



# *ESA in Action*

Annual Report  
2011



# From the Executive Director

As I reflect on the year, I am proud of the accomplishments of ESA. In August 2010 we launched our fifth peer reviewed journal, *Ecosphere*, under a new publishing model. At launch time we were uncertain if this online only, author-pays model would be acceptable to our community. As evidenced by the number of submissions and articles published, it was not only acceptable, but has already met its goals for rapid publication and quality. Everyone involved with this journal's inception, launch and first year deserve kudos!



ESA file photo

All our journals continue their levels of excellence as evidenced by the impact factors of *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment*, *Ecology*, *Ecological Applications*, and *Ecological Monographs* which all increased this year. *Ecology* received the most citations of any journal in its category, and *Frontiers* ranked second in Environmental Sciences and fourth in Ecology.

ESA conducted its first professional membership survey in 2011. The results were pleasing and thought-provoking. Members of all ages and disciplines indicated that their number one reason for joining the Society is to support the field of ecology. The majority of members in all age groups rated their satisfaction with ESA as high but the survey pointed to areas where ESA can provide even more service to its members. For example, younger professionals expressed interest in more networking, career resources and training opportunities. There is also a growing interest in public policy and in improving ecology education. We have already begun to address some of the opportunities highlighted in the survey results.

Thanks to the inspiration of our President Terry Chapin and the enthusiastic leadership of Terry, Past President Mary Power and President Elect Steward Pickett, ESA launched a major effort to focus attention on Earth Stewardship. A basic premise of the initiative is that ecologists alone cannot address the challenges of sustaining and enhancing Earth's life support systems. ESA has reached out to social scientists, urban planners, religious leaders and resource managers to explore ways to collaborate. These inspiring meetings led to program activities at the Austin Annual Meeting, a workshop proposal, and to several publications and the initiative holds the promise of many more collaborative activities.

In 2011, the Society broadened its outreach to members and others interested in our science through greater participation in social media and published a guidebook to help ecologists engage in policy. ESA also added a new western region sustainable communities project to its SEEDS program and launched a new collaborative project to enhance the Society's EcoEd Digital Library. An ESA workshop on biological infrastructure identified the challenges of keeping long term projects operational and explored different models to sustain them.

ESA's finances are strong, our Annual Meeting continues to evolve to share ecological science and provide networking opportunities, and we have begun planning for our 2015 Centennial Celebration. I continue to be grateful for the leadership of our Governing Board and staff and to the dedicated members who guide our sections, chapters and committees.

*Katherine S. McCarter*

# From the President

It has been an honor to serve as ESA's president. The level of enthusiasm and commitment by ESA's members, leadership, and staff have made the experience both memorable and fun and gives me optimism that ESA will continue to play a leading role in advancing the science of ecology and its application to societally important issues.

The Earth Stewardship Initiative, which began during Mary Power's presidency, has continued to take shape as a framework for ESA to contribute to the science needed for a more sustainable relationship between society and the biosphere. In meetings with leadership of eight academic societies in the social sciences, we learned that all of these societies are pursuing sustainability-related initiatives. They expressed enthusiasm in forging partnerships with ESA and other natural sciences to develop interdisciplinary approaches to sustainability and stewardship. The next step is to identify specific projects and outcomes that have greater impact than what any single society could do by itself. For example, ESA is participating in efforts initiated by the American Geophysical Union and the Pew Center to identify causes of miscommunication about climate science and to identify strategies for improved dialogue with the public about science.

Meetings of ESA with a broad spectrum of environmentally oriented religious leaders also revealed enthusiasm for joint activities, based on common interests in stewardship and environmental justice. Plans are emerging for a speakers' bureau that could be called upon by religious groups interested in information or discussion about environmental and ecological issues. Speakers would be trained in both the ecological and religious dimensions of stewardship so as to maximize opportunities for constructive dialogue.

In October 2010, ESA joined with the National Education Association and 20 national partners to host an Ecology and Education Summit on Environmental Literacy for a Sustainable World. This unique event focused on broad-based coordination for civic engagement as a platform for sustainability education. Products of the Summit included both immediate actions in support of the Green Schools program and establishment of a task force to identify a set of principles about environmental literacy that every citizen should know.

