

Highlights of the 10th annual meeting of the Alaska Entomological Society

by Kathryn Daly¹



Figure 1: Members present at the end of the meeting. Back row, from left: Michael Baldwin, Kathryn Daly, Adam Haberski, Renee Nowicki, Steve Swenson, Jason Moan, Garret Dubois, Steven Burr and Alexandria Wenninger. Front row, from left: Logan Mullen, Isaac Davis, Derek Sikes, Matt Bowser and Roger Burnside.

The tenth annual meeting of the Alaska Entomological Society took place at the Alaska Department of Natural Resources building in Fairbanks on Saturday, February 4th, 2017. We are grateful to Steven Burr of the Forest Health Protection Service for offering us the use of this space. Every year, our annual meetings allow us to exchange information about statewide monitoring efforts, discoveries, and updates on long-running projects and events of potential interest to Alaskan entomologists. In the three years that I've attended, I have always left the meetings awed by the vast range of topics which our membership is involved in. I found this year to be no exception, and thoroughly enjoyed learning about the diverse research that has occurred since our last meeting. It was my favorite meeting yet because of the musical performances of the first and last presentations; for those who were unable to attend, audio recordings and PDFs of all presentations can be found on our website (<http://www.akentsoc.org/>).

Presentations

Matt Bowser's opening presentation, "Willow Rose Cecids via LifeScanner," left us amazed both with his continued progress in documenting the immense diversity of Cecidomyiidae (gall Midges) using COI sequences obtained from LifeScanner kits, and with his talented musicianship

of sharing the research as a song while accompanying himself on guitar! Thank you very much for such an enjoyable start to our meeting, Matt!

Jacque Shade's presentation on the 2016 field season of the Alaska Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey shared the positive news that no Asian Gypsy moths, exotic wood boring bark beetles, or exotic mollusks were found during their intensive survey work across the central and southeastern regions. In the coming 2017 season, the CAPS project will also survey nurseries between Fairbanks and Anchorage for invasive pests.

Next, I shared an update on the Kenelm W. Philip Lepidoptera Collection. In 2016, I had the opportunity to teach 17 people (15 students & 2 technicians) to assist in curating both papered and pinned specimens. As of March 6th, 2017, a total of 24,296 specimens have now been associated with a barcode linking the specimen to its digitized record in ARCTOS (<http://arctos.database.museum>), representing 21% of the Beringian material within Dr. Philip's collection.

Logan Mullen presented a summary of his phylogenetic studies and subsequent revision of the Rove Beetle genus *Phlaeopterus*. He described the distributions of these snowfield-loving beetles, which are under threat of extinction due to climatic warming. Logan's meticulous analyses of both COI data and morphology has resolved multiple species problems which existed within the genus.

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Steven Burr shared an overview of the 2016 Forest Health Protection's pest mapping efforts, beginning with the Northern Spruce Engraver beetle, *Ips perturbatus*. He described efforts to mitigate damage caused by leaf mining sawflies (Tenthredinidae) using an ichneumonid wasp *Lathrolestes thomsoni*. Birch Leaf Roller moths have caused substantial damage to Interior Alaska, as has the Eastern Spruce Budworm, *Choristoneura fumiferana* and the Willow Leafblotch Miner, *Micurapteryx salicifoliella*. Steven also shared his research on leaf gas exchange and water relationships of trees damaged by the Aspen Leafminer. He shared positive news that as of yet, there is no evidence that the Brown Marmorated Stink Bug (*Halyomorpha halys*), a potential agricultural pest, has established within Alaska.

Jason Moan's presentation on the 2016 Forest Insect Impacts in Southcentral Alaska was an excellent overview of the Alaska Division of Forestry's monitoring efforts. Species of interest included the spruce beetle, speckled green fruitworm moth, and the spruce aphid. Insect prevalence was monitored through aerial surveys and ground traps, along with collaborative reports of pest appearances from communities off the road system.

Derek Sikes was the last to present, sharing an overview of the 2016 NPS Centennial Bioblitzes from Alaska's National Parks, where arthropods were collected in Anaktuvuk Pass (within Gates of the Arctic Nat'l Park), Serpentine Hot Springs (in Bering Land Bridge Nat'l Preserve) and Denali National Park. Bioblitzes offer the chance for community members, including children, to participate in the documentation of Alaska's diversity. The Serpentine Hot Springs bioblitz was a collaborative effort between the National Park Service and children from the Seward Peninsula communities of Wales, Shishmaref, and Nome. A highlight of this trip was the discovery of a new species of *Boreus* sp. found by a 13 year old, a momentous occasion which was captured in a song written and performed by Heidi Kristenson, of the Fairbanks NPS. Derek played a

recording of this catchy tune to end his presentation, the conclusion of our general meeting.

Slides and audio for these presentations are available on our website at <http://www.akentsoc.org/archives/1128>.

Business Meeting Highlights

Our business meeting began with a summary from our Treasurer, Roger Burnside, who successfully motioned for a resolution to make the membership dues payment cutoff at the end of the calendar year. If the cutoff is missed, we will give a grace period until March 1, after which the member is dropped from the roster if dues are not received. Our Secretary and Treasurer will set a dues reminder prior to the calendar year deadline, and will send a follow up reminder before the March 1 cutoff.

To continue our Alaska Science Fair awards for children who create an entomology-focused project, this year Alaska Entomological Society members will judge entomological entries in the Juneau, Anchorage, and Fairbanks fairs. Our 2017 editorial board now consists of Roger Burnside, Garrett Dubois, Matt Bowser, Jason Moan and Derek Sikes.

Matt Bowser successfully motioned that we apply digital object identifiers (DOI's) to *AKES Newsletter* articles starting in 2017 through Arctos if specimens are cited within the article. This will allow for a persistent link to our publications and allow them to be directly linked to the specimens as a media item in specimen records.

To conclude our meeting, 2017 officers were elected: Kathryn Daly (President), Garrett Dubois (Vice President), Adam Haberski (Secretary), Roger Burnside (Treasurer).

It is my honor to serve the Society as President for the next year, and I look forward to seeing you at the next annual meeting!

Sincerely,
Kathryn Daly

