

# MUVE NEWSLETTER



May 2025

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings my fellow MUVers!

Well, the active insect season is definitely upon us and the busier they get, the busier we get. They keep us on our toes and keep us curious, interested, and engaged. No two seasons are ever alike for us, and I certainly like it that way. This early season, we just happened to have captured a large brood of a snow-melt mosquito called *Aedes (Ochlerotatus) niphadopsis* Dyar & Knab. Our Laboratory Director, Dr. Chris Bibbs, noticed this skeeter in our traps and [took some rare photos of this species](#). This skeeter has been informally named the “Snowflake American Pointy Mosquito”—what a cute name! The species is univoltine with an obligate embryonic diapause. Eggs hatch in the harshest and most unpredictable time of the early year in Utah (mid-January to early March) and undergo a slow development until adult eclosion in late April. The species can occur in large broods around that time and is one of the most annoying vernal pests in the foothills of Salt Lake City.



Ironically, the first larvae were collected by the famous Smithsonian entomologist Harrison Gray Dyar Jr., yes that same ento from Dyar’s Law and other peculiar pursuits like bigamy and tunnel building. Read Marc Epstein’s book titled *Moths, Myths, and Mosquitoes: The Eccentric Life of Harrison G. Dyar, Jr.* for an entertaining and remarkable biography! The type locality for the larvae of *Ae. niphadopsis* are right here in Salt Lake City, next to the train tracks, which just happened to be the spot where Dyar’s train had stopped during his “collecting honeymoon” with his first wife! The mating/swarming behavior of this species is also unique, as told by one of my mentors Dr. Sammie Dickson, who did his Ph.D. on this species. For that information, you will have to ask me in person so I can make sure someone is actually reading this!

## OFFICERS



[Dr. Ary Faraji](#), President

[Dr. Alexander Ko](#), Vice President

[Dr. Sudip Gaire](#), Vice President-Elect

[Anna Iverson, BCE](#), Secretary

[Dr. Shao-Hung "Dennis" Lee](#), Treasurer

[Dr. Kyle Jordan](#), Past President

[Dr. Erika Machtinger](#), Governing Board

But moving on to actual [Medical, Urban, & Veterinary Entomology \(MUVE\) Section](#) business, I want to report that we have balanced our Section's budget and are completely back on track. Additionally, a very generous anonymous donor has offered to fully sponsor all three MUVE Student Recognition Awards (Medical/Urban/Veterinary) for the next three years! The only thing that this person has asked in return is the hope that others may follow suit, as many people may also be financially capable, but just have not thought about doing something like this. I want to thank this individual for setting the example. If anyone else has a similar interest, [please contact me directly](#).

I also want to thank Dr. Mike Reiskind for agreeing to chair an ad hoc committee to review and update the MUVE Section Policies and Procedures. Mike will be joined by myself, past EntSoc President Jennifer Henke, and Dr. Erika Machtinger. However, we are also looking for additional volunteers, so if anyone else is willing to serve on this committee, [please reach out to me](#).

Speaking of **volunteers and elections**, it is that time of year already! As always, if you want to get involved more with MUVE or ESA, let us know. Nominations for [elected positions](#) and volunteer applications for [appointed Committee positions](#) are open through **June 1**. MUVE has three officer positions on the ballot: MUVE Vice President-Elect, MUVE Secretary, and MUVE Representative to the ESA Governing Board. Our only vacancy for Committee appointments is on the Science Policy Committee, as Dr. Meredith Spence-Beaulieu nears the end of her three-year term. I want to thank Meredith for her service and implore anyone else that may be interested in this position to [reach out to me](#) or [Meredith](#) for more information.

I also want to remind everyone that it is award season and we are historically awful at applying for these—either for ourselves or even others! Let's change that and make an effort to [nominate someone or help someone with their application](#) this season. You only have until **June 1** on this, so please make an effort! You deserve it!

I started this column by talking about a spring melt mosquito, but by the time you read this, spring may be gone and summer will almost be here. Yes, I said bee because I have been trying to set up my own honey bee hive recently. But I was a few bees short, so I went to an apiary store and asked the clerk for a dozen bees to boost up my colony. The clerk carefully counted 13 bees, put them in a plastic container, and placed it on top of the counter for me. I looked at her kind of sideways and said "wait a minute, I only wanted 12 bees." Without missing a beat, she quickly chimed back, "don't worry that's a freebie!"

