



Nathan Stephenson/USGS

Nathan Stephenson Receives National Award from National Park Service

WERC scientist **Nathan Stephenson** has been honored by the **National Park Service** with the Director's Natural Resource Award for Natural Resource Research. Based out of the WERC Sequoia and Kings Canyon Field Station, Stephenson is a leader in research and long-term monitoring of Western U.S. forest ecosystems, contributing to our knowledge of forestry science, climate change effects, parks management and more. "Due to Nate's commitment to the Sierra Nevada and his original research in forested ecosystems and their maintenance processes, he has become an internationally acknowledged expert on forest ecology," says the service. This is Stephenson's second nomination for this national award, whose previous recipient was noted biologist E.O. Wilson in 2010.

<http://www.nps.gov/applications/digest/headline.cfm?type=PeopleNews&id=3591>

<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/outreach.aspx?RecordID=142>

NEW JOURNAL ARTICLES

Stephens, SL, REJ Boerner, JJ Moghaddas, EEY Moghaddas, BM Collins, CB Dow, C Edminster, CE Fiedler, DL Fry, BR Hartsough, **JE Keeley**, EE Knapp, JD McIver, CN Skinner, A Youngblood. 2012. **Fuel treatment impacts on estimated wildfire carbon loss from forests in Montana, Oregon, California, and Arizona.** *Ecosphere* 3(5).

doi: 10.1890/ES11-00289.1

<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/ProductDetails.aspx?ID=4737>

Soldánová, M, AM Kuris, Scholz, T, **KD Lafferty**. 2012. **The role of spatial and temporal heterogeneity and competition in structuring trematode communities in the great pond snail, *Lymnaea stagnalis* (L.).** *Journal of Parasitology* 98(3): 460-471.

doi: 10.1645/GE-2964.1

<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/ProductDetails.aspx?ID=4736>

EVENTS

June 25-27, 2012 (Los Angeles, CA)

WERC scientist **Jon Keeley** was among the panelists at the Tuesday working group sessions at **The Mediterranean City conference** on climate change adaptation. <http://www.werc.usgs.gov/Event.aspx?ID=110>

June 26, 2012 (San Diego, CA)

WERC scientists **Robert Fisher**, **Carlton Rochester**, **Denise Clark** and others presented at the **San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Program's Annual Report Workshop**, a public meeting discussing habitat planning efforts in San Diego County informed by WERC research. Contact Robert Fisher for details.

July 15-18, 2012 (Oakland, CA)

The **2012 SCB North America Congress for Conservation Biology** will include several presentations and tours featuring WERC scientists, including **Erin Boydston**, **Arriana Brand** and **Laura Valoppi**. Interior Assistant Secretary **Anne Castle** will be a plenary speaker.

<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/Event.aspx?ID=93>

IN THE NEWS

Wildfire Risk to Homes Is Most Related to Location, Study Finds (*Los Angeles Times*) profiles the new study by **Jon Keeley**, **Teresa Brennan** and colleagues, revealing that housing density and location were determinants of housing loss in San Diego and Ventura County wildfires.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-wildfire-houses-20120616,0,4730156.story>

Mercury Stays Put (*Estuary News*)

quotes **Laura Valoppi** about mercury monitoring in Alviso, CA. USGS is studying whether levee breaches from salt pond restoration will disperse legacy mercury.

<http://www.sfestuary.org/PDF/newsletters/Estuary-June2012-Web.pdf>

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NEW JOURNAL ARTICLES (CONT'D)

Miller, DAW, **CS Brehme**, JE Hines, JD Nichols, **RN Fisher**. 2012. **Joint estimation of habitat dynamics and species interactions: disturbance reduces co-occurrence of non-native predators with an endangered toad.** *Journal of Animal Ecology*. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-2656.2012.02001.x.
<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/ProductDetails.aspx?ID=4734>

