



FOREST AND WILDLIFE ECOLOGY NEWS



A Newsletter for Dept. of Forest and Wildlife Ecology Staff, Students and Alumni

Vol. 12, No. 1

April 2009

News from the Chair

This will be my last chairman's editorial for the newsletter – on July 1, Prof. Bill Karasov will take over as department chairman. Bill is a long-time member of the wildlife ecology faculty and has an excellent understanding of the programs and staff in the department and college. I am sure that you will all join me in welcoming Bill into his new position. I will return to regular faculty status, at least for a while, and continue teaching and completing some long-neglected manuscripts and projects.

We are also pleased to welcome our newest Assistant Professor, Dr. Adena Rissman, to Madison. Actually, Adena formerly lived in Madison while working for the Wisconsin DNR, so her current position represents something of a homecoming. See the feature on Adena and her plans on page 4.

We are pleased to continue receiving updates from alumni near and far on their professional and personal activities. I cannot begin to tell you how proud the faculty are when learning of the success of former students. We are always pleased to welcome alumni back to Madison (see page 3), but we are most happy to receive e-mails and letters in lieu of personal visits. Please remain connected and let us hear from you at least once in a while.

Finally, I want to thank each and every donor for their support of the department's programs during 2008. The list of contributors on pages 6 and 7 cannot ever be complete, so I apologize if you were inadvertently omitted. In times of tight budgets, your gifts and support make an enormous difference to our teaching and research programs. Thanks for your continuing support.

— Ray Guries, Chair

Alumni Update

The 2000s

Sara Unz (B.S. Recreation 2006) has taken the position of membership services coordinator for the North American Lake Management Society (NALMS—www.nalms.org). Shortly after joining the organization she participated in NALMS' annual symposium at Chateau Lake Louise in Alberta, Canada. (slunz@nalms.org)

Sadie (Gearing) Ulman (B.A. Zoology 2004), who worked closely with Prof. Karasov as an undergraduate, recently sent an update on her current activities. In the Fall of 2008 she began working on a Master's degree at the University of Delaware. Her research focuses on shorebird migration in the Chickaloon Flats, Kenai NWR, Alaska. Her advisor is **Prof. Chris Williams**, also an alumnus of UW-Madison. He received his M.S. in 1996 and Ph.D. in 2001, both in wildlife ecology. He currently is a fac-

ulty member in the Dept. of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware. (Sadie's email is: sadieu@udel.edu and Chris Williams' email is ckwillia@udel.edu)

The 1990s

Nancy (Cervantes) Christel (B.S. Wildlife Ecology 1996) is a WI DNR wildlife biologist in Spooner, Wis. Prior to her current permanent position, Nancy was a student intern for WI DNR Endangered Resources and held several seasonal field positions with WI DNR and other agencies. (nancy.christel@wisconsin.gov)

Art Smith (M.S. Wildlife Ecology 1996) is the Administrator of the Wildlife Damage Management Program for the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks. His program is responsible for responding to predator, nuisance species, and game animal complaints in the state. Beyond the work realm Art is active in the Wildlife Society at *continues on page 2*

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the state, section and international levels. In addition, he is a Master Gardener and Scoutmaster. (art.smith@state.sd.us)

J. Keith Gilles (M.S. and Ph.D. in Forest Economics in 1982 and 1983, respectively) was named Dean of the College of Natural Resources at the University of California, Berkeley. Keith joined the Berkeley faculty 1983 as an Assistant Professor in Forestry and Resource Management and was promoted to Associate Professor and Professor in 1989 and 1999, respectively. (gilless@nature.berkeley.edu)

The 1980s

Terry Droessler (B.S. Forest Science 1981, M.S. Forestry 1983) in recent correspondence mentions an interesting project that takes him to the Queen Charlotte Islands just off the coast of British Columbia. He is working with the Haida Nation on long-term growth projections to achieve high grade cedar logs. The logs must be at least 50 ft. in length to be used for canoes. Terry estimates this will require a 500 year rotation. (tnkdroses@hughes.net)

Bonnie Brooks Erpelding (M.S. Wildlife Ecology 1988) has made a career shift from a position with Minnesota DNR as a nongame and endangered species biologist to home educating five children, teaching co-op classes in all disciplines, and community activism. (bonrick@juno.com)

