



Société canadienne  
d'écologie et d'évolution

Canadian Society for  
Ecology and Evolution

Bulletin no. 11  
February 2012

The bulletin 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.

**Editor:**

Mary Reid  
University of Calgary  
[mreid@ucalgary.ca](mailto:mreid@ucalgary.ca)

## Table of Contents

2	President's Message
5	Early Career Awards 2012
5	President's Award
6	CSEE Conferences
6	Ottawa 2012
8	Kelowna 2013
9	Montréal 2014
9	Financial support for regional meetings
10	Biodiversity and Conservation Committee
11	Outreach Committee
12	Students and Postdocs
13	NSERC in 2012
15	Canadian Council for Animal Care
17	Canadian Institute for Ecology and Evolution

### *Next CSEE meetings* details below

Ottawa	6-12 July 2012
Kelowna	12-15 May 2013
Montréal	May 2014



## President's Message

### Reflections and some horizon gazing

*Spencer C.H. Barrett, U. Toronto [spencer.barrett@utoronto.ca](mailto:spencer.barrett@utoronto.ca)  
CSEE President 2010-2011*

This message will be my last as President of CSEE and I would like to use it to briefly reflect on what we have achieved over the past few years and to outline what I see as several major challenges that lie ahead for our society. Two years seems like a long time when you embark on a new responsibility, and the initial learning curve can often be steep. However, as I am sure anyone who has held office will confirm, time soon flies by, and before you know it the end of your term is over and you are left pondering over unfinished business and your failure to make headway on issues that you wanted to tackle.

I started my Presidency with two main goals. First, I felt it was important to reach out to biodiversity scientists so that they felt at home in our society, and could find talks, symposia and workshops at our annual meeting that would be of interest to them. Second, I wanted to facilitate the growth of CIEE, so that its full potential could be realized. I see this organization as the primary host for workshops that synthesize current knowledge about Canada's ecosystems, and for the delivery of short courses for graduate students that provide training in the latest techniques and approaches in our field.

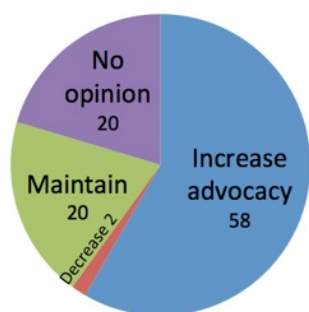
We have made good progress on both of these goals, although of course there is still some way to go. More biodiversity scientists attended the Banff meeting last spring than in previous annual meetings, and there were three successful symposia on Canada's biodiversity and a CIEE-sponsored workshop focusing on phylogenetic methods. The Biodiversity and Conservation Committee, ably chaired by Arne Mooers, produced a valuable response to the [CCA report](#) on the state of taxonomy in Canada. There is also a potentially exciting initiative for taxonomy training on the horizon with the NSERC-CREATE program being spearheaded by Felix Sperling and Heather Proctor at the University of Alberta to complement the existing CREATE program at the Biodiversity Research Centre at UBC. I am hopeful that this momentum can be maintained with both CSEE and CIEE playing a supporting role where they can. It is worth noting that our forthcoming annual meeting in Ottawa in July will include substantially more content of interest to systematists and comparative biologists because the Society for Systematic Biology is one of the five societies co-hosting our meeting.

Growing CIEE is a major challenge given the current economic climate and perhaps because of the uniqueness of the CIEE vision (see <http://ciee-icee.com/>) and hence its unfamiliarity to most scientists. However, progress is being made on several fronts and valuable workshops have been held at the Koffler Scientific Reserve over the past two years. In addition, the Management Board held its inaugural meeting in July 2011 with Steve Heard

as the chair. The board initiated a search to find a new director now that Art Weis' term as the first Director is coming to an end. It is my hope that as more and more individuals are involved with CIEE activities, word will spread about the obvious benefits to Canadian ecologists and evolutionary biologists of having a home grown institute that brings together expertise from across our nation. Certainly, I have yet to speak to a participant of a workshop that has not been highly enthusiastic about the intellectual synergy that these meetings offer. Plans are underway for CIEE to co-sponsor a workshop with NESCent at the Ottawa meeting on "The Tree of Sex" organized by Doris Bachtrog and including Sally Otto, Brian Charlesworth and Mark Kirkpatrick among others. It is important to emphasize that CIEE workshops can be held anywhere in Canada and I encourage members to consider submitting innovative proposals to CIEE (see their website for details).

Despite its young age, CSEE has now become the primary society of choice for most Canadian ecologists and evolutionary biologists. Our meetings are diverse in program content, very well-attended, and are characterized by a high level of enthusiasm, especially by student members who clearly see the value of a society, unlike most elsewhere in the world, that encompasses both ecology and evolutionary biology. However, this is no time for complacency and the leadership of any society should always try to look ahead to make sure that they can anticipate future issues, devise appropriate solutions and come up with exciting new initiatives. With this in mind, here are three issues that I believe will need to be addressed by council in the coming years.