Sincerely,

Ary Faraji, Ph.D.  
MUVE Section President 2024-2025

## MUVE JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Visit the ESA [Career Center](#) to explore new job opportunities in your field. Some of the most recent MUVE job listings include:

- [Research Assistant/Associate](#), Auburn University
- [Quality Control Specialist - Pest Control, American Pest](#)
- [Graduate Student Assistantship at LSU – Urban/Peri-urban Pest Management](#), Louisiana State University Department of Entomology

# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: MUVErS



Help us highlight MUVE members and bring their work into the spotlight! Please send any MUVErS news to be included in future newsletters and tweets to [Mikenna Smith](#).

## Retiree Spotlight: Wes Watson

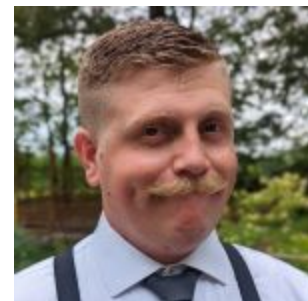
Wes Watson retired from the Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology at North Carolina State University after 26 years of service. Wes started his career in Veterinary Entomology at the University of Wyoming working with Dr. Jack Lloyd. Key to that training experience, he worked on a wide range of applied projects, including flood plain mosquito abatement, ked and bot fly management in sheep, and horn fly and louse control on cattle. Wes earned his doctorate at the University of Nebraska under the mentorship of Dr. J. J. Petersen. His research led to the discovery of behavioral fever responses in house flies infected with *Entomophthora muscae*, the causative agent of summitting disease in flies. Wes continued dipteran research as a postdoctoral researcher with the USDA in Beltsville, Maryland, and Cornell University with Drs. Ed Schmidtman and Don Rutz, respectively. Wes took a position at North Carolina State University in 1997, where he continued working on pests of veterinary importance, insect pathology, biological control, forensic entomology, urban entomology and pastureland ecology. He developed collaborations with researchers in the Departments of Poultry Science and Animal Science, and the College of Veterinary Medicine. He taught Medical and Veterinary Entomology in the Entomology Program for many years. He served as Director of Graduate Programs and Department Head of Entomology until 2016. Thereafter he was the Associate Department Head for Entomology and Plant Pathology.



Wes has been an ESA member for 45 years and served as MUVE President-Elect in 2013 and President in 2014. He has represented MUVE on ESA editorial boards and committees and as a competition judge. He was the recipient of the Livestock Insect Workers Conference Lifetime Achievement Award. Since his retirement in 2023, Wes has continued to provide extension updates to livestock producers in North Carolina on the advances of the Longhorned Tick.

## Medical MUVEr: Drew Lysaker

Drew Lysaker, M.S., completed his graduate degree in 2024. During his graduate career, he investigated the ecology of tree-hole and container breeding mosquitoes in western Wisconsin, focusing on the eastern treehole mosquito (*Aedes triseriatus*) and the introduced *Aedes japonicus*. He is now the Vector-Borne Disease Education Program Specialist on the Vector-Borne Disease Team at Penn State Extension and the VectorED Network. In this role, he develops educational materials such as fact sheets and infographics to inform the public about reducing the risk of mosquito bites and other arthropod vector bites and the pathogens that they can transmit. He also teaches about vector identification and biology in workshops for pest management professionals, biologists, and other educators.



## Urban MUVEr: Aaron Ashbrook

Dr. Aaron Ashbrook is an Assistant Professor of Urban/Peri-urban Extension Entomology in the Department of Entomology at Louisiana State University. His extension program focuses on a range of structural and medical pests commonly encountered by homeowners and pest control professionals. Collaborating with urban entomologists across the region, he co-developed the North

American Termite Survey (NATS), an initiative aimed at updating the distribution map of the Formosan subterranean termite in the southern United States. Dr. Ashbrook is particularly focused on improving bed bug and structural pest management through the use of alternative control tools. He is also actively involved in regional extension efforts, including the Gulf South Vector Collaborative and the Southern Region Delusory Infestations Working Group. When he finds the time, he enjoys watching films, spending time outdoors, and fishing.



