



The Association  
for the Study of  
**Literature &  
Environment**



# ASLE News

Winter 2010

A Quarterly Publication of the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment

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**Save the Date:  
ASLE Conference  
2011**

## President's Column

by Annie Ingram

As I put the finishing touches on this column, Haitians are struggling to cope with yet another colossal natural disaster. In 2008, four hurricanes hit the country in less than a month, leaving hundreds dead, most of the crops destroyed, and an already fragile infrastructure unprepared for devastation of such magnitude. On January 12, an earthquake measuring 7.0 on the Richter scale - the largest ever recorded in this area - struck the capital. A massive aid effort mobilized quickly, but the damage projections are staggering: hundreds of thousands of people are feared dead; many more are injured and homeless. In the face of such utter catastrophe, what can be done?



2010 ASLE President Annie Ingram

The international response has been swift and significant, with aid workers, doctors, earthquake experts, money, and other forms of relief pouring into the country. Media provide up-to-the-minute reports with grim projections of further damage, heart-wrenching images, and inspiring stories of survival. The enormity of the disaster has been met with an immensity of action as well as compassion.

Go back a month, across the Atlantic, to another small island nation. In the aftermath of the Copenhagen climate conference, many opine that the international response was neither swift nor significant. Treaty negotiations got bogged down in logistics, North-South tensions, the US-China showdown. The consequences of climate change are very different in both scale and immediacy from those of the Haiti earthquake, but this most recent international crisis has me wondering: what will it take to mobilize a global effort to address climate change?

As ASLE enters another year and another decade, we have much to do. Our work as writers, critics, teachers, and activists becomes more and more relevant as the world's environmental issues become more pressing. As an organization, we are becoming more international in our membership and our conference participants, as we strengthen our connections with affiliate organizations outside the US. Our recently-approved Strategic Plan includes several points of outreach, including to "Increase the visibility of the organization within and outside of academia" and "Improve public discourse about the environment through community-based, K-12, and undergraduate programs." Our past two biennial conferences have offered carbon offsets for travel and the other environmental impacts of our coming together; but because we can do even more, another goal of our Strategic Plan is to "Improve the environmental sustainability of the organization."

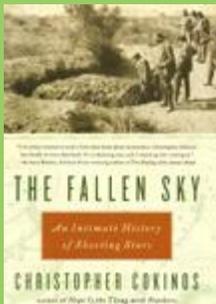
As we work toward these and other goals, I find much that inspires and motivates me. In a 2003 essay on "Four Challenges of Sustainability," David Orr writes, "We need, first, more accurate models, metaphors, and measures to describe the human enterprise relative to the biosphere." Working with - both analyzing and creating - metaphors is what many of us do for

The dates for the Ninth Biennial ASLE Conference at Indiana University in Bloomington, IN, have been set. The conference will be held from June 21-26, 2011, so put it on your calendar now and look for the CFP this summer!

## ASLE Bookshelf

The following works were recently published by ASLE members. If we've missed your publication, or if you have a newly published work you'd like to have included in the next ASLE News, please send bibliographic information to Catherine Meeks ([catherine-meeks@utc.edu](mailto:catherine-meeks@utc.edu)).

**Cokinos, Christopher.** *The Fallen Sky: An Intimate History of Shooting Stars.* New York: Penguin/Tarcher, 2009.



**Heumann, Joseph K. and Robin L. Murray.** *Ecology and Popular Film: Cinema on the Edge.* New York: SUNY Press,

a living. ASLE folk are teaching about climate change, collaborating through conference panels, blog posts, and workshops to find new pedagogies and texts that will help give our students and communities the tools to confront these issues locally and globally. If words are not enough - or are too much - we can follow 350.org in its mission to "inspire the world to rise to the challenge of the climate crisis - to create a new sense of urgency and of possibility for our planet" by focusing "on the number 350 - as in parts per million, the level scientists have identified as the safe upper limit for CO2 in our atmosphere."

Identifying safe upper limits is a key component of sustainability. With its commitment to justice for present and future generations, social and economic equity, and the preservation of bio- and cultural diversity, sustainability instructs us to live sufficiently rather than extravagantly, to consume wisely rather than excessively, and to consider the downstream consequences of everything that we do. The writers who inspire us - Sandra Steingraber, Wendell Berry, Vandana Shiva, Henry David Thoreau, Simon Ortiz, Marjorie Stoneman Douglas - have much to teach us, and those we teach, about sustainability.