First, there is still a sizeable number of ecologists and environmental scientists in Canada that could be recruited to CSEE. Getting these folks on board will take some effort, but adding a few hundred would take our membership over 1000, something that could be the goal of a creative new membership drive. If this is considered it will be important to dispel the common myth that "evolutionary types" somehow dominate CSEE. Our survey of the membership last spring clearly indicates that this is not the case, and an analysis of contributed papers, symposia and major awards also supports this. We need to do a better job of encouraging disenfranchised ecologists to step up and get involved by putting on symposia and running for council. Given the pressing problem that global climate change presents to Canadian ecosystems, particularly in the north, it is vital that the CSEE membership includes as many environmental scientists as possible so we can provide the most informed advice to policy makers.



Second, one of the most striking results of last year's survey was the finding that a large proportion of our members would like us to take a more proactive role with regards to policy issues and what could be loosely called "informed advocacy based on expert advice" on the major environmental issues of the day. This is a challenging problem that is faced by all scholarly societies and requires well thought out policies that safeguard the scientific objectivity of the society, but at the same time provide the flexibility to respond in a timely manner to environmental issues as they arise. At the present time we have

no formal mechanism for this and it would seem that a major challenge facing council will be to hammer out a framework for dealing with such policy issues. This may require a new

committee on council and could involve a policy forum on our website or in the Bulletin, as well as more creative use of social media.

Finally, it seems likely, given the current economic slow down, that we are about to enter a much more challenging funding environment as the Government prepares for its next budget in February. How this will affect NSERC grants to Evolution and Ecology is unclear, and our liaison meeting in Ottawa in November with NSERC personnel provided few concrete clues. It is worth pointing out, before the gloom and doom reaches unbearable levels, that the funding success for Discovery Grants is still way above 'blue skies research' for most of our competitor nations. For a more global perspective I encourage you to look at the recent article "Funding troubles for evolution and ecology" by Cyrus Martin in *Current Biology* (2011 21: R969-R973). Nevertheless, despite the great benefits of the NSERC system, which in my view still remains one of the greatest assets to Canadian science and engineering and an envy of our colleagues in other countries, it seems likely that things will get a lot tougher in the coming year. It is therefore important that CSEE continues to put pressure on NSERC to maintain Discovery Grant funding in the face of the inevitable budget cuts and pressures from the Harper government to increase funding to programs that support research of demonstrable relevance to the private sector. As the Martin article makes clear, it is not difficult to make the case that research in ecology and evolutionary biology is vital for the future well being of human society, and we must do a better job of hammering this point home to the general public, the media and our local MPs.

I would like to end by thanking members of council for all of their efforts over the past few years to make CSEE the vibrant society that it is today. It has been an honour and a pleasure to serve the society as your Vice President and President over the past 4 years. I would especially like to thank Sally Otto, who has provided me with much advice and has served tirelessly for CSEE over and above her role as secretary and member of the executive committee. Finally, it is reassuring to hand over to Jeff Hutchings and to know that the leadership of CSEE is in such capable and experienced hands. I look forward to working with Jeff to make sure that CSEE continues to grow and thrive, and that we continue to find innovative ways of promoting ecology and evolutionary biology in Canada.

I wish you all a happy and productive New Year.



## Early Career Awards 2012: Congratulations!

*Steve Heard (UNB), Chair, Awards and Recognition Committee*



I am pleased to announce 2012 Early Career Awards to Dr. Dominique Gravel (Université du Québec à Rimouski) and Dr. Marc Johnson (University of Toronto - Mississauga). The Early Career Awards recognize outstanding accomplishments and promising future research potential in ecology and evolution by scientists early in their career (within 5 years following the PhD). Drs. Gravel and Johnson will receive \$500 awards and 10-year CSEE memberships, and will be invited to present keynote addresses at the 2012 CSEE meeting (Evolution 2012 in Ottawa).

Dr. Gravel is a community ecologist with a strong interest in modeling and theoretical ecology. His work combines theoretical models with experimental and field data in order to explore the complex interaction between species distributions, community structure, and ecosystem function. He has applied this approach to such disparate systems as temperate forests, bacterial communities and the rocky intertidal. He completed his PhD in 2007 and has published 17 peer-reviewed papers in journals that include the highest-impact ones in the field.



Dr. Johnson's research bridges evolution, ecology and genetics to the evolutionary consequences of sexual reproduction in plants, the evolution of plant defences against herbivores and pathogens, and the ecological consequences of genetic variation. He completed his PhD in 2007, has published 26 peer-reviewed papers, and has also been recognized by the American Society of Naturalists with their Young Investigator's Prize.

## President's Award: Application Deadline 15 April 2012

**Award Description:** The CSEE President's Award recognizes outstanding contributions to ecology and/or evolutionary biology by a Canadian scientist. This award is given to one candidate every 2 years. The winner receives a lifetime membership in CSEE, a \$1000 prize, and an invitation to present a plenary talk at the annual CSEE meeting (with later submission for publication in Proceedings B). The intent of this award is to recognize mid- and late-career scientists (to complement CSEE's Early Career Awards).

**Application/Nomination Procedures:** Candidates may apply directly or may be nominated. Nominations **must** contain a curriculum vitae, a summary of research accomplishments (maximum 3 pages including any literature cited), and brief (1 page) justification of the candidate's suitability for the President's Award. All nomination materials must be sent as PDF e-mail attachments.

