



SWS South Atlantic Chapter

Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia,
Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands

SOUTH ATLANTIC CHAPTER OF THE SOCIETY OF WETLAND SCIENTISTS REPORT FOR THE 2011 ANNUAL BOARD MEETING

July 2011

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Abstract:

In the past year, the South Atlantic Chapter of the Society of Wetland Scientists held a Joint Chapter Meeting with the Mid Atlantic Chapter on March 7-8, 2011 with 129 attendees. The SAC continued to offer a number of travel and research grants to students; our 2011 student awards are (1) the Diversity Program Undergraduate Mentoring Travel Award supporting up to \$1500 for travel to the 2011 SWS Annual Meeting, (2) one \$1000, and one \$500 student travel awards to the 2011 SWS Annual Meeting, (3) two \$100 student travel awards to attend the Association of Southeastern Biologists (ASB) conference, (4) three awards for the best student papers (\$400, \$300, and \$200) and one award for best student poster (\$300) at the Joint SWS South Atlantic and Mid-Atlantic Chapters (SAC/MAC) meeting, and (5) two \$750 Student Research Awards. The terms for our current Chair and Vice-Chair are expiring, so we are holding elections for those positions and will announce the new officers at the Chapter meeting in Prague. We continued our fundraising by selling merchandise with the chapter logo and ran our fifth annual calendar photo contest. We continue to have a good association with our two wetland student groups (at Duke and University of Florida) and host pages on our SWS SAC webpage to highlight their group activities. In addition, we have a facebook page, currently with 81 members, which we use for Chapter communication along with email newsletters.

Chapter / Committee Roster:

Dianna M. Hogan, Chair (June 2009 – June 2011)
Kimberli J. Ponzio, Past Chair (June 2009-June 2011)
Michael Piehler, Vice Chair (June 2009 – June 2011)
William Conner, Secretary/Treasurer (June 1992 – June 2013)
Shanin Speas-Frost, Webmaster (June 2003 – continuing)
David Bailey, Awards Chair (January 2008 – continuing)

1. Chapter mission

The objective of the South Atlantic Chapter of the Society of Wetland Scientists is to encourage communication of wetland issues and research activities in the South Atlantic region (from Virginia to Florida, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands). The Chapter sponsors meetings and other activities to foster interaction of wetland scientists and managers in the region, funds student research, and sponsors students to attend conferences.

2. Activities, actions, and accomplishments

The Joint SWS South Atlantic and Mid-Atlantic Chapters (SAC/MAC) meeting was held March 7-8, 2011 at the USGS Headquarters in Reston, Virginia. The meeting, *Wetlands, Water Resources, and People*, had 129 attendees and featured 2 days of concurrent scientific sessions, a poster session, and a keynote address by Dr Chris Craft. Based on a panel of judges, cash awards were given for the 3 best student oral presentations and the best student poster presentation. The best SWS SAC/MAC student oral presentations were: 1st Place: Jamie Duberstein (awarded \$400), 2nd Place: Jenny Allen (awarded \$300), and 3rd Place: Nilam Kayastha (awarded \$200). The best SWS SAC/MAC student poster presentation was Jenna Clark (awarded \$300). Meeting wrap-up and photos can be found at:

http://www.sws.org/regional/southatlantic/sac_mac_joint_meeting_2011.html. This activity supports the following items in the SWS Strategic Plan: Action 1.2.3, Action 1.2.4, Action 1.4.1, Action 4.1.1., Action 4.3.1, and Action 5.2.1.



The SAC held a Chapter Business Meeting on March 7, 2011 during the Joint SWS South Atlantic and Mid-Atlantic Chapters (SAC/MAC) Meeting. At this meeting, the members voted to extend the



eligibility for our SWS Annual Meeting Student Travel Award from being for graduate students only to both graduate and undergraduate students. This makes our student awards more consistent in that our ASB Student Travel Award only specifies you must be a student, and our SAC Research Grant can be for a graduate or an undergraduate student.

The SAC will sponsor one UMEB (Undergraduate Mentoring in Environmental Biology) student within the South Atlantic Chapter with a fully funded travel award (not to exceed \$1,500) to the 2011 Annual SWS Conference in Prague. The SAC 2011 UMEB award recipient is Jasmine Washington of Florida State University; the award will be made at the Annual SWS Conference in Prague. This award was made a permanent installment in our student awards program in 2008-2009. This activity supports the following items in the SWS Strategic Plan: Objective 1.1 - Actions 1.1.1 and 1.1.2, Objective 2.2 - Actions 2.2.1 and 2.2.2, Objective 6.3, Objective 7.6 – Action 7.6.1.

The SAC is awarding two Student Travel Awards to the Annual SWS Meeting in Prague, one for \$1000 and one for \$500. This award is usually two \$500 awards, but due to the cost of international travel, one award was increased to \$1000 for this year only. The \$1000 winner of the 2011 Student Travel Award is Lisa G. Chambers (University of Florida): The effects of urban stormwater on soil organic carbon loss in coastal wetlands experiencing sea level rise. The \$500 winner of the 2011 Student Travel Awards is Scott Winton (Duke University): The Effects of Urban Stream and Riparian Restoration on Summer and Winter Avian Populations. The awards will be made at the Annual SWS Conference in

Prague. These activities support the following items in the SWS Strategic Plan: Objective 1.1 - Actions 1.1.1 and 1.1.2, Objective 2.2 – Action 2.2.2, Objective 6.3, and Objective 7.6.