Jacobson, ER, **KH Berry**, JFX Wlehan Jr, F Origgi, AL Childress, J Braun, M Schrenzel, **J Yee**, B Rideout. 2012. **Serologic and molecular evidence for testudinid herpesvirus 2 infection in wild Agassiz's desert tortoise, *Gopherus agassizii*.** *Journal of Wildlife Diseases* 48(3): 747-757.
<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/ProductDetails.aspx?ID=4733>

Coates, PS, ML Casazza, BJ Halstead, JP Fleskes. 2012. **Relative value of managed wetlands and tidal marshlands for wintering northern pintails.** *Journal of Fish and Wildlife Management*. doi: 10.3996/102011-JFWM-062
<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/ProductDetails.aspx?ID=4696>

Athearn, ND, **JY Takekawa**, JD Bluso-Demers, **JM Shinn, LA Brand**, CW Robinson-Nilsen, CM Strong. 2012. **Variability in habitat value of commercial salt production ponds: implications for waterbird management and tidal marsh restoration planning.** *Hydrobiologia*. doi: 10.1007/s10750-012-1177-y
<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/ProductDetails.aspx?ID=4696>

NEW WERC PUBLICATION BRIEFS

Density-Dependent Nest Survival and the Benefits of Having Neighbors

Nest predation levels are a key part of waterfowl demography studies, but considerable uncertainty remains as to whether nest predation is density-dependent. Published in *Oecologia*, new research by **Josh Ackerman** and UC Davis colleagues found local nest dispersion — rather than larger-scale measures of nest density — may play a more important role in density-dependent nest predation.
<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/ProductDetails.aspx?ID=4732>

Mercury Exposure Suppresses Stress Response in Juvenile Birds

New research by **Josh Ackerman, Garth Herring** and **Mark Herzog** published in *Environmental Science and Technology* indicates that chronic mercury exposure may suppress baseline corticosterone concentrations in Forster's tern (*Sterna forsteri*) chicks, and suggests that a juvenile bird's ability to respond to stress may be reduced.
<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/ProductDetails.aspx?ID=4729>

Mercury May Reduce Body Condition of Endangered California Clapper Rails

USGS researchers examined mercury exposure in 133 California clapper rails within tidal marsh habitats of San Francisco Bay from 2006 to 2010, with birds collected from Arrowhead Marsh, Colma Creek Marsh, Cogswell Marsh, and Faber-Laumeister Marsh. The research by **Josh Ackerman, Cory Overton, Mike Casazza, Robin Keister, Mark Herzog** and Collin Eagles-Smith found a percentage of feather, blood and egg samples with mercury concentrations that could put rails at risk for impaired reproduction.
<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/ProductDetails.aspx?ID=4730>

IN THE NEWS

Common Parasite May Increase Suicide Risk (MyHealthNewsDaily.com) reports on a study in the *Archives of General Psychiatry*, and quotes **Kevin Lafferty** as an outside expert on the biology of the parasite *Toxoplasma gondii*.
<http://www.myhealthnewsdaily.com/2790-parasite-suicide-risk.html>

California Landscape Conservation Cooperative to Fund Eight Conservation-Based Science Projects in 2012 (CaliforniaLCC.org) announced the 2012 awarded projects of the California LCC. Supported WERC scientists include **Joe Fleskes'** research on climate change and waterfowl ecology in the San Francisco Bay Estuary, as well as research by **John Takekawa, Susan De La Cruz** and **Isa Woo** on intertidal foraging of migratory birds in the San Francisco Bay Estuary.
<http://californialcc.org/news13.html>

The Science of Predicting Which Houses Will Survive Wildfires (KUNC Greely, Colorado) cites the **WERC Southern California Wildfire Risk Scenario Project** as part of its coverage of the current Colorado wildfires, interviewing co-PI Alexandra Syphard.
<http://www.kunc.org/post/science-predicting-which-houses-will-survive-wildfires>

FROM THE BLOG

Why Are Biologists Studying Housing Loss from Wildfires?

Guest writer **Alexandra Syphard** answers the question. An ecologist with the Conservation Biology Institute, Syphard is a co-PI on the WERC Southern California Wildfire Risk Scenario Project.
<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/outreach.aspx?RecordID=141>