Within ESA, SEEDS continues to foment exciting projects and programs that foster ecological education and leadership by a diverse cadre of young ecologists. SEEDS sponsors an annual leadership training meeting, field trips to LTER sites, Bioblitz (community engagement activities with an underprivileged community during each ESA meeting), and SEEDS-sponsored symposia at the ESA meeting. SEEDS now has about 65 campus ecology chapters across the country.

Through its publications, ESA continues to provide outlets to communicate important advances in the field of ecology. Guided by its stellar boards of editors, ESA journals have speeded the time from submission to publication, particularly through *Ecosphere*, ESA's new electronic rapid-publication journal. Citations of articles in ESA journals show that ESA's journals have enormous (and increasing) impact on the scientific community.

ESA's annual meeting in Austin illustrated both the depth of ecological inquiry into fundamental ecological processes and the breadth of interest in bridging between ecology and many other natural and social sciences. The Earth Stewardship theme of the meeting elicited a wide range of symposia, sessions, and workshops that explored opportunities for ecologists to contribute to societally important issues through research and education. The Student Section, representing about 25 percent of ESA members, has taken an active role in proposing and participating in sessions and in exploring ties with student groups in ecological societies from other countries.

Finally, ESA owes a huge debt of gratitude to Katherine McCarter and the rest of the ESA staff, who play key roles in the success of the Society. They have kept ESA on sound financial footing despite a struggling national economy; they support the journals and meetings that have been a hallmark of ESA's contribution to science; and they play key roles in new initiatives and in outreach from ESA to society at large. It has been an absolute pleasure to work with them.



ESA file photo

*Terry Chapin*

# ESA in Action

## *Earth Stewardship*

- Throughout the year, ESA leadership met with religious, social science, green architecture, and federal management communities to explore collaboration in enhancing Earth's resilience under increasing human pressures.
- Earth Stewardship was the theme of ESA's 2011 Annual Meeting and the Opening Plenary Panel set the tone by featuring speakers from diverse communities to discuss this challenging topic.
- Thanks to support from the Packard Foundation and the US Forest Service, SEEDS (Strategies for Ecology Education, Diversity and Sustainability) chapters are developing projects on local ecological and cultural conservation and education initiatives.

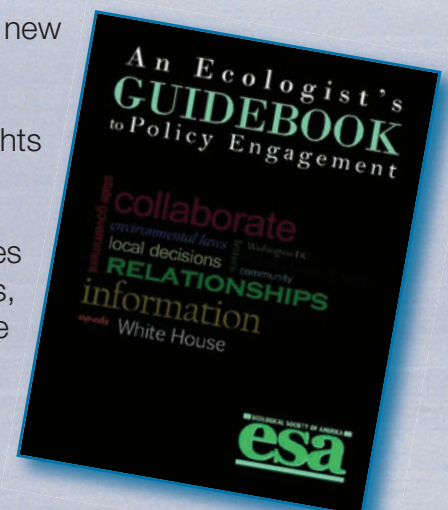


SEEDS Students.

Melissa Armstrong

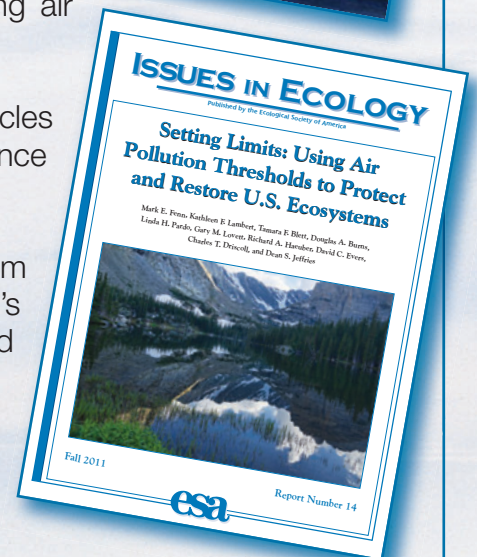
## *Informing Policy*

- In partnership with The Wildlife Society and the Meridian Institute, an ESA workshop provided feedback from stakeholders on the U.S. Geological Survey's National Climate Change and Wildlife Science Center and Climate Science Centers.
- To help ecologists contribute to policymaking, ESA published a new resource, *An Ecologist's Guidebook to Policy Engagement*.
- The Society held a congressional briefing on how ecological insights can improve management of flood-prone areas.
- ESA and its members expressed their views on a range of issues relevant to ecology, including threats to U.S. environmental laws, uranium mining near the Grand Canyon, and global natural science collections.