**Time lines:** The deadline for receipt of all materials for 2013 President's Award is **15 April 2012**. Subsequent deadlines will be announced in future even-numbered years. Materials for the 2012 competition must be sent to the CSEE/SCEE Chair of the Awards & Recognition Committee, Locke Rowe ([locke.rowe@utoronto.ca](mailto:locke.rowe@utoronto.ca)). The recipient will receive their award at the following (odd-numbered year) annual meeting.



# CSEE Conferences

## 7<sup>th</sup> CSEE meeting: Ottawa 2012



The 2012 annual meeting of the CSEE is fast approaching. The meeting will be an invigorating departure from tradition in that it will be held jointly with four other societies (Society for the Study of Evolution, American Society of Naturalists, Society for Systematic Biology and the European Society for Evolutionary Biology). This is a truly international event and the first time that ESEB will participate in a North American meeting. This first joint meeting will be held from July 6-10 here in Canada, at the new [Ottawa Convention Centre](#) situated on the historic Rideau Canal in the city's downtown, and will provide us with a unique opportunity to showcase the strength of Canadian research in ecology and evolution.

The Canadian ecology & evolution community will benefit enormously by hosting this international event, and it is important that we maintain a strong identity and presence within the larger conference, and also ensure that our ecologists feel at home. To this end, the CSEE and the CIEE will be hosting several prominent activities. These include two CSEE-sponsored symposia that reflect the integration of ecology and evolution, "The structure and dynamics of ecological networks: from genes to ecosystems" (organized by Bronwyn Rayfield and Andrew Gonzalez), and "Eco-evolutionary dynamics: how ecological and evolutionary process influence one another" (organized by Andrew Hendry and Dolph Schluter). The CSEE will also jointly host the Symposium for Women Entering Ecology and Evolution Today (SWEEET): "Knowing your options and getting the job you want: career options beyond academia" (<http://www.ecoevo.ca/SWEEET>). The recipients of CSEE's Early Career Award will speak at a Joint Awards Symposium alongside award recipients from all the other societies, Spencer Barrett will deliver the CSEE presidential address, a CSEE mixer will provide an opportunity to meet up midway through the conference, CSEE will sponsor a public outreach talk given by [Rosie Redfield](#) of UBC, and, of course, there is the CSEE annual general meeting to look forward to (and an informal CSEE pub night too!). In addition, the CIEE and CSEE will offer workshops the day following the main meeting. Topics include "Next-generation sequencing for ecology and evolution" led by Nolan Kane, "Communicating Science" taught in part by Peter Calamai, and a workshop on R is in the planning stages. The CIEE is also co-sponsoring a workshop with NESCent: "The tree of sex - a comprehensive synthesis of sex determination systems in eukaryotes."

The format will generally follow that of the SSE/ASN/SSB 'Evolution' meetings (concurrent sessions rather than symposia), except that the banquet will be replaced by an informal farewell dinner (without speeches), for which we will have exclusive run of the stunning [Canadian Museum of Civilization](#). Registration is set to "go live" in February 2012. Please join us for this historic meeting that will include the world's academic leaders in evolution, ecology and systematics. Visit [www.Evolution2012.org/](http://www.Evolution2012.org/) for more information.

The local organizing committee is headed by **Howard Rundle** (University of Ottawa) and aided by co-organizer **Andrew Simons** (Carleton University); both are CSEE members.

## CSEE Symposia 2012

### Eco-evolutionary dynamics: how ecological and evolutionary process influence one another.

*Organized by Andrew Hendry (McGill) and Dolph Schluter (UBC-Vancouver)*

Evolutionary and ecological processes have traditionally been thought to occur on very different time scales – but we now know that evolution can occur quite rapidly. This realization increases the possibility that ongoing evolutionary change can influence ongoing ecological processes at the population, community, and ecosystem levels. We therefore need an integration of ecological and evolutionary theory and data into a unified framework. This symposium is designed to promote this integration by illustrating the breadth of interactions that occur between ecology and evolution. We will start with an introductory presentation that outlines a conceptual framework for how ecology and evolution can reciprocally influence one another (Hendry). We will then have two talks on how ecology drives evolutionary process, the first showing how rapid evolution can occur in response to ecological change (De Meester) and the second showing how this ecologically-driven evolution contributes to adaptive radiation (Schluter). We will then have two talks on how ongoing evolution influences ecological process at the population (Bell) and community (Johnson) levels. Finally, we will have a talk that closes the circle by outlining the potential for, and showing the reality of, true *feedbacks* between ecology and evolution acting on short time scales (Post). We hope that this symposium will provide a broad and motivating overview that will enhance interactions between ecologists and evolutionary biologists and thereby promote a general theory of eco-evolutionary dynamics.

