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**Pacific Southwest Research Station, Albany, CA 94710**

## Welsh, Lind Find Tongue-Fishing Snake

While studying the Pacific aquatic garter snake (*Thamnophis atratus*), Hart Welsh and Amy Lind found a behavior characteristic—tongue fishing—that had never been previously reported. The snake sits on the bank of a small stream in an ambush position. If it sees a fish approaching, it sticks its tongue on the water surface and wiggles the tips as though to mimic an insect falling into the water.

Hart and Amy are research wildlife biologists at the Station's Redwood Sciences Laboratory, Arcata, and assigned to the Timber/Wildlife Interactions Research Unit there.

"Our studies have centered on the Pacific aquatic garter snake because it is an important predator in aquatic/riparian ecosystems on forested landscapes," says Hart. "This snake is a good indicator of the relative quality of such ecosystems. It preys chiefly on salmonids. It is an interesting animal in its own right—and furthermore, we like snakes."

Since 1986, Hart and Amy have been studying the aquatic garter snake at Hurdygurdy Creek in the Smith River drainage, in northern California. To record the fishing behavior of the snake, they used a video camera in their field studies.

Their findings are reported in the June issue of the *Journal of Herpetology* (vol. 3, no. 1) in an article titled "Evidence of Lingual-Luring by an Aquatic Snake." The subject aroused the interest of another journal, *Natural History*, which titled a news brief "Tongue Fishing" in its June issue. And Hart has received queries about lingual luring from other writers.

Adult aquatic garter snakes are active foragers who feed chiefly on aquatic giant salamanders in streambed substrates. Juvenile snakes use primarily ambush tactics to capture juvenile salmonids along stream margins. While in ambush position, luring snakes extend and hold their tongues out, vibrate the tongue tips on the water surface, apparently to mimic insects to attract and capture young fish.

Other animals and birds, including the alligator snapping turtle and the snowy egret, use their tongue to fish. But the findings by Hart and Amy are the first reported for a snake species.

## Mangold Appointed Forest Health Director in WO

Robert D. Mangold has been named Director of Forest Health Protection, in the FS Washington Office State and Private Forestry Branch. He succeeds Ann Bartuska, who in 1998, was named Director of Forest Management, in the National Forest Systems Branch. For the past year and a half, Rob has been Acting Director of Forest Health Protection and, at the same time, National Forest Health Monitoring Program Manager. He holds a bachelor's degree from the University of New Hampshire,

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## Committee of Scientists Changes Membership

Three new members have been named to the Station's Committee of Scientists. They are Julie Denslow, Armando Gonzalez-Caban Jim Simpson. The group is considered the most prestigious committee at the Station, dealing with issues of science and interests of scientist.

Julie is Team Leader—Non-Indigenous Plant Species Research, at Hilo, Hawaii. Armando is a forest economist with the Fire Management Research Unit, Riverside. Jim is a research meteorologist with the Urban Forestry Research Unit, at Davis. They replace three outgoing members of the Committee—Pat Shea, Davis who retired; Jim Allen, Honolulu; Jim Absher, Riverside. A fourth new member, who will represent Arcata, will replace Bill Zielinski.

Chaired by David Weise, Project Leader—Prescribed Fire/Fire Effects Research, at Riverside, the Committee of Scientists administers the Station's internal competitive grants and publications award programs; serves as liaison between all scientists and the Station Director; advises the Director on scientific issues, problems, and opportunities in research; monitors the scientific climate of the Station; and advises on the needs, opportunities, and methods for enhancing the training, vitality, and productivity of Station scientists.

Members serve 2-year terms. Current members who are continuing on the Committee are Kathy Purcell, Fresno; Matt Busse, Redding; and Dave Weise. Their terms end in 2001. Each PSW research site is represented by at least one member.

