



Cory Overton/USGS

EVENTS

March 22, 2012 (Menlo Park, CA) Tom Suchanek will give this month's USGS Menlo Park Public Lecture and Webcast, discussing the impacts of climate change on California and San Francisco Bay.
<http://online.wr.usgs.gov/calendar/>

IN THE NEWS

UCLA Undergrads Tackle Urban Wildlife Research (The Wildlife Society Urban Wildlife News) highlights research by UCLA researcher Travis Longcore, the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority and Erin Boydston, examining the use of a roadway underpass by humans and wild mammals in greater L.A.
<http://www.environment.ucla.edu/news/article.asp?parentid=13976>

White Sharks Factor in California Sea Otter Mortality (various outlets) is a current focus of WERC scientists Brian Hatfield and Tim Tinker, who recently announced the total reported sea otter strandings in California for 2011.
http://www.mercurynews.com/breaking-news/ci_19983492
<http://www.q13fox.com/ideogallery/68240860/>
http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-0227-sea-otter-20120227_0,2779949.story
<http://nyti.ms/zWjgjU>
<http://www.scpr.org/programs/madeleine-brand/2012/02/28/22699>

Case Closed for Sea Otter Deaths (AAAS ScienceNOW) reports a Calif. Department of Fish and Game analysis of sea otter deaths due to *Microcystis*, a freshwater cyanobacteria. WERC's Tim Tinker is a coauthor on the research, which was discussed at the AAAS Annual Meeting in Vancouver.
<http://news.sciencemag.org/science-now/2012/02/scienceshot-case-closed-for-sea.html>

High-Water Hideouts for Endangered Rail

Bay Nature magazine interviewed WERC scientist Cory Overton at the Dixon Field Station, who is testing artificial floating islands in San Francisco Bay as refuges for endangered California clapper rail (*Rallus longirostris obsoletus*). The islands serve as roosting and nesting sites for rails during extreme high tides, which could be exacerbated under forecasted sea level rise. Remote cameras have shown the rails actively using the islands, so Overton will deploy more than 25 islands in spring 2012 in Oakland's Arrowhead Marsh and elsewhere to further study this conservation tool.
<http://baynature.org/articles/jan-mar-2012/keeping-clapper-rails-high-and-dry>

NEW JOURNAL ARTICLES

Kéfi, S, EL Berlow, EA Wieters, SA Navarrete, OL Petchey, SA Wood, A Boit, LN Joppa, KD Lafferty, RJ Williams, ND Martinez, BA Menge, CA Blanchette, AC Iles, U Brose. 2012. **More than a meal... integrating non-feeding interactions into food webs.** *Ecology Letters*. doi: 10.1111/j.1461-0248.2011.01732.x
<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/ProductDetails.aspx?ID=4653>

Lee, JS, EW Ruell, EE Boydston, LM Lyren, RS Alonso, JL Troyer, KR Crooks, S VandeWoude. 2012. **Gene flow and pathogen transmission among bobcats (*Lynx rufus*) in a fragmented urban landscape.** *Molecular Ecology*. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-294X.2012.05493.x
<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/ProductDetails.aspx?ID=4654>

Vittecoq, M, E Elguero, KD Lafferty, B Roche, J Brodeur, M Gauthier-Clerc, D Missé, F Thomas. 2012. **Brain cancer mortality rates increase with *Toxoplasma gondii* seroprevalence in France.** *Infection, Genetics and Evolution*. doi: 10.1016/j.meegid.2012.01.013 (in press)
<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/ProductDetails.aspx?ID=4655>

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NEW JOURNAL ARTICLES (CONT'D)

Waitman, BA, SB Vander Wall, **TC Esque**. 2012. Seed dispersal and seed fate in Joshua tree (*Yucca brevifolia*). *Journal of Arid Environments* doi: 10.1016/j.jaridenv.2011.12.012 (in press)
<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/ProductDetails.aspx?ID=4656>

NEW PUBLICATION BRIEFS

Reassessing Wilderness Stewardship in an Era of Rapid Climate Change

WERC ecologist **Nate Stephenson** and USDA paleoecologist Constance Millar discuss planning considerations when designing wilderness management actions in face of shifting baselines and species ranges under climate change.
<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/ProductDetails.aspx?ID=4643>

NEW FACTSHEETS

WERC Outreach Factsheet: Long-Term Research in Forest Dynamics

USGS maintains a network of 30 long-term forest research plots in Sequoia and Yosemite national parks, where the birth, growth, health and deaths of some 30,000 trees have been tracked annually for up to 30 years. **Nate Stephenson** explains the network's value.
<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/ProductDetails.aspx?ID=4651>

NEW PRESS RELEASES

Number of Dead California Sea Otters Recovered in 2011 a Record High

Since 1968, USGS and CDFG have documented sea otter "strandings" — the number of dead, sick or injured sea otters reported along California each year. **Tim Tinker** presents the 2011 figures, including an increase in mortality related to white sharks.
<http://www.usgs.gov/newsroom/article.asp?ID=3116>

Cradle of Flames: New Book Explains How Wildfires Shape Southern California and other 'Mediterranean' Ecosystems

Exploring the impact of fire on Mediterranean-type plant communities is the focus of a new book, *Fire in Mediterranean Ecosystems* (Cambridge University Press). The book's host of international authors is led by WERC fire ecologist **Jon Keeley**.
<http://www.usgs.gov/newsroom/article.asp?ID=3123>

Low Pathogenic Avian Influenza Transmitted During Summer in Calif. Wetlands

Waterfowl can spread low pathogenic avian influenza viruses (LPAIv) during summer, even with warm wetland temperatures and low waterfowl densities. A WERC team led by **Joe Fleskes** sampled Yolo Bypass and Sacramento Valley wetlands for this study.
<http://www.usgs.gov/newsroom/article.asp?ID=3127>

IN THE NEWS (CONT'D)

Darwin's Degenerates (Science Sushi on Scientific American Blogs) revisits the evolutionary uniqueness of parasites, and cites several studies by **Kevin Lafferty** on parasite and ecological theory.

<http://blogs.scientificamerican.com/science-sushi/2012/02/12/darwins-degenerates-evolutions-finest-observations/>

FROM THE BLOG

Meet the Lauan Ground Skink of Fiji checks in on a 2011 expedition by **Robert Fisher** to Fiji to survey a rare species and the potential threats to its survival. (See Expedition box below)
<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/outreach.aspx?RecordID=124>



Trick My Truck, San Francisco Bird Research Edition visits WERC scientist **Stacy Moskal**, who is studying shorebird use of constructed islands and tidal waters at Pond SF2 of the **South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project**, near Menlo Park, CA. Moskal conducts bird behavior and count surveys from a custom mobile platform.
<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/outreach.aspx?RecordID=123>



Lauan Ground Skink Survey in Fiji

WERC scientist **Robert Fisher** explored the Ono-I-Lau island complex of Fiji in July 2011 with NatureFiji and University of Kansas and the support of the Mohamed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund and National Trust Fiji. The Lauan ground skink (*Leiopisma alazon*) was discovered in 1982 but not observed again by scientists until 2011, when the team photographed live specimens for the first time. The species was found on three small islands — the largest of which is less than 1km² in area — and face threats from nonnative rats and yellow crazy ants, and sea level rise. A report is forthcoming.