We must also sustain ourselves, knowing our own upper limits (of despair, exhaustion, frustration) and seeking what replenishes us (trees, music, beauty, community). What often inspires and motivates me the most is knowing that all of you are out there, not only supporting ASLE, but also doing good work, striving to effect positive change in your communities, reaching out with your talents and time, and living with joy and purpose.

As an organization, we have much to look forward to. Next month, the ASLE officers will gather in North Carolina for the annual business meeting and retreat, and the next newsletter will give you an update on our work there.

## 2010 ASLE Officer Election Results

by Karla Armbruster



Marbled Orb Weaver (*Araneus marmoreus*), Clifton Gorge State Nature Preserve, OH. Photo by H. Lewis Ulman.

Early in December of last year, many of you participated in ASLE's annual election, an important process that substantially shapes the direction of the organization for the next year (and beyond). First, I would like to thank all the ASLE members who ran for office; the fact that so many talented individuals were willing to contribute their time and energy to the organization reminded me why ASLE is such a wonderful professional home.

And now for the results: We are extremely fortunate to be welcoming **Ursula Heise**, professor of English at Stanford University, as our vice president for 2010. Ursula will become president in 2011 and will be the co-organizer of ASLE's 2011 conference with Christoph Irmscher of Indiana

University. We are equally fortunate in our two new Executive Council members: **Greta Gaard**, professor of English at University of Wisconsin-River Falls, and **Catriona Mortimer-Sandilands**, professor and Canada Research Chair in Sustainability and Culture at York University.

In other leadership news, **Jill Anderson** of the University of Mississippi has been appointed for a two-year term as one of our graduate student liaisons, joining **Sarah Jaquette Ray**, who now becomes our senior graduate student liaison. **Dan Philippon**, our 2009 president and intrepid co-organizer of the eighth biennial conference in Victoria, British Columbia, transitions into the role of immediate past president this year.

Finally, on behalf of ASLE, I extend deep and sincere gratitude to our outgoing officers for all of their wisdom, work, and - perhaps most of all - wit and warmth: **Rochelle Johnson** (2009 immediate past president), **Janine DeBaise** and **Jim Warren** (Executive Council members), and **Angela Waldie** (senior graduate student liaison).

2009.

**Hutchings, Kevin.** *Romantic Ecologies and Colonial Cultures in the British Atlantic World, 1750-1850.* Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009. 226 pp.

**Norwick, Stephen.** *The History of Metaphors of Nature: Science and Literature from Homer to Al Gore.* 2 vols., Mellen Press: 2006. 925 pp.

**Oates, David.** *What We Love Will Save Us.* (Personal Essays) Portland: Kelson Books, 2009.



**Robisch, Kip.** *Wolves and the Wolf Myth in American Literature.* Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2009.

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## List of Donors

The following people have pledged or contributed to the ASLE Strategic Plan Campaign to date:

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## Report on the ASLE Development Campaign

by John Tallmadge, Chair, ASLE Development Committee

The public phase of ASLE's first ever development campaign concluded in October, and I am pleased to report that we raised \$35,013 in donations and pledges from 85 ASLE supporters during this period (see [List of Donors](#) in the column to the left).

Profoundest thanks are due to our generous donors, and to our outstanding volunteer committee, whose imagination and perseverance led to far better results than anyone might have expected in such a challenging economy. The money will enable ASLE to pursue new programs while maintaining our current programs and services at an enhanced level of quality over the next three to five years. But the campaign generated other important benefits that are not apparent from the numbers alone. By way of explanation, let me take you behind the scenes.

Discussions began in the winter of 2008, when the Executive Council authorized a fund drive and formed a committee, which President Rochelle Johnson asked me to chair. Members included former ASLE presidents Karla Armbruster, Terrell Dixon, and Ann Fisher-Wirth, along with Richard Kerridge, Tom Bailey, and Managing Director Amy McIntyre. Needing to build a case statement, we pressed for linkage to the nascent strategic plan, including a prioritized set of goals with numbers attached. This got the leadership thinking in the very concrete and practical terms needed, not only to raise the money, but to translate it into action. Thus fortified, we organized ourselves during the winter and spring of 2009, developing our materials and contacting long-time members about making leadership gifts before the biennial meeting in Victoria, where we planned to announce the campaign.

Although none of us had much experience in fund raising, we entered into it with good will and cheerful hearts, finding it a pleasure to renew acquaintances, talk about what ASLE has meant to us, and learn about the hopes and dreams of our colleagues. By the time Victoria rolled around we had nearly \$20,000 in pledges, despite the recession. We reported our results to the Executive Council, recommending that they consider adding Development as a standing committee and conducting a fund drive every five years.

