

2025 American Arachnological Society Business Meeting

Held during annual meeting held in Golden, Colorado USA

Business meeting on June 18, 2025

President Linda Rayor ran the business meeting.

2026 AAS Meeting overview

The 2026 AAS annual meeting will be held in Lincoln, Nebraska and hosted by Eileen Hebets. Eileen provided an outstanding and exciting overview of Lincoln. Dates for this meeting are TBD but will be posted on the AAS website.

Election Results:

Paula Cushing thanked the candidates who agreed to run during this year's AAS Governance Board election including:

Anne Danielson-Francois who ran unopposed for President Elect (because she and Jason Bond received a tie for this position two years ago).

Angela Chuang, David Nelsen, and Daniel Proud who all agreed to run for Director.

Nina Sandlin who ran unopposed for a continuation of her position as society treasurer.

Cushing applauded all these individuals for their willingness to serve and congratulated Anne Danielson-Francois, Angela Chuang, and Nina Sandlin for receiving majority votes for their respective positions.

Thanks:

The meeting hosts, Paula Cushing, Jason Bond, Andy Roberts, and Nina Sandlin were thanked as were the members of the scientific program committee, the travel grant committee, the student awards committee and the meeting volunteers.

Overview of Society:

Linda Rayor summarized the **changes to the Journal of Arachnology** (JoA) including implementing a new Pay on Demand option for members who wish to continue to receive hard copies of the journal. For the present, Lifetime Members who wish to receive hard copies will continue to do so without additional payment requirement.

Linda requested that authors who submit to JoA ensure that their article is polished and thoroughly checked. She pointed out that part of the delay in publication is due to minor corrections that the Editorial staff is required to do that authors miss. Authors should carefully follow the Instructions to Authors prior to submission.

Linda also provided an overview about **positive changes to the society website**.

Finances: She pointed out that AAS account are stable this year but costs and expenses will change over time. She encouraged members to increase their support for the society via donations and to encourage continued membership.

Currently, AAS has 309 regular **members**; 290 student and retiree members; and 80 sponsored members.

The society is moving to a more automated membership renewal system that will make renewing memberships easier.

Linda encouraged students to join the society. We are your community and the AAS supports you.

She called out recipients of the **travel grants** to attend the 2025 meeting including:

Applicants and funding amount:

Aróstegui, Javier Blasco: New York City, NY, USA; \$800

Castanon, Nadia: Stephenville, TX, USA; \$550

Gibbons, Kris: Ypsilanti, MI, USA; \$800

Grossel, Laís: Sao Paulo, Brazil; \$800

Jones, Madeline: Portland OR, USA; \$800

Karkosiak, Katherine: Akron, OH, USA; \$800

Kerschner, Ali: Portland, OR, USA; \$250

Kioko, Grace: Nairobi, Kenya; Not Awarded

Kutti, Arjun: Kerala, India; Not Awarded

Lockett, Sage: Richmond, VA, USA; \$600

Mascarell, Arnau, Moscow, ID, USA; \$800

Poscente, Spencer, Ypsilanti, MI, USA; \$800

She also congratulated recipients of the **student research grants** (winners are listed below taken from the Grant Committee Chair's report):

Total Awarded ($n = 13$), Arachnological Research Fund: **\$8,500.00**

Steven Casey, PhD student, University of Massachusetts, Lowell, USA. \$800. Molecular evolution of unique dragline silk in cribellate orb-weaving spiders and its connection to mechanical performance and web form

Nadia Castanon, MS student, Tarleton State University, USA. \$450. Investigating the Impact of Invasive Plants and Grazing Practices on Spider Communities in Texas Rangelands

Irving David Chávez Lara, MS student, Centro de Investigaciones Biológicas del Noroeste (CIBNOR) S.C.; B.C.S., México. \$500. Diversity and Abundance of Arachnids (ex Acari, Chelicerata: Arachnida) from the "El Novillo" Sierra, Baja California Sur, México ▪ **AWARD DECLINED**

Poulami De, PhD student, University of Akron, USA. \$600. How Prey Flight Noise Regulates Spider Hunting Behavior: Probing the Role of Airborne Sound in Priming Prey Capture Responses

Sage DeLong, MS student, University of Illinois, Chicago, USA. \$750. The internal and external factors of the release of defensive chemical secretions in *Leiobunum* spp. Opiliones

