President's Column

A Biogeography Specialty Group New Year's Resolution for 2009

Season's Greetings! At this time of year I find myself reflecting on the past year's accomplishments and setting goals for the coming year. The past year has seen some changes to BSG communications - a new web domain, a new newsletter editor and updates to the AAG web-based discussion forums. The discussion forum has tremendous potential for rapid communications and networking but remains under-subscribed by our members, limiting opportunities for many colleagues.

So with this message, I am posing the following challenges to all members of the Biogeography Specialty Group - a group New Year's Resolution for 2009 to improve communications and make the most of our network…

• Take 5 minutes to join the **BSG discussion forum** (instructions below) to receive postings for jobs student competitions, invitations to participate in special sessions at meetings, and calls for submissions for the newsletter.

• Already a member of the BSG forum? **Double check your "preferences"** to ensure you receive BSG postings in a timely way (instructions below).

• **Network** by reminding one other biogeographer (your student or faculty advisor or a colleague) to join the on-line discussion forum.

• Student members, join the **BSG student listserve** by sending an email to Chad Lane (chad.lane (at) lawrence.edu)

• **Add the new BSG domain** to your favorite links and promote it on your homepage (**www.biogeographer.org**)

**Instructions to access the BSG forum…**

  Login to the AAG website (www.aag.org)
  Select "My Communities" from the Communities panel (lower right)
  Select "Global Preferences" to ensure you are actively subscribed to the BSG community and to ensure you are receiving all email messages from the forum
  (Select "preferences" to receive email messages immediately, daily or weekly)
  Under "My Communities", select Biogeography Specialty Group
  Under "Forums", select General Information or Job Announcements to review recently posted messages or to post a new message
  To post a new message, click on "General Information" and "Create a New Topic" (upper right). From here you can type your message, preview for formatting and then post.

In the New Year, look for announcements on the BSG forum about the upcoming AAG meeting in Las Vegas. Best wishes in 2009!

Lori Daniels, BSG President 2007-9

**Graduate Student Representative Column**

Greetings from snowy Wisconsin! As the new graduate student representative to the BSG, I’d like to first thank Jenn Marlon, the outgoing BSG student representative, for her hard work and a wonderful career development session at the 2008 meetings in Boston. I am currently putting together a session for next year’s meeting, which will be on doing fieldwork in biogeography. This session will be a place for graduate students and early-career biogeographers to discuss issues such as planning, funding, and successfully carrying out fieldwork in a range of settings and geographic regions. If you or someone you know has a lot of field experience, or have suggestions of good resources for graduate fieldwork, please pass them along!
At next year’s meeting, look forward to a new format for the BSG Student Paper and Poster Awards. Students participating in the awards will be showcased in separate Student Paper and Poster Special Sessions. The new setup was designed to better showcase student work, and simplify the judges’ review process. This will be the first time the BSG has used the new format, so we’d love to hear feedback!

I’m excited to work with the rest of the BSG board in the coming year, and hope to meet many of you at next year’s meeting in Las Vegas. If you’re interested in being on the BSG student list-serv, please e-mail the list moderator, Chad Lane, at chad.lane (at) lawrence.edu. In the meantime, I hope everyone has had a successful end-of-semester wrap-up, and has a wonderful break!

**********************
Jacquelyn Gill, BSG Graduate Student Representative 2008-9

Back to the top

---

**Calls for Nominations and Participation**

**Cowles and Parsons Awards**

Please consider submitting nominations for the Henry Cowles Award for Excellence in Publication and the James J. Parsons Distinguished Career Award. To submit a nomination for the Cowles Award, please simply send the name of the person and the name of their paper/book; a pdf file of the nominated work as an attachment would also be appreciated, if possible. To nominate a person for the Parsons Award, send a short letter of nomination stating some of the candidate's most significant achievements.

Please submit nominations by February 1, 2009. Information can be submitted via snail mail, e-mail (strongly preferred!) or fax to:

David R. Butler, Ph.D.
Professor of Geography
Department of Geography
Texas State University-San Marcos
San Marcos, TX 78666-4616 U.S.A.

phone 512-245-7977, fax 512-245-8353, e-mail db25@txstate.edu
BSG 2009 Board Nominations

This winter we'll be electing a new BSG President, two new BSG Board Members, and a new Student Representative.

Please send nominations for any of these positions (specify which position) to Colin Long at longco@uwosh.edu by Jan. 31st. Elections will take place during February.

