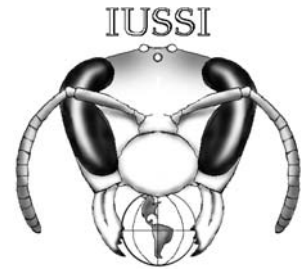




NORTH AMERICAN SECTION

NAS/IUSSI NEWSLETTER August 31, 2009



NORTH AMERICAN SECTION

NAS/IUSSI Officers

President: Blaine Cole
President-elect: John Wenzel
Past President: Marla Spivak

Secretary-Treasurer: Colin Brent
Web Master: Jian Chen
Archivist: Chris Starr

Dear NAS members:

Here we are with summer in its final throws and the students once again safely ensconced in classrooms across the nation. It is a happy time for me as I resume playing my favorite game while biking into work; dodge the oblivious eight-year-old with a massive backpack stepping into my path. My *soto voce* curses have grown quite creative. Another fun change for me is having moved into a new house. I timed this perfectly so that I could do all the heavy lifting during the height of summer. Tremendous good fun if you don't mind a bit of heat stroke. The reward is a massive back yard with a very diverse insect fauna. Sadly, after being attacked, my wife demanded I eliminate the three colonies of *Solenopsis xyloni*. She has allowed me a mature nest of harvester ants, but she has been eyeing the carpenter ants in a none-too-friendly fashion. I'm always amazed at the things you end up negotiating for when married.

Today I have several items that need your attention. First is our selection for the position of president-elect. Currently that role is being held by John Wenzel, who has been quite active in the executive committee. He shall ascend to full-fledged presidency this December at the ESA meeting in Indianapolis, and we will need a replacement. To that end, below you will find brief statements from our candidates. These individuals were nominated by a selection committee based on their qualifications and previous contributions to the society, so rest assured that I didn't just pick names out of a hat. This is their big chance to pander to the public in the hope of gaining some political clout, so feel free to contact them. Once you have secured an adequate bribe, please email me your "decision" so that I can make a tally. I would like to hear from everyone by October 30th, at which time the ballot boxes shall be closed.

Terry McGlynn is Assistant Professor of Biology at California State University Dominguez Hills. He investigates the behavioral, community and ecosystem ecology of tropical rain forest ants. Recent work has emphasized landscape-scale environmental variation and the consequences for the ants that live in leaf litter. He conducts field

experiments to understand how colonies and communities respond to limiting resources.

Terry received his B.A. from Occidental College in 1993, then joined Mike Breed's lab, receiving his Ph.D. from the University of Colorado in 1999. He has previously taught undergraduates with Gettysburg College, the University of California Study Abroad Program and the University of San Diego. He has published over 20 peer-reviewed publications, many with undergraduate coauthors.

An advocate for student research, Terry has personally mentored more than sixty undergraduates conducting research in Costa Rica at La Selva Biological Station. He serves as PI of the NSF-funded Tropical Ecology Mentorship Program of Southern California, directing collaborative research teams of undergraduates, graduate students and high school biology teachers. He is currently working with science education experts of the Los Angeles Unified School District to promote hands-on investigations emphasizing backyard biodiversity.

Terry has been an active member of the section since 1994, and is honored to be nominated to serve the section as President. In 1999, he received the George Eickwort Award, and since then has organized symposia for the ESA and IUSSI Congresses. He is typically current with his dues, and regularly facilitates post-business meeting recreation.

David Tarpy is an Associate Professor of Entomology and the Extension Apiculturist at North Carolina State University. He received an MS from Bucknell University (David Fletcher), a Ph.D. from the University of California at Davis (Rob Page), and a postdoctoral fellowship at Cornell University (Tom Seeley). His research interests focus on the biology and behavioral ecology of honey bee queens, using techniques including field manipulations, behavioral observation, instrumental insemination, and molecular markers. As Extension Apiculturist, he coordinates the NC Master Beekeeper Program, maintains an apiculture web site, and spearheads numerous extension projects for beekeeper education and training. His teaching duties span the department's curriculum, including a 190-student non-majors course on honey bees and society, an advanced beekeeping course, and a graduate student seminar on the social behavior of insects. He is a founding and participating member of the NCSU Social Insect Working Group and served the IUSSI as the co-webmaster for the 2006 International Congress.