We recommended, further, that, in addition to our existing programs, ASLE support projects devoted to the environmental humanities, providing seed money from this campaign. As we suggest in our report, "Sustainability requires us to address not only the proximate but the ultimate causes of environmental problems, namely, the values, ideas, images, and beliefs that we hold concerning the relations between humanity and the rest of life. These are the very subjects that the humanities address using the tools of critical thinking and creative imagination. Therefore, ASLE will initiate and seek support for projects that engage and promote the environmental humanities as vital components of the effort to achieve a sustainable society."

We launched the public phase of our campaign at the banquet in Victoria, encouraging members to contribute an amount equal to at least one year's dues. Although the number of donors turned out to be smaller than we had hoped, those who did contribute frequently expressed their gratitude and devotion. The words of one sequoia-level donor seemed to capture the mood of many who gave, no matter the dollar amount: "ASLE has been so important to me over the years: the energy and fun of working with folks during its founding, the good friends that have come to me through ASLE, the chance to merge my environmental interests with my academic and professional life--all of these were, regrettably, not present during my graduate school and early academy years. I owe ASLE all that I can give it."

What did we learn from this campaign? There is a lot of loyalty and good will out there: ASLE has made a huge difference to many people in their work and in their lives as teachers, scholars, and environmentalists. Members want to feel connected to their organization, involved in its good work, and factored into its planning.

If you are one of those people to whom ASLE has meant so much, but you have not contributed, there's still time! We're continuing to accept pledges into the new year, so please join your friends and colleagues in making a commitment to help ASLE reach its goals. Simply contact Amy McIntyre ([info@asle.org](mailto:info@asle.org)), and she will send you a pledge form. Every gift counts, no matter the size!

### Sequoia (\$1000 or more)

A Friend of ASLE  
Anonymous  
Tom Bailey  
Jerry Dollar  
Annie Ingram  
Rochelle Johnson  
Mark Long  
Scott Slovic

### Bristlecone Pine (\$500-999)

Lawrence Buell  
Kate Chandler  
Nancy Cook  
Elizabeth Dodd & David  
Rintoul  
Cheryll Glotfelty  
Richard Hunt  
M. Jimmie Killingsworth  
Daniel Philippon  
Arlene Plevin  
John Tallmadge  
Jim & Julianne Warren

### Sugar Maple (\$250-499)

Stacy Alaimo  
Michael Branch  
John Elder  
John Felstiner  
Janice Fiamengo  
Anna Ford  
Nathaniel Hart  
Ursula Heise  
Tom Hillard & Kim Leeder  
John Knott  
Glen Love  
The Minerva Fund  
Rachel Stein  
Robert Watson

### Dogwood (\$100-249)

Bruce Allen  
Karla Armbruster  
Pamela Banting  
Brian Bartlett  
Wes Berry & Jean  
Sokolowski  
Daniel Brayton & Antonia  
Losano  
Dianne Chisholm  
Serena Chou  
Christopher Cokinos  
Janine DeBaise  
Ann Fisher-Wirth  
Harold Fromm  
Andrew Gottlieb

In the meantime, thanks again to everyone who met, planned, worked, and contributed to this campaign. It's a first for ASLE and a testimony to the dedication, generosity, and good will of everyone involved.

#### ASLE Development Committee:

Karla Armbruster  
Tom Bailey  
Terrell Dixon  
Ann Fisher-Wirth  
Richard Kerridge  
Rochelle Johnson  
Amy McIntyre  
John Tallmadge



*Eastern Wahoo (Euonymus atropurpureus)*  
Prairie Oaks Metro Park, OH.  
Photo by H. Lewis Ulman

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## In Memoriam: Walter Isle

by Tom Bailey, Lisa Slappey, and Barney Nelson

Walter Isle's list of professional activities is a long one: past presidencies, boards of directors, endowed chairs, dean, organizer of conferences and symposiums, writer and reviewer of journal articles, and the list goes on—but his most important contributions for many of us often occurred subtly after the presentations, after the conferences, or right before the spot lights came up on us, as we saw him slip quietly into a chair at the back of the room. Walt had the gift of friendship; a first impression might highlight his quietness and his extreme good humor. The hubbub of a conference pleased him without exciting him much. At dinner time, and perhaps especially later at the bar, he liked his beer, and he liked listening to the jokes and the statements, but as the night went on, he didn't hold forth as some did; he simply contributed to the conversation when he had something to say. And when he did talk, folks quieted down and listened. Always humble, he did not seem to take up much space, but his passing leaves a tremendous vacancy.

