological Sciences, University of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho. More info: <http://www.uiweb.uidaho.edu/evolution09/index.html>

SMBE 2009, the annual meeting of the Society for Molecular Biology and Evolution (SMBE) will be held June 3-7, 2009 in Iowa City, hosted by the University of Iowa. More info: <http://ccg.biology.uiowa.edu/smbe/>.

Hennig XXVIII, the Annual Meeting of the Willi Hennig Society, will be held June 22-26, 2009 in Singapore, hosted by the National University of Singapore and the Singapore Botanic Gardens. More info: <http://www.cladistics.org/meetings.html>.

Proposed Changes to DSEB By-Laws.

These proposed changes will appear on the spring ballot measures. Additions = **bold underline**; deletions = ~~strikethrough~~

1. Divisional Chair's Term



Article III, Section 1

The Chair-Elect shall be elected before one annual meeting and serve for a term of one year, and shall then successively and automatically become Chair for a term of *two* **three** years and then successively and automatically become Past Chair for two years.

Rationale: A proposal was made at the last meeting to adjust the term length of the Division Chair, to be consistent with lengths of terms of our other officers and officers in other divisions.

2. Changes suggested to fix inconsistencies between Society and division.

a. Membership

Article II, Section 1

"Any member of the Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology may become a member of the Division of Systematic and Evolutionary Biology by registering with ~~the Secretary of the Division or the Executive Director of the Society,~~ without payment of additional dues **the SICB business office.**

Rationale: Membership is actually much simpler than our by-laws suggests.

b. Student/ Postdoctoral Affairs Officer

Article III, Section 1

The officers of the Division shall be a Chair, Past Chair, Chair-Elect, Secretary, Secretary-Elect, Program Officer, **and** Program Officer-Elect, ~~and Student/Postdoctoral Affairs Officer.~~ The Chair-Elect shall be elected before one annual meeting and serve for a term of one year, and shall then successively and auto-

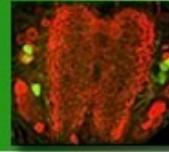
matically become Chair for a term of two years and then successively and automatically become Past Chair for two years. The Secretary-Elect shall be elected triennially, and shall hold office for a term of one year, and then successively and automatically become Secretary for three years. The Program Officer-Elect shall be elected to serve for one year and shall then successively and automatically become Program Officer for three years. ~~The Student/Postdoctoral Affairs Officer shall be elected by the Student and Postdoctoral members of the division, and serve for two years. Candidates must be Student or Postdoctoral members of the division at the time of election, and may not be re-elected.~~ The Chair may be re-elected to serve another term following the two-year term as Past Chair; the Secretary and Program Officer may be re-elected to successive terms.

Article III, Section 2. Student/Postdoctoral Representative

The Division Chair shall appoint a Student/Postdoctoral Representative for a term concurrent with the Division Chair. The Student/Postdoctoral Representative will contribute to the biannual Division newsletter and represent DSEB at the graduate student/postdoc lunch at the annual Society meeting. The Student/Postdoctoral Representative will serve on the Division Executive Committee as a non-voting member.

Article IV Section 7. Student/Postdoctoral Affairs ~~Officer~~ **Representative**

The Student/Postdoctoral Affairs ~~Officer~~



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Representative shall represent Student and Postdoctoral members of the division on the divisional Executive Committee, and on behalf of the division society-wide.

Rationale: Our bylaws are in conflict with the Society bylaws in that we have an elected Student/ Postdoctoral Affairs Officer; under society rules, students and postdocs may not run for SICB offices. The suggested changes to fix this involve giving the person a slightly different title, and appointing them rather than electing them, as follows with the addition of a new section (this will be Article III, Section 2, with the following sections renumbered).

c. Officer term beginning

Article III, Section 2 (= new Section 3 in reference to above amendment)

Election of officers shall be by mail or appropriately secure electronic ballot of the Division. The names of candidates for offices shall be published by the Division at least thirty (30) days in advance of the due date of the ballot. All officers and appointed representatives shall assume the duties of their office ~~at adjournment of the next annual Society business meeting~~ **at the end of the second SICB Executive Committee meeting at the Annual Meeting in the year the term is to begin, and will end at the adjournment of the second SICB Executive Committee meeting at the Annual Meeting in the year the term is to expire.** In the case when the Chair is unexpectedly vacated without a Chair-elect in place, the Past Chair, and if unavailable the Secretary, shall assume the

office of Chair. In the case when the offices of Secretary or Program Officer are unexpectedly vacated without an officer-elect in place, the current Nominating Committee will recommend to the Chair an interim officer to be appointed to serve the remainder of the term.

Rationale: We have officers assuming duties after the SICB business meeting; however, this isn't supposed to happen until after the second SICB Executive Committee meeting.

d. Executive Committee

Article III, section 6

~~In intervals between meetings, the~~ **The** management of the Division shall be vested in an Executive Committee consisting of the officers of the Division and the **Student/Postdoctoral Representative.**

Rationale: Just a wording change suggested here.