

**Biological Society of Washington
Annual Meeting, 17 May 2012**

President Michael Carleton called the meeting to order at 10:00 am in the Rose Conference Room, National Museum of Natural History, Washington, D.C. Council members present: Michael Carleton (President), Stephen Gardiner (President-Elect and Editor), Stephen Cairns (Secretary); Sean Brady (Treasurer); Carol Baldwin, Steve Gotte, F. Christian Thompson, Neal Woodman (Elected Council); Richard Banks, Bruce Collette, Kristian Fauchald, Ron Heyer, Roy McDiarmid, Storrs Olson, Wayne Mathis (Past Presidents); Neal Woodman (Membership Committee Chair), and Bob Reynolds (Finance Committee Chair). A total of 20 members were present, including 4 regular members (Daphne Fautin, Jerry Harasewych, Lynne Parenti, Ken Tighe). Two representatives from Allen Press were also in attendance: Nick Dormer, Business Association Manager and Associate Publisher; and Melanie Dolechex, Director of Publishing.

Carleton called the meeting to order, welcomed the guests, and asked for a motion to accept the minutes of last year's Annual Meeting as published in volume 124(2):137-139. The motion was accepted and the minutes approved without discussion.

Reports for FY 2011

Robert Reynolds presented the Audit Committee's report, which uncovered no discrepancies in the Treasurer's accounting procedures or totals. Additional members of that committee were Michael Pogue and Ronald Heyer.

Treasurer Seán Brady then summarized the Treasurer's report for FY 2011. The total value of the Endowment Fund increased slightly due mainly to an anonymous donation of \$2500, but our investments with Merrill Lynch decreased slightly; the Endowment Fund now stands at \$106,032. Total assets of the Society, as of December 31, 2011, amount to \$148,085, which represents an overall decrease of \$8334 due to three factors: slight loss in value of our endowment investments with Merrill Lynch; a one-time expenditure to establish a members' website; and a general loss due to the shrinking membership base.

Next, Membership Committee Chair Neal Woodman noted that of the 40 potential subsidized student memberships set aside by the Council last year, only two were requested and granted. Expanded discussion of how to increase membership transpired later in the meeting.

Editor Stephen Gardiner made the following report: "This was my sixth year as Editor of the Society's publications. The staff of Associate Editors remained the same as in 2010. As always, I extend my sincere appreciation to all who are serving as Associate Editors for the Society. Their devoted efforts to excellence in the review process are reflected in the quality of the manuscripts published in the Proceedings.

"No Bulletins were published in 2011. Four issues of the Proceedings were published in 2011, and statistics are as follows: 1) issue 1 – 8 April 2011, 7 manuscripts for 52 pages, 2) issue 2 – 2 August 2011, 7 manuscripts for 85 pages, 3) issue 3 – 10 October 2011, 9 manuscripts for 112 pages, and 4) issue 4 - 30 December 2011, 10 manuscripts for 138 pages. Total manuscripts submitted - 41, total manuscripts rejected - 1, total pages published - 385, and total pages subsidized by the Society - 68 (=~18%, a percentage similar to 2009-2010). The number of manuscripts submitted in 2011 decreased slightly from 2010 and continues to remain substantially lower than historical numbers for the Proceedings.

"Thirty-three manuscripts were published in 2011, and the breakdown by taxa is as follows: 1) vertebrates – 10, 2) Crustacea – 9, 3) other invertebrate groups – 9, 4) Tardigrada – 3, and 5) Cnidaria – 2. Similar to 2010, the majority of manuscripts published in 2011 were submitted by authors who have

previously published in the Proceedings, most of whom utilized PeerTrack for submission of their manuscripts.”

Editor Gardiner also noted that cost for color figures has been reduced from \$600 to \$300 per figure for Society members.

Nick Dormer, Business Manager for Allen Press, presented the company’s 2011 publishing report, noting that Society revenues as well as membership and institutional subscriptions had declined about 10% compared with the last year. He indicated that this pattern was consistent with “trends seen across scholarly publishing.” Part of the membership decline may be attributable to journal access through BioOne.2, but this decrease is counteracted by the slight increase in revenue generated from our participation in that aggregation; the trade-off of these factors is virtually impossible to quantify. Dormer also pointed out that our impact factor increased from 0.643 to 0.750 in 2010; the 2011 number is not yet available. The Proceedings now has 305 individual and 105 institutional subscribers, plus its broad accessibility through BioOne.2.

New and On-going Business

Stephen Cairns, Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee to Revise the Constitution, presented the procedure followed to update these documents and highlighted the two policy changes enacted—restatement of the Society’s Purpose (Article 2), and reduction in the size of the Elected Council from 6 to 4 members (Article 5), a change to be instituted with the 2014 election. As unanimously endorsed by the Council and electronically approved by 52 general members, the new constitution and bylaws go into effect 17 May 2012 (see the following ratified version). Other members of the ad hoc committee were Dick Banks and Roy McDiarmid.

Carleton summarized responses by the Council on the topic of proactively recognizing Emeritus Members. His report elicited a general discussion of requirements for emeritus membership in other societies and the difficulty in pro-rating Life Memberships, but no conclusions were reached. The issue will be pursued by President-Elect Gardiner.

Stephen Gardiner enthusiastically announced that this year the Society will publish a large bulletin on the herpetofauna of Guyana (“Amphibians and reptiles of Guyana, South America: Illustrated keys, annotated species accounts, and a biogeographic synopsis”), for which the Society will underwrite \$7000 of the total publication costs. Bob Reynolds, one of the manuscript’s coauthors, elaborated the scientific goals and intended audiences of the publication.

Nick Dormer reported that our new Journal Website (<http://www.pbsw.org>) was successfully launched and was steadily visited during a 3-month period to open access. Discussion centered on the need to upgrade the visual attractiveness of the site, its functional utility, and its seamless link to the Society/Member Website (<http://www.biosocwash.org>).

Neal Woodman, Chair of the Membership Committee, led a spirited discussion about ways to reverse our declining membership and article submission rate. Carleton pointed out that we still have \$1000 committed by the Council to subsidize student memberships and \$10,000 obligated to solicit high-profile papers. Neal emphasized the needs to recruit members within the NMNH and other local societies, to advertise in other taxonomic journals, and to explore effective use of social media. Carole Baldwin further urged that we publish our highly successful bulletins as a supplement to the Proceedings, in order to enhance our impact factor by retaining the same ISBN title and because an elevated journal impact factor may be an important catalyst to attract prospective members and contributors. Roy McDiarmid recommended that we formulate a clear statement of purpose of the Society, target NMNH summer

interns regarding an introduction to our journal, and aggressively reach out to lay and scientific communities in Guyana, a region that is the focus of our next bulletin.

Finally, Ron Heyer, Chair of the Nominating Committee (also including Stephen Cairns and Bob Reynolds), identified their Committee's difficulties in finding willing candidates to nominate for the 2012 election, especially for the major officers.

Secretary Stephen Cairns announced the results of the 2012 electronic ballot, to which 117 members voted: President, Stephen Gardiner; President-Elect, Jerry Harasewych; Secretary, Wayne Mathis; Treasurer, Kenneth Tighe; and Elected Council, Carole Baldwin, Daphne Fautin, Gordon Hendler, Martha Nizinski, Lynne Parenti, and Jeff Williams.

President Carleton concluded the meeting by expressing his confidence that the Society was in good hands under new President Stephen Gardiner, who will also continue to fill the post of Journal Editor. Stephen Gardiner thanked Mike for his service and adjourned the meeting at 11:45 am.

Respectfully Submitted,
Stephen D. Cairns
Secretary