Some of us worked with him closely at the Kalamazoo ASLE Conference. His greatest qualities were on display during that ten days. His personal bravery, for one: he was just out of the hospital and was recovering from major heart surgery; he probably should have stayed home and let Pam nurse him, but there he was. Sweet. Gentle. Forceful. He knew everyone; everyone liked him; the conference sessions were well-organized because he and Lisa Slappey had spent untold hours making it so....it was no accident that he had a long career as a high-ranking administrator, though he didn't talk about that career much. His professional interests were in the advancement of ASLE and the Western Literature Association (WLA), their members, and *WAL* and *ISLE* (which he jokingly liked to claim was named after him). His feelings in support of environmental activism were strong, yet he always welcomed and encouraged open discussion and alternate views. His faith in the pursuit of truth never wavered. He encouraged even undergraduates to join both organizations and present and publish papers.

Although a distinguished professor at one of the nation's most prestigious universities, Walter always had time and encouragement for faculty at open-admission state schools, invited graduate students to dinner, attended conference sessions he knew would probably have low attendance, helped to give new faculty a boost with their colleagues by lending his name and support to their projects. Your problem was never too minor for his attention, but he didn't hand out answers, he inspired courage. At a time when there was a lot of political noise surrounding our profession and its treatment of the marginal, he helped everyone who asked for help, and judged people on their work.

Walter's scholarly interests led him from modern American to postmodern literature and finally to environmental literature, and the ASLE community came to mean a great deal to him. As founding co-director of Rice University's Center for the Study of Environment and Society, he brought a number of ASLE friends to lecture on campus. He introduced courses on Environmental, Native American, and Western American literatures and even taught a class on environmental history. He was a wise and generous mentor to graduate students and junior

Deborah Holler  
Kevin Hutchings  
Christoph Irmscher  
Shoko Itoh  
LeeAnne Kryder  
Lauren LaFauci  
Paul Lindholdt  
Tom Lynch  
Pascale Mathex-Cartwright  
Allen K. Mears  
Microsoft Matching Gifts  
Salma Monani  
Kate Rigby  
David Robertson  
Elizabeth Schults  
Sheryl St. Germain  
William Stroup  
H. Lewis Ulman  
Allison Wallace  
Laura Dassow Walls &  
Robert E. Walls  
O. Alan Weltzien  
Robert Wess  
Lisa West  
Jim & Sasha Wohlpart  
Rita Wong

### Aspen (\$20-99)

Lorraine Anderson  
James Barilla  
Hal Crimmel  
Terry Gifford  
Nancy Gift  
Ryan Hediger  
Yoshiko Kayano  
Virginia Kennedy  
Jenny Kerber  
Michael Kowalewski  
Annette Lucksinger  
Katherine Lynes  
Sarah Jaquette Ray  
Mary Swander

### Members Write

ASLE News wants to include your voices! We invite members to write 100-200 words in response to a word, phrase, or question that will then be published in the next

faculty members. The collegiality for which he was so well known translated into his daily practice of teaching. Walter collaborated with a science professor, Ron Sass, to offer an interdisciplinary environmental studies course for first year undergraduates. After both "retired," Walter and Ron adapted the class to reach returning adult students in Rice's newest degree program, the Master of Liberal Studies.

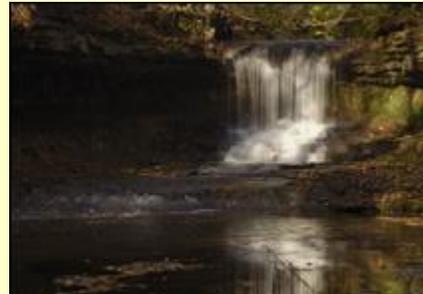
Walter was an example of yin/yang, an oxymoron. He was a humble intellectual, a gentle driving force, a quiet orator, an unassuming giant, a respectful opponent, a relaxed busy man. If there is such a thing as absent leadership, he had it. So maybe we haven't lost him after all.

### Memorial Service and Scholarship Fund

There will be a memorial program celebrating Walter Isle's life and contributions to Rice on Friday, February 26 at 4pm in the Rice Memorial Chapel, Rice University, Houston Texas.

To honor and continue Walter's work, the English Department and the family have established the "Walter W. Isle Lectureship in Environmental Literature" at Rice University. ASLE officers have voted to make a gift to this fund, with the amount to be determined next month at the Executive Council business meeting. If you would like to make a personal donation to the fund, please send contributions to:

Professor Helena Michie, Chair  
Attention: Walter Isle Memorial Fund  
English Department MS-30  
Rice University  
P.O. Box 1892  
Houston, TX 77251-1892



Little Miami River, Clifton Gorge State Nature Preserve, OH. Photo by H. Lewis Ulman.