Erin Golladay, MS student, University of South Alabama, USA. \$900. Gene Expression Dynamics of Venom Replenishment Across Time in Striped Bark Scorpions

Ella Kelner, MS student, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, USA. \$350. An analysis of the flexural strength of *Hypochilus pococki* cribellate silk threads

Tyler Kulak, MS student, University of Massachusetts Boston, USA. \$500. Biodiversity and Insecticide Sensitivity of Nantucket Bog Spiders

Anngelyk La Luz Maldonado, PhD student, University of Florida, USA. \$750. Using experimental and micro-CT approaches to assess parasite manipulation of spider behavior

Julieta Ledda, PhD student, National University of Cordoba (UNC). Argentina. \$600. Biodiversity of arachnids in the Mendoza foothills: Effect of urbanization and human perception.

Jaclyn Mowry, MS student, Western Michigan University, USA. \$500. Insect-Mediated Mercury Flux in the Kalamazoo River Area of Concern

Nikhil Kuni, PhD student, MIT World Peace University, Pune, India. \$500. Spiders in Urban Web: Assessment of Correlates of Spider Diversity & Distribution in the Context of Changing Environment

Spencer Poscente, MS student, Eastern Michigan University, USA. \$600. Love in the Fast Lane: Rapid Senescence at Sexual Maturity in Male Tarantulas (*Aphonopelma hentzi*)

Rebecca Robertson, PhD student, University of Kentucky, USA. \$700. Spider Web eDNA as a Passive Surveillance Tool for Biodiversity and Invasive Species Monitoring

Total Awarded ($n = 10$), Vincent Roth Fund: **\$6,500.00**

Ian Ashton, MS student, San Diego State University, USA. \$1,000. Testing a model of natural “reverse speciation” by evaluating hybrid zones in the *Habronattus americanus* species group (Araneae: Salticidae)

Laura Caramori, MS student, Museu Nacional do Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), Brasil. \$700. Taxonomic review and phylogenetic analysis of *Heterocranus* Roewer, 1913 (Opiliones: Cranidae)

Thakshila Herath, MS student, National Institute of Fundamental Studies, Sri Lanka. \$450. Unravelling the Enigma of Phycas: Phylogenetic and Biogeographic Insights into Sri Lanka's Endemic Salticids

Madeline Jones, UG student, Lewis & Clark College, USA. \$950. Morphological Characteristics of Proposed New Species of *Trogloaraptor*

María Emilia Tauber, MS student, Universidad de la Republica, Uruguay. \$700. *Acanthoscurria* from Córdoba, Argentina, and Uruguay: one or more species?

Aakash Kumar Pathak, PhD student, Indian Institute of Science Education and Research, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, India. \$950. Population structure and barriers to gene flow in the widespread Indian social spider: Insights from the Western Ghats

María Paula Pereira, PhD student, Museo Argentino de Ciencias Naturales “Bernadino Rivadavia”, Argentina. \$1,000. Systematic revision of Kimulidae: Advancing Phylogenetic Understanding with Ultraconserved Elements

Iván López Ramírez, MS student, Centro de Investigaciones Biológicas del Noroeste SC. (CIBNOR), Mexico. \$750. Integrative taxonomy for species delimitation of the spider genus *Steatoda* Sundevall, and *Asagena* Sundevall (Araneae: Theridiidae) (fulva group) from Mexico, with morphological and molecular evidence.

The President also **asked for volunteers for service roles** in the society – membership in committees (e.g., DEI, Outreach, grant review committees). Contact Linda Rayor or Jason Bond if you have an interest in these committees.

Society Volunteer/Service needs include the following:

- New Graduate student representative after Sept 2025 because the current representative, Ryan Jones, will be stepping down upon graduation.
- A new committee chair for the DEI committee because Mercedes Burns, after serving in this role for 6 years has decided to step down.

- A new committee chair for the Outreach and Engagement committee since the current chair, Eileen Hebets, is overcommitted and must step down.
- Individuals willing to serve as rotating committee members for a variety of service roles on committees.

Paula Cushing recognized Ryan, Mercedes, and Eileen for their outstanding service in their respective roles and called for recognition of their service – all in attendance applauded.

Call out for new business from those attending the meeting – none so stated.

Motion to adjourn made by Alex Berry.