



# Ellipsaria

Fall 1999 - Volume 1 - Issue 1

## The Official Newsletter of the Freshwater Mollusk Conservation Society

### FMCS Outreach Workshop Planned April 4 - 6, 2000 First Call for Abstracts

The Freshwater Mollusk Conservation Society and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) will be co-hosting an exciting and productive 2.5 day workshop on the use of outreach efforts as a tool for mollusk conservation. This workshop will be held at the USFWS National Conservation and Training Center (NCTC) on April 4 - 6, 2000. The NCTC is located in the beautiful hills of Shepherdstown, West Virginia, near the Potomac River. This workshop will provide participants with outreach tools and techniques to address community conservation needs. Topics to be covered in this first call for abstracts include:

- Building blocks for effective outreach and education
- Outreach techniques
- Working with the media
- Using outreach efforts for habitat restoration
- Targeting the audience
- Building effective watershed partnerships
- Legislative outreach
- Fundraising techniques

Obviously, submitted abstracts do not need to deal only with freshwater mollusks. The target of these efforts can be freshwater mollusks or their habitats. This will be an instructional workshop on how to build / complete outreach efforts. The program format will be both oral and poster. Oral presentation time is limited to 20 minutes (including the question and answer period). Practice your talk before the meeting because time limits will be strictly enforced. Poster size is limited to 5 feet wide by 3 feet tall, although if you wish to bring a display unit, special arrangements can be made.

Abstracts are limited to 300 words. The abstract title should be followed by the author(s) name(s), affiliation(s), mailing address(es), and e-mail address(es). Abstracts

should include the clearly stated objectives, methods (if any), general results, and basic conclusion of your presentation. Video playback equipment will be available for the sessions, so videotape will be accommodated. At the bottom of your abstract please indicate if your presentation is oral or poster.

Submit 3 hard copies of your abstract, a diskette copy (Word 97 or WordPerfect 7 format only), with the author's names, software type, and version on the diskette label and an unattached e-mail version by **January 14, 2000** to:

Rita Vilella - Outreach Workshop Program Coordinator  
USGS - BRD, Aquatic Ecology Laboratory  
1700 Leetown Road  
Kearneysville, WV 25430  
Phone: (304) 724-4472, E-mail: [Rita\\_Vilella@usgs.gov](mailto:Rita_Vilella@usgs.gov)

The following abstract, from last year's Chattanooga FMCS symposium, is presented here as an illustration of the proper format.

#### SAMPLE ABSTRACT

The Global Status and Geographic Hot-spots of North America's Unionid Mussels. Melissa Morrison and Lawrence Master. The Nature Conservancy, 201 Devonshire Street Floor 5, Boston, MA 02110. (617) 542-1908. [Mmorrison@tnc.org](mailto:Mmorrison@tnc.org) or [lmaster@tnc.org](mailto:lmaster@tnc.org)

The Nature Conservancy and the Network of Natural Heritage Programs maintain databases that gather, organize, and distribute biodiversity information. Given the threats posed to our freshwater systems increasing emphasis is being placed on gathering information for aquatic organisms in order to prioritize areas and species to conserve. Species are prioritized using a 1-5 ranking system ranging from critically imperiled (G1) to demonstrably secure (G5). Over the past year, with assistance from many experts, we reviewed these ranks for all unionid mussels and the results will be displayed on the poster along with our process for evaluating species. One of the applications of this ranking system, when combined with geographic data, is to identify 'hot spots' for unionids at risk (G1-G3) by watershed (map to be included in poster). The 23 watershed areas containing the greatest number of at risk mussel species are in four river basins alone, the Tennessee, Ohio, Cumberland, and Mobile.

## Outreach Workshop Accommodations

Workshop participants will attend presentations at the NCTC, and lunch will be available at the local cafeteria. The cost of a lunch at NCTC is about \$8.00. The FMCS is not responsible for workshop attendee's rooms or meals.

The NCTC has lodging and meal packages available, but the number of rooms are limited. The rooms and meals are reasonably priced, and accommodations are discounted for federal employees. Additional information about the cost and availability of rooms at the NCTC can be obtained from:

National Conservation Training Center  
County Route 1  
Shepherdstown, West Virginia 25443-9713  
Telephone: 304-876-7476  
or by accessing the USFWS office directory information on the web at: <http://offices.fws.gov/directory/>

Because space at the NCTC is limited, the FMCS has reserved blocks of rooms at several nearby hotels. Please direct questions about price and availability to the appropriate hotel.

