

ESA Annual Report 2012



Understanding Life on Earth



From the Executive Director

If I were to categorize this past year, I would say it was a year when ESA gave extra attention to serving its early career members. Our membership survey in 2011 pointed to the desire to create more networking, career resources and training opportunities for younger professionals. ESA's ad hoc committee Ecology for a New Generation presented a series of recommendations, many of which have already been put into place. For example, our Portland meeting included two special skill building workshops for students and young professionals and ESA sections enthusiastically offered to participate in a networking activity during the opening reception that matched young professionals with mentors in their field of interest.



ESA file photo.

ESA's Earth Stewardship initiative continued in 2012 under the guidance of President Steward Pickett. A workshop was held in the spring that involved social scientists, urban planners, the religious community and practitioners who explored collaborative activities going forward. A special issue of *Frontiers* will result from this workshop. Another Society initiative – the emerging issues conference series, which addresses high-visibility issues of wide interest in the science community – took place in February. Eighty scientists, managers and students convened to discuss the challenges of developing ecologically-based conservation targets under global change.

The Society's engagement via social media grew in leaps and bounds over the year attracting over 6,000 Twitter followers and 2,000 "Likes" on Facebook. In another outreach effort, President Pickett, together with other Society members and staff spent a weekend in April talking with hundreds of children, families and servicemen who stopped at ESA's urban ecology booth during the US Science and Engineering Festival.

Ecosphere, ESA's open access journal, completed its second year and enjoyed great support from our community. *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment*, *Ecological Monographs*, and *Ecological Applications* all received increased impact factors and our flagship journal, *Ecology* has the most citations of any journal in the Ecology category. The landscape of scientific publishing is ever changing and ESA continues to evaluate and adapt its publishing program.

SEEDS, ESA's award winning program to promote diversity in the field of ecology, is as vibrant as ever. The seventh annual leadership meeting was held in Washington, DC and focused on public policy. The number of SEEDS chapters has grown to 78 across the US, Puerto Rico, the American Samoa's and Virgin Islands. The program has been undergoing a strategic planning effort that looks to its future needs and seeks to strengthen its financial base.

ESA's Annual Meeting in Portland was our largest ever, with attendance just four shy of 5,000! ESA had another positive year financially and is continuing its commitment to build reserves for the future. The work of the Society is guided by the leadership of the Governing Board, the ESA Council, and the members who support the Society through service on journals, sections, chapters and committees. The professional staff manage our programs and activities. I am proud to serve as ESA Executive Director and look forward to the year ahead.

Katherine S. McCarter

From the President

My term as President of ESA has been a career high for me, and it was a bit of a surprise to calculate that it came during my 40th year of membership in the Society. It was a pleasure to help lead the world's largest association of professional ecologists. The scope of ESA is truly impressive, comprising members who are educators, students, environmental consultants, and researchers, among others. Furthermore, the activities of ESA promote all three pillars of the scientific enterprise: discovery, nurturing the professional community, and engaging the larger society.

Partnering with the Society's professional staff, headquartered in Washington DC, with publications offices in Ithaca, NY to help move these three linked aspects of science forward has been a real pleasure.

There were several highlights during my term. The first was the Ecology for a New Generation Committee which I charged to explore how the Society could facilitate the success of those who are just now preparing for and exploring ecological careers. Chaired by Governing Board member Sonia Ortega, this committee worked hard and creatively to identify new ways of engaging younger ecologists and to suggest how ESA might evolve to encourage their involvement. Several of the suggestions were put in place already, and the committee report contains many ideas that can be implemented over the longer term.

Second was helping to promote increasing diversity in the community of ecologists. This is crucial for all three components of the scientific process. Diversity enhances the process and objectivity of discovery, the nurturing of the scientific community, and effective engagement with society. I targeted the diversification of our discipline in my remarks in the scientific plenary at the Annual Meeting in Portland, OR. I was also delighted to participate in the SEEDS Leadership Conference, and to host a Presidential Conversation on Diversity among Society leaders. This last activity helped to elicit new ways of thinking about how all activities of the Society can contribute to diversification of our workforce, both within academia and in a wider variety of ecological careers, and to signal the importance of diversity throughout our portfolio of ESA activities.

