

**EVENTS**

**September 30, 2014 (Sacramento, CA)**  
**Liz Bowen** presented at the **Sacramento State University** colloquium series.  
<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/Event.aspx?ID=196>

**October 23-24, 2014 (Washington, DC)**  
**Karen Thorne** presented her sea level rise research at the **2014 National Workshop on Large Landscape Conservation**.  
<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/Event.aspx?ID=192>

**October 25-30, 2014 (Pittsburgh, PA)**  
WERC scientists were in attendance at **The Wildlife Society** annual meeting.  
<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/Event.aspx?ID=194>

**October 28-30, 2014 (Sacramento, CA)**  
WERC scientists presented on waterfowl and water supply, diving ducks, and marsh restoration science at the **8th Biennial Bay-Delta Science Conference**.  
<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/Event.aspx?ID=197>

**November 7, 2014 (Northridge, CA)**  
**Erin Boydston** and **Adam Backlin** spoke on urban wildlife corridors and native aquatic species at the **Ecology of the L.A. River Watershed** meeting.  
<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/Event.aspx?ID=198>

**December 15-19, 2014 (San Francisco)**  
**Josh Ackerman** will have mercury studies presented at the **2014 AGU Fall Meeting**.  
<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/Event.aspx?ID=199>

**IN THE NEWS**

**Giant Sequoias May Surprise Us in a Warmer Future** (*The Fresno Bee*)  
Reporter Mark Grossi interviews **Nathan Stephenson** on the current drought's impact on giant sequoias, noting opposite trends in older versus younger trees.  
[http://www.fresnobee.com/2014/10/18/4184871\\_giant-sequoias-may-surprise-us.html](http://www.fresnobee.com/2014/10/18/4184871_giant-sequoias-may-surprise-us.html)

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**Virus Calculated as Culprit Killing Sea Stars**

A prime suspect has been identified as a probable cause of the Sea Star Wasting Disease, a mysterious epidemic that has been killing these animals by the millions along the U.S. and Canadian Pacific Coast.

“Because it’s happening underwater, this devastation may be difficult for many people to picture,” says **Kevin Lafferty**. “But imagine if all the songbirds from Alaska to Mexico started falling out of the sky, dropping their wings and disintegrating into a pile of feathers. You’d wonder if you were in an Old Testament-style plague.”

After experimenting with sick sea stars and sampling wild sea stars, researchers managed to isolate and analyze the genome of a previously unidentified virus. The Cornell University team, with collaborators from 13 institutions, including Lafferty, published their findings on this sea star associated densovirus (SSaDV) recently in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. Read the USGS Top Story:

- [http://www.usgs.gov/blogs/features/usgs\\_top\\_story/virus-calculated-as-culprit-killing-sea-stars/](http://www.usgs.gov/blogs/features/usgs_top_story/virus-calculated-as-culprit-killing-sea-stars/)
- <http://www.cpradio.org/news/insight/2014/11/18/insight-111814b/>
- <http://www.utsandiego.com/news/2014/nov/17/environment-sea-star-wasting-virus/>
- <http://animals.io9.com/why-are-all-the-sea-stars-dying-1659558989>
- <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/11/18/us-science-starfish-idUSKCN0J129K20141118>
- <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/rundown/scientists-solve-mystery-of-west-coast-starfish-deaths/>
- <http://arstechnica.com/science/2014/11/virus-may-be-the-culprit-in-a-disease-thats-wiping-out-starfish/>
- <http://www.scpr.org/programs/take-two/2014/11/18/40402/sea-star-wasting-disease-cause-may-have-been-found/>

**NEW OPEN-FILE REPORTS**

Manier, DJ, ZH Bowen, **ML Brooks**, **ML Casazza**, **PS Coates**, PA Deibert, SE Hanser, DH Johnson. 2014. **Conservation buffer distance estimates for Greater Sage-Grouse—A review**: U.S. Geological Survey Open-File Report 2014–1239, 14 p. doi: 10.3133/ofr20141239  
<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/ProductDetails.aspx?ID=5126>

## NEW JOURNAL ARTICLES

Blomberg, EJ, JS Sedinger, D Gibson, **PS Coates**, **ML Casazza**. 2014. Carryover effects and climatic conditions influence the postfledgling survival of greater sage-grouse. *Ecology and Evolution*. doi: 10.1002/ece3.1139  
<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/ProductDetails.aspx?ID=5127>

**Coates, PS**, **KB Howe**, **ML Casazza**, DJ Delehenty. 2014. Common raven occurrence in relation to energy transmission line corridors transiting human-altered sagebrush steppe. *Journal of Arid Environments* 111: 68-78.  
doi: 10.1016/j.jaridenv.2014.08.004  
<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/ProductDetails.aspx?ID=5094>

