Making and Presenting Technical Posters

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Pre-Planning

- An effective poster operates on many levels...
  - Source of information
  - Conversation starter
  - Advertisement of the research
  - Summary of the research
Pre-Planning

- Poor posters generally suffer from some easily solved problems...
  - Objective(s) and main point(s) hard to find
  - Text too small
  - Poor graphics
  - Poor organization
Audience

- Poster sessions have diverse audience members, to appeal to them all...
  - Provide context
  - Use plain language
  - Avoid jargon and acronyms
  - Interpret your findings
Choosing Fonts

- **Headlines = Sans Serif**
  - Arial
  - Century Gothic
  - Tahoma

- **Text = Serif**
  - Times New Roman
  - Palatino
  - Garamond
Font Sizes

- Your poster should be “readable” from 8 feet.
- Headline size =/> 36 pts
- Text size =/> 24 pts
- Actual size will vary depending on font.
- Text size in figures must also be large.
Words – Less is More

- The entire poster should have less than 1000 words, less than 800 is better.
- Avoid blocks of text longer than 10 sentences.
- Lists of sentences are better than blocks of text.
- Text boxes should be at least 40 characters wide.
Using Color

- Vibrant colors attract attention...and then wear out a reader's eyes.
- Light backgrounds and dark letters are your best combination.
- Stick to a small palette of colors.
- Use multiple colors in a theme, not randomly assigned.
In text, use *italics* instead of *underlining*.

Subheads should be the same size as text, **bolding** will draw enough attention.

Do not use the auto-tab. Set your own smaller tabs or manually space your tabs.

Using a single space between sentences will save room.
Graphics – Backgrounds

Avoid using dark backgrounds whenever possible.
Graphics – Frames

- Use a thin black or grey line around photos to add visual appeal. It should be almost imperceptible.
Graphics – Graphs

- Graph titles should be in “Sentence case” not “Title Case.”
- Label the Y-axis horizontally whenever possible.
- Do not include dark backgrounds. If they are automatically generated cut them out.
- All info here should be readable from 6 feet...most people *only* read graphs.
Graphics – Sample Graphs

Lynx-Hare Population Oscillations (represented by trapping data)

- Number of Pelts
- Year

Lynx
Hare

Number of Pelts

Year

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26

0 50 100 150 200 250

1 6 11 16 21 26
Presenting Tips

- Develop a 1-sentence overview.
- Make a clear team plan regarding who will stay at the poster when (read: don’t leave the poster unattended).
- Have your faculty members business cards on hand.
- Carry a black marker and white-out.
Wardrobe Coordination

Good

Bad
Wardrobe Coordination
Sample Posters

Southern Flounder Exhibit Temperature-Dependent Sex Determination
J. Adam Lackenbach*, John Godwin and Russell Broksi
Department of Zoology, Box 7617, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC 27695

Introduction
Southern Flounder (Paralichthys dentatus) are important to aquaculture because they are known to produce both male and female fish.温度有明显的性别差异。

Objective
This study was conducted to determine whether southern flounder exhibit temperature-dependent sex determination (TSD), and if growth is affected by rearing temperature.

Methods
- Southern flounder were reared in freshwater and in seawater.
- The sea water was heated to temperatures of 10°C, 20°C, and 30°C.
- The fish were harvested at intervals of 3 months.

Results
- Fish were reared in seawater and in freshwater.
- The lowest growth was observed in the fish reared in seawater.

Conclusions
- The results indicate that temperature-dependent sex determination occurs in southern flounder.

Acknowledgements
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Graphs:
- Temperature Affects Sex Determination
- Growth Does Not Differ by Sex
- Rearing Temperature Affects Growth
- Histological Analysis

Notes:
- Temperature affects the growth of southern flounder.
- Temperature-dependent sex determination is observed in southern flounder.
Sample Posters

Can Suburban Greenways Provide High Quality Bird Habitat?

Objective: Greenways for the Birds
- Determine how development-sensitive forest birds are affected by
  - Forested corridor width
  - Adjacent development intensity
  - Vegetation composition & structure
  - Develop recommendations for greenway designers and planners

Study Design & Independent Variables
- Sampled 34 – 360m corridors in Raleigh, NC, USA
- Sampled range of tailed corridor widths (20 – 1,200m)
- Adjacent density (low-density residential = office/commercial)
- Vegetation composition & structure in corridor
- Land cover in 300m x 300m adjacent to corridor (context)
- Measured richness & abundance of
  - Breeding birds
  - Neotropical migrant birds during stopovers
  - Nesting and nest predators

Spring Neotropical Migrant Stopovers
- More common in wider greenways with more, taller hardwood trees

Breeding Birds of Concern More Common in Wider Greenways with Less Managed Area Surrounded by More Forest Canopy
- 8-minute, 5km point counts at center of corridor
- Revised 6 times during breeding season

Nest Predators Less Common in Wider Greenways with Narrower Paths
- Five 600-scat stations along each greenway segment
- Observed for 5 nights each

Significant Predictors for Predator Abundance
- Greenway
- Adjacent Landscape
- Canopy Cover
- % Hardwoods
- Canopy Height
- % Bare Earth

Significant Predictors for Breeder Abundance
- Greenway
- Adjacent Landscape
- Canopy Cover
- % Hardwoods
- Canopy Height
- % Bare Earth

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Greenways for Development-Sensitive Forest Birds Might Conflict with Intense Recreational Use
- People & Managers Prefer...
- Forest Birds Prefer...

Potential Solution: Wide Corridor, Trail Near Edge
- Make corridors at least 5ha wide; wider is better
- Don’t split forest corridor
- Keep trails as narrow as possible
- Avoid wide gravel areas along trails within forested corridor
- Locate trails near the edge of forested corridors
Helpful Links

- Advice on Designing Scientific Posters
  http://www.swarthmore.edu/NatSci/cpurrin1/posteradvice.htm

- Creating Effective Poster Presentations
  http://www.ncsu.edu/project/posters/NewSite/DefineMessage.html#Note0

- Flickr: The Poster Sessions Pool
  http://www.flickr.com/groups/368476@N21/pool