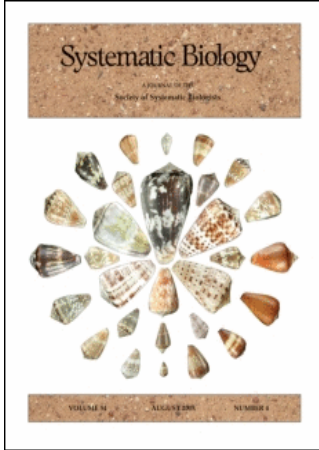


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# The Society of Systematic Biologists' Awards in Systematics

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The Society of Systematic Biologists' (SSB; formerly the Society of Systematic Zoology (SSZ)) turned 50 on 29 December 1997. The first issue of its journal *Systematic Biology* (formerly *Systematic Zoology*) was published in 1952, making the end of 2001 the completion of the 50th anniversary of the journal. The 15th anniversary produced a brief history of SSZ (Yochelson, 1966) and the 25th anniversary was marked by the publication of a review article (Blackwelder, 1977) and the establishment of the Ernst Mayr Award. In honor of our 50th anniversaries, as a further step toward playing a more active role in the systematics community, and in recognition that graduate students embody the future of systematics, the Society has decided to increase the support of systematic research. As a result, during the past two years the Society has organized and expanded its awards. Prior to 1997 the SSB had only one award, the Ernst Mayr Student Award. In 1998 the Society established the "President's Award for Excellence in Systematics" and the "Graduate Student Research Award," and in 1999 we recognized the first recipients of the "Publisher's Award for Excellence in Systematic Research." All recipients receive a monetary award as well as a certificate. The names of the winners are announced during the banquet at the annual meeting and published in *Systematic Biology*.

## *Ernst Mayr Student Award in Systematics*

In 1977 (Anonymous), the following announcement was published:

Ernst Mayr Student Award in Systematics. With the object of encouraging students to pursue matters of general significance for systematics, an Ernst Mayr Award will be given at the Annual Meeting of the Society of Systematic Zoology for an outstanding presentation by a student. Conditions of the award will be as follows:

a. The paper shall be given by an accredited student (graduate or undergraduate) and member of the Society at a regular scheduled session of the Annual Meeting of the Society,

b. The student paper shall be scheduled by the Program Chairman of our Society according to the same standards that apply to professional papers,

c. The student paper, to qualify for the award shall deal, at least in part, with matters of general significance for systematics (plant or animal) and these matters of general interest (theory, philosophy, methodology, etc.) shall be specified in the formal presentation,

d. The student papers shall be judged by an Award Judge or Committee appointed by the Council at the time of our Annual Meeting (or before),

e. The student presenting the winning paper shall be encouraged to submit a manuscript on the subject of his talk for publication in *Systematic Zoology*,

f. The award shall be announced at the Business Meeting of the Society and shall consist of the sum of \$150 and a set of the available back issues of *Systematic Zoology*.

Although some things have changed (e.g., the monetary award is now \$500), much of the original intent of the award remains the same.

The current constitution of the Society states, "The committee {Ernst Mayr Award in Systematic Biology Committee} shall select the outstanding paper presented at the annual meeting by a student member of the Society or a member who has received the Ph.D. degree within the last 15 months." The committee consists of several members of the Society who are appointed by the President, but usually have been recommended by the Chair of the Committee. Whenever possible at least one member of the committee is a former winner of the award.

The paper may be co-authored; however, it is understood that the ideas, data, and conclusions presented are primarily and substantially the work of the student presenting the paper, and the intention is that that person will be senior author on the

published version of the paper. Occasionally the award is given to two separate students when the committee cannot make a decision between two finalists. Students should indicate their desire to compete for the award in the appropriate place on the "Call for Papers" form for the annual meetings. The papers will be judged on originality, scientific rigor, thoroughness of the analyses, clarity of organization and presentation, presentation style (oral and visual elements), and the general significance of the research. Particular attention will be paid to the broader context of the work. Because abstracts are not required, the title of the paper submitted should clearly indicate the relevance to systematics. Presentations focusing on other areas of biology (ecology, behavior, genetics, populations or molecular biology, etc.), those that lack a strong systematics emphasis, and previous winners of the award, are not eligible.

