

Ecology & Evolution Graduate Program Newsletter

May-June 2016

Previous newsletters may be found at:
<http://rci.rutgers.edu/~deenr/news.html>

**Please don't be shy about sending in material for the newsletter!
Keep those emails, cards, letters, and social media posts coming! Send
your news and accomplishments to pjmorin@rci.rutgers.edu.**

Congratulations!

- **Dr. Siobain Duffy** and **Dr. Ning Zhang** have been named as Chancellor's Scholars at Rutgers.
- Three of our graduate program faculty were recognized at a ceremony convened by RU President Robert Barchi to honor faculty excellence:

Susman Award for Excellence in Teaching—**Dr. Lena Struwe**

Board of Trustees Research Fellowships for Scholarly Excellence—**Dr. Yana Bromberg**
and **Dr. Olaf Jensen**.

- **Judy Weis** received the Merit Award from the Society of Wetland Scientists, at their meeting in Corpus Christi, TX.

Student Grants:

The E&E Small Grants Program

Each year, graduate students in the Ecology and Evolution Program apply for internal small grants to help support their research. Members of the E&E Executive Committee provide merit reviews of short proposals submitted by the students, and awards are made based on the scores of those reviews. Every year, there are more requests for funding than can be met with our limited resources.

The E&E Small Grants Program is mostly supported by donations made by program alumni, friends, and faculty. Donations of any amount to this fund are crucial to maintain this important effort. Donations can be made online at the program webpage at <http://ecoevo.rutgers.edu/>. To donate, click on the link that says **Make A Difference: Support E&E**. Alternatively you can send a check made out to Rutgers University, with a note designating the gift for the Ecology and Evolution Graduate Program (mailed to Marsha Morin, Ecology and Evolution Graduate Program, 14 College Farm Road, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NY 08901). The Charlie Kontos Memorial Fellowship is made possible by the generosity of the family of Charlie Kontos. The Ted Stiles Memorial Grant is augmented by funds raised by our graduate students through the activities of their graduate student association (the ECOGSA).

Recipients of E&E Small Grants:

1. **Michael Acquafredda** - \$1000; Topic: "Interactions between *Crepidula fornicata* and *Crassostrea virginica* in Delaware Bay"
2. **LaShanda Williams** - \$1000; Topic: "Exploring oral bacterial diversity in early 20th century European immigrants and New York City Residents"
3. **Michael Roswell** - \$1000; Topic: "Do male and female bees forage on the same flower species?"
4. **Ariel Kruger** - \$1000; Topic: "Inducible defenses in *Hyla andersonii* tadpoles"

Recipient of the Charlie Kontos Memorial Fellowship in Environmental Conservation:

Rita Grunberg - \$1500; Topic: "Intraspecific Variation in Host-Parasite Power Laws"

Recipient of the Ted Stiles Memorial Grant:

Jennifer Blake-Mahmud - \$1500; Topic: "Temporal, spatial, and environmental dimensions of variable sex expression in striped maple."

Hutcheson Memorial Forest Summer Grants

Students who do research at Hutcheson Memorial Forest (HMF) also have access to HMF grants to help support their work. Students who receive these grants are expected to help with the annual sampling of the Buell-Small Succession Study, which has monitored the course of secondary succession in experimental plots at HMF since 1958. Funds for these grants come from the operating budget of HMF.

This year's recipients of HMF Summer Grants are:

Jeff Brown (from the Lockwood lab)

Ariel Kruger (from the Morin Lab)

Max Piana (from the Handel Lab)

Lauren Poster (from the Handel Lab)

Colleen Smith (from the Winfree Lab)

Media:

Steven Handel and **Steward Pickett** were interviewed for a feature about Hutcheson Memorial Forest which aired on NPR-Philadelphia, WHYY, 90.0 FM, on Friday May 20 at 10 a.m. The show can be found on their website, whyy.org.

Student Achievements and Activities:

Dan Clark was accepted by and will participate in a program in Bordeaux, France, through the Centers of Excellence Program called "Ecology and Global Changes

Transitions:

Congratulations to:

Samantha Gilbert on the successful defense of her Preliminary Proposal on June 7, 2016.

Jason Morson on the successful defense of his Preliminary Proposal on May 13, 2016

LaShanda Williams on the successful completion of her Qualifying Exam on May 9, 2016

Agnesa Redere on the successful completion of her Qualifying Exam on May 9, 2016.

Jennifer Hoey on the successful completion of her Qualifying Exam on May 6, 2016.

Paulina Arancibia on the successful completion of her Qualifying Exam on May 5, 2016.

Alex Safiq on the successful completion of her Qualifying Exam on May 4, 2016.

Alumni News:

Jeremy Feinberg (Ph.D. 2016, Advisor Joanna Burger) has been selected for an appointment as a Smithsonian Institution Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan Fellow awarded through the James Smithson Fellowship Program at the National Museum of Natural History (NMNH) and the National Zoological Park (NZIP). Jeremy will be working with Kevin de Queiroz (NMNH) and Jessica Deichmann (NZIP) .

Jeremy's project will involve a conservation-based study that uses bioacoustics and the extensive specimen collection at NMNH to broadly explore the *Rana pipiens* (leopard frog) species complex throughout the eastern US. This project includes field and lab components that will combine resources and expertise from both NMNH and SCBI to look across the vast distributions of four cryptic congeners—species that look similar to one another—to examine degrees of variation in acoustic-call features and specimen morphology.