

# JAMES RENNIE BEQUEST

## REPORT ON EXPEDITION/PROJECT/CONFERENCE

**Expedition/Project/**

**Conference Title:** 14<sup>th</sup> International Behavioral Ecology Congress

**Travel Dates:** 12<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> August 2012

**Location:** Department of Biology, Lund University, Sweden

**Group member(s):** Hannah Froy

**Aims:** To present a poster and receive feedback on some of my PhD work; to attend conference talks and poster presentations; and to meet other researchers in the field.

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### OUTCOME (not less than 300 words):-

Thanks to the travel award I received from the James Rennie Bequest, I was able to attend the 14<sup>th</sup> International Behavioral Ecology Congress in Lund, Sweden. These meetings are organised by the International Society for Behavioral Ecology (ISBE) every two years. In addition to promoting the discipline of behavioral ecology, they aim to provide researchers in the field a forum to present work, exchange views, and get to know each other. This was a great opportunity at the end of the second year of my PhD, and I very much enjoyed the conference.

A varied series of plenary lectures was given by eminent researchers, including Rüdiger Wehner, Lars Chittka, Rosemary Gillespie and Jacobus Boomsma. I particularly enjoyed Anna Qvarnström's talk on flycatchers, and the role of male contest competition in speciation. The conference finished with the Hamilton lecture, given by John Krebs who gave a very interesting individual 'retrospective of behavioral ecology'. It was very inspiring to hear a personal account of the career of such an important figure in the field.

The conference was attended by around 1000 delegates from around the world. Consequently there a number of parallel sessions running at any one time. I attended many interesting lectures, some by researchers whose work I was familiar with, and others which were new to me. My PhD work focuses on reproductive senescence in a long-lived seabird, and therefore the session on ageing was particularly relevant. I enjoyed the session on oxidative stress, in which a number of excellent talks gave useful insight into potential future research areas.

It was great to have the opportunity to present a poster – *Senescence and terminal investment*: . I enjoyed presenting my work to a diverse audience, and had a number of informative discussions with other delegates. Particularly valuable was the opportunity to talk with Alexi Maklakov from Uppsala University, and researchers from the Universities of Groningen and Glasgow whose work is very relevant to that in my PhD. The poster sessions in general provided a nice informal setting to speak to other students with similar study systems, working on seabirds and long-term data.

There was plenty of time during long lunch breaks, evenings and the afternoon out to meet and engage with people from many different institutions at various stages of their research careers. I found it informative and inspiring to be exposed to such a range of different

## **JAMES RENNIE BEQUEST**

research methods, study systems and research questions. In particular I enjoyed the sessions on cooperative breeding and altruism, an area I find very interesting about have not worked on since my undergraduate.

I am very grateful to the James Rennie Bequest for the financial assistance which enabled me to attend the International Behavioral Ecology Congress. This was my first nig, international conference, and was a very valuable experience at this stage of my PhD.