



LIFE SCIENCE NEWS

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April 28, 2006

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Need a break before finals, or just want to celebrate the arrival of spring? The Alaska Chamber Chorale will present their annual spring concert on Thursday, May 4 at 8 p.m. in the Charles W. Davis Concert Hall, with a program featuring a refreshingly eclectic mix of songs from around the world. An informal reception will follow in the Great Hall. Cost is \$10 for adults, \$8 for students/seniors/military; no charge for children under 12. Tickets are available through Hoitt's Music, College Floral, Artworks, the UAF Music Department, Chorale members, or at the door.

Biology and Wildlife Department GSA Meeting
Tuesday, May 2nd, 1-2 PM, 201 Irving I.
Contact: Haley Lanier, fthcl1@uaf.edu

Dr. Christine Cuyler from the Greenland Institute of Natural Resources will present a seminar at 12:00 in 417 IARC on Monday 1 May. Please contact Dorothy Parkerson (fndrp@uaf.edu) to arrange a meeting with Dr. Cuyler on Monday or Tuesday.

West Greenland caribou explosion: What happened? What about the future?

Abstract: The 1993 caribou (*Rangifer tarandus groenlandicus*) estimate was 7-9,000 animals. Nine years later the estimate was ca 140,000. Caribou have no natural predators in West Greenland. When combined with their high fertility and recruitment, this would suggest that overabundance might be their greatest threat. Several boom and crash cycles of caribou in West Greenland have been noted since the 1700's. The 2005

and 2006 population estimates indicate decreasing abundance and poor recruitment in two of the major stocks. A new crash may occur in the near future. Given stocking densities are three to six-times the recommended target value considered sustainable; we expect strong competition between individuals for available food resources. If the stocks are allowed to continue at their current size or increase further, there is a clear risk of range overgrazing and trampling. Unsustainable range use may compromise the future health and viability of caribou stocks in West Greenland. Regardless of management initiatives taken now, population crashes may be inevitable for some West Greenland herds within the foreseeable future, but accurate predictions about herd trends are impossible. To understand approaching developments the caribou and their range must be studied within the wider context of global warming and associated climate change.

Biosketch

Christine Cuyler: Employed since 1996 as research scientist at the Greenland Institute of Natural Resources, Department for Mammals & Birds, Nuuk, Greenland. Responsible for population assessment of caribou (*Rangifer tarandus* ssp.) and muskoxen (*Ovibos moschatus*) in Greenland, and for providing management advice to the Greenland Home-rule government.

New IAB staff positions: The IAB business office would like to announce that **Maria Russell** has accepted the account technician position with the Specialized Neuroscience Research Program program. Maria will continue to work with IAB in Irving I. As part of her assignment Maria will be assisting the fiscal office on special projects related to NIH grants and working with the neuroscience faculty, staff, and students on Phase II of the SNRP grant.

LIFE SCIENCES SEMINAR

Blair Wolf

University of New Mexico

Avian community ecology in a hot desert; abiotic drivers and biotic interactions

Elvey Auditorium

May 5, 3:30pm

Also, please welcome **Alyssa Moehle** as the new IAB business office front desk administrator. Maria will be training Alyssa over the next few weeks to make the transition as smooth as possible. Congratulations to Maria and Alyssa for their promotions.

\$\$ GRANTS AND AWARDS \$\$

Aren Gunderson
2006 recipient of the
Burney Dunn Memorial Award

Falk Huettmann and Hector Douglas III
UA Foundation
Monitoring Environmental change in avian food webs of
the northern Bering sea.
\$15,000

📖 NEW FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES 📖

2nd Annual UA Biomedical Research Conference
Department of Biological Sciences
University of Alaska Anchorage
May 22-23, 2006

The Department of Biological Sciences (UAA) and the Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Program (UAF) announce the 2nd Annual University of Alaska Biomedical Research Conference (UABRC) to be held May 22-23 on the University of Alaska Anchorage campus.