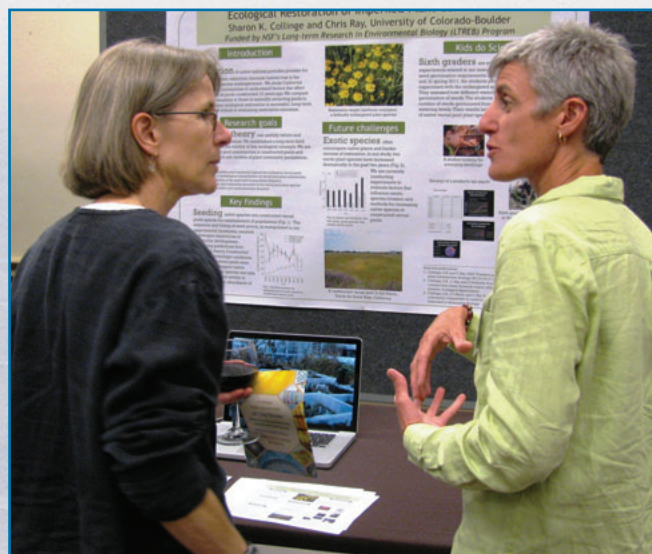
## Sharing Ecology

- An article on the negative impacts of low-frequency sounds on squids and other cephalopods featured in ESA's journal *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment* drew extensive international media attention.
- A new edition of ESA's *Issues in Ecology* series focused on using air pollution thresholds to protect ecosystems.
- The Society's journal *Ecological Applications* featured a set of articles on the environmental impacts of biofuels, based on a 2008 conference organized by ESA.
- ESA's blog and podcasts continued to draw readers and listeners from both within and beyond the ecological community. The Society's Facebook page grew in popularity while 3,500 individuals and organizations "followed" ESA tweets.



## Advancing Ecological Science

- Sponsored by the National Science Foundation, the Society's workshop on sustaining biological infrastructure identified obstacles and provided recommendations to keeping long-term biological infrastructure projects operational.
- Showcasing ecological research and education supported by federal investments, ESA sponsored an exhibit on Capitol Hill.
- With support from the National Science Foundation, an ESA webinar on "Large Ecological Data Sets for Student-Active Learning" and the Society's EcoEd Digital Library project provided opportunities for faculty to enhance undergraduate biology.



Sharon Collinge (right) discusses her research during a Capitol Hill science exhibition.

Nadine Lynn

# Communicating Research

Scientists around the world publish their research in ecology and environmental science in ESA's scientific, peer-reviewed journals: ***Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment***, ***Ecology***, ***Ecological Monographs***, and ***Ecological Applications***.

ESA journals enjoy high impact factors and are widely cited. ESA's newest journal, ***Ecosphere***, launched in 2010, is a rapid-publication, online-only, open access journal featuring all sub-disciplines of ecology.

Research featured in ESA's journals in 2011 included articles on evolutionary traps, the ecological impacts of cruise ships and off-roading, competition between barred and spotted owls, using population targets to measure species threats, and estuarine and coastal ecosystem services. News outlets including *The Atlantic*, *Herald Sun*, *ABC News Radio*, *El Mundo*, *Discovery*, *USA Today*, the *Washington Post*, and the *Sueddeutsche Zeitung* were among those covering articles published in the Society's journals.