Since its inception, the Ernst Mayr Award has been given to 24 individuals, 9 of whom are women. Currently, the winner receives \$500 and a set of the available back issues of the journal. For many years no one kept track of the recipients of this award. During the last year, with the help of many individuals, we have tracked down all of the past winners of the Award and have assembled a complete list of the winners with their brief biographies in Table 1.

Upon examining the previous winners, it has been of interest to see if the award has succeeded in its original object of "encouraging students to pursue matters of general significance for systematics." Many winners have gone on to distinguished careers in systematics, and certainly a number of the winners have served SSB in a variety of ways, such as editor (Cannatella), officers, (Cannatella, de Queiroz) and councilors (Calabrese, Coddington, de Queiroz, Frost, O'Grady, Huelsenbeck) as well as committee members. Over the years, quite a number have published and continue to publish in our journal and nearly all are still members of SSB. It is satisfying that three of the previous winners (Cannatella, Edwards, and de Queiroz) have gone on to help run systematics programs that have produced students who have won the award or to mentor post-

doctorate or predoctorate students who have won the award. The Universities that have produced the most winners are the University of Kansas with five, and the University of Texas, Austin, with four. Whether or not winning the award actually encouraged these individuals cannot be answered without further investigation, but it seems obvious that at the very least it has helped identify people who contribute to the systematic community in a variety of ways.

One startling fact is that the male recipients (15) of this award have fared better in the academic community than have most of the female recipients (9). There are exceptions to this (e.g., Caira); however, on the whole, the finding stands. Why this should be so is difficult to say and is not the purpose of this study, but it is a question that needs further investigation. Informal comments by some of the early female recipients of the award have indicated that the pressures involved in "dual career couples," the demands of academia, perceived inequality in treatment, and the time involved in managing a family made it impossible to continue in the traditional academic track. It is hoped that recent changes in attitudes in University administrations and faculty will allow more recent recipients of the award to avoid some of the same pitfalls.

#### *President's Award for Excellence in Systematics*

The "President's Award for Excellence in Systematics" is given at the discretion of the President of the Society on the recommendation or approval of the Council. The recipient should have made a major contribution to systematic research, or in some way moved systematic research into a new area. In so doing, the recipient's work should have benefited many different aspects of systematics. The award is not given every year but rather is presented when an individual is universally recognized for his or her unique contribution to systematic research. In 1998 the award was presented to its first and so far only recipient, David Swofford, Smithsonian Institution. Swofford was recognized for his "excellence in

TABLE 1. Winners of the Ernst Mayr Student Award in Systematics, 1976–1999.

Year	Name	Advisor(s)	Institution (at time of award)	Degree completed	Postdoc advisor	Postdoc institution	Current occupation	Current location	Current member
1976	Diane Calabrese	C. W. Schaefer	Univ. of Connecticut	Ph.D.	—	—	Writer	Silver Spring, MD	no
1977	Sharon Simpson	J. Cracraft	Univ. of Illinois at Chicago	Ph.D.	—	—	Professor	Brower Community College, FL	no
1978	no award	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1979	Sadie Coats	N. Johnson	Univ. of California, Berkeley	M.S.	n/a	n/a	Deceased	—	—
1980	no award	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1981	Kevin de Queiroz	R. Etheridge	San Diego State Univ. (M.S.)	Ph.D. (UC Berkeley)	A. Leviton R. Drewes J. Gauthier	California Academy of Sciences	Research scientist & curator	NMNH, Smithsonian Institution	yes
1982	Jonathan Coddington	H. W. Levi	Harvard Univ.	Ph.D.	—	—	Research scientist & curator	NMNH, Smithsonian Institution	yes
1983	Janine Caira	M. Pritchard	Univ. of Nebraska	Ph.D.	—	—	Professor	Univ. of Connecticut	yes
1983	Richard O'Grady	D. Brooks	Univ. of British Columbia	Ph.D.	D. Hope	NMNH, Smithsonian Institution	Executive director	American Institute of Biological Sciences	yes
1984	Eldredge (Biff) Bermingham	J. Avise	Univ. of Georgia	Ph.D.	C. Aquadro	Cornell Univ.	Research scientist	Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, Panama	yes
1985	David Cannatella	L. Trueb	Univ. of Kansas	Ph.D.	D. Wake	UC Berkeley	Curator & professor	Texas Memorial Museum, Univ. of Texas, Austin	yes
1986	Linda Dryden (Chandler)	L. Trueb	Univ. of Kansas	M.S.	n/a	n/a	Scientific illustrator	Millidgeville, GA	no
1987	Darrel Frost	W. Duellman	Univ. of Kansas	Ph.D.	—	—	Associate Dean of Science for Collections	American Museum of Natural History	yes
1988	Linda Ford	L. Trueb	Univ. of Kansas	Ph.D.	C. Myers	American Museum of Natural History	Curatorial associate	American Museum of Natural History	yes
1989	Richard Cloutier	H.-P. Schultze	Univ. of Kansas	Ph.D.	P. L. Forey	Natural History Museum, London	Research scientist & teacher	Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique & Univ. du Quebec a Rimouski	no