The second item on the agenda is an attempt to promote interactivity within the organization. Yes, we do have regular meetings and everyone gets to enjoy these little missives, but it can be hard to determine who is doing what without an extensive search on the web or a much more prodigious memory than I possess. In an effort to promote levels of mutual awareness and public accessibility, I am taking a two-pronged approach. First, I would like to include a brief (2-4 sentences) statement of each members' general areas of interest. This information will be posted on our website. If you are willing to participate, please submit statements to me and I will begin compiling them. Second, I am going to include brief bios in my newsletters about any new or recently rejoined members. Here is the first crop to appear:

Hossam Farag Abou-Shaara: I am a student at the University of Alexandria, Department of Pest Control and Environmental Protection, Damanhour Branch, Egypt. The title of my Master's thesis is "Morphometric, Biological, Behavioral studies on some honey bee races at El-Behera governorate." I currently have four papers in preparation for publication and I have patented seven beekeeping inventions. I maintain my own apiary in Damanhour city and I am a member in Beekeeping association Alexandria governorate, Egypt. I am currently looking for an advisor in the US with whom I could complete a Ph.D.

Leeanne Alonso: received her B.A. and B.S. from the University of Texas at Austin, and then a PhD in Biology from Harvard University in 1994. Leeanne's doctoral research focused on "The Ecology of a facultative ant-plant mutualism" under the supervision of Dr. E.O. Wilson. Leeanne has also studied the imported fire ant *Solenopsis invicta* and ant diversity patterns. Her current research focuses on assessing ant diversity and protecting ants and their habitats. Leeanne oversees the Rapid Assessment Program (RAP) at Conservation International, which employs teams of expert scientists to rapidly collect biological information needed for conservation action in unexplored regions of the world. Leeanne has organized and implemented about 40 biological surveys. Leeanne also co-edited *Ants: Standard Methods for Measuring and Monitoring Biodiversity* and is involved in teaching the annual "Ant Course." Leeanne's latest project is writing a field guide to the Ants of Eastern North America with the aim of getting people to appreciate how much ants do for us every day.

Marty Matisoff: I am earning my MS in Entomology at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln. I also am conducting independent research in the bee laboratory of Dr. Tom Webster, where I am investigating the relationship between *Nosema ceranae* and honey bee decline. I expect to enter a doctorate program in Fall 2010, at which time I plan to focus in insect pathology, specifically with regard to honey bees. In addition to my studies, I am the editor of the Kentucky State Beekeepers Association and I am an amateur beekeeper.

Ann Mayo: I am a candidate for the PhD degree in quantitative biology at the University of Texas at Arlington. I am working on the foraging behavior and ecology of the harvester ant *Pogonomyrmex comanche* in the Fort Worth/Arlington area of Texas. I also have a minor project on the *Pogonomyrmex* ants and interaction between *Pogonomyrmex rugosus* and *Acromyrmex versicolor* in Big Bend, Texas.

Brad Metz: I am affiliated with the Department of Entomology at Texas A&M University currently in the process of completing my doctorate with Dr. Tanya Pankiw. The major focus of my research is on the communication between larvae and adults of the honey bee and the social context of brood pheromone. I specifically focus on the variation of brood pheromone components under different rearing environment conditions and the communication of nutritional status. Another component of my research is the population specificity of brood pheromone blend and the behavioral effects of this specificity.

Graham Thompson: I am an Assistant Professor in the Department of Biology at the University of Western Ontario. My lab studies the biological basis of insect social behaviour; how it evolves, how it is maintained and why some species are social while others are not. My lab uses natural history information, the theory of social evolution, and genomic technology to discover how molecules influence the evolution and expression of social traits, mostly in termites and honey bees. Conversely, we are interested in how sociality itself influences the transmission and expression of genes.

Third, Sean O'Donnell (Email: sodonnell@u.washington.edu) has asked that I advertise a Ph.D. student position he has available:

Opportunity for a PhD student to work on a project related to a newly-funded NSF grant at the University of Washington (Seattle, WA).