The 1970s

Bob Kovar (B.S. Wildlife Ecology 1977) directs the Intercultural Leadership Initiative (ILI), a project he started about 11 years ago that strives “to improve academic and social success for students by reducing racial tensions in schools and promoting cultural understanding through inter-

Alumnus Richard Taber receives Wildlife Society’s highest award

The Wildlife Society has bestowed its highest honor on Dr. Richard Taber, who received the Aldo Leopold Memorial Award at The Wildlife Society’s annual meeting in Miami in December 2008. The award honors Leopold’s legacy by, in turn, honoring an individual whose life work embodies Aldo Leopold’s philosophy of conservation. Dr. Taber earned his M.S. in Wildlife Ecology at the UW-Madison in 1949. He was fortunate to have the opportunity to work with Aldo Leopold prior to Leopold’s death in 1948. Dr. Taber completed his Ph.D. at the University of California-Berkeley in 1951. He has held faculty positions at the University of California-Berkeley, University of Montana, and the University of Washington in Seattle. He has mentored over 100 graduate students who, through Dr. Taber’s educational influence, continue Aldo Leopold’s conservation ideals. Dr. Taber retired from the University of Washington in 1985 and today lives in Salisbury, North Carolina.

cultural experiences,” according to the organization’s web site. ILI serves about 1,000 students in the Lakeland Union School District in northern Wisconsin. Bob and the rest of the ILI project team appear to be doing a great job. In 2008 they received “High Honors” and a \$20,000 award from the Harvard [University] Project on American Indian Economic Development. (bkovar@ilileadership.org) The ILI web site is: <www.ilileadership.org>.

The 1960s

Orrin Rongstad (M.S. 1963, Ph.D. 1965 Wildlife Ecology) retired from the Dept. of Wildlife Ecology in 1990, but remained involved in deer telemetry research in the state until the last of the transmitters quit in the mid 1990s. He also assisted with elk reintroduction in 1995. Orrin says he doesn’t hunt and fish quite as much as in his earlier years. But, weather permitting, he does try to walk nine holes on a golf course five days a week. (ojrongstad@wisc.edu)

◆ In Memorium ◆

David Karnosky (B.S. Forest Science 1971, M.S. and Ph.D. Plant Breeding and Genetics 1972, 1975, respectively) passed away at age 59 on Oct. 24, 2008, in Chassell, MI. David was born in Rhinelander, WI. At the time of his death he was a member of the faculty in the School of Forest Resources and Environmental Sciences at Michigan Technological University in Houghton, MI. David is survived by his wife of 38 years, Sheryl Karnosky of Chassell, MI; two sons, David of Chassell and Jason of Madison, WI; and two brothers, William and Brian, both of Rhinelander, WI.





Recent grads share work world experiences

Guy Smith (seated left) and Dan Schneider (seated right), both department alumni and current employees of Milwaukee County Parks, recently spent time with students talking about their job responsibilities and the path that led them to their current positions.

For some people life after graduation seems like one big question mark—what jobs to apply for, what part of the country to live in, what kind of salary does the job pay, so many possible directions to go and so many choices to make. Students in the Resource-Oriented Recreation Management course taught by Prof. Don Field received a bit of help charting their paths from two alumni of the Recreation Resources Management program who visited their class during the fall semester. Dan Schneider (B.S. 2007), an Arborist with Milwaukee County Parks, and Guy Smith (B.S. 2003), Deputy Regional Manager with Milwaukee County Parks, spent a class period talking about the path that led each of them to their current employment. They also described just what it is they do in their current positions.

Dan spoke first outlining where he has gone between graduation and his current job. Dan grew up in northern Wisconsin and started his college career as a history major. But along the way he decided that a major in Recreation Resources Management would lead to a career more in line with his interests. Prior to his current position Dan worked for Plum Creek Timber Company, Inc. in Forest

County, was an apprentice for the USDA Forest Service at Land Between the Lakes National Recreation Area straddling Kentucky and Tennessee, and was a WI DNR naturalist at Havenwoods State Forest located within the City of Milwaukee. “Diversified duties” seems to best describe what Dan does in his current arborist position. He trims trees, plants trees and shrubs, conducts prescribed burns, and has even been known to lay asphalt, along with a variety of other chores. He says he appreciates the support his employers have given him to further his training and education. For example, his current and previous employers have covered his expenses to obtain his “red card” and wildland fire fighting training, his commercial vehicle operator’s license, and his license to apply herbicides and pesticides. His current employer, Milwaukee County Parks, is providing Dan financial support to earn a degree in business management at Milwaukee Area Technical College.