TABLE 1. Extended.

Year	Name	Advisor(s)	Institution (at time of award)	Degree completed	Postdoc advisor	Postdoc institution	Current occupation	Current location	Current member
1990	no award	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1991	John Huelsenbeck	D. Hillis J. Bull	Univ. of Texas, Austin	Ph.D.	M. Slatkin D. Swofford	UC Berkeley NMNH, Smithsonian Institution	Assistant professor	Univ. of Rochester	yes
1992	Scott Edwards	M. Slatkin N. Johnson	Univ. of California, Berkeley	Ph.D.	W. Potts E. Wakeland	Univ. of Florida, Gainesville	Associate professor	Univ. of Washington, Seattle	yes
1993	Michael Whiting	J. K. Liebherr	Cornell Univ.	Ph.D.	R. deSalle	American Museum of Natural History	Assistant professor & curator	Brigham Young Univ.	yes
1994	Anna Graybeal	D. Wake	Univ. of California, Berkeley	Ph.D.	D. Hillis	Univ. of Texas, Austin	Graduate student	Psychology, Univ. of Texas, Austin	no
1995	Scott Steppan	B. Patterson	Univ. of Chicago	Ph.D.	M. Carleton M. Braun R. Hoffmann	NMNH, Smithsonian Institution	Assistant professor	Florida State Univ., Tallahassee	yes
1995	Allan Cooper	A. Wilson; G. Chambers	Victoria Univ., Wellington, New Zealand	Ph.D.	R. Fleischier	National Zoological Park, Smithsonian Institution	NERC research fellow & lecturer	Univ. of Oxford	yes
1996	Sharon Messenger	D. Hillis J. Bull	Univ. of Texas, Austin	Ph.D.	C. Rupprecht	Centers for Disease Control & Prevention	Postdoctoral study	Centers for Disease Control & Prevention	yes
1997	Steven Poe	D. Cannatella D. Hillis	Univ. of Texas, Austin	—	—	—	Graduate student	Univ. of Texas, Austin	yes
1998	Jim McGuire	D. Hillis D. Cannatella	Univ. of Texas, Austin	Ph.D.	K. de Queiroz	NMNH, Smithsonian Institution	Assistant professor	Louisiana State Univ.	yes
1998	Hopi Hoekstra	S. Edwards	Univ. of Washington, Seattle	—	—	—	Graduate student	Univ. of Washington, Seattle	yes
1999	Frank E. (Andy) Anderson	J. Pearse	Univ. of, California, Santa Cruz	Ph.D.	D. Swofford J. Noremburg	NMNH, Smithsonian Institution	Assistant professor	Southern Illinois Univ., Carbondale	yes
1999	George Weiblen	M. Donoghue	Harvard Univ.	Ph.D.	G. Bush	Michigan State Univ.	Postdoctoral study	Michigan State Univ.	yes

systematic publications and presentations, and because through his development of the computer program PAUP he has assisted nearly everyone in the systematic community in his/her research." Recipients receive \$1000.

#### *Awards for Graduate Student Research*

In 1998 SSB established the "Awards for Graduate Student Research," which were announced in *Systematic Biology* (Anonymous, 1998). These awards are to assist students in the initiation (first two years) of their systematics projects and in the collection of preliminary data needed by them to pursue additional sources of support. Applicants may be from any country but must be members of SSB, and previous awardees may not reapply. The Graduate Student Research Awards are designed to help ensure the long-term health of the Society by giving students an important reason to join the Society and become involved in its activities.