Clarion Hotel, 7 Lowe Dr., Sheperdstown, WV.  
Phone (304) 876-700 or (800) 252-7466.

Comfort Suites of Martinsburg, Rt. 9 East PO Box 2599,  
Martinsburg, WV. Phone (304) 263-8888.

Holiday Inn, 301 Foxcroft Ave., Martinsburg, WV.  
Phone (304) 267-5500.

Other hotels in the Sheperdstown/Martinsburg area are:

Comfort Inn of Martinsburg, 2800 Aikens Center -  
Edwin Miller Blvd. Martinsburg, WV, (304) 263-6200

Days Inn, 209 Viking Way, Martinsburg, WV.  
Phone (304) 263-1800.

Mecklenberg Inn, 128 E. German St., Sheperdstown,  
WV. Phone (304) 876-2126.

## Outreach Workshop Travel Information

Direct air service to Sheperdstown is not available. However, the Sheperdstown area is serviced by 3 major airports.

Washington Dulles International Airport, Sterling VA is 53 miles from the NCTC in Sheperdstown, WV.

Reagan National Airport, Arlington, VA is 76 miles from the NCTC in Sheperdstown, WV.

Baltimore-Washington International Airport, MD is 91 miles from the NCTC in Sheperdstown, WV.

The NCTC provides shuttle service to and from Washington, Dulles Airport, on Sunday's and Friday's for \$30.00. The NCTC also provides limited shuttle service Monday - Thursday, for an additional cost. Please call the NCTC for specific shuttle times and availability.

If you're driving to the meeting, Sheperdstown, West Virginia, is located near the junction of Interstate 70 and Interstate 81 near Hagerstown, Maryland. From the Hagerstown junction, take Interstate 81 south to Martinsburg, West Virginia, (Exit 16). From Exit 16, travel south on State Route 9 for 1.9 miles, then turn right on US 11 and travel south for .3 miles. Make a left turn onto State Route 45 (East Molar Ave.), and travel east for 8.2 miles. Once you reach Sheperdstown, make a left at the 4-way stop on to State Route 480. Travel 0.2 miles and take the third left onto Shepherd Grade Road. Travel 3.4 miles on Shepherd Grade Road and turn right at the NCTC gate. Proceed straight in and follow the signs to the registration desk in the entry/auditorium building. If you arrive late and the gate is closed, press the call button for assistance.

## Outreach Workshop Registration

Registration for the FMCS Outreach workshop can be completed only by mail. Please complete the enclosed registration form, enclose a check for the appropriate amount, and mail both the form and check to the FMCS treasurer at the following address:

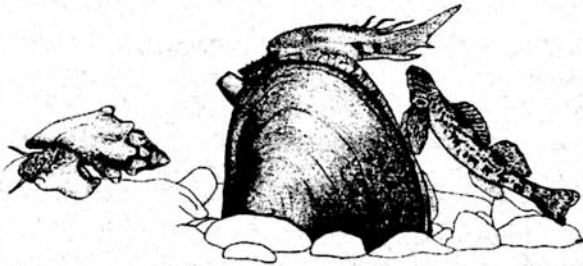
Heidi L. Dunn,  
FMCS Treasurer,  
114 Algana Ct.  
St. Peters, MO 63376  
Phone (636) 447-5355,  
Fax (636) 447-4101  
e-mail : [ecologsists@aol.com](mailto:ecologsists@aol.com)

## 2001 FMCS Symposium Planned

The FMCS is planning another broad-spectrum symposium for the spring of 2001. The location has yet to be determined. During the last general business meeting conducted at the Chattanooga symposium, FMCS members voted to hold a general symposium every 2 years. Please contact either of the FMCS symposium committee co-chairs if you have any ideas or questions about the 2001 FMCS symposium.