#### Confirmed talks and speakers:

1. *A conceptual framework for eco-evolutionary dynamics.* Andrew Hendry. McGill.
2. *Ecological change drives rapid evolution.* Luc De Meester. K.U. Leuven.
3. *Ecological contributions to the early stages of adaptive radiation.* Dolph Schluter. UBC
4. *Evolutionary effects on population dynamics: evolutionary rescue.* Graham Bell. McGill.
5. *Evolutionary effects on community structure.* Marc Johnson. UT Mississauga.
6. *Eco-evolutionary feedbacks.* David Post. Yale University

### The structure and dynamics of ecological networks: from genes to ecosystems

*Organized by Bronwyn Rayfield (McGill) and Andrew Gonzalez (McGill)*

Networks form at all levels of biological organization from gene regulatory networks to food webs. Accordingly, a common interest in the forms, functions, and dynamics of networks is burgeoning across ecological and evolutionary disciplines. This symposium aims to facilitate an exchange of perspectives and approaches among leading Canadian researchers studying networks in the fields of ecology, evolution, and systematics. The symposium will begin with a brief introduction of the priority questions and scales amenable to network analyses in ecology and evolution

(Rayfield). The first two talks will focus on generalized methods for hypothesis testing based on networks (Fortin) and comparing complex connectivity patterns among networks (Lapointe). Subsequent talks will provide examples of ecological and evolutionary networks across a range of scales. Two talks will investigate network models of interacting individuals, one of which examines evolutionary dynamics of social behavior (Day) while the other analyzes disease outbreak dynamics in response to vaccination (Bauch). The following talk will present results from experimental networks demonstrating how population dynamics and persistence are affected by habitat network structure (Rayfield and Gonzalez). The final talk will explore the structural aspects of foodwebs that influence the success of species invasions (Romanuk). By leveraging the shared interest in networks between ecologists and evolutionary biologists, this symposium will foster conceptual connections and highlight new avenues for collaborations on problems of network complexity and dynamics.

**Confirmed talks and speakers:**

1. *How to test hypotheses using graphs*. Marie-Josée Fortin. Toronto.
2. *Comparing methods for comparing networks*. François-Joseph Lapointe. Montréal.
3. *Evolution in social networks*. Troy Day. Queen's University.
4. *Adaptive responses to the emergence of disease on a network: the case of human vaccinating behavior*. Chris Bauch. Guelph.
5. *Habitat connectivity and fragmented ecological networks*. Bronwyn Rayfield and Andrew Gonzalez. McGill.
6. *Species invasions in food web networks*. Tamara Romanuk. Dalhousie.

## 8<sup>th</sup> CSEE meeting: Kelowna 2013

Jason Pither, UBC-Okanagan, [jason.pither@ubc.ca](mailto:jason.pither@ubc.ca)

On behalf of the local organizing committee, I am thrilled to announce that the 8th annual CSEE meeting will be held May 12-15, 2013 at the University of British Columbia, Okanagan campus. Located near the city of Kelowna in the beautiful Okanagan Valley - one of Canada's most ecologically diverse regions - UBC Okanagan provides a spectacular venue for the meeting. The Valley offers fantastic outing opportunities for naturalists and oenophiles alike. Renowned naturalist and author Dick Cannings will be leading a field trip (tentatively Sunday, May 12th), and will also be providing the public plenary lecture. Mark your calendars!



Bob Lalonde UBC-O



## 9<sup>th</sup> CSEE meeting: Montréal 2014

Andrew Hendry (McGill, [andrew.hendry@mcgill.ca](mailto:andrew.hendry@mcgill.ca)) and Hans Larsson (McGill, [hans.ce.larsson@mcgill.ca](mailto:hans.ce.larsson@mcgill.ca))

**CSEE/CSZ/SCL will meet together in Montréal in 2014!** The CSEE annual meeting will be held in May, 2014, in Montréal, Québec. So as to foster discourse and collaboration between related Canadian academic societies, this will be a full joint meeting with the [Canadian Society for Zoology](#) and the [Society of Canadian Limnologists](#) - the first ever joint meeting of these societies! The meeting venue will be the [Centre Mont-Royal](#) which is immediately adjacent to McGill University. The meeting is jointly organized and hosted by all four Montréal Universities: McGill, Concordia, UQAM, and Université de Montréal. As co-chairs of the meeting, we look forward to welcoming you to Montréal in 2014.

### CSEE Supports Regional Conferences!

CSEE considers requests for financial support from the organizers of regional Canadian meetings in ecology and evolution. Requests must include a statement on how the funds will be used and how the meeting advances the broad mandate of the CSEE. Meetings that receive financial support must promote CSEE on all promotional material associated with the conference and must submit a brief report to the CSEE following the meeting. Recent and upcoming meetings to which CSEE has contribute support include

1. "Science and Policy Exchange" (Dialogue sciences et politiques), the goal of which was to "assemble students and leaders in government, industry, research, and the community for an exchange of ideas on science and policy issues affecting Quebec". CSEE specifically supported the biodiversity part of this exchange: <http://www.sp-exchange.ca/2011-exchange/>
2. EVO-WIBO is a gathering of the evolutionary biologists of the Pacific Northwest. The meeting typically attracts 120-140 researchers for a two-day meeting, held every second year. This year's meeting will be April 20-22 at Fort Worden State Park in Port Townsend, WA: <http://www.zoology.ubc.ca/evo-wibo/>

If you have a relevant regional meeting and are seeking sponsorship from CSEE, contact Andy Gonzalez (Chair, [andrew.gonzalez@mcgill.ca](mailto:andrew.gonzalez@mcgill.ca)) for details

### Phylogenetics workshop, Ottawa July 2012

I intend to offer a **one**-day workshop entitled "Phylogenetics with DAMBE" on July 5 & 11, 2012, timed for the Evolution 2012 participants. The topics will include

- Routine phylogenetic analyses and dating methods (both conventional dating with internal node calibration and tip-dating)
- Phylogeny-based comparative methods.
- Evolutionary genomics

There might be a fee (< \$20/person); the cost would be less if all participants bring their own laptops. Please email me directly if you are interested in participating.

