

Newsletter of the AFS Ontario Chapter



AMERICAN FISHERIES SOCIETY
ONTARIO CHAPTER

President's Message



Spring is upon us and the leaves are already sprouting on the trees in my neighbourhood. This is my favourite time of year. Although many of my friends prefer the fall, I prefer the feeling of renewal that spring brings. I spend weekend time watching the rivers in flood in late March and early April and looking for trout fry in late April/May (found some brook trout fry on April 25th).

Rivers do most of their work on their channels at this time of year and for those of us that focus on restoration, it is a time to see how well your previous work is doing and, in some cases, determine what we should have done to help the stream rebuild its infrastructure. Biologists in the past have often focused our attention on the "easy" time of the year, late spring, summer and early fall, for monitoring aquatic environments and our fish populations. However, it is the winter conditions and spring floods that condition our rivers and lakes for the coming year. Understanding how these larger

scale processes affect our ability to manage lakes, rivers and streams and how they affect our fish communities requires a multi-disciplinary approach and integrative thinking. H.B.N. Hynes is considered the father of modern aquatic ecology, with the publication in 1970 of his book, "***The Ecology of Running Waters***". At the University of Waterloo, Hynes drilled into all of us that the "real science" was between the disciplinary silos, not within them. As a professional organization, we have the benefit of inviting anyone that is interested in fish, aquatic environments and habitats to join us and work with us: witness the big success of the various disciplines in the parent organizations, Bioengineering Section. This section is a great place to meet and discuss fisheries issues with professionals from other fields.

We as an organization should also be reaching out to sister professional organizations such as the Canadian Water Resources Association and the Soil and Water Conservation Society to learn new perspectives for working on aquatic systems.

Of course, our major task as a Chapter this year is assisting with the AFS 2008 Annual Meeting in Ottawa. I am very proud of the many members that have stepped up to the plate to assist us with the organization of the Annual Meeting. A number of you volunteered after our request in the last newsletter and Dave Maraldo and I would like to thank you for your help. It is NOT TOO LATE to volunteer to help during the Annual Meeting. Please drop Dave Maraldo (ottawa2008@afs-oc.org) or me a line if you wish to help us at the meeting.

President's Messagecontinued

A major meeting of the organizing committee, the host hotels and Ottawa Congress Centre occurred late last month in Ottawa. One of our members, Ann Rocchi was kind enough to represent the Chapter at the two day meeting and to also provide input from the Raffle Committee as well. Ann has also taken on the job of helping organize the day-care facilities for the Annual Meeting. This year, like in San Francisco last year, the organizing committee is trying to make this conference as green as possible. Chapter member Brenda Koenig is

Chair of the Green Meeting Committee and has developed a number of great initiatives to reduce the carbon footprint of this meeting and to reduce, reuse and recycle. So as you can see, things are moving forward, come out and help and be part of the excitement!

Hope to see you there.

Jack Imhof
president@afs-oc.org

Ontario Freshwater Fishes Life History Database

The AFS-OC is proud to be affiliated with the Ontario Freshwater Fishes Life History Database (OFFLHD). Once hosted by the Ontario Chapter, the OFFLHD now has its own domain (www.fishdb.ca). This website is an unparalleled source of information concerning the fishes of Ontario. Researchers, consultants and students alike agree this interactive searchable database provides a valuable resource to all those interested in Ontario freshwater fishes.

The OFFLHD is a fully searchable database for all Ontario and adjacent Great Lakes freshwater fishes including introduced, extirpated and extinct species. It contains current information pertaining to life history, habitat, size and age, distribution, status, reproduction and nomenclature for 150 species, 3 subspecies and 2 established hybrids. The website also includes photographs, range maps, notes, references, glossary of terms and related web links.

Try it out for yourself by clicking the OFFLHD logo on the Ontario Chapter homepage, or directly by visiting <http://www.fishdb.ca>. Explore, learn and enjoy.

The Ontario Freshwater Fishes Life History Database was created and is maintained by Rob Eakins, webmaster@afs-oc.org.



Not an Ontario Chapter Member?

Join now and show your support in Ottawa

- Develop your professional networks and keep current on fisheries issues
- Collaborate, foster new ideas, volunteer Get involved with grass roots fisheries projects
- Take advantage of continuing education and training opportunities, student assistance and awards

For more information or to join just check the **Ontario Chapter** box next time you renew your AFS membership or contact Bill Gardner at membership@afs-oc.org.