An Introduction to the  
The Freshwater Mollusk Conservation Society

## Freshwater Mollusk Conservation Society



The Freshwater Mollusk Conservation Society (FMCS) is dedicated to the conservation of and advocacy of freshwater mollusks, North America's most imperiled animals. Membership in the society is open to anyone interested in freshwater mollusks who supports the purposes of the Society. In brief, these purposes are: 1) Advocate conservation of freshwater molluscan resources, 2) Serve as a conduit for information about freshwater mollusks, 3) Promote science-based management of freshwater mollusks, 4) Facilitate education and awareness about freshwater mollusks and their function in freshwater ecosystems, 5) Assist with the facilitation of the National Strategy for the Conservation of Native Freshwater Mussels (Journal of Shellfish Research, 1999, Volume 17, Number 5), and a similar strategy currently under development for freshwater gastropods.

The FMCS traces its origins to 1992 when a symposium sponsored by the Upper Mississippi River Conservation Committee, USFWS, Mussel Mitigation Trust, and Tennessee Shell Company brought concerned people to St. Louis, Missouri to discuss the status, conservation, and management of freshwater mussels. This meeting resulted in the formation of a working group to develop the National Strategy for the Conservation of Native Freshwater Mussels and set the groundwork for another freshwater mussel symposium. The second symposium was also held in St. Louis in 1995. Both symposia resulted in published proceedings. In March 1996, the Mississippi Interstate Cooperative Research Association (MICRA) formed a mussel committee. This committee, which became the National Native Mussel Conservation Committee (NNMCC) was a group of state, federal, and academic biologists, along with individuals from the commercial mussel industry who agreed to the National Strategy for the Conservation of Native Freshwater Mussels. In March 1998, the NNMCC and attendees at the Conservation, Captive Care and Propagation of Freshwater Mussels Symposium held in Columbus, OH, voted to form the Freshwater Mollusk Conservation Society.

The present FMCS Executive Board is comprised of 3 officers and the chairman of 9 different standing

committees. The officers, although initially selected by the board, will be nominated and elected directly by the society membership. Participation in any of the 9 standing committees is open to any FMCS member. In November 1998, the Executive Board drafted a society constitution and voted to incorporate the FMCS as a not-for-profit organization. Copies of the Society constitution are available from the FMCS Secretary.

The 1999 FMCS officers are:

President  
Al Buchanan  
Missouri Dept. of Conservation  
1110 S. College Ave.  
Columbia, MO 65201  
Phone: (573) 882-9880 - ext. 3257  
Buchaa@mail.conservation.state.mo.us

Secretary  
Rita Villella  
USGS-BRD  
Leetown Science Center  
Kearneysville, WV 25430  
Phone: (304) 724-4472  
Rita\_Villella@usgs.gov

Treasurer  
Heidi Dunn  
Ecological Specialists, Inc.  
114 Algana Ct.  
St. Peters, MO 63376  
Phone: (314) 447-5355  
Ecologists@aol.com

President - Elect  
Paul Johnson  
Southeast Aquatic Research Institute and Tennessee  
Aquarium, One Broad Street  
Chattanooga, TN 37401  
Phone (423) 785-4074  
Pdj@sari.org

### FMCS Treasurer's Report

The interest and enthusiasm for our fledgling society has been outstanding. In just 6 months, 73 regular members, 8 student members, and 2 contributing members have joined the FMCS. Our goal is to have our membership exceed 120 members by the end of this year. A copy of the FMCS membership form is included in the newsletter. Additional copies of the membership form are available on-line at:

[http://www.sari.org/FMCS\\_Membership\\_Form.htm](http://www.sari.org/FMCS_Membership_Form.htm)

In addition to the membership dues, the auction at the Chattanooga symposium generated over \$1600. The

auction proceeds were used to incorporate our society and apply for non-profit status (501 c 3). We are now officially a corporation, and are in the process of completing the non-profit status application. Other monies generated during the Chattanooga symposium will be used to assist with society announcements, proceedings publication, and for seeding another great symposium in 2001.

Contributed by Heidi Dunn.

## FMCS Secretary's Report

The first board meeting of FMCS was held by conference call on June 23, 1999. This conference call cleared-up left over business from the Chattanooga meeting. Heidi Dunn updated the board on current FMCS membership: 66 regular members, 7 students and 1 contributing member.

### Bylaws and Constitution:

The main order of business was to discuss and vote on the articles of incorporation and bylaws. The board voted to incorporate the society. The articles of incorporation and bylaws were discussed in detail. The board voted to accept the bylaws as modified per discussion. Copies of the FMCS constitution and by laws are available from the Secretary.