Guy Smith says that as a kid growing up in Madison, he always wanted to be a park ranger. As he describes his employment history leading to his current position as

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Deputy Regional Manager with Milwaukee County Parks, it appears he's been able to experience the demands park rangers experience and more. Guy held LTE positions with the Dane County Parks Department during his time at the UW-Madison. Following graduation, he took on a challenging apprenticeship at Land Between the Lakes Recreational Area managing the high use Piney Campground and also serving as Acting Facility Manager overseeing a \$700,000 budget. Guy was offered a permanent position with Land Between the Lakes following his apprenticeship, but a newly created Trails Coordinator position with Milwaukee County Parks drew him back to Wisconsin. As he eased into his new position, he jumped from the proverbial frying pan into the fire with tight deadlines for writing a trails network plan and creating a budget as well as communicating with the county executive and county supervisors. Guy has since been promoted to Deputy Regional Manager with even more responsibilities, including hiring staff to fill 16 newly created forestry positions, purchasing equipment, overseeing management of 15,000 acres of land in the park system, coordinating youth volunteers and serving as point person for the media on Milwaukee County recreational matters.

Both Guy and Dan seem content in their current positions, but both emphasize the importance of continuing your education, whether it's getting new certifications, learning new skills at workshops, or taking classes at the university or technical school. That appears to be key to keeping their jobs interesting, challenging, and fun.

Faculty Feature. . .

Adena Rissman joins the F&WE faculty

Assistant Professor Adena Rissman joined the Department of Forest and Wildlife Ecology in January of this year. She completed her Ph.D. and a postdoctoral position in the Department of Environmental



We welcome Assistant Professor Adena Rissman, to the Department of Forest and Wildlife Ecology. Prof. Rissman completed her Ph.D. and a postdoc at University of California, Berkeley prior to her appointment here.

Science, Policy, and Management at University of California, Berkeley. Prior to that she earned a B.A. from the University of Texas at Austin in the Plan II Liberal Arts Honors Program with a concentration in Environmental Studies. Her Ph.D. research examined conservation strategies on private land, with a particular focus on conservation easements. Prof. Rissman investigates the management, conservation, and sustainable use of forest and range ecosystems, addressing the social and ecological drivers and outcomes of conservation strategies at the landscape scale. A combination of methods, including spatial analysis, document analysis, and interviews, has contributed to a greater understanding of the drivers of land use change, new models of governance over private

lands, and institutional approaches to adaptive management and monitoring. Her work ranges from national studies to regional analyses in Wisconsin forests and California oak woodlands and grasslands.

A homecoming of sorts

Prof. Rissman had ties to Madison prior to her joining the faculty. Before graduate school, she enjoyed living in Madison and working as a state forest planner for the Wisconsin DNR and as a naturalist at the Aldo Leopold Nature Center. Prof. Rissman's teaching interests include natural resource policy, science and decision making, and public and private land conservation. She looks forward to getting reacquainted with Madison. She enjoys bicycling, cross-country skiing, and canoeing with her partner Carey.



Karasov takes over as department chair July 1

The votes are in and Prof. William Karasov will take over as chair of the Dept. of Forest and Wildlife Ecology on July 1, 2009. Prof. Karasov joined the UW-Wisconsin faculty in 1985 after completing a post doctoral associateship at UCLA. He also earned his Ph.D. in Biology from UCLA and his undergraduate degree in Biology at the



William Karasov

University of Minnesota. Prof. Karasov's research focuses on the physiological ecology of terrestrial vertebrates, especially the ecological implications of how they process energy, nutrients, and toxins. Prof. Karasov takes the department chair reins from Prof. Ray Guries, who has served as chair since July 2002.

