

## ISWE Annual Report 2019

This year we elected one new member to the ISWE board – Sue Walker (Chester Zoo, UK) became the Vice Chair of Ethics and Special Initiatives as of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020. Thank you to Rachel Santymire (Lincoln Park Zoo, Chicago, IL USA) for serving on the board for the last three years.

The 7th ISWE Conference was organized and held in Skukuza, Kruger National Park, South Africa, hosted by the Mammal Research Institute of the University of Pretoria, October 13th-16th, 2019. The conference included 106 attendees from 18 countries, featured 2 plenary speakers, 39 oral and 46 poster presentations, and the first ever ISWE trainee-mentor luncheon! Two travel scholarships were awarded, to Justine Hudson (University of Manitoba, Canada) and Laura McCaw (University of Toronto Scarborough, Canada), respectively. Otto Kalliokoski was voted best oral presentation, and Friederike Pohlin and Sanjeeta Sharma Pokharel won the best poster vote.

ISWE hosted its annual board meeting on October 13<sup>th</sup> 2019, just prior to its conference. The Society's website design and maintenance, board liability insurance, the Society's By-laws, and WEIN content management were all discussed, as well as testing of the recently developed Corticosterone and Estradiol ISWE Mini-kits, possibilities for providing special issue opportunities for publishing ISWE research, and strategies for raising and using additional funds to support the ISWE mission.

### 2019 highlights from the ISWE board and priorities for 2020:

Andre Ganswindt, Chair, University of Pretoria, South Africa

- Taking over as Chair of ISWE was of course the most joyful highlight and at the same time the most challenging task for me last year, and I would like to use this opportunity to once again thank the previous Chair Dr Mandi W. Schook for the superb handover, her professional reorganization of the managerial tasks of the board, and for being such an inspiring example. Further, I would like to sincerely thank the current and outgoing board members for all their hard and dedicated work over the last year; without your commitment I would have struggled tremendously.
- Being the local host of our 7th ISWE Conference, was of course another major (and sometimes challenging) highlight for me last year, and without the help of our brilliant conference chair Dr. Diana Koester and the highly professional local organizer Mrs. Jackey Deacon, it would not have been possible to enable the experience I intended, so thanks a million for frequently going the extra mile.
- Strengthening the international profile of our Society will be one of my major priorities for 2020. Having participants from 18 different countries at our last conference is a promising step into the right direction in this regard, but regions like Africa, South and Central America, Asia, Australia and Oceania are still largely underrepresented, and we have to think innovatively to strive towards a more globally inclusive society.

Rachel Santymire, Vice Chair Ethics and Special Initiatives, Lincoln Park Zoo, USA

- We have been working on developing and testing new Estradiol and Corticosterone ISWE minikits with Arbor Assays, Inc. So far, we have had five members test the Corticosterone kit on seven species; eight species were tested on the Estradiol minikit. We will continue testing the kits in 2020 before they are made available to our ISWE members.
- Following the development of our new website, we are working on re-integrating the Wildlife Endocrinology Information Network (WEIN). In 2020, we will add a link to the website where members can access the database to search for existing projects and enter in new projects.
- In 2020, our new initiatives will be to develop an ISWE wildlife endocrinology manual for our members and to look into creating a special issue on wildlife endocrinology with the journal *Frontiers*.

Jocelyn Bryant, Vice Chair Membership and Fundraising, Brookfield Zoo, USA

- Thank you to our conference sponsors, Arbor Assays, Inc., Enzo Life Sciences, and the National Research Foundation! Your support and generosity is much appreciated.
- This is the first year we incorporated a silent auction into conference activities and our deepest gratitude to those who donated and bid on items.
- In 2020, we will be exploring ideas for raising (and using) funds to benefit our membership. If you are interested in getting involved, we have subcommittee openings. We will also be looking into potentially

incorporating different themes as a basis for future conferences and taking a different approach to obtaining research and conference sponsorships. If you are interested in exploring and assisting in sponsorships, there will be subcommittee openings available.

Diana Koester, Conference Chair, Cleveland Metroparks Zoo, USA

- For the first time, optional activities (birding walk, rhino boma visit, research laboratory tour, and veterinary procedure) were offered to conference attendees alongside the conference schedule. All monies generated from these additional activities will go towards supporting a South African M.Sc. student, in collaboration with SANParks – so thank you to everyone that took part.
- Planning is already underway for our next conference in 2021, which will be organised by the Laboratory for the Conservation of Endangered Species at the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology, Hyderabad, India.
- Conference Planning Subcommittee members are revamping the criteria used to review abstracts for inclusion in future conference programs, to make the process more straightforward for both reviewers and authors and ensuring we maintain objectivity in abstract review. Improvements will continue to be made to the abstract submission and review system in the upcoming months prior to use for the 8th ISWE conference.

Grace Fuller, Communications Chair, Detroit Zoological Society, USA

- The board worked to revise and streamline the ISWE mission and vision into a single statement of purpose, reading “The International Society of Wildlife Endocrinology is a non-profit organization that provides a forum for collaboration and information exchange to advance the science of wildlife endocrinology. Our members develop and apply innovative approaches to study wildlife health, reproduction, welfare, and conservation.” The statement and accompanying updated goals are on the home page of the website.
- The bi-annual ISWE newsletter has continued, with new features including member publication summaries, photos from the field, and a “guess the poo” game.
- ISWE has expanded its social media presence and now has dedicated pages on Instagram, Twitter, and ResearchGate, in addition to the existing Facebook account. The Society is currently at 915 followers on Facebook, 78 followers on Twitter, and 46 followers on Instagram. Member research stories are posted regularly, and the Society is always seeking information and stories to post at: [ISWE.socialmedia@gmail.com](mailto:ISWE.socialmedia@gmail.com)

Katie Edwards, Secretary, Chester Zoo, UK

- We have been working on streamlining some of our processes behind the scenes, including adjusting board-member timelines to ease transitions, and updating ISWE’s by-laws to make sure we stay up to date with the growth of our society. We will be sending the updated by-laws to the membership for ratification early in 2020, so please keep an eye out for that in your inbox.
- In 2020 we will hold elections for the positions of secretary, communications chair, and chair elect, so please consider whether you would like to help our society grow – a call for nominations will come out later this year.

Annie Newell Fugate, Treasurer, Texas A&M University, USA

- Our main expenditure this year was the rebuild and update of the ISWE website.
- We made income from the 2019 ISWE conference, which will be reinvested in the mission of the organization.

#### **ISWE 2019 Financial Summary:**

Starting balance (January 1, 2019): \$47,367.89  
- Income \$22,901.64  
- Expenses \$ 9,900.91  
Ending Balance (December 31, 2019): \$60,368.62

**ISWE Membership Dec 2019:** 179 members