

Minutes for: WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2006

Agenda:

1. Attendance
 2. Announcements
 3. Guest Speaker: Pablo Leira Doce
 4. Bay Area SCB Conference: Committee Updates
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1. *Attendance*

After last month's lull, attendance rebounded back to 27 people, with some new faces, no doubt drawn in by the guest speaker. We hope to see you all again in December!

2. *Announcements*

Congressman Richard Pombo (R-CA) was defeated in the 11th district! Thanks to the efforts of the Defenders of Wildlife and all of the volunteers, we achieved a great victory for conservation biologists and environmentalists.

Our parent organization, the Society for Conservation Biology, needs numbers on membership for its chapters. There is an online survey, through *Survey Monkey*, that we need you to complete. The survey is only five questions long and takes about one-minute to complete. Here is the link:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=793462856848>

4. *Guest Speaker*

Pablo Leira Dolce

Department of Plant Biology and Ecology

University of Seville, Spain

Conservation in Andalusia Spain:

Strengths and challenges of the Andalusian Strategy for invasive species

Geographical region

With a small chain of mountains to the north, a chain of large mountains to the south, a river running through the center, and coastal marshlands along the south-western border, this region offers a variety of habitats and a complete range of climate regimes. Because of the this, Andalusia has a high rate of endemism and the highest biodiversity of all of Europe.

Biodiversity and Conservation

There are currently eight different categories for protected areas in this region: National Park, Natural Park, Natural Site, Natural Preserve, Semi-public Natural Preserve, Natural Monument, Periurban Park and Preserved Landscape. These categories create a flexibility in the creation of protected areas, totaling 150 sites and covering 34% of the total area.

Red Book of Invasive Species – published by Consejeria de Medio Ambiente, Junta de Andalusia

Invasive species have resulted in a decrease in the population of native species and altered the appearance of the ecological communities in Andalusia. Worldwide, invasive species are the second cause for the loss of biodiversity (IUCN). They are typically favored in disrupted ecosystems or in those isolate, though preserved. There are two main objectives of their invasive species plan: 1) prevention and education and 2) control of the populations.

SOCIETY FOR CONSERVATION BIOLOGY – BERKELEY CHAPTER

Example: *Spartina densiflora*, a marsh cordgrass native to South America, was introduced to Europe over four hundred years ago. Currently, *S. densiflora* dominates most of the marshes in Spain, forming mono-cultures. In Andalusia, the three major marsh complexes, which are all protected, are covered in dense mono-cultures of *S. densiflora*. Unfortunately, nothing is being done about this terrible invasive. Removal is highly controversial since it has been present for hundreds of years, and provides foraging habitat and shelter for bird life.

Example: The Guadiamar River drains into the marshes, and is one of the rivers that does not have any dams. In 1998, mining began in the uplands, causing a huge influx of waste from the mines to flow into the river. Today, the river is part of a Preserved Landscape and Eco-Corridor. However, there is currently a highway that bisects the corridor and development along the corridor.

Example: The Tinto River is an acidic river (pH<2), which is also high in iron content, fueling the growth of chemoautotrophic bacteria. This unique habitat draws researchers from around the world, including NASA. However, nothing has been done since the protected area was established in 2004: no plan to regulate human activities, no visitor center, etc.

Future Policy

The European Union (EU) is moving toward establishing Natura 2000 sites, with the goal of protecting biodiversity throughout the EU. This program provides the legal framework to establish three kinds of protected areas: Special Protected Areas (SPA), Sites of Community Importance (SCI) and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC). Eventually, all of the protected areas within the EU will be classified under one of these three major areas. Check out this website for more information about the EU Nature Conservation Policy: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/home.htm>.

5. Bay Area SCB Conference

The three planning committees provided updates on their progress:

- Budget & Funding (Morgan - mtingley@nature.berkeley.edu) -- We received a pledge from the Department of Integrative Biology for \$750. This will be used for leverage to get similar funds from ESPM. We are currently working on GA and ASUC grants as well.
- Speakers (Suzie - smcilroy@nature.berkeley.edu) -- Michael Soule is potentially our keynote speaker. Negotiations and confirmation are still in progress.
- Paraphernalia (Erin - emeyer@berkeley.edu) -- Our goal is to use recycled, organic, and environmentally friendly products for all of the printed materials as well as the gift. We have not chosen a specific company yet, but we have found companies that will satisfy those goals. The conference gift will be a canvass tote bag.

Calling all artists! We need your help!

We need ideas for a conference theme along with the logo. The design(s) will appear on the T-shirt, the printed booklet and the tote bag. You can design different logos for each product, but keep to a central theme. Please e-mail Erin with theme and design ideas. The companies prefer the art in Adobe Illustrator (9.0). We will vote on the submitted designs in an upcoming meeting. The winning designer will receive a prize (yet to be determined).

** END MINUTES **

Respectfully submitted,
Erin Meyer, Secretary