
George Mercer Award
John Stachowicz¹, Heather Fried²,
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John Stachowicz

conservation. John Stachowicz, Heather Fried and their colleagues have conducted one of the very few studies in marine environments that explicitly test effects of diversity on ecosystem function. It contains elegant field experiments using sessile marine invertebrates that are well-linked to surveys conducted in natural habitats of Long Island Sound, with clear articulation of complex results. This work also addresses an issue of key practical importance – the degree to which diversity per se affects invasion resistance. Increased diversity led to a heightened resistance

to invasion, primarily because more speciose assemblages utilized more of the available limiting resource (attachment space) and buffered against temporal fluctuations in resource use by individual species. The research is particularly elegant because species-specific effects on invasibility are dissected from the impacts of community level diversity, and the mechanism of the diversity effect is identified. The Stachowicz et al. work is a seminal contribution that will stimulate many further studies in marine systems, as well as comparisons to ongoing, more mature efforts that are exploring the functional consequences of diversity in terrestrial environments.



Richard Osman

John Stachowicz is Assistant Professor in the Section of Ecology and Evolution, University of California – Davis; he holds a Ph.D. (1998) from the University of North Carolina. Heather Fried is a graduate student in the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at the University of Connecticut. Richard Osman is Curator in the Population and Community Ecology Group at the Academy of Natural Sciences Estuarine Research Center, and Robert Whitlatch is Professor in the Department of Marine Sciences at the University of Connecticut.



Heather Fried



Robert Whitlatch

Distinguished Service Citation Award Subcommittee: Steve Heard (Chair), Sally Holbrook, James Morris, Jean Richardson, Andy Sih, Ellen Simms, and Mike Willig