

NEWS NOTES

MSU Administrator to Head Leading Wildlife Society

A nationally recognized administrator in Mississippi State's College of Forest Resources is on track to become president of The Wildlife Society (TWS).

Bruce Leopold, head of the university's wildlife and fisheries department, recently was elected as TWS vice president. In 2009, he moves to the top administrative office of the 10,000-member international organization founded in 1937.

The society is a nonprofit scientific and educational association dedicated to promoting the highest levels of wildlife stewardship. With headquarters in Bethesda, Md., it works to enhance the ability of wildlife professionals to conserve diversity, sustain productivity and ensure responsible use of wildlife resources for the benefit of humanity.

Acceptance of the TWS leadership role involves a 4-year commitment that includes a year as vice president, president-elect, president and immediate past-president, respectively. Leopold is a longtime Wildlife Society member who previously served on its governing council and as Southeastern Section representative.



MSU Student Forestry Group Again Tops Among Peers

Mississippi State University's student chapter of the Society of American Foresters (SAF) continues among the top organizations of its kind in the nation.

The 40-member body recently placed first in the SAF Student Chapter Web site competition and now ranks second overall in the outstanding student chapter category.

The group has finished atop the overall chapter rankings for the past 8 years, capturing first place in the 1996-97, 2000-01, 2003-04, and 2005-06 school years; second place in 1998-99, 2001-02 and 2004-05; and third place in 2002-03.

The chapter now has won first place for 5 years in Web site competition. Designed and maintained by members, the site—www.cfr.msstate.edu/studentorgs/saf—was judged on design and content, among other criteria.

All forestry majors, the 2006-07 officers include president J. Eric Ezell of Starkville, vice president James D. Floyd of Thomasville, N.C., secretary Jean E. Chervenak of Poplar Bluff, Mo., and treasurer Emily M. Courtney of Clinton. Associate professor of forestry Donald L. Grebner is chapter adviser.

MSU Graduate, Doctoral Candidate Named STAR Fellow

A doctoral candidate in Mississippi State's College of Forest Resources is receiving the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's STAR Fellowship.

Joshua P. Adams of Ruston, La., is among 65 graduate students—and the first from the university—named to the prestigious Science to Achieve Results Fellows Program. His award begins with the 2007-08 academic year and extends for the next 3 years.

Now in his second year of research, Adams is focusing on forest molecular genetics. Working with forestry assistant professor Cetin Yuceer, he is using the latest molecular techniques to modify trees for use in cleaning land sites contaminated with heavy metals that may cause cancer and other health problems.

Initiated by the EPA in 1995, the fellowship program is designed to encourage promising students to obtain advanced degrees and pursue careers in an environmental field. This goal is among major immediate and long-term missions of EPA to help protect the nation's public health and the environment.

Adams, who received an MSU master's degree in forestry in 2005, is among some 1,200 students honored with STAR fellowships since the program began. He earlier graduated from Louisiana Tech University with a degree in 2003.

Adams is using the poplar tree (genus *Populus*, and including cottonwoods, poplars and aspens, among others) for his study since its genome has been sequenced and transformation procedures have been refined, Yuceer said.

The genome is a full set of chromosomes that contains all the inheritable traits of an organism.

Yuceer said Adams' research seeks to develop a tree variety that quickly absorbs heavy metals and harnesses fluorescent energy transfer that enables it to monitor metal contamination in soil and water.

"If successful, this project is expected to provide a high-biomass species with an accumulation and monitoring phenotype which is pursuant to the goal of ensuring plant, animal and human safety," Yuceer emphasized.

Hughes Honored with Service Award



Glenn Hughes

Glenn Hughes was recognized in July 2007 by the National Association of County Agricultural Agents at its 92nd Annual Meeting and Professional Improvement Conference in Grand Rapids, Mich., by receiving the association's Distinguished Service Award. The award is presented to the top 2 percent of the county agents from each state with more than 10 years service in the nation's Cooperative Extension Service. The selection is made by county agents in that state and endorsed by the state extension director. This year, 69 individuals from throughout the United States were presented the Distinguished Service Award.