## ESA Journal Rankings and Impact Factors

"Ecology" Category (out of 129 journal titles)

- 4 FRONTIERS IN ECOLOGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT (8.820)
- 8 ECOLOGICAL MONOGRAPHS (5.938)
- 12 ECOLOGY (5.073)
- 23 ECOLOGICAL APPLICATIONS (4.276)

"Environmental Sciences" Category (out of 192 journal titles)

- 2 FRONTIERS IN ECOLOGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT (4.276)
- 12 ECOLOGICAL APPLICATIONS (3.672)



Some 1,000 listeners tune into ESA's podcasts, ***Beyond the Frontier*** and ***Field Talk*** every month. These podcasts feature interviews with authors about the research they've published in ESA journals.



# Annual Meeting

The Society's 96th Annual Meeting took place in Austin, Texas, drawing nearly 3,700 attendees. The meeting featured field trips, awards, an Opening Plenary Panel discussion and numerous presentations ranging from warfare ecology to natural history to bat conservation. In honor of Austin's famous music scene, ESA hosted *An Austin Night for Nature*, a live concert featuring Austin musicians to benefit local environmental groups. ESA also donated \$9,230 each to Austin-based Bat Conservation International and the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center as part of the Society's environmental offsets initiative. *Science*, *Nature*, *ScienceDaily*, *HealthDay*, *Voice of America*, and other media covered the ESA meeting.



Mexican free-tailed bats emerge from Congress Avenue Bridge in Austin.



ESA field trip participants canoe the San Marcos River.

Chris Best, USFWS



Nadine Lyynn

President Chapin congratulates Don Strong for his Distinguished Service Citation.



Nadine Lyynn

Lots of interest at the ESA Student Section booth.

ESA file photo

## 2011 Award Winners

- Eminent Ecologist:** Thomas Whitham
- Odum Education Award:** John Moore
- Mercer Award:** Tracy Langkilde
- Cooper Award:** Margaret Davis, Ruth Shaw, Julie Etterson
- E. Lucy Braun Award (2010):** Joe Fader
- Murray F. Buell Award (2010):** Jenny Talbot
- Sustainability Science Award:** B. Worm, *et al.*
- Distinguished Service Citation:** Donald Strong



Austin Night for Nature ESA benefit concert.

ESA file photo

# Finances

Fiscal Year ending 6/30/2011

## Revenues

Grants & Contributions	728,621
Membership Dues	631,350
Subscriptions	2,661,008
Manuscript Charges	530,722
Annual Meeting	991,915
Investment Income	82,006
Other Revenues	354,557
Net Assets released from restrictions	586,939
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>6,567,118</b>

## Expenses

Public Affairs	244,059
Science Program	364,092
Annual Meeting	852,061
Chapters & Sections	41,528
Journal Publications	2,724,106
Education	615,713
Member & Administrative Services	1,512,851
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>6,354,410</b>

## Change in Net Assets

Unrestricted Net Assets as of June 30, 2010	2,342,921
Unrestricted Net Assets as of June 30, 2011	2,555,629

## Assets

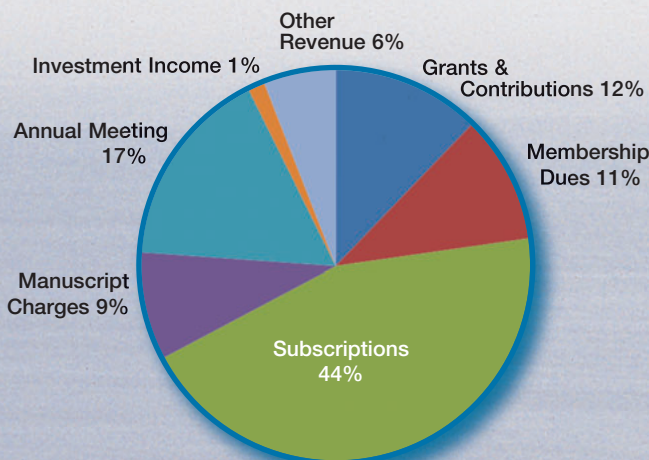
Cash and Cash Equivalents	1,842,497
Investments	4,234,691
Accounts Receivable	266,115
Grants Receivable	220,554
Prepaid Expenses	188,643
Furniture & Equipment (less depreciation)	9,948
Deposits	24,616
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>6,787,064</b>