## MUVE Student Spotlight: Jennifer "Jenna" Mora

Jennifer "Jenna" Mora is a master's student in the Entomology program at Rutgers University in Dr. Alvaro Toledo's lab. Her thesis focuses on developing an artificial feeding system for the American dog tick, *Dermacentor variabilis*. Once developed, this system can be utilized to study tick-borne diseases and tick physiology as well as



evaluating the efficacy of acaricidal products. She was awarded the 2024 Northeastern Mosquito Control Association's Jobbins Scholarship for her research. Additionally, she started a new position with Central Life Sciences as the Northeast Regional Sales Manager. Outside of work and academia, Jenna believes it is extremely rewarding to be active in the scientific community and professional societies. She is actively involved in committees of the Entomological Society of America and the New Jersey Mosquito Control Association and organized a symposium about tick research at the 2025 ESA Eastern Branch meeting. Her involvement in professional societies has led to numerous networking opportunities and lifelong friendships. One of her favorite parts of being an entomologist is getting to share the love and excitement of entomology with the next generation. She loves conducting in-person outreach campaigns as well as virtually through programs like Skype a Scientist and Letters to a Pre-Scientist. You can connect with Jenna on [LinkedIn](#).

## NEWS BRIEFS



### Blog Post Highlights from *Entomology Today*

- [Hitching a Ride: Why a New Mite Might Vex U.S. Beekeepers](#)
- [These Tiger Beetles Thrive in Yellowstone Hot Springs—But How?](#)
- [The Sweetest Snack: Research Details Mosquito's Nectar Preferences](#)
- [Unraveling the Invasion Puzzle: Contrasting Success and Failure in Global Whitefly and Thrips Species](#)
- [Southern Corn Billbug: Scourge to Corn in Eastern North Carolina](#)

Remember: For the latest breaking news items related to MUVE, please follow us on [X](#) and [Bluesky](#).

## ASK CLARY FLY



Hi MUVErs,

Have you ever opened an old library book where you see stains and chewed up pages? Or even to the extent where the book binding is about to fall apart? Hopefully not. If you have, then you most likely spotted some pest damage caused by booklice.

Psocopterans are small 1mm long nonparasitic insects that thrive in high humid environments containing cellulose resources. Stored-product psocids attack a variety of human commodities like flour, grains, glue, and museum specimens. However, have you ever wondered if they have a choice preference for paper? Booklice can be choosy when it comes to different paper substrates. A [past study](#) found that booklice chose substrate paper with a low density of booklice rather than paper with a high density of booklice, which is most likely due to aggregation pheromone. They also prefer paper that contains sooty fungus, which could possibly be due to being attracted to the fungal odor or fungi enhancing their development. Just some food for thought: what factors influence the choice preferences of your insect study system?

Now onto the important ESA business:

- Entomology 2025 in Portland, Oregon, November 9-12:
  - [Submit your abstracts](#) for the upcoming [ESA Annual Meeting](#) by May 30.
  - There is a new requirement for student presentations this year, which requires you to rank your top three presentation preferences, due to the high number of student submissions each year. The presentation preferences are Student 10-Minute Presentation Competition, Student 10-Minute Presentation Non-Competition, Student Poster Display Competition, and Student Poster Display Non-Competition. ESA will prioritize your first choice.
- ESA Student Awards:
  - Apply for [student awards](#)! Many of them are due June 1.
- ESA Volunteer Committee
  - If you are interested in volunteering for ESA Committees and getting involved in professional development, [apply by June 1](#).

If you have specific questions, topics, or comments that you would like Clary Fly to address in the next MUVE Newsletter or individually by email, go ahead and submit them through this [reoccurring link](#). This form will be available for the entire two-year term that Emily Ta will be serving as the MUVE Student Affairs Committee representative and "Clary Fly." Ask or comment away! Feel free to address my question above that I pose regarding your insect study system!

Cheers,  
Clary Fly

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

### MUVE Nominations Committee Seeking New Volunteers

MUVE is seeking volunteers to serve on our Nominations Committee, which is responsible for recruiting candidates for elected MUVE positions. As a committee member, you will help identify and encourage strong candidates to run for positions and play a key role in shaping the future leadership of MUVE.