The SAC held an annual Business Luncheon during the Association of Southern Biologists (ASB) annual meeting at the University of Alabama at Huntsville on April 13-16, 2011. The SAC awarded two \$100 travel awards to help support students presenting wetlands research at the ASB meeting. The 2011 recipients were: 1) Alex T. Fotis (University of Louisiana at Monroe): Living on the edge: trees promoting optimal conditions for woody seedling performance, and 2) Lisa D. Brown (University of Louisiana at Monroe): Herpetofaunal survey of Upper Ouachita National Wildlife Refuge in northern Louisiana. This event provides an opportunity to recruit new SWS members and involve existing SAC members in chapter activities. This activity supports the following items in the SWS Strategic Plan: Action 1.4.1, Action 1.4.2, Objective 7.1, and Objective 7.3.



SWS SAC representative Jamie Duberstein giving the ASB travel award to recipients Alex Fotis and Lisa Brown

The SAC implemented a new Student Research Grant program in 2006, annually awarding four \$500 grants to students that are conducting wetland research within the regional boundaries of the SAC. In 2008-09, we increased the award amount to \$750 each, but in 2009-2010, we had to decrease the number of awards to two \$750 awards. SAC applicants follow the guidelines and application deadlines of the SWS program. Our two \$750 award winners for 2011 are 1) Rupesh Bhomia (University of Florida): Accretion And Stability of Phosphorus In Recently Accreted Soils (RAS) in the Stormwater Treatment Areas of the Everglades, and 2) Jaclyn E. Koehn (University of South Carolina): Hydrologic Function Between Upland and Flood Plain Shallow Water Dynamics of Four Hole Swamp Fringe. This activity supports the following items in the SWS Strategic Plan: Object 1.1 - Action 1.1.1, Objective 2.2, and Objective 7.6.

The SAC held an election for Chair and Vice Chair in spring 2011 with two candidates for each position. Hongjun Chen and Christina Uranowski ran for the Chair position and Scott Emery and Kelly Chinnners Reiss ran for the position of Vice Chair. The new Chair and Vice Chair of SAC will be announced at the SAC Chapter Meeting at the SWS Conference in Prague. This activity supports the following items in the SWS Strategic Plan: Objective 7.1 and Objective 7.9.

The SAC continued its commitment to encourage the involvement of students and future generations of wetland scientists by working with two student groups, one at Duke and one at University of Florida. The student wetland group at Duke University is called Duke SAWS (Student Association of Wetland Scientists) and has *Dr. Curtis Richardson* as the Faculty Sponsor. The 'Wetlands Club' at the University of Florida continues to support a variety of activities to involve students in wetland related events and has *Dr. Mark Clark* as the faculty sponsor. The student groups and photos are included on our SWS SAC webpage

(http://www.sws.org/regional/southatlantic/student_chapters.html). These activities supported the following items in the SWS Strategic Plan: Objectives 1.1, 2.1, and 2.2, Objective 4.3 – Action 4.3.1, Objective 7.1, and Objective 7.6 - Action 7.6.1.

The SAC is continuing to sell merchandise with our chapter logo in order to increase revenue and visibility of the chapter. We are selling merchandise with our logo through an online company, CafePress.com. Color or black and white logos (designed by Florida artist Robert Ponzio) are available on apparel, posters, cards, housewares, and bags. The revenue from this program has been used to donate merchandise for silent auctions held by other like-minded organizations. The merchandise can be viewed and purchased online at <http://www.cafepress.com/swssac>. This activity directly supports the following items in the SWS Strategic Plan: Action 7.7.2 and Objective 7.1, and will indirectly support Action 1.1.1, Objective 2.2.2, and Objective 6.3

The SAC had its fifth annual photo competition with winning photos published in a 2011 wetland calendar that was sold online. Photo submissions of southeastern wetlands were solicited from SWS members both from within as well as outside of the SAC chapter. The top twelve photos were chosen by our judges, printed in a calendar, and sold with the rest of our merchandise at CafePress.com. SWS has asked permission to use the SAC calendar images as covers of the Wetlands Journal in coming issues. These efforts have increased the visibility of SWS and SAC and will increase revenue to support SAC programs. This activity supports the following items in the SWS Strategic Plan: Action 7.7.2 and Objective 7.1, and will indirectly support Objective 1.1 - Action 1.1.1, Objective 2.2 – Action 2.2.2, and Objective 6.3.

The SAC website has been updated with easy to find chapter information to keep chapter members informed with news of Chapter and related wetland happenings. Information on all of the Chapter's various grants and awards programs is available online, including current year's application guidelines, deadlines, and past recipient awards. We also have pages for our two student wetland groups (Duke and University of Florida). In addition, we have a SWS SAC facebook page currently with 81 members to further promote communication with SAC members (at: South Atlantic Chapter of the Society of Wetland Scientists). These activities support the following items in the SWS Strategic Plan: Objective 1.2 –Action 1.2.4 and Objective 2.4.

3. Planned activities and actions

SWS Chapters have been asked to submit a summary to the SWS Board for how they plan to use the funds they currently have. The SWS SAC has a good amount of money in our checking account and CD, and expect income from our March 2011 SAC/MAC joint meeting (see section 5). Consistent with our Chapter Mission, we will use those funds to continue to support our student travel and research awards. In addition, we will also be considering the potential of another joint chapter meeting to foster communication on wetland issues and build interest in SWS.

4. Recommendations for activities or action

None.

5. Background information

The South Atlantic Chapter has 479 members (401 paying and 78 life) as of June 2011 (compared to 515 members as of June 2010, 682 members in 2009, and 807 members in 2008). Currently (June 2011) we have \$4091.11 in our checking account and \$7,267.47 in a CD for a total balance of \$11,358.58. The final financial accounting for the March 2011 SAC/MAC joint meeting is still being worked out with Burk (they handled registration for us and accepted funds from one of our sponsors). However, we expect approximately \$3000 from that (both SAC and MAC should each receive about \$3000).