Earth Stewardship is an initiative that I was very pleased to be able to continue. Following upon the leadership of Presidents Power and Chapin, I helped promote Earth Stewardship at our own Annual Meeting, through a multidisciplinary NSF-sponsored workshop, through a symposium at the EcoSummit 2012 (of which ESA was a cosponsor), and through meetings with other communities and associations with a shared interest in stewardship. Importantly, stewardship acknowledges the linked wellbeing of the environment and of humans. My particular focus was to connect with professions in urban design, regional planning, and engineering as a way to promote Earth Stewardship.

The establishment of honorific fellowships for outstanding members of the Ecological Society also took place on my watch. I was delighted to be able to support the proposal by Alan Hastings, Deborah Goldberg and Katherine McCarter which led to the naming of our first cohort of ESA Fellows. Nominations for Early Career Fellows have been invited. Importantly, these honors, bestowed for excellence or extraordinary promise, are intended to highlight contributions to ecological discovery, application, education, and policy.

I hope my contributions can be summarized as helping the Society look forward in a changing world. The world is changing in terms of demography, technological savvy, and career expectations of the younger generation, of publication and distribution of scientific knowledge, of climate and vulnerability and the associated needs for enhanced Earth Stewardship. I hope you find in this Annual Report abundant evidence of ESAs contributions to all three pillars of science, and of its own adaptability in this changing world.



ESA file photo.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Stewart Pickett".

ESA in Action

Sharing Ecology



Two new editions of ESA's *Issues in Ecology* series focused on the role of landscape connectivity in conservation and the risks of excess nitrogen in the environment.

ESA's booth on urban ecology attracted hundreds of visitors during the US Science and Engineering Festival.

A growing social media community followed and discussed ecological issues through the Society's blog, Facebook and Twitter posts.

ESA's open access *Bulletin* offered articles that included such varied topics as harnessing smart phones for ecological education and research and the economic value of vulnerable ecosystems.



ESA file photo.

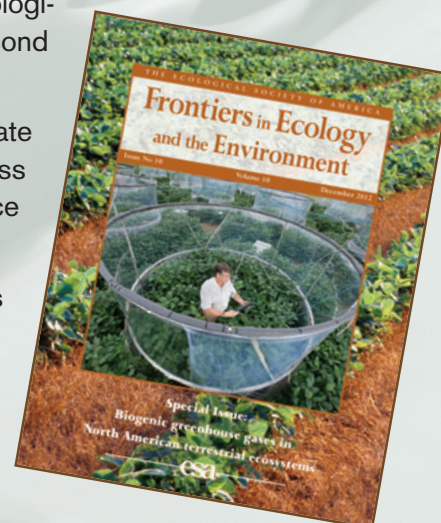
Peter Mooreside, with ESA, talks to visitors about small invertebrates found in urban areas.

Advancing Ecological Science and Education

Eighty scientists, managers and students discussed developing ecologically-based conservation targets under global change at ESA's second Emerging Issues Conference.

Funded by the Department of Energy and part of the National Climate Assessment, a *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment* open access Special Issue focused on managing biogeochemical cycles to reduce greenhouse gases.

A new folder system for users to group educational resource collections and a collaborative resource tagging feature of the EcoEd Digital Library were launched as part of the Digital Resource Discovery (DRD) project. Funded by the National Science Foundation, DRD is an ESA partnership with three other societies.



Earth Stewardship

ESA's Earth Stewardship workshop – sponsored by NSF – brought together representatives from the academic, federal, religious, business and planning and design communities to identify ways to move forward in implementing Earth stewardship.

An ESA workshop on environmental literacy explored models which can serve as entry points to diverse and previously un-engaged communities.

Sponsored by the NSF and in collaboration with the Meridian Institute, ESA hosted a workshop that brought together managers, policy professionals, and agency representatives to craft strategies to sustain the nation's living stocks collections.



Whooping cranes in flight.

USFWS

Informing Policy



ESA graduate student Sarah Roley tells appropriations committee staffer Robert Bonner about her research during the Hill science exhibit.

ESA weighed in on a range of issues relevant to ecology, including sustaining Canada's Experimental Lake Area and support for the environmental education programs of the Environmental Protection Agency and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Student leaders in ESA's SEEDS program (Strategies for Ecology Education, Diversity and Sustainability) met with over 20 congressional offices to discuss STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) education.



SEEDS student leader Tiffany Carey with her congressman Hansen Clarke.

The research of an ESA graduate student was showcased in ESA's Capitol Hill exhibit at an annual science event designed to facilitate interaction between policymakers and scientists. ESA Graduate Student Policy Award winners participated in Capitol Hill meetings focused on support of ecological research.