The final order of business was to vote on making the present executive committee the first Board of Directors. The list of the first Board of Directors is as follows:

President:	Al Buchanan
Treasurer:	Heidi Dunn
Secretary:	Rita Villella
President-Elect:	Paul Johnson

FMCS Standing Committees: Committee Head(s)

Status/Distribution of Mussels: Kevin Cummings  
Status/Distribution of Gastropods: Rob Dillon  
Symposium: Steve Ahlstedt & John Jenkinson  
Outreach: Linda Drees, Susan Mangin & Mike Davis  
Information Exchange: Madeleine Lyttle  
Water Quality/Habitat/Zebra Mussel: Tom Muir  
Propagation/Restoration: Dick Biggins & Rick Tankersley  
Guidelines/Techniques: Heidi Dunn  
Commercial: Steve Ahlstedt, Nelson Cohen, Cheryl Ballenger

Reports from each individual committee are presented in the following sections. Specific information about each of the committees and their projects can be obtained by contacting the appropriate committee chair.

Contributed by: Rita Villella

## FMCS Standing Committees and Committee Activity Reports

## Mussel Status and Distribution Atlas

Kevin Cummings - Committee Head  
Illinois Natural History Survey, Champaign, IL  
Ksc@inhs.uiuc.edu  
<http://www.inhs.uiuc.edu/cbd/collections/mollusk.html>

One of the problems faced by systematists, ecologists, conservationists, and industry has been the lack of data on the distribution of North American freshwater mussels. In order to effectively conserve and manage mussel populations it is essential that detailed distributional information be made available. One of the goals of the National Strategy was to develop a mussel distributional atlas similar to that developed for fishes. The overall objective of the atlas project is to summarize the available distributional data on all freshwater mussels in North America and provide an overview of the literature on their biology and conservation status. A "working group" has been formed consisting of scientists from across the country that have experience with and knowledge about mussel distribution and atlas production. The working group met in October 1997 to set up a framework to develop an atlas. To that end we compiled an initial list of regional coordinators, compilers, and species to be included, developed a draft format for the maps and an associated database, developed a budget and targeted potential funding sources, and developed a timetable for completion of the project. A small grant to "jump start" the project was provided by the USFWS this August. This grant will allow us to prepare a few species accounts. Hopefully we can use these examples to generate interest in funding the complete project that will consist of approximately 300 species accounts. In order for this project to be a success many individuals from numerous agencies and institutions will be needed to volunteer their time and services. Anyone wanting to be involved should check-off the appropriate box on the membership form. A call will go out this fall (after the field season) to ask for volunteers to prepare sample accounts.

## Gastropod Status and Distribution Atlas

Rob Dillon - Committee Head, College of Charleston  
Charleston, SC  
Dillonr@cofc.edu  
<http://www.cofc.edu/~dillonr/fwgnahome.htm>

March 1999 saw the first formal meeting of the FMCS Gastropod Committee, a dedicated band of scientists, resource agency personnel, environmentalists, and other professionals united by a common concern over North America's rich diversity of freshwater snails. We are making progress on two fronts.

Paul Johnson is coordinating an effort to produce a national conservation strategy for freshwater gastropods. This project focuses on specific problems and information

gaps about the systematics, genetics, ecology, physiological ecology, and conservation biology of North American freshwater gastropods. The project is multi-authored, and the goal is to summarize these problems into a National Strategy for the Conservation of Native Freshwater Gastropods, to become a companion to the just published mussel strategy. A draft of this document should be completed by the 2001 symposium.

Rob Dillon is coordinating the "Freshwater Gastropods of North America" project, an ambitious effort to monograph all of the roughly 500 species of freshwater snails inhabiting the continent north of Mexico. Regional teams will survey local freshwater gastropod faunas, museum resources, and published records to compile modern distribution databases, using a format similar to that already adopted for the FMCS Mussel Atlas. The project will also include a taxonomic review. Regional coordinators will forward samples to taxon specialists, where identifications will be made and species accounts written to include descriptions, illustrations, synonymy, bibliography, ecology, and current distribution maps on a continental scale.