## Liabilities and Net Assets

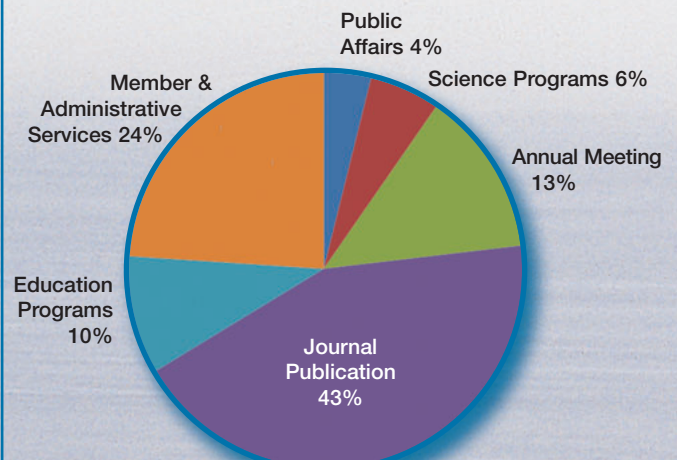
Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	304,938
Deferred Revenue	2,510,035
Unrestricted Net Assets	2,555,629
Temporarily Restricted Net Assets	1,366,462
Permanently Restricted Net Assets	50,000
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>6,787,064</b>

Audited by Gelman, Rosenberg, Freedman.  
For a complete audit report please contact  
ESA's Washington DC office.

### 2011 REVENUES



### 2011 EXPENSES





# 2011 Fund for the Future

ESA thanks its generous donors who help support Society initiatives. If you would like to help the Society advance the science and profession of ecology, please consider making a donation at [www.esa.org/donate](http://www.esa.org/donate).

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ESA is grateful to the following organizations that provided funds to ESA activities and programs:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| ARKive (Wildscreen USA)<br>Appalachian State University<br>Chevron Corporation<br>David and Lucile Packard Foundation<br>Defenders of Wildlife<br>Doris Duke Charitable Foundation<br>Environmental Protection Agency<br>Green Mountain Digital<br>National Education Association<br>National Environmental Education Foundation<br>National Geographic<br>National Marine Sanctuary Foundation<br>National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration | National Science Foundation<br>North Carolina State University<br>The Nature Conservancy<br>Tree Foundation<br>USACE (Strategic Environmental Research and Development Program)<br>USDA Forest Service<br>USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture<br>USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service<br>US Geological Survey<br>University of North Texas<br>Wildlife Acoustics Inc. |
|--|--|

# About the ESA

The Ecological Society of America is the largest professional organization for ecologists and environmental scientists in the world. The Society's 10,000 members work to advance our understanding of life on Earth. Much of ecologists' work is relevant to environmental issues such as energy and food production, management and conservation of natural resources and emerging diseases.

ESA works to broadly share ecological information through activities that include policy and media outreach, education and diversity initiatives and projects that link the ecological research and management communities and help integrate ecological science into decision-making. The Society also organizes scientific conferences and publishes high-impact journals.



Scott Bauer, USDA

*Nutrient pollution of aquatic environments is a major problem in areas such as the Chesapeake Bay.*



Scott Collins

*Understanding the ecology of cities, such as Phoenix, AZ, is increasingly important as urban populations continue to grow globally.*



Nadine Lynn

*ESA congressional briefing on mercury pollution in ecosystems.*



ESA file photo

*Ecologists catching up during an ESA annual meeting.*



Charlee Glenn

*Stephanie Cruz Maysonet talks about the activities of the University of Puerto Rico, Bayamon's SEEDS Chapter.*

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### Cover photos:

*Clockwise from top left: Stephen Pacala gives MacArthur Address. Credit: ESA file photo. Emily Stanley and Jeff Opperman discuss the ecology of floodplains during an ESA congressional briefing. Credit: Liza Lester. 2011 Graduate Student Policy Award winner Kellen Marshall Gillespie. Credit: ESA file photo. A grasshopper looks on while a SEEDS student writes in her field journal during a SEEDS field trip in the Florida Everglades, Michael Hanft and Natalia Lopez Figueroa examine grasses during a SEEDS field trip to the Jornada Experimental Range. Credit: Charlee Glenn.*

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