Colin Long  
Department of Geography and Urban Planning  
University of Wisconsin Oshkosh

BSG 2009 Student Research Grants

The aim of the Biogeography Specialty Group (BSG) Graduate Student Research Grant Competition is to provide partial support for graduate students to conduct quality biogeographic research projects for their Master's thesis or Doctoral dissertation. The awards are competitive, and proposals are judged individually on the basis of: 1) scientific merit of the project, including biogeographic significance of the research question and quality of the methodology; 2) organization and clarity of the proposal; and 3) qualifications of the student to conduct the proposed work. Each applicant must be a student member of the AAG, and the proposed project should be part of her or his thesis or dissertation research. Normally, awards are made to one Master's and one Doctoral student each year. Applicants may join the AAG now and become eligible for the Student Research Grant competition if not already a student member. A committee of four to six biogeographers from different institutions will evaluate the proposals. Applications must be postmarked or electronically transmitted (preferred) to Dr. Henri D. Grissino-Mayer by April 1, 2009. Announcement of the awards will be made at the BSG business meeting at the AAG Annual Meeting in Las Vegas.

THE APPLICATION FORM AND ABSTRACT MUST BE RECEIVED BY APRIL 1, 2009.

Application instructions and form (MS Word format)

For more information, contact:

Henri D. Grissino-Mayer  
Associate Professor of Geography  
Department of Geography  
1000 Phillip Fulmer Way  
The University of Tennessee  
Knoxville, Tennessee 37996  
865-974-6029  
http://web.utk.edu/~grissino/
BSG 2009 Student and Poster Awards
AAG Student Oral and Poster Presentation Update

I am pleased to announce that we have 16 student participants in the presentation competition for the upcoming Las Vegas Annual Meeting. At this meeting we will début a new organizational format for the competition as we will be holding specially organized sessions sponsored by the BSG solely featuring competition participants. This will alleviate problems that have developed in recent years as the BSG student membership and the conference itself has grown. In past years student presentations were scattered throughout the meeting, often in concurrent sessions and in different conference buildings creating logistical nightmares and in some cases unscheduled workouts (!) for our volunteer judges.

Most importantly we felt that the new format will better showcase our talented student BSG researchers.

So when the program comes out in the spring please mark off and plan on attending the poster, 2 M.A. and 1 Ph.D. BSG Sponsored Student Presentation Sessions.

Michelle Goman, Dept. Earth and Atmospheric Sciences, Cornell University

BSG Student Paper and Poster Competition Organizer

Back to the top

News

2009 Annual AAG Meeting in Las Vegas, NV
March 22-27, 2009
Biogeography Specialty Group Sponsored Sessions (with organizers):

1. **Student Competitions**
   Biogeography Specialty Group student poster competition
   Contact: Michelle Goman (mgoman@cornell.edu)

   Biogeography Specialty Group student paper competition
   Contact: Michelle Goman (mgoman@cornell.edu)

2. **Round Table Discussion**
   Species Distribution Modeling Roundtable
   Contact: Jen Miller (jennifer.miller@austin.utexas.edu)

3. **Interactive Short Paper Sessions**
   Dendrochronology
   Contact - Jim Speer (jspeer3@indstate.edu)

4. **Panel Presentation**
   What is an NSF GK-12 Grant and How Would Getting One Help Me and My Department?
   Contact: Sally Horn (shorn@utk.edu)

5. **Organized Paper Sessions**
   Riparian Ecosystem Dynamics
   Contact - John Kupfer (kupfer@sc.edu)

   Landscape Ecology and Biogeography
   Contact Jim Hayes, james.hayes@csun.edu

   Ecological Analysis using Presettlement Land Survey Records
   Contact - Yi-Chen Wang (geowyc@nus.edu.sg)

   Dendroecology, Dendroclimatology, North American Dendroecological Fieldweek Studies,
   Stable Isotopes and Dendrochemistry
   Contact - Jim Speer (jspeer3@indstate.edu)

   Biogeography and Remote Sensing: Linking species, landscape and regional scales
   Contact: Jaclyn Hall (jhall@geog.ufl.edu)

   Insect outbreaks and forest ecosystems: Patterns, causes, and impacts
   Contact: Dominik Kulakowski (dkulakowski@clarku.edu)

   A Geographic Perspective on the Status of Whitebark Pine Communities in Western North America
   Contact: Evan Larson (lars2859@umn.edu) or Saskia van de Gevel (svandegevel@yahoo.com)
Assessing Environmental Disturbance to Forest Ecosystems: Linking regional approaches to place based research
Contact: Laura C. Schneider(laschnei@rci.rutgers.edu) or John Rogan (jrogan@clarku.edu)

Climate Change and Plant Communities
Contact: David Goldblum (dgoldblum@niu.edu)