## Symposium Committee

### Committee Chairs

Steve Ahlstedt, USGS-WRD, Knoxville, TN  
ahlstedt@usgs.gov

John Jenkinson, TVA, Chattanooga, TN  
jjjenkinso@tva.gov

The FMCS Symposium Committee is responsible not only for the selection and oversight of the society symposia, but also for working towards the development of specific symposium criteria. These criteria are being crafted to insure the quality and consistency of our symposia. The next FMCS symposium will take place in the spring of 2001. A location for the 2001 symposium has yet to be determined, but this decision will be made at the FMCS Board meeting this November (see below).

## Chattanooga FMCS Symposium Lures Hundreds

Over 280 people from 32 states and 3 Canadian Provinces attended the first FMCS symposium held in Chattanooga, Tennessee on March 17-19, 1999. This symposium was hosted by the Southeast Aquatic Research Institute and the Tennessee Aquarium. Officially titled "Musseling in on Biodiversity", the symposium consisted of about 70 oral presentations, 45 poster presentations, and several workshops. The symposium was sponsored by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Upper Mississippi River

Conservation Committee, Mussel Mitigation Trust, Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Geological Survey, Tennessee Valley Authority, U.S. Forest Service, North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences, and The Nature Conservancy. While most of the contributions dealt with freshwater mussels, there were also several papers presented on freshwater gastropods and sphaeriid clams. A published proceedings containing about 20 contributed papers from this symposium is also in the works. Information about the Chattanooga Symposium, the Proceedings and other FMCS information can be found at:

[http://www.sari.org/MUSSEL\\_SYMPOSIUM\\_ANNOUNCEMENT.ORG](http://www.sari.org/MUSSEL_SYMPOSIUM_ANNOUNCEMENT.ORG)

## Outreach

### Committee Chairs

Linda Drees, USFWS, Manhattan, KS  
Linda\_Drees@fws.gov

Mike Davis, Minnesota Dept. of Natural Resources  
Lake City, MN  
Mike.davis@dnr.state.mn.us

Susan Mangin, USFWS, Arlington, VA  
Susan\_Mangin@fws.gov

In addition to the spring 2000 workshop (see information above), the FMCS Outreach Committee has a number of ongoing projects.

The Outreach Committee is developing a native mollusks speakers, bureau. This is a group of FMCS members who volunteer their time to speak to local conservation and watershed groups about freshwater mollusks and their special conservation status. If you would like to volunteer, or would like a copy of the speakers, list, please contact:

Suzi von Oettingen, USFWS, 22 Bridge Street, Unit 1  
Concord, NH 03301, Phone: (603) 225-1411  
Suzi\_vonoettingen@fws.gov

The outreach committee is also working on developing new ideas that would be beneficial to both the fauna and society. The committee has taken stock of what they already have, and will meet soon to decide how to get this information out to targeted audiences. So far, most of the outreach emphasis has been limited to freshwater mussels. However, the committee would like to develop outreach strategies that deal with gastropods and reach an even broader audience. At present, the committee is evaluating which outreach products and strategies reach the targeted

audiences. If you would like to assist with this effort, please contact one of the outreach committee members.

## Information Exchange

Madeleine Lyttle – Committee Head  
USFWS, Essex Junction, VT  
Madeleine\_Lyttle@fws.gov

The Information Exchange Committee has been very busy preparing a mass mailing of the National Strategy for the Conservation of Native Freshwater Mussels, recently published in the Journal of Shellfish Research, 1999, Volume 17, Number 5. Reprints of this strategy are being sent to federal and state political leaders, state and federal wildlife agency administrators, and employees who make resource management decisions. As this newsletter arrives, the reprints have also been mailed. Reprints of the national strategy are also available to FMCS members.

The information exchange committee also developed a pre-proposal that was passed through Patty Morrison (USFWS) to work with Corps of Engineers in Louisville and USFWS Region 4, on a mollusk bibliography. This bibliography would be posted to the web and may eventually serve as the web page server for the society.

## Water Quality, Habitat Alteration and Zebra Mussels

Tom Muir – Committee Head  
USGS, Reston, VA  
Tom\_Muir@usgs.gov

This FMCS committee has assisted with a series of papers on the relationships between freshwater mollusks and water quality. To date, four papers have been published in the March 1999 issue (Volume 18:1) of the Journal of the North American Benthological Society (JNABS). These papers stem from a special workshop that was held during the 1997 NABS meeting in San Marcos, Texas. The 3 remaining papers presented at this workshop are now in review, and should be published sometime next year.