Communicating Research

Scientists around the world publish their research in ecology and environmental science in ESA's scientific, peer-reviewed journals: ***Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment***, ***Ecology***, ***Ecological Monographs***, and ***Ecological Applications***. The Society's journals enjoy high impact factors. ESA's newest journal, ***Ecosphere***, launched in 2010, is a rapid-publication, online-only, open access journal featuring all sub-disciplines of ecology.

Research featured in ESA's journals in 2012 included a variety of topics such as using elk bones to determine the animals' habitat use in Yellowstone National Park, the ecology of potential bioenergy grasses, the growing role of citizen science contributions, the effects of habitat fragmentation on tortoise populations and the impacts of sexual harassment on catshark population dynamics.

In addition to press releases, ESA shares ecological information through social media including the Society's popular blog *EcoTone*, ESA podcasts, and on Facebook (over 2,000 'likes') and Twitter (6,500 followers). *Beyond the Frontier* podcasts attract thousands of listeners, with a podcast on the impacts of cascading ecosystems on bark beetle outbreaks spiking to over 11,000 hits. *A Field Talk* podcast about geographical bias in field research was also immensely popular.



ESA Journal Rankings and Impact Factors

"Ecology" Category (out of 131 journal titles)

- 4 FRONTIERS IN ECOLOGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT (9.113)
- 5 ECOLOGICAL MONOGRAPHS (7.433)
- 14 ECOLOGICAL APPLICATIONS (5.102)
- 19 ECOLOGY (4.849)



"Environmental Sciences" Category (out of 205 journal titles)

- 2 FRONTIERS IN ECOLOGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT (9.113)
- 10 ECOLOGICAL APPLICATIONS (5.102)

Annual Meeting

The Society's 97th Annual Meeting was a record-breaker for the Society, drawing 4,996 attendees nationally and internationally to Portland, Oregon. The gathering was abuzz with thousands of presentations on a wide range of topics as researchers, students, educators, resource managers and policymakers shared ideas and information. A conference on public participation in scientific research was held in association with the ESA meeting and highlighted a citizen science Special Issue of *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment*. As part of its environmental offsets initiative, ESA donated \$12,475 each to Portland-based Friends of Trees and to the Columbia Land Trust.

Media interest in the meeting was strong and included the *Oregonian*, *LA Times*, *USA Today*, public radio and *Nature News*. Twitter feeds hummed with #ESA2012 and ESA's facebook page rocketed to 17,000 "people reached."



Jerry Franklin reflects on 50 years of forest ecology and its policy applications

ESA file photo



Stephen Davis

Bike field trip participants explore the area.



ESA file photo

ESA exhibit hall entrance.



ESA file photo

The Student Section's popular meeting orientation for students.

President Pickett congratulates Sustainable Science award recipient Reid.



Nadine Lynn

2011 Award Winners

Eminent Ecologist: Robert Naiman

MacArthur Award: Anthony Ives

Odum Education Award: Charlene D'Avanzo

Mercer Award: Ann Carla Staver, Sally Archibald

Cooper Award: Kevin Boyce, *et al.*

E. Lucy Braun Award: Ernane Vieira Neto

Murray F. Buell Award: Ebony Murrell

Sustainability Science Award: R.S. Reid, *et al.*

Distinguished Service Citation: Janet Lanza

Honorary Member: Rick Shine

Finances

Fiscal Year ending 6/30/2012

Revenues

Grants & Contributions	665,486
Membership Dues	668,869
Subscriptions	2,606,609
Manuscript Charges	583,377
Annual Meeting	1,083,800
Investment Income	48,401
Other Revenues	284,120
Net Assets released from restrictions	383,260

Total Revenues **6,323,922**

Expenses

Public Affairs	247,162
Science Program	433,864
Annual Meeting	893,191
Chapters & Sections	42,634
Journal Publications	2,548,617
Education	670,039
Member & Administrative Services	1,365,142

Total Expenses **6,200,649**

Change in Net Assets **123,273**

Unrestricted Net Assets as of June 30, 2011	2,555,630
Unrestricted Net Assets as of June 30, 2012	2,678,903

Assets

Cash and cash equivalents	1,944,729
Investments	4,286,963
Accounts receivable	255,224
Grants receivable	200,459
Prepaid expenses	133,999
Furniture & Equipment (less depreciation)	22,706
Deposits	24,616