## Recent Conference Round-Up

### The Society for Literature, Science, and the Arts in Atlanta, GA by Helena Feder

The 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference of the Society for Literature, Science, and the Arts in Atlanta, Georgia was, like last year's conference in Charlotte, North Carolina, attended by members working in a variety of disciplines from across and beyond the United States, including many ASLE members. The theme of the 2009 conference was "Decodings": "Do we decode nature, or are natural processes already full of encoding/decoding mechanisms along the lines of DNA? Is a digital representation a decoding of analog nature, or must we decode the digital to understand what is lost in quantizing natural continua?"

Delegates read papers on a number of subjects of interest to ASLE members. There were seven panels in the area of animal studies alone (with titles such as "Reading with Animals," "Animal Transgenics: Of Mice and Meat," and "Animal Subjects"). Notable papers on these panels include **Sarah E. McFarland's** "Decoding a Radical Animal Subjectivity," Susan McHugh's "Toward a Literary History of GM Animal Agency," and **Richard Nash's** "Animal Death and Wordsworth's Hart-Leap Well." Other panels of interest include "Autopoiesis, Gaia, Climate, and Time," "Thoreau's House: a Nineteenth Century Building Project" (a series of Pecha Kucha presentations by Georgia Tech undergraduates building a replica of Thoreau's house using nineteenth-century tools and practices), and "Nature/Cultures" (on genetic code and the boundaries of nature and culture). **Wendy Wheeler**, Reader in English at London Metropolitan University, led a guest scholar session on "creative evolution," and **Jim Girmsley**, award-winning playwright and novelist, led a guest writers' session. **Ian Bogost**, Associate Professor in the School of Literature Communication and Culture at Georgia Tech, gave the plenary lecture, entitled "Alien Phenomenology: A Pragmatic Speculative Realism." For more information on the SLSA, please go to: <http://www.litsciarts.org/>. Next year's conference will be held in Indianapolis, Indiana.

issue. (Readers of The Sun magazine will recognize this feature as similar to their always fascinating "Readers Write.") Be sure to read [Eve Quesnel's take on "Healing"](#) published in this issue!

For the Spring 2010 Members Write, respond to the following word:

**"Relief"**

Please send responses either in the body of an e-mail or as an attachment to *ASLE News* Editor Catherine Meeks, [catherine-meeks@utc.edu](mailto:catherine-meeks@utc.edu).

## American Studies Association Annual Conference and ECC Business Meeting

by Joni Adamson

The Environment and Culture Caucus of the **American Studies Association** holds an annual Business Meeting to brainstorm proposals for sessions, facilitate networking, and award the Annette Kolodny Prize for Best Paper on an environment and culture topic. The 2009 ASA conference and ECC Business Meeting was held in November in Washington, D.C. The Annette Kolodny prize, sponsored by Duke University Press and *Orion* Magazine, was awarded to **Giovanna Di Chiro**, for her paper, "Polluted Politics? Confronting Toxic Discourse, Sex Panic, and Eco-Normativity."

Each year, the ASA-ECC sponsors one panel. The 2009 sponsored panel was organized by **Finis Dunaway** and titled "Vulnerable Bodies, Ecological Citizenship, and the Making of Environmental Publics." The ASA-ECC works to get as many environmentally-related panels accepted to the conference as possible, then, after official notification of acceptance is sent by the ASA Program Committee, the ECC votes to decide which panel to officially sponsor.

The process for submission of a panel or individual paper to the ASA is quite competitive. The acceptance rate is 60% for proposed panels and 40% for proposed individual papers. Using its listserv, the ECC advises members on how to make proposals more competitive. Those who would like to join the ECC's listserv and receive announcements about the annual Business Meeting and ASA convention, should email Joni Adamson at [Joni.Adamson@asu.edu](mailto:Joni.Adamson@asu.edu). Also, see our website: [http://www.theasa.net/caucus\\_environment/](http://www.theasa.net/caucus_environment/).

The 2010 ECC Business Meeting will be held in San Antonio, TX, during the annual convention, November 18-21.

## ASLE-Affiliated Panels at the Modern Language Association Convention

Two panels sponsored by ASLE were presented at the recent MLA convention in Philadelphia, PA, held December 27-30, 2009. The first was on African American Literature and the Environment, chaired by **Scott Knickerbocker**, College of Idaho. Presenting were **Sonya Posmentier**, Princeton University, "Kamau Brathwaite's *Weather Complex* and Sterling Brown's *Southern Road*," **Katherine R. Lynes**, Union College, "They Held the River's 'Tongue like Words': Reenvisioning African American Eco-poetics," **Alexa Weik**, Université de Fribourg, Switzerland, "Environmental Justice and the Transcendence of Race Thinking in Percival Everett's *Watershed*," and **Kristen Egan**, Loyola University, Chicago, "Now a Swamp in Name Only: Assimilation and Environment in W. E. B. DuBois's *The Quest of the Silver Fleece*."