~ Xuhua Xia, U. Ottawa ([xuhua.xia@uottawa.ca](mailto:xuhua.xia@uottawa.ca), URL: <http://dambe.bio.uottawa.ca>)

## CSEE Biodiversity & Conservation Committee and the Frontiers in Conservation Science Workshop, 2013

Arne Mooers, SFU [amooers@sfu.ca](mailto:amooers@sfu.ca)  
Chair, Biodiversity & Conservation Committee



We have just a few choice things to report this time around. We need your input on the second item.

Following on from our interest in increasing Canada's capacity in Systematics and Taxonomy, we are pleased to hear that Prof. Felix Sperling and colleagues at the University of Alberta and the Université de Montréal are organizing an application to NSERC's Collaborative Research and Training Experience programme for a five-year training programme in Systematics and Taxonomy. The CSEE executive and the B&C committee will support this endeavour in any and all ways we can.

We also have a mandate to liaise with other Canadian organizations with similar interests. To this end, we will be holding a "Frontiers in Conservation Science" workshop at the 2013 UBC-O CSEE meetings in Kelowna with the World Wildlife Fund - Canada. We have two goals in mind with the workshop. Our first goal is a clear answer to the question: ***What do we, as ecologists and evolutionary biologists, see as the emerging but understudied issues in conservation science relevant to Canada?*** Our second, somewhat radical goal is to start to organize directed research projects focussed on tackling specific questions that flow from these issues.

We want this to be a novel forum in both form and content, with lots of directed brainstorming leading to clear action items. To this end, we (this committee, Jason Pither, Chair of the local organizing committee, UBC-O and Steven Price Director, Conservation Practise, World Wildlife Fund - Canada, and any others interested in helping) would like to hear from all and sundry, now, as to what these understudied issues might be. This input will help us decide on the invited speakers and frame the workshop. So, we all know that climate change is causing alarming changes, and there is now directed research attention on the impacts on biodiversity in our country. But are we missing key questions even here? Are there clearly-defined but understudied problems that a set of independent or linked research projects could help answer? Are there other completely unrelated issues that need serious research attention? Write us with you measured opinions and unmeasured ideas. (We are also planning a booth at the 2012 CSEE/Evolution meeting to harass/canvass participants.)

Finally, with the new executive members joining us, I expect the Biodiversity and Conservation Committee will see a membership change or two this spring. As always, please contact [Arne Mooers](mailto:Arne Mooers) if you would like to get involved.

# CSEE Outreach

## *Actively promoting ecology and evolution in Canada*

Fanie Pelletier, U. Sherbrooke [Fanie.Pelletier@USherbrooke.ca](mailto:Fanie.Pelletier@USherbrooke.ca)  
CSEE council member and Outreach Chair



### What's new?

With the coming year your Outreach Committee will change members as Sean Rogers has now retired. Fanie Pelletier (Sherbrooke University) will now be chairing the Committee that includes Erika Crispo (University of Calgary), Lorraine Adderly (University of Calgary), Suzanne Gray (McGill University), and Kiyoko Gotanda (McGill University). We would like to greatly acknowledge Sean Rogers' contribution to this committee and to the promotion of ecology and evolution in Canada.

### Plans for 2012

In collaboration with the Ottawa local organization committee we are planning to organize a public lecture during the venue. More details on this event will be available on the society web page over the winter. We should also hold a child day again this year as this event proved to be a great success in the past.

### Vignettes and Outreach proposals needed!

The CSEE Outreach committee coordinates the publication of vignettes on our website <http://www.ecoevo.ca/en/vignettes.htm>. We currently have 11 vignettes and hope to double that number by the end of the year. We are really 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 ideas or vignettes for review (ideas/vignettes can be submitted by email to: [fanie.pelletier@usherbrooke.ca](mailto:fanie.pelletier@usherbrooke.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 the 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 Fanie Pelletier ([fanie.pelletier@usherbrooke.ca](mailto:fanie.pelletier@usherbrooke.ca))

## Student and Postdoctoral Members

Leanna Lachowsky, U. Calgary [CSEEstudent@gmail.com](mailto:CSEEstudent@gmail.com)  
CSEE Student and Post-doctoral Council Representative



### Ottawa 2012

Our annual meeting in Ottawa this year is gearing up to be a BIG one! This is a great opportunity to attend an international conference in combination with our national meeting. With 11 planned symposia, numerous workshops before during and after the meeting, 4 days of talks and several evening socials there will definitely be something for everyone.

### CSEE student travel grants:

The CSEE is supporting students traveling to this year's meeting with 20 travel grants of \$500 each. To be eligible for a travel grant you must be:

- a student member of the CSEE (unfortunately post-docs are not eligible)
- up to date on [paying your membership fees](#)
- presenting a talk or poster
- traveling more than 500 km to the meeting

If you would like to be considered, make sure you check the correct box on the registration page during [early registration](#). You must indicate that you are a CSEE member for this option to be available to you. Recipients will be informed by e-mail two weeks after early registration has closed.