Total Assets **6,868,696**

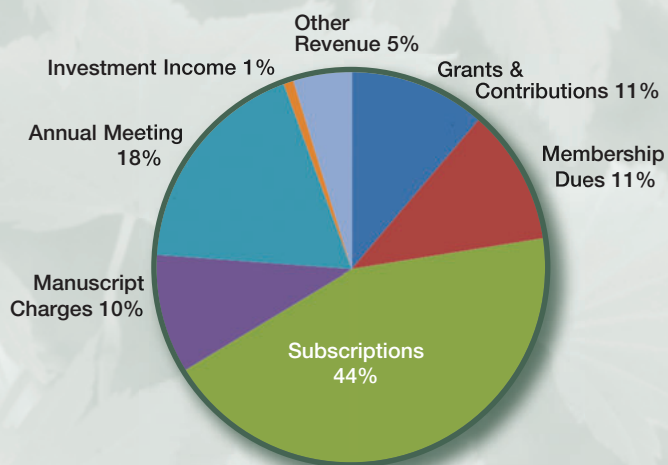
Liabilities and Net Assets

Accounts payable and accrued expenses	210,970
Deferred revenue	2,762,411
Unrestricted Net Assets	2,678,903
Temporarily Restricted Net Assets	1,166,412
Permanently Restricted Net Assets	50,000

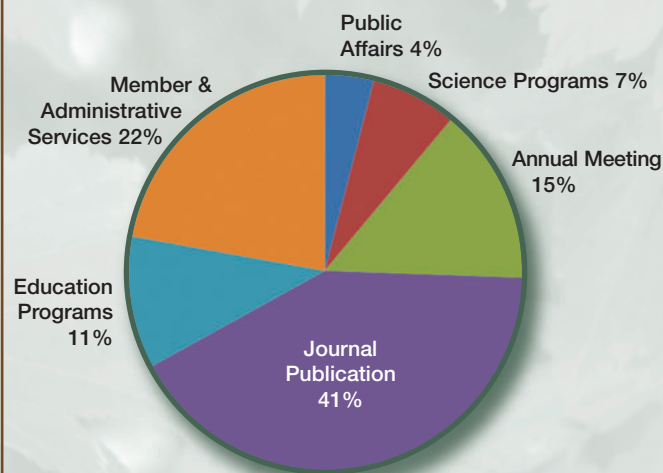
Total Liabilities and Net Assets **6,868,696**

Audited by Gelman, Rosenberg, Freedman.
For a complete audit report please contact
ESA's Washington DC office.

2012 REVENUES



2012 EXPENSES



2012 Fund for the Future

ESA thanks its generous donors who help support Society initiatives. If you would like to help the Society advance the science and profession of ecology, please consider making a donation at www.esa.org/donate.

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\$500-999

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Defenders of Wildlife
Doris Duke Charitable Foundation
Environmental Protection Agency
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National Aeronautics and Space Administration
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National Science Foundation
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Society for Wetland Science
USDA Forest Service
USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
USACE (SERDP)
US Geological Survey
University of North Texas
Wildlife Acoustics

About the ESA

The Ecological Society of America is the world's largest professional organization of ecological scientists. ESA's 10,000 members work in academia, government and in the private sector to improve society's understanding and stewardship of life on Earth. Members' work addresses threatened and endangered species, alternative energy, sustainable agriculture and fisheries, emerging diseases, climate change and many other important issues.

The Society works to broadly share ecological information through policy and media outreach, education and diversity initiatives and projects that link the ecological research and management communities and help integrate ecological science into decision-making. ESA also organizes scientific conferences and publishes high-impact journals.



USFWS

American robins play a key role in the spread of West Nile virus, which is a health threat to both wildlife and people.



Julie Doll, MSU

NSF KBS LTER site experimental plot, part of a study that showed the potential of marginal lands for growing biofuels.



Nadine Lynn

President Steward Pickett and graduate students on Capitol Hill. ESA organizes a congressional visits day each spring to facilitate member involvement in public policy.



Danielle Dixon

Goby fish on a coral reef in Fiji; green algae are moving in on the coral but gobies respond to corals' "alarm" call and eat the algae.

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Cover photograph: During the 2012 USA Science & Engineering Festival, ESA President Steward Pickett engages girls in an urban ecology game about ecology in environments such as Washington, DC.



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