## Propagation, Restoration and Introduction

Committee Chairs:

Dick Biggins  
USFWS  
Asheville, NC  
Richard\_Biggins@fws.gov

Richard Tankersley  
University of Maryland Baltimore Co.,  
Baltimore, MD  
Tankersl@umbc.edu

This committee is charged with developing a criteria that considers issues related to molluscan heritage and genetics concerns in the development of formal artificial propagation and mollusk translocation procedures. The idea is to develop a formal set of guidelines and recommendations that will be used in mollusk translocations, reintroductions, and artificial propagation activities. At the moment, the committee's work is focused exclusively on freshwater mussels, but some reintroduction / augmentation guidelines for freshwater gastropods are being considered. This committee has already developed a set of genetics considerations and is presently working on artificial propagation and translocation guidelines. The intention of this committee is to publish the final list of recommendations in an issue of Fisheries, the American Fisheries Society monthly publication.

## Guidelines and Techniques

Heidi Dunn  
Ecological Specialists, Inc.  
St. Peters, MO  
Ecologists@aol.com

This committee held a workshop at the Chattanooga symposium to begin to bring some standardization to several fields of unionid study. Topics of initial interest to the committee are:

- Assessment of the effects of contaminants on unionids
- Guidelines for the captive care of unionids
- Guidelines for the study of molluscan physiology
- Guidelines for mussel sampling strategies
- Guidelines for mussel life-history studies

The rationale behind this strategy is not to prevent experienced investigators from using novel approaches to experimental problems. Rather, this committee wants to develop a set of minimum guidelines in each field, for the beginning investigator. For example, as more is learned about the effects of agricultural pesticides and herbicides on juvenile mussel survivorship, hopefully, there will be more interest in this process by toxicologists who have never worked with freshwater mussels. When complete, these guidelines would not only give investigators a minimum starting point to develop a proper investigation, but might supply them with a summary of known information and techniques. A summary of the existing guidelines on mussel sampling strategies will appear in the Chattanooga Symposium Proceedings.

## Commercial

Steve Ahlstedt – Committee Head  
USGS-WRD  
Knoxville, TN  
Ahlstedt@usgs.gov

This committee has just gotten underway to gather information about commercial mussel harvesting in the United States today. Several specific items of interest are:

- What species of mussels are considered commercial by states that allow any commercial harvest.
- For each commercial species, what are the legal sizes that can be harvested in each state.
- What are the licensing fees in each state, and how many licenses are issued each year.

Information compiled by this committee may be used to develop specific set of criteria for making harvest recommendations to state wildlife resource agencies. For example, many states have different size requirements for the same species, which can inadvertently encourage a violation of the Lacy Act. If states had identical size and species requirements, violations of the Lacy Act might be less common. For example, Tennessee and Alabama, where most of the commercial harvesting takes place, are now developing uniform size standards for each species. Additionally, the committee would like to determine a dollar value for each commercial species, so state resource agencies would have a basis for assessing possible fines when a large commercial mussel kill occurs.

### A Message from the FMCS President

As individuals interested in the preservation of aquatic resources, all we have to do to understand the challenges we face is to look out our car windows while driving to and from work. On my way home every night I pass over Perche Creek, a small, 5-th order prairie-border stream in central Missouri that reflects many of the abuses we have heaped upon our aquatic resources. During a normal rainfall year, Perche Creek slices its way through corn and beans fields and an occasional pasture where cattle can be seen standing ankle-deep recycling fluids from the creek through their bodies, and back into the creek again. The banks of Perche Creek, even at the rare location where some trees remain, appear as steep earthen cliffs, with chunks of sediments peeling off and falling into the water at the slightest weather change. During high water events, large sections of the streambank disappear altogether as Perche reclaims beans and corn clinging to the top of the bank. Seemingly oblivious to gravity and nature, every

year the farmers continue to plant their crops as close as possible to the stream.