AFS 2008 Update

Planning for the 138th Annual Meeting is moving quickly and accelerating! But before panic sets in needlessly, I thought it would be appropriate to look back to survey where we have been; then look forward to what's coming at us.

First and foremost it's all about the team! From the few of us who started on this path through all those who joined along the way, even in the last few months, you have been phenomenal. I've attached the Committee Chairs names and portfolios, and I know they will pass on their thanks to their committee members.

Tasks accomplished (in no particular order):

- Symposia, contributed papers, posters, accepted, authors notified
- AFS Web posting, major update, May 1st
- Day Care provider (Winners Day Care) in place
- Volunteers continue to come forward – Coordinator (Kelly Lucas) in place
- June supplement (36 pages) to Fisheries Magazine submitted to AFS
- Brochure/Mini Poster and Display completed
- Met target for guest room take-up at Westin = no charge for meeting rooms
- Meeting rooms for technical sessions, and various functions all assigned
- Local Committee Fundraising exceeds targets!
- Registration Bags ordered
- Tours posted on website

Tasks well underway:

- On-line Registration slated for launch May 15th

- Program Guide moving well; June Supplement provides much of the material
- Trade Show layout planning for booths, posters, and entertainment
- Social events including spawning run
- Flash drives (registration gifts) ready to be ordered and loaded with meeting information
- "Greening conference initiatives" - Tree planting to offset carbon footprint for conference, local foods on menus, reduced disposables
- Article submitted on greening conference for Fisheries magazine
- Audio/Video contract in final negotiations

Tasks to focus on:

- Organize "on-site" registration
- Order T-shirts for volunteers, Raffle ticket sellers, committee members, spawning run, and AFS – OC sales
- Social events – confirm menus and numbers
- Local logistics – coffee breaks, signs and banners, Business office
- Communications planning and media relations
- Getting people out to the meeting

Keeping our team happy!

Dave Maraldo
General Meeting Chair
AFS 2008

ottawa2008@afs-oc.org



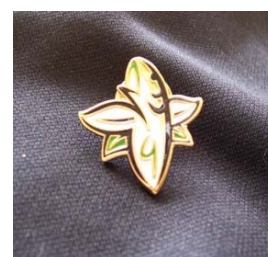
Impress your friends and colleagues - Support your AFS-OC now!

Ontario Chapter [baseball caps](#) and [lapel pins](#) are available for purchase.



Cost: Baseball Cap **\$20.00**
Lapel Pin **\$5.00**

If you would like to place an order for a baseball cap or lapel pin, please contact Heather Lynn (secretary@afs-oc.org).



Fish Web Collaborative

Many groups are collecting fish community and habitat information. Because the data is stored differently, it is difficult to access information on fish communities and habitat necessary to make resource management decisions, test effects of regulations, habitat improvements or other management techniques, and difficult to make comparisons across spatial and temporal scales.

The purpose of the Fish Web Collaborative Project is to establish an understanding of the various fish distribution data holdings, standards and business requirements across agencies. Fish Web's ultimate goal is the creation of a multi-organizational collaborative "data model" based on the results of a survey for the management of Fish Distribution data in Ontario. The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources recently obtained funding from GeoConnections Canada for Phase 1, which aims to develop thematic data standards for fish distribution information and is to be completed by September 2008. Phases 2 and 3 are proposed and aim to publish thematic data on fish distribution in Ontario waterbodies on the internet (Aug 2008 – Aug 2009) and develop a web-based application to enable the community of practice to continue to contribute fisheries data (August 2009-March 2010).

Phase 1 goals and objectives are as follows:

Goals

- Compile a comprehensive list of existing fish data sources;
- Document the essential descriptive and administrative information to support discovery, access and use of existing fish data sources;
- Conduct workshops with users to develop a consensus-based data model which meets the critical needs of most organizations implementing fisheries regulations, habitat improvement and management activities.

Objectives

- Develop a catalogue of the numerous sources of fisheries data currently available from the many stakeholders that collect, store and maintain this information;
- Document the metadata associated with each source of fisheries data, including data quality, associated data collection protocols and data standards;
- Document whether the data is stored in an information management system or simply resides on personal computers;
- Develop consensus among the fisheries community of practice on the critical fisheries data that is required to facilitate fisheries resource decision-making;
- Develop a consensus-based data model for fisheries information;
- Provide recommendations on the priority fisheries data sets to be initially published.

To date, a steering committee has been established composed of representatives from MNR, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Institute for Fisheries Research (Michigan), and Conservation Authorities.