SAF continues accreditation of Forest Science major

The Department of Forest and Wildlife Ecology is pleased to announce that

the Society of American Foresters (SAF) will continue its accreditation of our Forest Science undergraduate major through the year 2017. An SAF review team spent several days in the department in the fall of 2008 scrutinizing all aspects of the Forest Science major to make sure our program meets SAF standards. In continuing the Forest Science accreditation, the SAF noted our program's "continued dedication to excellence in forest resources education."

19-year experiment provides answers on oak regeneration problem

Oak regeneration failures have been a chronic and puzzling problem in much of eastern North America for the past 60 years, a trend that does not bode well for the hardwood industry or a number of important wildlife species. In 1985 Professors Craig Lorimer and Ray Guries and then-graduate student Dan Pubanz set up a long-term, replicated experiment in the Kickapoo Valley to compare the effects of several silvicultural treatments with those of the prevailing logging practices typical of small, private woodlots. The experiment was recently reactivated and became the basis for a thesis for M.S. student Nick Povak. After 19 years, the contrast between treated and untreated plots was dramatic. Stands harvested as commercial clearcuts became overrun by a wide variety of non-oak species, many of low economic value. The most successful treatments were shelterwood cuts that included removal of understory competitors more than 5 feet tall. Underplanting of oak seedlings was also essential on the more productive sites. Oaks that successfully reached the canopy now number from 60-365 per acre depending on the site. Results were published in the November 2008 issue of *Canadian Journal of Forest Research*. The project was partly funded by the Kickapoo Valley Reforestation Fund, a bequest of Ralph Nuzum to the University of Wisconsin Foundation.

Before (top photo) and after (bottom photo) shelterwood cut-understory removal treatment at one of the experimental oak regeneration sites in 1985 in the Kickapoo Valley. By 2004, this treated site had 365 oaks per acre in the dominant crown classes.





Thomas Lillesand named honorary ASPRS member

Professor Emeritus Thomas Lillesand has been named an Honorary Member of the American Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ASPRS), the highest award an ASPRS member can receive. Prof. Lillesand is an Emeritus faculty member of the Department of Forest and Wildlife Ecology, as well as the UW-Madison's Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies and the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering. ASPRS's Honorary Membership recognizes individuals who have provided distinguished service to ASPRS and/or who have attained distinction in advancing the science and use of the geospatial information sciences. Lillesand retired from the UW-Madison in 2006 and continues to consult on a part-time basis.

Langston receives award, grants, date with CNN

Professor Nancy Langston received the 2009 Leopold-Hidy Award from the American Society for Environmental History for writing the best article in the journal *Environmental History* in 2008. Her article is titled, "The Retreat from Precaution: Regulating Diethylstilbestrol (DES), Endocrine Disruptors, and Environmental Health. One member of the journal's editorial board wrote: "The topic and the prose lured me into reading this piece as soon as I received the January issue in the mail. But it was Nancy's keen analytic mind that kept me engrossed, and ultimately it was the high level of her argumentation that elevated it above the other fine essays of 2008." Another wrote: "Its focus is on the historical dimension, but it is really the perfect primer for policymakers. I hope some of her ideas find their way into

Thank you to those who donated to Forest & Wildlife Ecology in 2008

We take this opportunity to thank all of you folks who made a donation to the Department of Forest and Wildlife Ecology in 2008. We greatly appreciate your support and interest in our department, programs, and students. The funds are sometimes tagged for a specific use. Other donations support scholarships, educational activities, student attendance at professional meetings, and special development projects. Thank you to all of our 2008 donors listed below.

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the Obama administration's health policies." Langston's forthcoming book, *Toxic Bodies: Endocrine Disruptors and the Lessons of History*, is scheduled for publication by Yale University Press in January 2010. A television crew will visit Madison later this month to interview Langston for an hour-long special with Dr. Sanjay Gupta on toxic chemicals in

our everyday lives that will appear on CNN this spring. In addition, Langston received a fellowship from the American Philosophical Society and a research grant from the UW-Madison Graduate School to support her work on another book, this one about the environmental history of boreal forests. For further details, visit her web page: <http://www.nancylangston.net/>



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We will continue to mail a paper copy to alumni and friends who prefer this format.

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