



From the Editor

A theme for the ages

The articles that follow illuminate many of the virtues of science: adaptability, repeatability, scalability, affinity for scrutiny and compounding, and ultimately its ability to produce knowledge. In this snapshot of seemingly unrelated studies, science is the theme, the common thread, and it is a strong bond.

Our cover article reviews what is known about an endemic species of salamander in Crater Lake and its troubling competition with an invasive, nonnative species of crayfish. The researchers couple this knowledge with an experiment of their own to better understand interactions between the species, and like sunlight penetrating the lake, science spotlights the problem and indicates the need for a management response.

Elsewhere social science provides a much-needed feedback loop for managers of designated wilderness areas with regard to wilderness stewardship as our climate changes. The report is a variation on a familiar theme: whether or not to act in wilderness and the implications of an active or passive stewardship approach for the preservation of wilderness character.

Researchers also investigate the abundance and distribution of pathogen-carrying ticks along the Appalachian Trail. The study reveals the importance of providing information for hikers to take preventive measures to help ensure their health and safety as they enjoy the trail.

Physical and intellectual interaction with parks is a prime opportunity awaiting visitors to the areas we manage, and the research about geocaches in Everglades gives us a useful perspective on this. Geocaching combines finding one's way to park features and preplaced interpretive information by way of a GPS device and a list of coordinates. As the researchers report, the activity can stimulate learning, provide physical challenge, and be designed to minimize resource damage. This information may help increase confidence in managers to create similar programs in other parks.

This collection of articles is not easily summed up in a thematic word or phrase. It is a fascinating array of field-based studies and findings that illustrate the flexibility, usefulness, and robust nature of science as our fundamental way of knowing.

—Jeff Selleck, Editor