The project will focus on the evolution and development of brain architecture in paper wasps (Vespidae: Polistinae), a group that shows tremendous diversity in social behavior and colony complexity. Research will include travel and field work in the Neotropics, as well as laboratory neuro-histology studies. The grant will provide 3 years of half-time Research Assistant support (summer and one academic quarter/year; Teaching Assistant support will be guaranteed for the rest of the appointment). Prospective students can apply either through the UW Animal Behavior Program (Psychology) or UW Zoology. See my web page to learn more about the work being done in my lab: <http://faculty.washington.edu/sodonnell/>.

Fourth, I have obtained a copy of the Hoelldobler and Wilson Symposium to be held at this year's Entomological Society of America conference in Indianapolis, IN. This has been organized by Walter Tschinkel and Sanford Porter. The date has not yet been assigned (sometime between December 13-16) and the talk times are tentative, but the speakers are set.

Speaker	email address	Title	Start Time
Porter & Tschinkel		Introduction	8:00
Jeanne	jeanne@entomology.wisc.edu	Vibrational signals influence development in <i>Polistes</i> wasps	8:05
Ward	psward@ucdavis.edu	Advances in our understanding of ant systematics and evolution	8:30
Fisher	bfisher@calacademy.org	How Many Ants Can An Island Hold? An integrative survey of Madagascar's ants	8:55
BREAK 9:20			
OPEN MIKE 9:30			
Gadau	jgadau@asu.edu	Causes and consequences of genetic variation in ant societies	9:40
Thorne	bthorne@umd.edu	The Evolution of Eusociality in Termites	10:05
Seeley	tds5@cornell.edu	Honeybee democracy	10:30
END MORNING SESSION 10:55			
PLENARY SPEAKER, MARK MOFFETT 11:00-12:30			
LUNCH 12:30-2:00			
Cole	bcole@uh.edu	The Evolutionary Ecology of Harvester Ants	2:00
Wheeler	dewsants@ag.arizona.edu	Extreme specializations of castes in ants	2:25
Dornhaus	dornhaus@email.arizona.edu	Division of labor in bumble bees: how, why, and are they really like furry ants?	2:50
OPEN MIKE 3:15			
BREAK 3:30			
Traniello	jft@bu.edu	Age, size, brain and subcaste evolution in the ant genus <i>Pheidole</i>	3:45
Mueller	umueller@mail.utexas.edu	On-the-Metapleural-Gland-of-Ants, Reloaded	4:10
Pierce	npierce@oeb.harvard.edu	Ants and the evolution of mutualism	4:35
Alonso	l.alonso@conservation.org	Ant Conservation: Importance and Challenges	5:00
END SYMPOSIUM 5:00			

Lastly, I want to remind everyone that nominations are needed for the Eickwort and Nutting Awards. You still have until October 30, but there is no time like the present to single out that exceptional student for recognition and to get their membership dues paid (a prerequisite for consideration). The official announcements and a membership form come at the end of the letter.

Please let me know if you should have any announcements you would like to make about upcoming events, grants, scholarships, job postings or other important developments. In addition to conveying the news by email, it will also be posted on our web page (<http://iussi.bees.net/>). And please get me your statements of research interests.

Have a great Fall semester.

Colin

Colin Brent
Research Entomologist
US Department of Agriculture
Arid-Land Agricultural Research Center
21881 N. Cardon Lane
Maricopa, AZ 85238
Office: 520-316-6337
Fax: 520-316-6330
email: colin.brent@ars.usda.gov

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS: William L. and Ruth D. Nutting Student Research Award

Due October 30, 2009

Purpose: To support research by graduate students in the field of basic termite biology. The William L. and Ruth D. Nutting Award is named in honor of the late Bill Nutting, an outstanding termite biologist who made major contributions to termite biology, both through his own research and mentoring of students, and in honor of Ruth Nutting for her support of Bill's work.

Nature: For 2009, the award shall consist of a plaque and a research grant of \$1,000. The recipient of the award will be announced at the 2009 NAS/IUSSI meeting to be held in association with the ESA annual meeting Dec. 13-16 in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Eligibility: The award will be given to the NAS/IUSSI graduate student member, who in the opinion of the Nutting Award Committee, shows the most distinguished record of research and scholarly activity in the area of basic termite biology. Any student member of NAS/IUSSI may be nominated. The student shall not have received a Ph.D. or terminated studies earlier than 12 months prior to the award. Students continuing beyond a master's degree will remain eligible. Previous award recipients are not eligible for a second award.