The second panel took the theme Humor and the Environment, and was also chaired by Scott Knickerbocker. **Molly Wallace**, Queen's University, presented "Involuntary Satire and Global Risk in Kurt Vonnegut's *Cat's Cradle*," and **Katherine R. Chandler**, Saint Mary's College, MD, shared a paper entitled "Honeyed Venom: Humor's Role in Barbara Kingsolver's *The Poisonwood Bible*."

## ASLE-Affiliated Panel at the South Atlantic Modern Language Association Convention

At this past November's SAMLA convention in Atlanta, ASLE member **Jim Clark** of Barton College in Wilson, NC chaired the ASLE-Affiliated Group session "Ecopoetry in the South." **Tim Burbery** of Marshall University served as Secretary, and presented his paper "Greening the (new) New Criticism: Notes Towards an Eco-Formalism." Also from Marshall University, **Chris Green** read his paper "The Ecology of Jesse Stuart's Kentucky Way." Rounding out the session were **George Hovis** of SUNY at Oneonta, with "Fred Chappell's Classical Eco-poetics

in *Backsass and Midquest*" and **Robert West** of Mississippi State University presenting "Things in the Dynamics of Themselves": A.R. Ammons and Eco-poetry." Though the panel was bright and early on a Saturday morning, the chair reports that the panel was well-attended, interesting, and enjoyable, sending this newly formed Affiliated Group off to a good start. **Tim Burbery** ([burbery@marshall.edu](mailto:burbery@marshall.edu)) will serve as the 2010 Chair, while **George Hovis** is the newly elected Secretary of the session. Look for the 2010 CFP on ASLE's website in the coming months.

## Society for the Study of American Women Writers Conference by Annie Ingram

The SSAWW met for its triennial conference in Philadelphia October 21-24, 2009. The ASLE-affiliated panel, "Women and Environments: Gardens, Cures, and Trash as Art" featured three papers. **Lauren LaFauci** (University of Michigan) presented "'Green-blooded Plants' and 'Leafy Lungs': Elizabeth Wright's Nature Cure"; **Arielle Zibrak** (Boston University) presented "'That Story and This Day': Recycling Waste in Rebecca Harding Davis's *Life in the Iron Mills*"; and **Lisa Giles** (University of Southern Maine) presented "'The Island Dreams in Flowers': Celia Thaxter's Victorian Seeing." All three papers gave fresh insights and provocative arguments that attest to the vibrant interplay of ecocriticism and the study of 19th-century American women writers. The Northwest Study Group of the SSAWW also sponsored a panel on "Women Writers and Environment: On the Politics of Nature," with fascinating papers by **Michelle Fankhauser** (Washington State) on Margaret Fuller's "flower power," by **Tina Gianquitto** (Colorado School of Mines) on Lydia Becker's "plant smuts," and by **Nicole Merola** (Rhode Island School of Design) on "Superfund Gothic" in Joyce Carol Oates. The closing plenary on "Transnational American Women's Writing" featured speakers from Japan, England, and several US universities, including long-time ASLE member **Joni Adamson**. The SSAWW national conference occurs every three years; regional study groups meet annually. For more information about the organization and its journal, *Legacy*, go to <http://www.wsu.edu/~campbell/ssaww/index.html>.

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## New Horizons for the European Association for the Study of Literature, Culture, and the Environment (EASLCE)

by Dr. Serenella Iovino, University of Turin, Italy, President of EASLCE

The past year has been a time of growth and exploration for EASLCE. In June, the ASLE conference in Victoria increased both our visibility and the sense of familiarity between European ecocritics and their colleagues from overseas. In November, the conference held in Antalya (Turkey) on the "Future of Ecocriticism: New Horizons" reinforced the international dialogue among ecocritics, fulfilling our wish for an increasingly extended and self-aware European ecocritical community.