Advances in Paleoclimatology: Moisture Changes through Time and their Impacts
Contact: Andrea Brunelle (andrea.brunelle@geog.utah.edu)

Vegetation Dynamics
Contact: Will Flatley (flatley@tamu.edu) or Daehyun Kim (geokim@geog.tamu.edu)

Treeline Ecotones in Mountain Environments
Contact: Dave Butler (db25@txstate.edu)

Remote Sensing of Land Surface Phenology
Contact: Willem van Leeuwen at leeuw@ag.arizona.edu

Marine Geomorphology and Mapping for an Ecosystem-Based Management Approach to Marine Reserve Design and Planning
Organizers: Dawn Wright (dawn@dusk.geo.orst.edu) and Will Heyman (wheyman@geog.tamu.edu)

Land use and regional land-atmosphere interactions
Organizers: Trent Biggs (trentbren@yahoo.com) and Eungul Lee (Eungul.lee@gmail.com)

Climate, Wildfire, and Woodland Dynamics in the Great Basin of North America
Contact: Franco Biondi (fbiondi@unr.edu) or Jason Sibold (Jason.Sibold@colostate.edu)

Mojave Desert: Regional and Local Threats
Mojave Desert: Landscape-Scale Effects on Plant and Animal Distributions
Mojave Desert: Recovery, Restoration and Ecosystem Monitoring
Contact: Jill Heaton (jheaton@unr.edu)

Remote Sensing and GIS Applications in Biogeography
Contact: Kirk Stueve (stueve@geog.tamu.edu)

Ecologies and Politics of Health
Contact: Brian King (bhk2@psu.edu)

Back to the top
Recent Publications

Note: Author submitting the publication to The Biogeographer highlighted in bold.


---

Research Notes

**Free Landsat Data**

**Rachel M. K. Headley, PhD**  
*Scientist, Landsat Project, USGS EROS*

On 8 December 2008, the USGS Landsat Project will release the entire Landsat archive for free order and download. This encompasses over 2.2 million scenes from 1972 through today, all of which is “GIS-ready” (AKA terrain-corrected, AKA orthorectified). While Landsat is a global mission, all international sites are not equally represented temporally.

Landsat 7 data is already available at no cost to the user. Educational use of the data has exploded, with over 10,000 downloads in the first weeks of the release. Please visit the GloVis viewer at http://glovis.usgs.gov for a visual search for your area of interest. For large spatial or temporal searches, I recommend using Earth Explorer at http://earthexplorer.usgs.gov.

If the data you seek has been ordered previously, it will be available for immediate download. If you are interested in a scene that has never been processed, you will have to order the data, which will become available in around 3 days.

For more information, please visit the Landsat website at [http://landsat.usgs.gov](http://landsat.usgs.gov).

contact: rheadley@usgs.gov  
Sioux Falls, SD  57198  
tel. 605-594-6118  
mobile 605-360-3613  
rheadley@usgs.gov
Member News: Robert E. Ford

Abu Dhabi Global Environmental Data Initiative
Welcoming Partners

Robert (Bob) Ford, MPH, PhD--formerly at USAID, Utah State University, BYU, and Loma Linda University--for most of 2008 has assisted the AGEDI Project (Abu Dhabi Global Environmental Data Initiative) as a senior development consultant via GPC (Geographic Planning Collaborative, Inc.)—see: http://www.agedi.ae/default.aspx. In collaboration with CIESIN (Earth Institute, Columbia University) and partners Marc Levy, Alex de Sherbinin, and Valentina Mara he has been helping design an EPI (Environmental Performance Index) for the Environment Agency of Abu Dhabi that can be adapted later for the GCC states of the Arabian Gulf (see http://epi.yale.edu/Home and http://www.ciesin.columbia.edu/index.html).

