



**Fragile
Inheritance**



**30 YEARS LATER
EXPEDITION**
Biological Survey

Only 24 hours in each day: the Schueleremic Annual Letter, 2010

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Everyone,

With ice on the inside of the windows reminding us that the Sun is just now kicking loose from New Zealand & heading for the Yukon, we again reflect that this year's lesson plan, like that of so many previous years, has been continued instruction in our limitations, and our lack of adeptness in making our enterprises pay their way – but as you can see, this year we've made some exciting progress and also some unprecedented decisions

Business arising from last year: *this spring we were able to announce the publication of the **Snail Book!*** This has been a long haul since it was first proposed in 1997, and even a long haul since Wayne Grimm unexpectedly died in 2005. Our profound thanks to Frank Ross & Donna Richoux for supporting this project, and then to CFIA for taking it up, to Robert and Isabelle for providing the real malacology, and to Judy Courteau & Matt Keevil for all the help with field work & curation. This is the first work to treat the entire Canadian fauna of terrestrial Gastropods, and we see signs that it is beginning to spark an increased interest in the life history, ecological roles, & systematics of Canadian land snails & slugs.

We spent most of the year either preparing for, or traveling on, the [30 Years Later Expedition](#). The Canadian Museum of Nature supported our winter work of preparing for the Expedition, databasing, developing GPS and data entry procedures, and constructing a website adequate for fundraising. We appreciate the kick start they gave us, but since then, we have been on our own for fund-raising and media publicity for the Expedition.

We've often puzzled about the idea that art is conventionally sold for money, while one is assessed page charges for finishing a work of science. This spring we decided to see how our art might support our science, and started Aleta's [daily painting blog](#). It seemed to take off well, selling about half of Aleta's miniature oils as she produced them from March to September. However, after a few false starts with local papers and radio, not much publicity has materialized, so the competitive bidding that we'd hoped for has not taken off. While the sales of paintings has been much appreciated, the resulting income has not risen above the subsistence level.

However, the painting-a-day mandate did succeed in keeping us in expeditionary mode

1 Grimm, F. Wayne, Robert G. Forsyth, Frederick W. Schueler, & Aleta Karstad. 2009 [2010]. *Identifying Land Snails and Slugs in Canada: Introduced Species and Native Genera*. Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Ottawa. iv+168 pp. ...and Grimm, Forsyth, Schueler, & Karstad. 2009 [2010]. *Identification des escargots et des limaces terrestres au Canada: Espèces introduites et genres indigènes*. Agence canadienne d'inspection des aliments. Ottawa. Iv+168 pp. Copies available at no cost from CFIA by calling 1-800-442-2342 during business hours, eastern time.

through the spring and summer, initially around home, then on a trip to Cochrane and surrounding areas of northeastern Ontario, in forays to the Lake Ontario shore, and then across Quebec enroute to two months in the Maritimes. This began with the New Brunswick Museum's Jacquet River bioblitz in northern New Brunswick, then swinging through shore areas of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia to [Bev Wigney's place at Round Hill, NS](#), weathering hurricane Earl in the Halifax area, then to the [CARCNET meetings in Wolfville](#), and giving presentations at the Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History in Halifax.



Checking for roadside Xerolenta snails along Hwy 7a near Bethany, Ontario

At the end of September we returned home for what was to have been an autumn of Unionid surveying in co-operation with local Conservation Authorities, but which turned out to be a season of enduring rain and watching high water, interrupted by two trips to the Toronto area for Freshwater Mussel Recovery meetings. Our results are posted in the [painting blog](#), and on the [30 Years Later Expedition](#) website. For other kinds of events, such as Mudpuppy Nights, and day-to-day natural history observations around home, see the [NatureList](#) archives, and join the NatureList.

The economic lesson of these travels was that having Aleta do paintings, journal and blog enroute while Fred keeps up with computer entry of field notes, and both keep up with e-mail, is an immense amount of work – so the fact that we were exploring idyllic venues didn't make this a vacation, and didn't leave us any time for doing publicity ourselves. Publicity must be done by someone else who can say **"Fred and Aleta are doing this great work, you've got to see it!"** rather than us saying **"Here's what we've come up with today,"** an affirmation that's unlikely to go viral.

Since early summer, the big project at home has been [getting the Store building ready to sell](#): renting out both apartments to tenants, carrying vast amounts of personal effects and books into Weirs House as we move in for the 6th time (1981, 1984, 1986, 1989, 2005, and now 2010), moving masses of recyclables & garbage, and arranging for specimens to go to museums. Skeletons & Crayfish to the New Brunswick Museum, and some of the landsnail drift to Robert Forsyth. The Queens Biological Station will take some teaching collections, and the Canadian Museum of Nature has agreed to take all of our Unionids and other Mollusca. While conventional real estating hasn't turned up any prospects for the Store, we have had interest from two educational institutions... stay tuned!
At the end of 2010 our previous associates have largely dispersed. **Judy Courteau** is studying horticulture at Kemptville College, **Matt Keevil**, at Laurentian University in

Sudbury, is working out genetic implications of dispersal movements of Snapping Turtles, and **Adam Zieleman** is studying biochemistry at Carleton University. **Lorraine Leader**, close friend & bookkeeper for two years, has returned to Toronto to seek her fortune, for at least this winter, leaving "Pipers House" available to us for a work space.

Fred has clams to identify and report on this winter; Aleta has commissions to paint "remastered" larger copies of some of her miniature oils, and has also taken on a part time nanny job, found for her by Jennifer who is still employed as a nanny in Ottawa. Rory spent three summer months in [Oxford, England](#), combing the archives for 17th century documents, and is now making good progress with his PhD thesis on how the early days of Parliament were written about. There's an application in for funding for a big *Ligumia nasuta* survey for the mid-summer, and we're committed to return to New Brunswick for a two-week Bio-blitz in June/July, and are also hoping to make it to Thunder Bay for the 2011 CARCNET meetings.

We feel good about the past year's launch of the 30 Years Later Expedition as a demonstration of the productivity, uniqueness & usefulness of the project. Since there's nothing else like it in the study of biodiversity and our changing environment, we hope that having the first year accomplished will attract funders so that the work can continue! The 30 Years Later Expedition can continue indefinitely with whatever time & funding we have available. At this point we don't know if next winter will find us on the west coast or not.... We also don't know when the Store building will sell or whether we'll be working with whoever buys it!

You'll be pleased to receive, as your seasonal gifts, the usual updated revisions of perennial documents: the accumulated wisdom of our commonplace book: "[I bet that's interesting to you in ways that you can't explain to me,](#)" and the rollicking assessment of nature and society in "[The Devil's Addendum.](#)"

This year's new posting will be "*The Idiot and the Oddity*" written by our late brother Paul Schueler in his high school years, and soon a scan of the finished inking of his "*Kung Faw Komics*" from the mid-1970s, at <http://pinicola.ca/PWS/>

Wishing everyone that they may enter the new year with minimal stress and maximum delight,

Best wishes, and love to all,



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Another "We need a sonnet about how" poem -

We need a sonnet about how
The blue & bulge pickup chromes
through the intersection with an unmuffled roar
Rolling the road of leaves into an undulating Maple wake.

We need a sonnet about tiny boxes that never hold
a bale or stovewood, flaunting their uselessness
down the road as if keeping up with the Jones
hadn't been discredited in the 1950s.

We need a sonnet about greenhouse gases and the tailpipe
where the roar holds forth
on global indifference and frenetic sloth
of ignorance feigned or real.

We need a couplet to sum all this up
The vast receding ice, and nature's "yup."

*(based on observations in the Bishops Mills intersection,
autumn 2010)*