The Awards Committee (Elizabeth Zimmer, Chair, Lucinda McDade, and V. Louise Roth) designed and set up the first year's competition. Two to three awards will be presented per year at \$1000 each. Applicants are required to submit a curriculum vitae; a brief research proposal, including objectives, methods, significance, and schedule; budget and budget justification; and two letters of recommendation, one being from the student's advisor. The research proposal must clearly state the stage of the proposed research and the current year and status of the student. Both Masters and Ph.D. students are eligible for these funds, and funding is not limited to any particular kind of research, but rather is available for field, museum/herbarium, and laboratory work. A balance in the type of work proposed and the discipline is sought when selecting the awardees. Submissions must be made in triplicate and mailed to the Chair of the Awards Committee and should be postmarked no later than 15 January 2000.

The three winners of the 1999 Student Research Award were Rafe Brown, Jocelyn Hall, and Sarah Smith. Their institution affiliations and project titles are as follows:

Rafe M. Brown  
Department of Zoology and Texas  
Memorial Museum  
University of Texas, Austin  
Austin, Texas 78712 USA

Title: "Systematics, biogeography and the importance of direct development in the evolution of platymantine ranids (Anura: Ranidae)."

Advisor: D. Cannatella, University of Texas, Austin

Jocelyn Hall  
University of Wisconsin, Madison  
132 Birge Hall, 430 Lincoln Dr.  
Madison, Wisconsin 53706, USA  
Title: "Molecular systematics and floral evolution in the plant family Capparaceae."  
Advisor: K. Sytsma, University of Wisconsin, Madison

Sarah A. Smith  
Evolutionary Biology Unit  
South Australian Museum, North Terrace  
Adelaide, South Australia 5000, Australia  
Title: "Phylogeny of the Australian scincid lizard genus."  
Advisor: M. Hutchinson, South Australia Museum and the University of Adelaide

#### *Publisher's Award for Excellence in Systematic Research*

The "Publisher's Award for Excellence in Systematic Research," sponsored by Taylor & Francis, Inc. has been established by our publisher (hereafter referred to as the Publisher's Award). The award is presented to the two best articles based on student research that were published in *Systematic Biology* during the previous year. The winning papers must be based on student research and the lead author must have been a student at the time the research was conducted. Each Publisher's Award is \$500 and they are presented at the annual meeting to the students who are the lead authors on the papers. If an article is co-authored by two or more students then special arrangements can be made to ensure appropriate recognition of all. The award was initiated with Volume 47 (1998) and the first award was presented at the 1999 annual meeting. The winners are selected by a committee

consisting of the President and the Editor(s), who endeavor to choose papers that combine high-quality original research and innovative ideas.

The two winning papers of the Publisher's Award for 1999 were written by Sean Graham and Sharon Messenger (with Jim McGuire). When papers are co-authored, the award is given to the senior author unless both authors are students and contributed equally, as was the case with Messenger and McGuire. The winning papers and the authors and their present institutions are listed below.

Title: "Phylogenetic Congruence and Discordance Among One Morphological and Three Molecular Data Sets from Pontederiaceae." *Systematic Biology* 47:545–567, 1998.

Sean W. Graham

Department of Biological Sciences,  
Biological Sciences Centre, University  
of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada  
T6G 2E9

Advisor: Spencer Barrett, University of  
Toronto

Title: "Morphology, Molecules, and the  
Phylogenetics of Cetaceans." *Systematic  
Biology* 47:90–124, 1998.

Sharon Messenger

Division of Viral and Rickettsial Diseases  
MS G-33

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
1600 Clifton Road, Atlanta, GA 30333  
Advisors: D. Hillis and J. Bull, University  
of Texas, Austin

Jim McGuire

Department of Vertebrate Zoology  
National Museum of Natural History  
Smithsonian Institution  
Washington, D.C. 20560

Advisors: D. Hillis and D. Cannatella,  
University of Texas, Austin

The members of SSB are constantly seeking ways to encourage and support students who are interested in systematics; any ideas or suggestions as to what might help to accomplish this should be sent to the current President.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We thank the many people who have helped trace the previous winners of the Ernst Mayr Award, especially Marilyn Hansel, Elizabeth Zimmer, and Paula Mabee.

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