## Evans Appointed IMT Group Leader

Charles J. (Chuck) Evans, who for the past 3-1/2 years has been Co-Group Leader—Information Management Technology, drops the "Co" prefix from his title, effective July 2. He has been sharing leadership of the IMT Group with Jim Baldwin, who last month returned full time to his job as leader of the Statistics Unit. In managing Stationwide computer technology activities, Chuck will continue to be located at the Station's Forestry Sciences Laboratory, in Fresno, Calif.

"The vacancy for the IMT position was advertised with several locations listed as potential sites for the Group Leader to be located," says Carol DeMuth, Assistant Station Director—Operations, Research Planning, and Applications. "Management felt that because IMT personnel are Stationwide—almost every PSW location has an IMT person—the Group Leader could be at any of several locations and still manage Stationwide programs."

Chuck earned B.A. and M.S. degrees in biology at Fresno State University, and started working for PSW

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*(Mangold—continued)*

a master's degree from the University of California at Berkeley, and a doctorate in forest genetics from Oregon State University.

### **Bray Receives Engineering Award at Humboldt**

Benjamin Bray has received the Homer Arnold Award in Applied Engineering from Humboldt State University, at Arcata. The award is given the President of the University "for outstanding achievement in applied engineering design involving environmental and resource problems."

Ben is a hydrologic technician with the Hillslope Processes/Fishery Research Unit, at the Station's Redwood Sciences Laboratory, at Arcata. His award-winning achievement was to estimate suspended sediment loads for the Freshwater and Caspar Creek watersheds, in northern California, and to design a Web site for displaying the results for the cooperative freshwater watershed monitoring program.

### **Personnelly Speaking**

*Cash Award*

- Karen Mallinen, receptionist, Albany: "for extra effort in completing the personal property inventory and the obsolete computer equipment inventory."

### **Rechel Named to National Geospatial Committee**

Jennifer Rechel has been selected to serve a 3-yr term on a National Forest Service Geospatial Advisory Committee. She is a geographer/wildlife biologist with the Station's Prescribed Fire/Fire Effects Research Unit, at the Forest Fire Laboratory, at Riverside. With 16 years of geographical information system and related experience, Jennifer is one of four FS members to represent the agency's Research Branch. The committee chair reports to the Washington Office Ecosystems Staff Director. Jennifer is on the training and skills development subcommittee and is now preparing briefings on geospatial status and future directions for WO and field staff members.

*(Evans—continued)*

in 1974. He became a permanent employee in 1979 as biological technician with the Sensitive Species Research Unit. He was promoted to wildlife biologist and then computer programmer/analyst with the Wildlife Habitat Research Unit. He left that assignment in 1987, and joined the Statistics/Computer Services Group, based in Fresno, working halftime on Stationwide projects and halftime on work with the Wildlife Monitoring/Range Research Unit. In 1990, Chuck was named the Station's "Outstanding Technical Support Person."

### **Meetings/Conferences/Seminars**

- Kathy Ewel, Team Leader—Tropical Forested Wetlands Research, Honolulu, participated in a workshop on developing a research agenda for linking biogeophysical and socioeconomic systems, June 5-8, at Arizona State University, Tempe, sponsored by the National Science Foundation.

- Carolyn Hunsaker and Brian Boroski, Sierra Nevada Montane Ecosystems Research Unit, Fresno, participated in a project meeting of the Electrical Engineering and Computer Science Department University of Michigan, at Ann Arbor, May 8-10.

- Haiganoush Preisler, Environmental Statistics Unit Albany, presented a paper on "Modeling the Multi-Dimensional Movement of Free-Ranging Animals," at the International Biometric Conference, Berkeley, July 3.

### **Open Season for Thrift Savings Ends July 31**

The Thrift Savings Plan Open Season, which began May 15, will end on July 31. During open season, Civil Service Retirement and Federal Employees Retirement System employees may start contributing to the Plan, if they are eligible. They can also reallocate future payroll contributions among three investment funds. And they can change future payroll contribution percentages. Questions about the Thrift Savings Plan can be directed to Rochelle Selvin, Albany.

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