**\*\*You may also apply for travel grants from other societies of which you are a member.\*\***

### CSEE student poster & talk awards:

As usual CSEE will be administering a Student Award Competition for the best talks and posters. Prizes of \$500, \$300 and \$200 will be awarded for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> of each presentation type. Entries will only be accepted until the end of [early registration](#). To be eligible, you must provide an abstract of your talk/poster (400 words max.). Abstracts will be evaluated in order to determine the talks and posters that will be judged. Get a leg up on the competition – check out the judging forms on the [CSEE website](#).

**4th Annual Student and Post-Doctoral Workshop:** CSEE is sponsoring a workshop during the Ottawa meeting and the topic is up to you! I've created a quick [SURVEY](#) to help pick the topic. Please provide feedback on some of the ideas that have already been thrown out there or propose another topic you would like to see. Previous workshops that were very well received included non-academic jobs (2009), speaking to the media (2010) and networking (2011). This workshop will be free and there is no need to register in advance.



Just check the program for the date, time and topic and we'll see you there! **NSERC Workshop:** As in previous years, we are arranging for a presentation by NSERC on their student and post-doc funding programs. As well, a number of [other workshops](#) are being planned. Be sure to check the conference website to find out and sign-up for the ones that are of interest to you!

**NSERC:** In November council had our annual meeting with NSERC. Both student reps, Kes (outgoing) and Leanna (incoming), were there to get the inside scoop. Isabelle Blain (Vice-President, Research Grants & Scholarships) assured us that NSERC's Highly Qualified Personnel (HQP) training programs would remain a priority, currently at 35% of their program budget. These programs include CGS, Vanier, Banting, Research Chairs of Excellence, etc. When asked about the apparent decrease in PDFs offered last year, this was explained to be due to a new requirement that NSERC reduce their risk by only offering the exact number of awards that they are able to fund. In the past they would over offer awards, anticipating that some would not be accepted. Last year, for any March offers that were not accepted, new offers were sent out in June and July. This year, with approximately 1200 applications received a success rate of 10-12% is anticipated. However, Isabelle highlighted some indirect avenues for funding of PDFs through various NSERC programs including CREATE and Discovery Grant Accelerators.

**Communication:** CSEE is on [LinkedIn](#) and [Facebook](#) – check in for discussions, networking, and announcements. Feel free to start your own discussion. Got a great idea? Issues? Questions? Please send me an email about absolutely anything to [CSEEstudent@gmail.com](mailto:CSEEstudent@gmail.com)

**Outgoing student/post-doc rep:** Kathryn (Kes) Morton has represented us well over the last two years. Many thanks to her for her efforts on council, organizing some great student workshops and for maintaining priority of student issues! All the best!

Looking forward to meeting/seeing you in our nation's capital!



## Slippery Road Ahead: NSERC in 2012

*Douglas Morris, Lakehead U. [dmorris@lakeheadu.ca](mailto:dmorris@lakeheadu.ca)  
NSERC Group Chair, Evolution and Ecology*

NSERC funding allocations in 2012 will depend critically on Treasury Board decisions. Minister Clement, who serves as President of Treasury Board, has initiated a one-time Strategic and Operating Review aimed at cutting at least \$4 billion from the 2012 Federal budget. Government departments and agencies, including NSERC, must submit 5 and 10 per cent savings scenarios. Although there is still potential for some good news emerging from budgetary decisions, this is clearly a time of general belt-tightening rather than increased funding.

On the positive side, the 2011 Federal budget included a \$15 million addition to NSERC's budget that was split equally between the 'Discovery' and 'Partnerships' envelopes. These funds resulted in a decision to increase Discovery-Grant funds to all successful 'early career researchers' (ECR) in the 2009-2013 competitions. NSERC expects that the average ECR Discovery Grant will thereby increase by approximately \$4000 - \$5000. Changes to other NSERC programs, such as those related to expanded opportunities for Discovery Supplements, modified Northern Supplements, climate change, and various international opportunities, can be reviewed by logging onto the NSERC website.



Another success story is NSERC's Collaborative REsearch And Training Experience (CREATE) program that has generated great interest and includes themes dealing with ecology and evolution. Beginning in 2012, this program will allocate up to one half of the CREATE grants to the new "Industrial Stream" in order that personnel can be "employer ready". There are also new opportunities to collaborate with German researchers (for details, please check the NSERC website). These 'revisions' appear to align with many changes at NSERC motivated by the mandate from the 2007 Science and Technology Strategy to increase Canada's competitive advantage through innovation.

Although CREATE leverages support from Universities and sponsors, it is not a free ride. Funding for CREATE was secured by reallocations in NSERC's People portfolio that is causing, and is expected to continue to cause, 'downstream' reductions in the number of PGS and PDF awards. We can anticipate success in these programs will become increasingly competitive, an issue that is likely to be a rather major concern for researchers, students, and post-docs who are not involved in CREATE. Application for NSERC post-doctoral awards has a projected 2012 success rate of approximately 10-12%. Budget reductions also herald low success probabilities for Major Resources Support (MRS) applications. Meanwhile, NSERC Frontiers has been put on hold pending the outcome of the review and 2012 budget.