In 2010 more steps in this direction will be taken. The first one will be the conference on European ecocriticism held in mid-January by the Radboud University, Nijmegen (Holland). Here, besides the presence of EASLCE's representatives as members of the scientific committee (**Axel Goodbody** and **Carmen FLYS-Junquera**) and plenary speakers (**Catrin Gersdorf** and myself), a ground-breaking plenary panel on "The State of European Ecocriticism," organized and lead by Carmen FLYS Junquera, will take place. The year will close with another very important venue for EASLCE's life: the joint-conference of EASLCE and ASLE-UK (University of Bath, UK-September 1-4), will be in fact the first step of a cooperation between the two leading ecocritical associations in Europe.



Leaf falling, Big Darby Creek, Battelle-Darby Metro Park, OH. Photo by H. Lewis Ulman.

But certainly seminal for EASLCE's growth in 2010 will be the launch of *Ecozon@-European Journal of Literature, Culture and Environment*, an open-access electronic journal which represents a joint effort between its founding core GIECO (the Spanish Group for Ecocritical Research) and EASLCE. Resonating with the topic of the Turkish international conference, the first issue of *Ecozon@* will be entirely focused on "The Future of Ecocriticism." Expected before spring, it will feature contributions by the most prominent ecocritics both from European and non-European countries (**Hubert Zapf, Isabel Hoving, Serpil Opperman, Greg Garrard, Ursula Heise, Cheryl Glotfelty, Greta Gaard, Stacy Alaimo, Joni Adamson, Scott Slovic,** and **Simon Estok**, among many others).

As a European ecocritical journal *Ecozon@* has a significant characteristic. It is in fact intended to represent not only an interdisciplinary but also a multilingual forum for ecocriticism. Thus, it perfectly reflects EASLCE's vocation to mirror both the unity and the multiplicity of the European continent. By definition, in fact, EASLCE is not associated to a single country and its compound identity takes advantage of the diversity of languages and places to which its members belong. The very finality of EASLCE is to promote the spread of ecocriticism in non-English speaking European countries, helping translate cultural issues about the global environment into new "local" ecocritical idioms. In this way, EASLCE intends to be a crossroad of experiences and to involve progressively more cultures and visions in the debate about ecological literacy.

A dialogue with all the branches of ASLE is doubtlessly vital to this endeavor, and the Bath conference will be an important step in this direction. It will be a great chance to continue building a common horizon where different people, from different cultures, languages, and countries, can meet to envision a shared culture of sustainability. For more information, please visit EASLCE's website: [www.easlce.eu](http://www.easlce.eu) and the *Ecozon@* website: [www.ecozona.eu](http://www.ecozona.eu).

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## ASEH Holds Annual Conference in March 2010

by Lisa Mighetto, Ph.D., Executive Director, American Society for Environmental History

The American Society for Environmental History (ASEH) is a non-profit learned society that increases understanding of current environmental issues by analyzing their historical background. Founded in 1977, ASEH promotes scholarship and teaching and connects its undertakings with larger communities through conferences, workshops, environmental film festivals, and other activities. Our journal, *Environmental History*, is published quarterly by Oxford University Press, and we offer a variety of grants and fellowships. For more information on ASEH, see [www.aseh.net](http://www.aseh.net)

This year, our annual conference will be held in Portland, Oregon on March 10-13. This meeting will include more than 100 sessions on topics of local, national, and international interest and will feature an all-day workshop on the national parks, with a site visit to the historic Columbia River Highway and Columbia River Gorge. The conference will open with a "floating seminar" on the Willamette River, which includes lunch and commentary by five regional scholars, followed by a plenary session on the Klamath River basin. Field trips to Bonneville Dam, Mount St. Helens, Fort Vancouver, and other locations will explore local environmental issues. An exhibit area with more than 40 booths will provide an opportunity to talk with university presses and local organizations. Jack Ohman, political cartoonist for *The Oregonian*, will serve as the evening banquet speaker, and the conference will end with a performance by the Portland State University jazz ensemble. This is a joint meeting with the National Council on Public History and we expect an attendance of around 1,000 people, including scholars and educators from all over the world.

For more information, including the conference program and registration form, see <http://www.aseh.net/conferences/current-conference>  
Reduced fees for early registration are in effect until Feb. 12, 2010.

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## Members Write: "Healing"

by Eve Quesnel

(Note: For more information on submitting to this feature, see this issue's "[Members Write](#)" announcement in the left column.)

She is healing, but what other choice does she have. After returning from a raft trip down the Colorado, her spirit is rejuvenated. The cancer in her brain, however, doesn't acknowledge the healing powers of the red muddy river, the precipitous slot canyons, nor the descending trill of the canyon wren.