Starting November 1, 2008 Bob returned to Rwanda, Africa on a fulltime basis where he spent four years during the 1980’s. He has assumed the post of Research Professor and Advisor to the Geographic Information Systems and Remote Sensing Research and Training Centre (CGIS) at the National University of Rwanda (NUR). He will also assist the new Master’s in GIS/Environment and Sustainable Development within the Geography Department as well as assist in outreach for the new Centre for Environment, Entrepreneurship, and Sustainable Development (CEESD). He also works closely the new undergraduate and graduate curriculum in Conservation Biology with partners from Antioch University, i.e. Beth Kaplin. Much of his work will focus on sustainability, public health, GIS/Remote Sensing, and biogeography, e.g. ecosystem and primate conservation thru health promotion with the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International, and coordinating locally an EU-funded interdisciplinary research endeavor on the “human dimensions of global change” entitled the CREATING7 Project (http://www.creating7.net). Other partners include the Albertine Rift Conservation Society (ARCOS)—see http://www.arcosnetwork.org/ as well as the MVP (Millennium Village Project-Mayange Rwanda) and Partners in Health (PIH): (http://www.pih.org/where/Rwanda/Rwanda.html) and (http://www.millenniumvillages.org/aboutmv/mv_mayange.htm).
BSG-AAG colleagues are invited to explore opportunities for research collaboration, study abroad, community development internships, and service in Rwanda and the Great Lakes/Albertine Rift region of Central Africa—we need all the help we can get! Formal partnerships already exist with the University of Redlands, Loma Linda University, ESRI, the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International, the Wildlife Conservation Society, CARPE (Central African Regional Program for the Environment), EarthWatch Institute, USAID and many other NGO, government, private sector, and donor agencies.

We welcome more partners! Learn more at: http://www.cgisnur.org/ Contact: geobobford@gmail.com or Bob Ford’s webpage: http://geobobford.com/

**Member News**

*Recent Graduate Student Completions in Biogeography at Texas State University:*


Back to the top

---

**Miscellaneous Notes**

**Upcoming Conference: XIIIth World Forestry Congress**
18-25 October 2009, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Call for the Submission of Abstracts and Posters: Deadline Extended to 31 December 2008!
"Forests in development – a vital balance" is the theme of this XIIIth World Forestry Congress and it will be tackled from the social, ecological and economic perspectives. This will provide an opportunity to analyze this natural resource’s functions on the local, regional and global scales. The relevance of every type of forest and its contribution to the planet’s sustainable development will be stressed.
Abstracts may be sent directly online via the corresponding web site or by e-mail. Detailed instructions as well as the submission form can be found at: [http://www.cfm2009.org](http://www.cfm2009.org)

**International Biogeography Society:**
The latest IBS Newsletter is out and can be downloaded at: [http://www.biogeography.org/pdfs/2008Vol6Iss3.pdf](http://www.biogeography.org/pdfs/2008Vol6Iss3.pdf). In this issue we provide additional, last-minute details on the International Biogeography Society meeting in Merida, Mexico. You will find a complete listing of symposia and the schedule of workshops and field trips for the January 2009 meeting at [www.biogeography.org](http://www.biogeography.org). Travel awards have been distributed to 66 awardees this year. This comes thanks to member involvement in IBS and from the support of the US National Science Foundation.
Miguel B. Araújo, V.P. Public Affairs and Communication, [www.biochange-lab.eu](http://www.biochange-lab.eu)

Back to the top
Submission Guidelines to “The Biogeographer”

Submissions should be sent directly to the editor as email attachments in one of the following formats: html, MS Word, or RTF (single spaced, 12 pt. Times Roman font). Limit special formatting to bold and italics, ensuring that all links are complete and any subfolders or documents are included. If submitting items for more than one section of the newsletter (news, notes, publications), send each in a separate email with the section identified in the subject line. Bear in mind that your editor generally just cuts and pastes whatever she gets, so please spell-check and proofread your submissions carefully. Submissions should be concise and written in a style consistent with the rest of the newsletter.

Notes and News Items. News items can be personal, departmental, institutional, or simply biogeography-related stories from the press. Notes are intended to convey topical information of interest to the BSG community. Topics for these categories include:

- Research Notes: new projects and progress reports or general research-related ideas and issues.
- Field Notes: recent field work or field trips or retellings of classic tales from the field (embellishments welcome).
- Course Notes: news, announcements, or articles related to teaching biogeography or pedagogical issues affecting the discipline.
- Book Notes: book reviews or announcements.
- Miscellaneous Notes: anything that doesn't fit in any of the other categories.

News items should generally be less than 500 words and notes less than 1500. Please check with the editor before submitting longer items. Images should be sent as separate files (do not embed them in text documents) following the guidelines below.

Recent Publications
Format bibliographic entries following the Chicago B style used in the Annals. Only publications that have actually appeared in print or online will be listed, so please do not submit in-press items until you have page numbers or a permanent URL.

Images
Photos should be jpeg or png format with a minimum resolution of and no larger than 400 pixels wide or tall. Larger images (up to 800 pixels wide) will be considered if appropriate. Maps and other graphics can be larger if needed for clarity, but in no case should exceed 800 pixels wide. Edit your images to enhance contrast, brightness, and color balance. (Picasa is a free image organizer that includes basic editing tools that can simplify this task; be sure to use the "Export" command after editing.)