It is not yet clear whether success rates for Discovery Grants in EG 1503 (Evolution and Ecology) have bottomed out. Although the demand for Discovery Grants within EG 1503 appears stable at approximately 200 applicants annually, success rates also depend on the allocation of applicants across bins, and with the 'returning' funds available for 're-distribution'.

Other news of interest is that effective 1 September 2011, NSERC harmonized its student and post-doctoral stipend policy with SSHRC and CIHR such that ("...the specific minima and maxima pertaining to stipends paid from grants will no longer be in effect"). This policy may address some of the concerns raised about the differential value of scholarships and awards amongst students and post-docs doing similar work, as well as the differential living and tuition costs among institutions. There are two caveats. One is that there is no minimum – this will hopefully not be an issue in the support of students and post-doctoral fellows within ecology and evolution. The second is that falling success rates for Discovery Grants means that fewer researchers have the option of supplementing student awards.

It may be useful to remember that success in some programs can be enhanced by a group strategy. The allocation of RTI funds to evolution and ecology is directly proportional to our cumulative funding requests. One of the best ways to secure the tools or instruments crucial to your research is to ensure that your evolution and ecology colleagues regularly submit RTI applications.

Canada's evolutionary biologists and ecologists are challenged with the unique responsibility of finding solutions to problems much larger than the fiscal priorities of NSERC, and the immediate economic goals of Government. The global climate is warming, species are going extinct, and new ones are reaching our shores, all at unprecedented rates. Human demands for natural resources continue to expand, our ability to control pests, pathogens, and disease is thwarted by rapid evolution, and attempts to conserve nature must do so against increasing social and economic pressures. Our chances of finding solutions to these problems are inexorably linked to public support for research in ecology and evolution. Again, our best chances of success lie in a group strategy. Please help to ensure that friends, neighbours, students, journalists, and Members of Parliament understand the vital role that research by Canada's scientists and engineers, and most especially that by ecologists and evolutionary biologists, can, and must, play for the current and future benefit of Canadians.

## Canadian Council for Animal Care

*Albrecht Schulte-Hostedde, Lakehead U., [aschulte@laurentian.ca](mailto:aschulte@laurentian.ca)  
CSEE Representative*



The CCAC is the “national peer review organization responsible for setting and maintaining standards for care and ethical use of animals in research, teaching, and testing in Canada.” The CSEE is a limited-term member, and I am the CSEE representative on Council. Many members of the CSEE use vertebrates in their research, and thus interact with the CCAC and local Animal Care Committees. Participation by the CSEE in the CCAC is thus of particular importance.

I am currently a member of the Guidelines Committee and had recently been elected Chair of the committee. One of the duties of the Committee Chairs is to be members of the Board of Directors. Thus, I participated in a number of extra meetings that I had not previously been part of.

The CCAC meets every 6 months, and the last meeting I attended was Sept 29-Oct 1, 2011. The agendas of all the meetings I attended during the three days were dominated by the financial situation of the CCAC. The CCAC applies to CIHR/NSERC for funding, and this has traditionally been on a three year cycle. This funding is not part of a specific funding program, but unique to the CCAC. It is unclear why or how the three-year cycle came about. The most recent grant proposal was submitted in December 2010 and asked for a 35% budget increase (as an aside – I had personally e-mailed the Executive Director of the CCAC and told that this was not appropriate given the funding constraints currently

experienced by Tri-Council funded researchers). In March 2011 the CCAC Executive met with the CIHR/NSERC Evaluation Committee. This Evaluation Committee was composed of a number of people familiar with animal care and ethics, and research, including bat biologist Brock Fenton. According to the documentation provided by CIHR/NSERC, the Evaluation Committee solicited opinions from institutions and local animal care committees regarding the CCAC, and submitted their report to CIHR/NSERC in April 2011. The Evaluation Committee provided three possible funding scenarios to CIHR/NSERC – three years of 5% increase, level funding, or a reduction of 5%. A 5% increase was endorsed and recommended by the Evaluation Committee. Nonetheless, when CIHR/NSERC finally provided the report and its decision to CCAC in September 2011, it provided only one year of level funding, with NSERC providing 20% of the total contribution (the balance from CIHR) for a total grant of \$2 570 000. CIHR/NSERC have asked for a new business model that addresses the issues raised by the Evaluation Committee including the need to improve cooperation with the universities, and the need for alternate models of service delivery.

In response to this change in the funding environment, CCAC Executive Director Clement Gauthier issued the following statement to stakeholders on Nov. 10, 2011:

“The Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) recently received its funding decision from the federal granting Agencies. In contrast to previous three-year funding decisions, the September 14th letter from the Presidents of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) and the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) extended the CCAC’s grant at its 2008-2011 level for one-year only, requesting the development of a new business plan.

Accordingly, the CCAC’s budget for 2011-2012 takes a pragmatic approach of reducing expenditures where feasible and concentrating on maintaining core activities already planned in CCAC’s major business-lines.

