

**Report on the Activities of the Austral and Neotropical America
section during the 22nd Annual Meeting of the
Society for Conservation Biology**

2008

Summary

During the 22nd Annual Meeting of the Society for Conservation Biology, held in July 2008 in Chattanooga, Tennessee, United States, the Austral and Neotropical America (ANA) section of the society carried out a number of activities: I) a short-course on needs assessment and curriculum design in conservation biology, II) a social event between ANA and the Social Science Working Group, III) a general ANA meeting, and IV) an ANA board members meeting. This report details these activities. It was written by Mariana Vale, Director of Communication.

Board members present at the meeting

Nora Byrum (Director of Education)
Mariana Vale (Director of Communication and Meetings)
Patricia Majluf (President Elect)
Rodrigo Medellin (President Ex-officio)

Chattanooga, 11-17 July 2008

SHORT COURSE (July 12-13)

ANA's director of education, Nora Bynum, organized, together with the Africa section and the Center for Biodiversity Conservation of the American Museum of Natural History, a two-day course entitled: Technical Support for Needs Assessment and Curriculum Design and Implementation in Conservation Biology. The course was well attended (including 6 participants from the ANA region, 2 funded by partial scholarships from the section) and all ANA board member present – Mariana Vale, Patricia Majluf and Rodrigo Medellin – participated in the course as resource faculty members. A more detailed report will be available by September 2008.

SSWG-ANA SOCIAL (July 14)

The director of the Social Science Working Group (SSWG), Michael Mascia, organized a social together with ANA. Michael Mascia spoke on behalf of the SSWG, expressing the group's interest in becoming more international. Rodrigo Medellin spoke on behalf of ANA, expressing ANA's interest in having a stronger tie to the social sciences. The social was well attended and fun, as a social should be.

ANA GENERAL MEETING (July 15)

ANA's President ex-officio, Rodrigo Medellin, hosted the ANA Meeting. Rodrigo made a short presentation explaining what ANA is, the benefits of being an ANA member, and showing ANA's most recent activities and future goals. Nora Bynum, Mariana Vale and Jon Paul Rodriguez (Editor of NeoCons) gave short explanations of activities carried by ANA. The meeting was attended by all ANA board members present at the conference plus another 35 people. Many participants were not ANA members yet and expressed interest in joining the section. A number of students expressed interest in volunteering as translators to Spanish for ANA.

MEETINGS OF THE ANA BOARD (July 13 and July 17)

ANA board members present in Chattanooga had two meetings, which identified a number of tasks and goals for the section for the near future. Below is a list of these tasks and goals:

1. 2009 ANA Board Meeting to be held in Mexico

It was decided that the next ANA Board Meeting should be held in Mexico City in April 2009. Four ANA board members are housed in that city (Gerardo Ceballos, Rurik List, Jesus Pacheco, and Rodrigo Medellin). The board members present

at the meeting hope that ANA Secretary, Jesus Pacheco, will help organizing this meeting with a similar format of the meeting held in 2008 in Rio de Janeiro.

2. New developments on ANA's paper in Conservation Biology

Each of the sections of SCB has been asked to develop a paper discussing the main conservation challenges faced by each region, to be considered for publication in Conservation Biology. The board members present at the meeting believed that the manuscript currently under construction could significantly improve in scope if the ANA members were involved. The board members proposed a short survey among ANA members to help identify the principal conservation challenges faced by the ANA region. The proposal was presented to and accepted by ANA's President Gerardo Ceballos and the survey is under way. Once the main topics are identified, Gerardo Ceballos will determine who should be in charge of writing each topic and will edit the final document in order to give coherence to the manuscript.

3. Need for applying for funds for ANA

The Christensen fund which has been covering ANA's expenses is over. Mariana Vale (ANA's Director of Communication and representative in SCB's Development Committee) agreed to communicate with Rurik List (ANA's Director of Finances) and Rese Cluck (SCB's Development Coordinator) to identify and apply to possible sources of funds for the ANA section.

4. Need to increase ANA membership

Given that ANA membership is down by more than 150 members compared to last year, we believe it is important to launch a membership campaign to inform general SCB membership, as well as to students and other people involved in conservation within the sphere of work of the current ANA members, about the benefits of being ANA members to attract new membership.

5. Need to tighten the relationship with regional chapters

Currently there are two local chapters within the ANA region. ANA should tighten its relationship with these chapters. Mariana Vale (ANA's Director of Communication) agreed to communicate with Fiona Nagle (SCB Chapters Coordinator) to start a dialogue with representatives of these local chapters.

6. Need to update the Bylaws

The Bylaws of ANA should be updated to include the ex-officio board members as part of the board for two years, as decided in the 2008 Board Meeting. Gerardo Ceballos should be responsible for performing this update.

7. Need to updates ANA's Webpage

A number of needed updates on ANA's Webpage were identified. Mariana Vale (ANA's Director of Communication) volunteered make the following additions to the webpage:

- Nora Bynum as Education Director on the list of board members

- Link to a list of ANA's representatives in SCB chapters
- Link to NeoCons newsletter subscription site
- Link to SCB chapters within the ANA region
- Post this report (ANA's activities during the 22nd Annual Meeting of SCB)
- Link to www.biologiadelaconservacion.com within the Resources link
- Clean all outdated information within links