

Student Sub-section of the Education Section Newsletter Article

By Caleb Hasler, Canadian Aquatic Resources Section (CARS) Communication Officer

On Saturday January 8th 2011 at the Canadian Conference for Fisheries Research (CCFFR) held in Toronto, Ontario, CARS hosted a student colloquium. Panel members were Steven Cooke, a professor from Carleton University; Martin Koops, a scientist with Fisheries and Oceans Canada; Scott Gibson, a species-at-risk biologist with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and a former consultant; Karen Murchie, a recent PhD graduate and a post-doc; and John Lark, the president of Coherent Advice and a long time fixture at CCFFR. Panel members were asked to talk about their backgrounds, their careers, and mainly focus on the paths they took to their current positions. They also provided very valuable “sage” advice to over 60 students (17 universities represented!). The students then had an opportunity to ask questions and interact with the panel members.

Some of the highlights were: 1) Finding out that it is ok to have a bad day, week, or even year- just stick with it, move to plan “b” if you have to; 2) Involvement with AFS or other professional societies is a must for success; 3) Having a lunch buffet in the room really helps bring in the crowd; 4) Be careful with your cover letter- make sure you talk about and provide examples for all of the job requirements; 5) Don’t be afraid to approach people at a conference, no one bites that hard; 6) The Rotary Club and the Society for Fisheries Society of the British Isles has funding opportunities for travel and research.

Many thanks to CARS executive committee for helping to plan the event, Rob McLaughlin and Nick Collins for logistical planning of the conference and the colloquium, Mike Donaldson for helping with the colloquium and taking pictures, and to all of the panel members. Also, many thanks to the other fisheries professionals that participated in the colloquium and helped to address many of the questions.



John Lark speaking to students at the Student Colloquium.