An initial round of Conservation Authority interviews have been completed, with additional interviews planned for universities, Non Government Organizations such as Trout Unlimited, MNR Fish and Wildlife Branch, MNR Great Lakes Branch, MNR's Fisheries Assessment Unit and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.



Science Student Michael Rennie of the University of Toronto Wins Inaugural Graduate Student Leadership Award

U of T Mississauga graduate student Michael Rennie is an ambassador for science with a particular knack for inspiring young people.

“Science is one of those subjects where, particularly in elementary school, it can be hard to engage students because there are a lot of stereotypes—that it’s boring and difficult. But, science is a discovery, and it’s exciting, no matter what age you are,” says Rennie, who is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology.

Rennie’s passion motivated him to establish a U of T Mississauga chapter of the Let’s Talk Science partnership program, a national science literary organization that develops educational programs and brings scientists to classrooms. In recognition of his efforts, Rennie received the Gordon Cressy Student Leadership Award and the Principal’s Student Involvement Award in April at the U of T Mississauga’s 2008 Student Award Reception. At the ceremony, Rennie also won the inaugural Graduate Student Leadership Award for his involvement with the campus’ graduate students’ union.

Now in the final stages of completing his PhD (his thesis is examining the impact of invasive aquatic species such as zebra mussels in the Great Lakes), Rennie arrived at U of T Mississauga in 2001 to work on an MSc in zoology. Recognizing a need for greater science outreach and more volunteer opportunities for graduate students, Rennie attended a Let’s Talk Science summer conference to get information on starting a chapter, secured funding with the help of U of T Mississauga’s vice-president and principal Ian Orchard, and motivated fellow students to become involved.

In his outreach to local schools, Rennie aims “to get children to actively participate in science by doing hands-on activities,” he says. He brought a chiller unit stocked with fish eggs to a kindergarten class in Glen Williams, Ont., so the children could watch fish hatch and then release them into the nearby Credit River. Grade 7/8 students at Peel Alternative School identified different species of salmon in photographs and played a card game he

devised to “make the link between why fish lay so many eggs and how few of those survive to adulthood.”

Similarly, Rennie has demonstrated a “can-do” approach in his numerous student-government positions. Most notably, as a graduate students’ union representative for U of T Mississauga, he helped to bring about administrative improvements that ensure the interests of graduate students on the west and east campuses are better represented.

While maintaining a Grade-A average, Rennie also found time to work as a teaching assistant, write a long list of peer-reviewed journal articles, and host a rock show on CFRE, the U of T Mississauga radio station.

“In life you have to make time for the things you value. Though it’s nice to be recognized, what I’m most proud of is that when I graduate, the things I’ve helped get started are going to be staying.”

Article written by Olena Wawryshyn and Published at <http://www.erin.utoronto.ca/>.



Graduate student Michael Rennie (left) receiving the Principal's Student Involvement Award from vice-president and principal Ian Orchard (Photo Credit: Yan Tam Seguin)

Student Winter Retreat a Great Success

In Spite of Mother Nature, Monica Granados from the University of Toronto weathered the winter storm to attend the 2008 AFS-OC Student Winter Retreat and bring us this report.



The snow accumulated and decreased the rate that cars advanced. Ten hours elapsed and at the eleventh the car and its occupants turned into the driveway of the white house on Lake Opinicon. Inside the house they were unaware of the time. Species names, protocols and terminology were ricocheting off the walls. Twenty-one students from western, central and eastern Ontario institutions had converged at the Queen's University Biological

Research Station to present their research. As morning threatened students retreated for what remained of the night.

Chris Pullen from Golder Associates began the series of presentations the following day. Entitled "Demystifying Environmental Consulting" the presentation offered a thorough treatment of the process and opportunities in the field. The student presentations expounded on research across kingdoms, trophic levels, zones and latitudes towards a comprehensive understanding of aquatic ecology. The



question period provided students feedback and promoted discussion amongst students. The conclusion of the talks ushered in the opportunity to revel in the surrounding landscape. The precipitation that had hindered our arrival earlier now served as the substrate for locomotion. Students in snowshoes and cross-country skis traversed the frozen lake. Below the thick ice was the manifestation of every slide presented hours earlier. The interactions between abiotic factors, conspecifics and species were all being executed. The product of which will be sampled and quantified. The retreat facilitated a connection not only between students with common research interests but also between the cells of data on a spreadsheet and what is

below the ice.