Nominations: Nominations may be made by the student or by others familiar with her/his work. Each nomination must include in electronic form: name of the nominee; CV of the nominee; title and brief (not to exceed one page) description of the work; a short biographical sketch; reprints of up to *two* publications (published or accepted preferred, although submitted manuscripts and/or thesis/dissertation summary may also accepted); and at least one letter of recommendation. If possible, a single PDF file containing all information except recommendation letter(s) would be preferred. ALL documents must be **received by** the Chair of the NAS/IUSSI Awards Committee by October 30, 2009: Kenna MacKenzie, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, 32 Main St., Kentville, NS B4N 1J5 Canada; fax: 902-679-2311; e-mail: mackenziek@agr.gc.ca.

Nutting Award Committee: One member of the IUSSI-NAS Awards Committee with an expertise in Isoptera will chair the Nutting Award Committee. For this year, Michael Haverty will be the chair. The Nutting Award Selection Committee shall consist of five members, including Michael Haverty, Kenna MacKenzie, Ruth Nutting, and two other members selected by the chair of the Nutting Award Committee.

**CALL FOR NOMINATIONS: George C.
Eickwort Student Research Award**
Due October 30, 2009

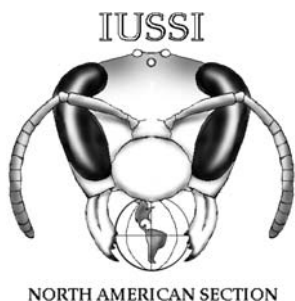
Purpose: To recognize research by students in the field of social insect biology for graduate or undergraduate work accomplished in North America or by a student member of NAS/IUSSI pursuing studies elsewhere.

Nature: The award shall consist of a certificate, an honorarium, and a one-year subscription to *Insectes Sociaux*. The award will be presented at the 2009 NAS/IUSSI meeting to be held in association with the ESA annual meeting Dec. 13-16 in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Eligibility: The award will be given to the student who in the opinion of the award committee shows the most distinguished record of research and scholarly activity in the area of social insect biology. Any student doing work in North America or any student member of NAS/IUSSI may be nominated. The student shall not have received a PhD or terminated studies earlier than 12 months prior to the award. Students continuing beyond a baccalaureate or masters degree will remain eligible. Previous award recipients are not eligible for a second award.

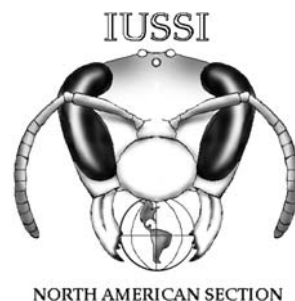
Nominations: Nominations may be made by the student or by others familiar with his/her work. Each nomination must include in electronic form: name and curriculum vitae of the student nominee; title and brief description (not to exceed one page) of the research; reprints of no more than *five* publications or submitted manuscripts; biographical sketch of the nominee; and two letters of recommendation. If possible, a single PDF file containing all information except recommendation letters would be preferred. ALL documents must be **received by** the Chair of the NAS/IUSSI Eickwort Student Award Committee by October 30, 2009: Kenna MacKenzie, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, 32 Main St., Kentville, NS B4N 1J5 Canada; fax: 902-679-2311; e-mail: kenna.mackenzie@agr.gc.ca

Eickwort Award Committee: Kenna MacKenzie (Chair), Phil Starks, Ulrich Mueller, Bryan Danforth, and Andrew Suarez.



MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL 2009

**INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR THE
STUDY OF SOCIAL INSECTS
NORTH AMERICAN SECTION**



NAME: _____

CURRENT ADDRESS:

TELEPHONE: _____

FAX: _____

EMAIL: _____

PLEASE **CIRCLE** YOUR CHOICE BELOW

Regular Member: \$22.50 Student Member: \$9.00 Household Member: \$5.00

Students – have your advisor or chair certify your status below

Advisor's signature, printed name, & Title

Donations (for Eickwort Award; Nutting Award; etc.):

Intended Use: _____ Amount: \$ _____

Make check payable (in US funds) to NAS/IUSSI. Please send it and this form to:

**Colin Brent
USDA-ALARC
21881 N. Cardon Ln.
Maricopa, AZ 85239**

For subscriptions to *Insectes Sociaux*, please contact petra.stromberger@birkhauser.ch