Hewson, I, JB Button, BM Gudenkauf, B Miner, AL Newton, JK Gaydos, J Wynne, CL Groves, G Hendler, M Murray, S Fradkin, M Breitbart, E Fahs Bender, **KD Lafferty**, AM Kilpatrick, CM Miner, P Raimondi, L Lahner, CS Friendman, S Daniels, M Haulena, J Marliave, CA Burge, ME Eisenlord, CD Harvell. 2014. **Densovirus associated with sea-star wasting disease and mass mortality**. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. doi: 10.1073/pnas.1416625111  
<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/ProductDetails.aspx?ID=5128>

**Richmond, JQ**, DK Jacobs, **AR Backlin**, CC Swift, C Delith, **RN Fisher**. 2014. Ephemeral stream reaches preserve the evolutionary and distributional history of threespine stickleback in the Santa Clara and Ventura River watersheds of southern California. *Conservation Genetics*. doi: 10.1007/s10592-014-0643-7  
<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/ProductDetails.aspx?ID=5129>

## IN THE NEWS (CONT'D)

### Digging for Badger Sightings (U-T San Diego)

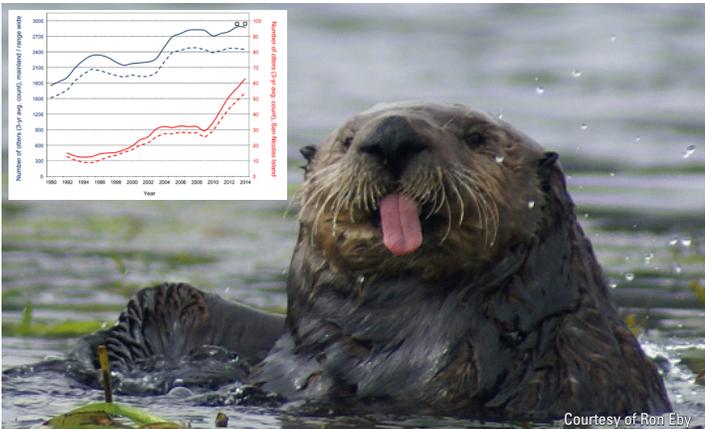
Reporter Deborah Sullivan Brennan spoke with **Cheryl Brehme** about the new effort to collect citizen sightings of American badgers in Southern California.  
<http://www.utsandiego.com/news/2014/sep/26/environment-san-diego-badger/>

### Restored Wetlands Welcome Wildlife and Protect Against Future Floods in San Francisco Bay Area (Newshour)

Reporter Cat Wise filed a segment for PBS *Newshour* examining the climate change adaptation objectives of the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project.  
<http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/san-francisco-salt-marshes/>

### Even a Marsh Can Drown (Orange County Register)

Reporter Aaron Orłowski interviews **Karen Thorne** about her sea level rise modeling research in Newport Bay and its implications for marsh habitat shifts.  
<http://www.ocregister.com/articles/grass-636534-eel-wetlands.html>



Courtesy of Ron Eby

## Calif. Sea Otters Holding Steady

Southern sea otter numbers are holding steady, according to the latest survey led by federal, state, aquarium, and university scientists. Led by **Tim Tinker** and **Brian Hatfield** with USFWS, CDFW OSPR, Monterey Bay Aquarium, UC Santa Cruz, and other partners, this annual, range-wide field survey reported the 2014 population index as 2,944.

[http://www.usgs.gov/blogs/features/usgs\\_top\\_story/slowly-swimming-towards-recovery-californias-sea-otter-numbers-holding-steady/](http://www.usgs.gov/blogs/features/usgs_top_story/slowly-swimming-towards-recovery-californias-sea-otter-numbers-holding-steady/)  
<http://www.fws.gov/ventura/newsroom/release.cfm?item=309>  
<http://www.capradio.org/news/insight/2014/09/24/insight-092414b/>  
[http://www.montereyherald.com/localnews/ci\\_26585657](http://www.montereyherald.com/localnews/ci_26585657)  
[http://www.vcstar.com/news/outdoors/officials-say-sea-otter-population-holding-steady\\_94303759](http://www.vcstar.com/news/outdoors/officials-say-sea-otter-population-holding-steady_94303759)



## Bowen Serves RNA Science Café

On November 12th, **Liz Bowen** was the featured guest at the **Davis Science Café**, a science outreach series that invites the public to meet and learn from scientists at cafés, restaurants, and bars. Bowen led a conversation on RNA transcription markers and its applications for wildlife and ecosystem health questions, and she appeared on the public radio show *Insight with Beth Ruyak* earlier that day to preview the event.

<http://capscicomm.org/2014/10/17/davis-science-cafe-on-november-12th-cityhalltaVERN-sea-otters-and-ecosystem-health/>  
<http://www.capradio.org/news/insight/2014/11/12/insight-111214b/>