Hughes provides outstanding educational support to timberland owners, Extension educators, 4-H youth, homeowners, industry groups and others interested in forest management throughout southeast Mississippi. He was instrumental in developing programs to meet educational needs of underserved forest landowners throughout the state, and he devoted many hours to helping clientele respond to and recover from Hurricane Katrina. Drawing upon expertise in many natural resource disciplines, his presentations and writings are beneficial to everyone interested in forest stewardship.

Donald Jackson of MSU Honored for Gulf Fisheries Research



Donald C. Jackson

An internationally recognized Mississippi State fisheries biologist is receiving a major honor for his post-Katrina work from a national professional society.

Donald C. Jackson, a 21-year teaching and research veteran of the university, was presented with the American Fisheries Society (AFS) 2007 Distinguished Service Award at the organization's recent annual meeting in San Francisco, Calif.

Jackson was honored for contributions of time and energy spent restoring the professional capacities of

fisheries biologists in the wake of the 2005 storm that did major damage to the Mississippi Gulf Coast and southeast Louisiana.

Jackson led the AFS Hurricane Disaster Relief Program. He assisted members in maintaining professional connections while also collecting funds to jump-start research and management programs of those affected.

Jackson also has led efforts to restore coastal fisheries. Working with graduate students from Mississippi, Iowa, Malaysia, New Jersey and Oregon, the College of Forest Resources professor is studying how fish populations in south Mississippi streams evolve following hurricanes.

In addition to tracking natural population processes, the study is examining effects of the supplemental stocking of game fish, primarily catfish and bass. A second study is focused on rebuilding artificial reefs offshore in the Gulf of Mexico. Critical components of fisheries-based economic enterprises all along the coast, the reefs were almost completely annihilated by the massive late-August hurricane. Jackson and his student team are working with the Mississippi Department of Marine

Resources to determine the best way to re-establish the artificial structures and enhance local fishing.

A third Jackson project sponsored by the National Marine Fisheries Service deals with the potential impacts on commercial shrimp populations of weather-related river discharges into the Gulf of Mexico.

Phil Bushby Receives CVM Teaching Award



Phil Bushby

Dr. Phil Bushby, a faculty member recognized for his innovative approaches to education and animal health, is the 2007 recipient of the prestigious Carl Norden-Pfizer Distinguished Teacher Award for Mississippi State University's College of Veterinary Medicine.

Each of the 28 veterinary colleges in the United States annually selects an outstanding faculty member for the teaching award. All state recipients are eligible for the national honor, sponsored by

Pfizer Animal Health and to be announced by the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges in 2008.

Bushby said he tries to create an environment that maximizes a student's opportunity to learn and allows consideration of different scenarios involving animal and client interactions.

"I don't spend time in front of students lecturing or just telling them something," he said. "I create situations for them to discover what they need to know."

Each veterinary class nominates CVM full-time faculty for the award. Names of nominees are submitted to the senior class for final selection during the latter part of the spring semester, said Barbara Coats, student affairs coordinator at the college.

She said student comments on Bushby's nomination included "caring," "innovative," "fabulous" and "there for us."

"Phil Bushby is a person our students trust, both as a teacher and as a friend," Coats said.

Bushby is service chief of primary care at the college's Animal Health Center and was recently named as the Marcia P. Lane Endowed Professor in Humane Ethics and Animal Welfare. Bushby is also a professor in the Department of Clinical Sciences and was the former director of the Office of Educational Innovation. He is a diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Surgeons, and in 2000, he received a Fulbright Scholarship to Dublin, Ireland, for his development of teaching techniques for problem-based learning.

"Dr. Phil Bushby is recognized nationally as an innovator in veterinary medical education," said Kent Hoblet, dean of the college. "Students recognize that he is committed to their education, thoroughly enjoys teaching and is genuine in his concern that they learn."