

Public Education Committee

Committee Members: K. Bell, D. Byman, G. Feldhamer, D. Ginnett, G. Griffiths, W. Ingle, D. Keiter, V. Mathis, M. Merrick, J. Morris, V. Naples, D. K. Odell, J. R. O'Neill, P. Owen, M. Phillips, L. Schlitter, B. J. Shaw (Chair), S. Sheffield, M. Swanson, K. K. Thorington, and J. Varner.

Mission:

Established as a standing committee by the Board of Directors in 1993, and the mission statement revised in 2009, the Public Education Committee seeks to make information about mammals accessible to grades K-12 in formal education settings and to everyone in informal settings. Committee members foster outreach projects in our Society to raise awareness of mammals for children and adults. The Committee coordinates its efforts with the assistance of other ASM committees, sister societies, informal public educational organizations, as well as elementary, middle, and high school science teachers.

Responsibilities:

The Public Education Committee conducts several activities including the Public Education Partnership (PEP) that is an initiative to encourage activity and visibility of ASM members in their local K-12 classrooms. This initiative was launched at the 1995 Annual Meeting at the University of Vermont with 64 charter members.

Information Items:

(1) Special Recognition:

Sean Maher

We would like to recognize Sean Maher, Chair of Informatics, for his extraordinary work on behalf of ASM's Public Education Committee over the past 24 months. He has been indispensable in working closely with both PEC and Acro Media to bring the database online. Thank you, Sean.

(2) State Lists of Mammals:

(G. Griffiths, W. Ingle, A. Joachim (deceased), M. Merrick, D. K. Odell, J. R. O'Neill, B.J. Shaw, and K.K. Thorington)

The Mammal Species Database went live online on 8 March 2016!

We would like to recognize David Huckabee, Chair of the Mammal Image Library, for his indispensable help in reviewing each of the database entries to look for errors, omissions, or erroneous additions. I am compiling all errors found and will work with Sean Maher to make the appropriate corrections.

Not all fields in the database are active: Zoonotic Disease and Citizen Scientist Projects are placeholders within the database structure. For Zoonotic Disease, we need someone who works in this area and is willing to populate and maintain this field in the database to volunteer on our Committee. For the Citizen Scientist Projects field, Katherine Thorington is developing a way to use this as a citizen scientist clearinghouse on mammals. For more information about the Citizen Scientist Clearinghouse, please see information item 4.

We are developing a voluntary survey to assist students and teachers on the ease of using the database. PEC asked to spend some time with the live database before we develop the survey, and currently it is a placeholder on the website. We will complete the survey this year.

We are going to incorporate the mammal species of Canada into the database. We anticipate completion of this phase by 2017. Our long-term goals are to incorporate Mexico's mammal species, and eventually the mammal species of Central and South America.

(3) Science Fair Certificates:

(B.J. Shaw)

The Public Education Committee provides recognition to students participating in Science Fairs with a project related to mammals by awarding a Certificate of Achievement. Blue Ridge Highlands Regional Science Fair awarded six participants our certificates. We would like to remind the membership to request the Certificate of Achievement if you participate as a judge or an organizer in a science fair, to present to any student who conducts research on mammals. Please email the Chair for the certificate template.

(4) Clearinghouse for K-12 Teachers:

(B.J. Shaw)

We did not have any requests this year for a mammalogist in the classroom.

(5) Citizen Scientist Projects:

(K.K. Thorington (lead), J. Varner)

One of the challenges of education through modern technology is how to get folks off the computer and exploring the natural world. At the 2013 Annual Meeting, K. K. Thorington, J. Varner, and B. Shaw developed and presented a poster to engage ASM membership in this discussion about how we can promote science to everyone, primarily through citizen scientist projects. In general, members indicated that PEC could act as a clearinghouse for citizen scientist projects throughout North America. This would provide one place for the public looking to participate in mammal projects, and in turn increase traffic to the ASM website. We now have a way to incorporate this information in the online database system.

(6) Teacher Workshop

(G. Feldhamer (lead), V. Mathis, P. Owen, L. Schlitter, B.J. Shaw, J. Varner)

PEC is completing the 3 year pilot of the K-5 teacher workshop Tracking Mammals for Elementary Teachers (developed by Joachim (deceased), Owen, Schlitter, and Shaw), and the

MS/HS workshop Population Dynamics for Middle School/High School Teachers (developed by Feldhamer, Mathis, and Varner) this year in Minneapolis at the Bell Museum. Minnesota does not use the Next Generation of Science Standards (NGSS), and we have aligned the activities to the standards of this state.

We now have completed the pilot for our first series of teacher workshops, and we will begin our second series in collaboration with the Conservation Committee, primarily to support the need for large predators (i.e., wolves) in a food web. We will begin this pilot with teachers next year in Idaho.

The PEC mission was charged with supporting ASM membership in reaching out to their communities to develop public education partners. To meet this charge, PEC will hold a workshop for members on how to present the piloted teacher workshops with all curriculum, assessments, the NGSS aligned, and ready to go for members to present to K-12 teachers in their home communities. Our intention is to provide all components for ASM members to present K-12 teacher workshops.

(7) Conservation Education:
(S. Sheffield (lead), B.J. Shaw)

To help support the work of the Conservation Committee, we are in the process of developing our next series of teacher workshops on conservation. As we move this project forward, we will rely on the Conservation Committee members to help us identify the primary points. In addition, we will provide teachers with ideas and projects that they can incorporate into their classroom on conservation issues of import to mammals. With Sean Maher's help, we will establish a webpage to post these ideas.

Action Items:

(1) PEC is working closely with the Program Committee to fold the teacher workshops into the official ASM programs. In addition, we are developing an ASM Member Workshop that we will present in Idaho. The Program Committee will incorporate this second ASM Member Workshop into their budget. They have, therefore, advised us to request the following for the teacher workshops with a maximum of 30 participants attending:

- Registration (via meeting website) - \$600
- Consumables - \$200
- Equipment - \$50
- Total Request - \$850

We will continue to reach out to local science/nature museums to collaborate on these trainings. The museums have provided rooms, AV equipment, and advertising the workshop. The Program Committee will work with us to promote ASM with requesting sponsorships for our meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara J. Shaw, Chair
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