While Council and Secretariat members work to find efficiencies and diversify approaches to funding and conducting CCAC’s activities, CCAC constituents may note some impacts on services over the coming months. This will be most evident in areas of new growth for CCAC, which reflects CCAC’s determination to ensure that core mandate, activities and constituents are protected until the CCAC can secure adequate longer-term funding solutions of care and use of animals in science.”

As you can imagine, the CCAC was surprised by the decision of CIHR/NSERC to reduce the duration of funding, and to request a new proposal so quickly. In the meetings I attended, it was clear that there is a sincere interest in addressing the issues raised by the Evaluation Committee. One major issue that was identified was that CIHR/NSERC provides 89% of the CCAC budget. Full cost recovery from private industry that is using CCAC documentation and certification is being explored. In addition, there are numerous granting agencies that use the animal care infrastructure provided by the CCAC that do not contribute to its operation (e.g. Heart and Stroke, Canadian Cancer Society), and it appears that these agencies will be approached and asked to cover some costs. In the future, CSEE members may find that any funding agencies not part of the Tri-Council may thus be asked to contribute financially to ethical oversight of animal research.



Finally, it is clear from my discussions with the Board that there is an appetite to engage in transformative change of the CCAC and in the way it interacts with institutions and researchers. It is the latter issue that I have been particularly forceful about. The local Animal Care Committees carry the CCAC “brand” when interacting with researchers, and much of the negative experiences of researchers (especially those that use non-model organisms like wildlife biologists) can be attributed to the variation across institutions in the experience institutional animal care committees and veterinarians have with animals like wildlife.

The CCAC has issued a mid-year performance report, and I can send this report to any interested members. The report outlines the activities of the Executive Director and of the various CCAC committees – Planning and Finance, Assessment, Guidelines, Three Rs, and Education, Training and Communications. If any members of CSEE have any questions about CCAC issues, please contact me at [aschultehostedde@laurentian.ca](mailto:aschultehostedde@laurentian.ca)

## Canadian Institute for Ecology and Evolution

### *Applications for **Director** now being accepted*



The Canadian Institute for Ecology and Evolution (CIEE/ICEE; <http://ciee-icee.com/>) seeks candidates for the position of Director. CIEE/ICEE is a national platform to identify and solve important problems in ecology and evolution through working groups, workshops, and other fora. In its first three years, the Institute has mounted working groups on global patterns in

plankton dynamics, the application of science in implementation of the Species at Risk Act, networking of Canadian field stations and, coming this spring, the effects of rising temperatures on food web structure. The Institute also sponsors training workshops in conjunction with the Canadian Society of Ecology and Evolution, and in June will give its first graduate mini-course, Landscape Genetics. CIEE/ICEE is now poised for membership and budgetary expansion, and the new Director will provide leadership and strategic direction as CIEE/ICEE continues to grow and mature. The Director is appointed by CIEE/ICEE's Management Board (3-year, renewable term) and receives a \$5000 yearly allowance. A Director can be located anywhere.

Responsibilities of the Director of CIEE include:

- *INSTITUTE DEVELOPMENT*: The Director proposes and develops new and innovative programs and partnerships that advance the CIEE/ICEE mission. This includes the recruitment and retention of member institutions.

- *PROGRAMS*: The Director issues calls for proposals for CIEE/ICEE programs and, with advice from the Scientific Advisory Group, selects proposals for funding. (An Associate Director arranges practical aspects of CIEE/ICEE programs, such as travel and housing.)
- *COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH*: The Director communicates information on CIEE/ICEE programs and accomplishments within the Institute, to relevant administrative officers at member institutions, and to the community of potential users.
- *FUNDRAISING*: The Director seeks financial support from governmental granting programs, universities, private donors, and other sources. The Management Board and the Associate Director assist with this responsibility.
- *BUDGET*: The Director (in consultation with the Associate Director) proposes a budget for approval by the Management Board.

The Directorship of CIEE/ICEE is an opportunity to have a major influence on the direction of ecological and evolutionary research, and its application, in Canada. To learn more about this opportunity, contact the Chair of the Management Board (Stephen Heard, [stephen.heard@unb.ca](mailto:stephen.heard@unb.ca), 506-452-6047). Applications for the directorship will be accepted immediately and until the position is filled (send a letter of interest and a CV to [stephen.heard@unb.ca](mailto:stephen.heard@unb.ca)).

#### **Your current CSEE council:**

- [Jeffrey Hutchings](#) (Dalhousie University) - President (2012 - 2013)
- [Judith Myers](#) (University of British Columbia) - Vice-president (2012 - 2013)
- [Miriam Richards](#) (Brock University) - Secretary (2012 - 2015)
- [Steeve Côté](#) (Université Laval) - Treasurer (2010 - 2013)
- [Arne Mooers](#) (Simon Fraser University) - Council member (2010 - 2013)
- [Stephen Heard](#) (University of New Brunswick) - Council member (2010 - 2013)
- [Mary Reid](#) (University of Calgary) - Council member (2011 - 2013)
- [Andrew Gonzalez](#) (McGill University) - Council member (2012 - 2015)
- [Fanie Pelletier](#) (Université de Sherbrooke) - Council member (2012 - 2015)
- [Locke Rowe](#) (University of Toronto) - Council member (2012 - 2015)
- [Leanna Lachowsky](#) (University of Calgary) - Student/Post-doc Councilor (2012 - 2013)