Graduate, undergraduate and faculty research in the biomedical and biochemical sciences will be featured in this 1 ½-day conference. Abstracts for both talks and posters are welcomed. Registration is free for students and \$50 for other participants, and covers meeting attendance and meals.

The deadline for registration and abstract submission is:
May 5, 2006

To register and submit an abstract, please go to:
<http://hosting.uaa.alaska.edu/afjek/Pages/UABRC.html>
Registration is required even if you do not wish to present. All students are encouraged to participate and present their research results.

Housing is available on the UAA campus for attendees. Travel awards for this conference are available through Alaska INBRE. Please see <http://www.alaska.edu/inbre/funding/students/index.html> for application forms and instructions.

For more information contact:

Dr. Jocelyn E. Krebs, UAA Department of Biological Sciences

Email: afjek@uaa.alaska.edu Phone: 907 786 1556

Applications are being accepted for the **Jack R. Luick Memorial Travel Fund** from students seeking limited support (generally \$500 - \$1,000) for travel to upcoming scientific conferences in 2006 and 2007.

Qualifications: Enrolled as a graduate student at UAF, in good academic standing, and pursuing a course of study in nutritional or physiological ecology of ungulates.

Preference will be given to students presenting papers at international conferences.

The application should include: A letter from the student to the fund's Selection Committee summarizing education, experience, research interests and career goals, a letter of support from the student's major professor, a conference agenda or synopsis, title and abstract, if available, of the paper to be presented, and an itemized travel budget. Submit entire packet to: Scholarship Coordinator, UAF Financial Aid, 105C Eielson Bldg., PO Box 756360, Fairbanks, AK 99775
Deadline: Oct 15, 2006 for travel through April 30, 2007

Graduate Student Travel Grants: Sponsored by The Comparative Nutrition Society. The Comparative Nutrition Society (CNS) will make two travel awards for the 2006 Conference: The 6th Symposium of the Comparative Nutrition Society will be held from August 4 through August 9 at the Keystone Resort Conference Center, Keystone Colorado. The symposium will begin with an opening reception on the evening of August 4, 2006 and close with an informal banquet on the evening of August 9, 2006.

The Susan Crissey Memorial Scholarship will recognize student research in captive animals, and **The Malcolm Ramsey Memorial Scholarship** will recognize student research in field animals. Recipients will have their CNS meeting registration fees waived and will receive a \$1,000 honorarium. **NOTE: To apply, students must be a member of CNS (you can join at www.cnsweb.org) and submit an abstract of their research and their CV by May 12.** Abstracts will be judged based on scientific merit and their potential to make an innovative and exciting contribution to the field of comparative nutrition.

Graduate Student Presentation Awards (GSPA): Three awards of \$500 each will be given in recognition of the highest quality oral and poster presentations. Presentations will be judged based on style, scientific merit, and their contribution to the field of comparative nutrition. For more details contact the CNS at

www.cnsweb.org or contact Robert G. White at ffrgw@uaf.edu. (Bob White is a past President of the CNS; several IAB graduate students have previously won the GSPA; the travel scholarships are new awards this year).

→→TRAVEL→→

- **Amy Carroll**, 4/28-5/21, to Chicago and Boston for fieldwork.
- **Brad Griffith**, 4/24-5/12, to Railholler, MO to attend the 12th Annual Wild Turkey Research & Management Workshop.
- **Nick Hubalik**, 4/24-5/4, to Y-K Delta region for data collection.
- **Dave Klein**, 4/26-5/3, to Homer and Anchorage for meeting with Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge biologists and UAA faculty re: Bering Sea island ecology.
- **Joe Margraf**, 4/27-5/13
- **Dave McGuire**, 4/29-5/9
- **Maria Russell**, 5/5-5/10, to Portland for SRA conference.

Quote of the week:

“Pleasure in the job puts perfection in the work.”

Aristotle