Also during normal years, there is a riffle under the bridge I cross which flows fast enough to clear the dirt clods from the rocks and oxygenate the water. This year, however, there isn't much water in the creek because the water-holding capacity of the watershed is much reduced from what it was a hundred, or even 20 years ago. The water now rushes off parking lots and roofs of developments that are now displacing the farms throughout the watershed. This water rushes down the channel and the flow level quickly returns to a minimal stage. The high, rushing waters hasten the erosion of the exposed banks and push the prairie soils downstream towards the Mississippi Delta. When the floods are over, the creek recedes quickly, leaving little depth to support fish, insects, snails, or mussels. So this year, I can easily wade across Perche Creek. Instead of its former pea-green summer flow, its waters lie in warm, dark green pools connected by trickles of water or, in some cases, only moist soil. Organic matter breaks down, and oxygen levels drop, bottom organisms are covered with a layer of silt, which is frequently loaded with nutrients and farm chemicals.

Perche Creek is just one of hundreds, maybe thousands, of streams throughout North America with declining habitat and water quality. And there lies our challenge. The next decade will be critical for the recovery of native freshwater mollusks. Our country is facing the last great water quality battle, the struggle to significantly reduce non-point source pollution. Non-point pollution impacts most streams in this country and, now, even causes hypoxia in the Gulf of Mexico; and freshwater mollusks are being impacted more than any other taxon. Among the other myriad of things we need to do to protect and manage mollusk populations, reducing non-point pollution is a critical threat to mollusk survival. That's the bad news.

Now for the good news, the Freshwater Mollusk Conservation Society has nearly 100 paid members and is continuing to grow. Treasurer Heidi Dunn's lawyer completed the legal work for the Constitution and Bylaws and soon we will submit our 501 c 3 status request to the IRS. We have money in our bank account and the National Strategy is on the street. We now have a newsletter, for transmitting information to our members which President - Elect Paul Johnson has initiated and produced. We plan to publish and send the newsletter to members 2-3 times per year. In November, among other things, the Board will put together an Editorial Committee to begin to manage Walkerana, which Dr. John Burch has graciously willed to the FMCS. Dr. Burch is also the FMCS's first Contributing Member. The Outreach and Symposium committees are working toward an Outreach Workshop to be held in April 2000, and the Symposium Committee is working towards the 2001 general symposium. Additionally, each of the other standing committees is also hard at work on the important projects

outlined in this edition of Ellipsaria. All of this continues to happen because of the talent and efforts of the Society's members. Keep up the good work.

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## General News and Information

The next meeting of the FMCS Board meeting will be held at the State of Kentucky Fish & Game Facility in Crittendon, KY (South of Cincinnati) from 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, November 4, through noon on Friday, November 5, 1999. The meeting is open to any FMCS member and those members that serve on a committee are especially encouraged to attend. For more information contact the FMCS President (Al Buchanan) or Wayne Davis, local arrangements coordinator at (wdavis1@mail.state.ky.us or (502) 564-7109 ext. 365).

The FMCS granted its first four Lifetime Achievement Awards to at the Chattanooga Symposium. The 1999 recipients were: John B. Burch, University of Michigan; David H. Stansbery, Ohio State University; W. D. Russell-Hunter, Syracuse University; and Paul W. Parmalee, University of Tennessee

To receive the FMCS Lifetime Achievement Award, an individual must meet all of the following criteria:

1. have been active in one or more aspects of freshwater mollusk research and/or conservation for at least 20 years,
2. have made important contributions to our understanding of freshwater mollusks and/or their conservation,
3. have exhibited actions and behaviors that promote a positive image for the Society,
4. have been nominated for this award in a proposal signed by three active members of the Society, and
5. the proposal has been approved by a two-thirds vote of the Society Executive Board during one of their regular meetings.

The FMCS executive board would again like to extend our thanks and congratulations to these worthy recipients.

The Triannual-Unionid report is now taking submissions for the fall issue. If you have any mollusk related information to pass along for the September report, please get the information to Richard Biggins (address below) by September 22, 1999.

Richard Biggins, USFWS, 160 Zillicoa Street, Asheville, NC 28801 Phone (828) 258-5330, Fax (828) 258-5330, Richard\_Biggins@fws.gov.

Southeast Aquatic  
Research Institute



and Tennessee Aquarium  
One Broad Street  
Chattanooga, TN 37401

W. Cope  
Department of Toxicology  
Box 7633  
North Carolina State University  
Raleigh, NC 27695-7633

CHATT TN 374 9/15/99

