



SOCIETY ACTIONS

ESA Awards for 2006

Murray F. Buell Award
Carolyn Kurle
University of California,
Santa Cruz



Murray F. Buell ascribed great importance to the participation of students at meetings and to excellence in the presentation of papers. To honor his dedication to the Ecological Society of America and to the younger generation of ecologists, this award is presented to a student for the outstanding oral paper presented at the Society's annual meeting.

The winner of the **Murray F. Buell Award** in 2006 is Carolyn Kurle for her paper "Introduced rats indirectly alter marine communities," which is based on her doctoral research at the University of California, Santa

Cruz under the supervision of Don Croll and Bernie Tershy. The Buell judges noted that Carolyn clearly presented the rationale for her study of the indirect effects of introduced rats on marine algal abundance in the rocky intertidal via a cross-community trophic interaction. Judges commented that the design of the study was elegantly simple, conducted on an impressive spatial scale, and that the results were surprisingly clear and convincing. One judge noted that Carolyn's study could well become a textbook example of the concept of trophic cascades. Judges noted that Carolyn was at ease during her presentation and that she handled at least

eight questions with poise, clarity, and interesting detail that showed the depth of her familiarity with this system. Judges commented that this work represents significant science that was well presented; the research was novel and successfully detailed a link between terrestrial and marine systems. In her presentation, Carolyn showed familiarity with ecological theory and with the applications of her research to conserving island ecosystems. The research showed that marine bird abundance differed on rat-infested and rat-free islands, and that this resulted in significant differences in intertidal invertebrate abundance and algal cover on the two island types. Her study illustrated the unexpected consequences of invasive animals and their potential to initiate indirect trophic cascades that can lead to large-scale influence on community structure. Carolyn received her M.S. from Texas A & M University in Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences in 1998, and a B.S. in Zoology and a B.A. in German Language and Literature from the University of Washington in 1994.

The Buell-Braun Award Selection Committee also selected three students for Honorable Mention for the Buell Award. This recognition was given to: (1) Meghan Duffy of the University of Wisconsin at Madison for her presentation entitled “Is the enemy of my enemy really my friend? The combined effects of selective predators and virulent parasites on *Daphnia* populations”; (2) Volker H. W. Rudolf of the University of Virginia for his presentation entitled, “Indirect asymmetrical interactions in stage-structured predator–prey systems; cannibalism, trait-mediated interaction and trophic cascades”; and (3) Jennifer L. Williams for her presentation entitled, “An experimental approach to exotic plant success: houndstongue in its native and introduced ranges.”

Christopher F. Sacchi, Buell-Braun subcommittee Chair

Buell-Braun subcommittee members:

David Holway, Andrew McCall, Nancy Eyster-Smith