She stops to visit us on her way home, still giddy from her experience, and I take her on a favorite walk. We stroll on a dirt road, stop at an old historic cabin to take pictures, then slowly, very slowly, we continue toward Aspen groves, not yet turned yellow. The sky proudly reflects the blue bowl of Lake Tahoe and we comment on the startling contrast between blue and towering green-leaved Aspens, plus the sweetness of the summer tomato we eat for lunch, arrests our attention. Along the road we talk about life and death, but mostly death, and I am surprised at my casual manner as if we are talking about the weather. When she leaves, I don't cry, but instead, relish in our time together and the unexpected lesson taught along the way. One day is one day. And of that, I will never forget.

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## Member News

**Cheryl J. Fish** has won the 2009 Florence Howe Award from the Women's Caucus of the Modern Language Association for best feminist essay in English. Her winning essay is entitled "The Toxic Body Politic: Ethnicity, Gender and Corrective Eco-Justice in Ruth Ozeki's *My Year of Meats* and Judith Helfand and Daniel Gold's *Blue Vinyl*."

Cheryl's essay appeared in *MELUS (Multi-Ethnic Literature of the U.S.)* Vol 34, Number 2, Summer 2009: 43-62 in a special issue on Ethnicity and Ecocriticism edited by Joni Adamson and Scott Slovic. You can read the full-text version of the essay through the database Project Muse: <http://muse.jhu.edu/search>

Cheryl J. Fish also published a recent essay, "Place, Emotion and and Environmental Justice in Harlem: June Jordan and Buckminster Fuller's 1965 'Architextual' Collaboration," in *DISCOURSE: Journal for Theoretical Studies in Media and Culture* in a special issue on Race, Environment, and Representation, edited by Mark B. Feldman and Hsuan L. Hsu. 29.2&3, published 2009.

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## New International Affiliate *ISLE* Subscription Rate

Oxford University Press now offers members of ASLE affiliate organizations based outside North America a special low subscription rate to our official journal *ISLE*.

This new low rate includes online only access to all issues of the journal dating back to 1996. A 2010 subscription costs just £27 / \$41 / €41, and grants online access from January to December 2010.

To subscribe at this special rate, simply visit [http://www.oxfordjournals.org/our\\_journals/isle/special\\_rates.html](http://www.oxfordjournals.org/our_journals/isle/special_rates.html) and click on the 'add to basket' button.

For more information about *ISLE*, visit the journal homepage at <http://isle.oxfordjournals.org/>.

To get a glimpse of what the journal is like, browse recent tables of contents at <http://isle.oxfordjournals.org/current.dtl>, edited by Mark B. Feldman and Hsuan L. Hsu. 29.2&3, published 2009.

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## ASLE News Notes

### Climate Change Workshop

Watch the *Orion* Magazine and Unity College (Maine) websites for details on a 4-day seminar/workshop August 1-4 on climate change and how to teach it to nonspecialist audiences (high school, college, and older): climate science, ecological effects, impacts on humans, responses from policy, engineering, ethics, arts, humanities; lots of hands-on activities, nature walks, art and writing exercises; lots of up-to-date, high-quality, accessible, practical information and resources. Led by **SueEllen Campbell**, **John Calderazzo**, and **Cindy Thomashow**. Contact [SueEllen.Campbell@colostate.edu](mailto:SueEllen.Campbell@colostate.edu) for more information.

### ASLE Member News

Whether you got a new job, won an award, or did something interesting, enlightening, or exciting, we want to know what you're up to! If you have some news to share with other ASLE members, and it doesn't "fit" into the Bookshelf, PhD, or Emeritus categories, please contact Catherine Meeks ([catherine-meeks@utc.edu](mailto:catherine-meeks@utc.edu)) with the Subject heading "Member News."

### ASLE Emeritus

ASLE News honors those ASLE members retired or retiring from teaching. If you would like to acknowledge someone in this new feature--or if you yourself will be retiring during the coming academic year--please contact Catherine Meeks ([catherine-meeks@utc.edu](mailto:catherine-meeks@utc.edu)). We will include a brief account of scholarly interests, the institutions of employment and years taught in the next newsletter.

### ASLE PhDs

Have you or one of your students recently defended a dissertation? If so, ASLE News wants to know. Each issue, we include announcements commemorating those members who have recently completed their doctoral work. If you would like to be included in this feature, please contact Catherine Meeks ([catherine-meeks@utc.edu](mailto:catherine-meeks@utc.edu)) with the dissertation title, degree-granting institution, and committee members.

## ASLE Website Member Tools

Here are a few of the things you can do once you login at <https://www.asle.org/site/members/login/>:

Renew Your Membership  
View Current and Past Issues of *ISLE* Journal Online  
Search the Membership Directory  
Update your Directory Entry

## Contact Information

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