Interested? Have questions? Contact [Amy Murillo](#) to get involved!

### MUVE Section Award Nominations Due June 1

MUVE members can submit nominations for the [MUVE Section Awards](#)! MUVE has a total of five awards, recognizing members at all levels:

- [Recognition Award in Medical, Urban, & Veterinary Entomology](#)
- [Medican, Urban, and Veterinary Entomology Early Career Award](#)

- [MUVE Student Recognition Awards](#)
- [MUVE Travel Award for New Attendees](#)
- [Shripat Kamble Urban Entomology Graduate Student Award for Innovative Research](#)

Nominations for all MUVE Section Awards are due **June 1**. Check out each award page for more information on nomination requirements and eligibility criteria. Questions? Contact [Kyle Jordan](#).

## ESA Professional, Early Career Professional, and Student Award Nominations Due June 1

ESA is currently accepting nominations for Professional, Early Career Professional, and Student awards. A great way to recognize your colleagues for their contributions to entomology and MUVE is to nominate them for these competitive society-wide awards! These awards are open to eligible ESA members. Find a [full list](#) of award descriptions, eligibility criteria, and nomination submission links. Submit your nominations by **June 1**.

# OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

## RaHP Vec Summer Internship

The Rockies and High Plains Vector-borne Diseases Center (RaHP VEC) is introducing a [new summer internship program](#) for summer 2025. The program seeks to facilitate opportunities for field training and localized research projects for students from throughout the region (Colorado, Wyoming, New Mexico, Utah, and the Texas panhandle) who are interested in vector control and public health.

## MUVE Award Sponsorship Request

MUVE continuously strives to foster interest in entomology and provide support that leads to the success of our Section members. Operating costs for ESA Sections are always the most significant drain on the budget, and while MUVE leadership would like to increase support of its members, doing so incurs a significant cost. By reaching out to our membership and the organizations they represent, we are hoping to provide financial support for the programs below. If we are successful, we hope to expand this support in subsequent years to include more travel awards for students and create other travel opportunities for support staff and technicians. Learn more about [sponsoring MUVE Awards](#).

## Submit Your Photos!

We all know the frustration of finding the best image of an insect for a presentation (or even any image!). As a community we can help each other in this endeavor. If you have images that you are willing to share, please consider submitting them to Bugwood, managed by the Center for Invasive Species and Ecosystem Health at the University of Georgia. This allows MUVE and ESA to support this site and not reinvent the wheel of managing an image database. Links to get started: [Home](#), [Insect Images](#), [Programs and Services](#), [Contribute](#).

With spring underway and our favorite critters getting active, remember to capture and share what you are seeing in the field and lab!

# MUVE EVENTS



## Biology of Vector-borne Diseases Course

June 16-21, 2025 | University of Idaho

University of Idaho's Institute for Health in the Human Ecosystem will host the [sixth annual vector-borne disease course](#) in Moscow, Idaho. This six-day, in-person course provides accessible,

condensed training and "knowledge networking" for advanced graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, faculty and professionals to ensure competency in basic biology, current trends and developments, and practical knowledge for U.S. and global vector-borne diseases of plants, animals and humans.

## **International Conference on Urban Pests**

June 28-July 9, 2025 | Lund, Sweden

The [International Conference on Urban Pests](#) (ICUP) will be held in Lund, southern Sweden from June 29-July 2, 2025. Jette Knudsen of Nattaro Labs is chairing the ICUP2025 Organising Committee, with the support of colleagues from most Nordic countries. ICUP2025 anticipates the latest urban pest science, and of course opportunities for networking and socializing.

## **Livestock Insect Workers Conference**

July 6-9, 2025 | Cody, Wyoming

The 67th annual [Livestock Insect Workers Conference](#) will be held in beautiful Cody, Wyoming, just 40 miles from Yellowstone National Park. This conference will dive into the latest news/research in livestock entomology, exchange valuable insights from the four sectors, and create an environment for new partnerships to flourish and benefit the future of livestock entomology.

## **International Congress of the Society for Vector Ecology**

October 12-17, 2025 | Chania, Crete

The Society for Vector Ecology will be hosting its [9th Annual International Congress](#) in Chania, Crete. [Registration](#) is now open.

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