

The International Association for Bear Research and Management's grants program—the first 11 years

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Two bear biologists, John Sheldon Bevins (Fig. 1) and George Menkens, and their pilot, Clifford A. Minch, disappeared during a polar bear (*Ursus maritimus*) tracking flight over Alaska's Arctic Ocean on 11 October 1990. Dr. Julia Bevins, John's widow, established the John Sheldon Bevins Memorial Foundation following John's death. To memorialize John's dedication to bears and improved bear management, the

International Association for Bear Research and Management (IBA) was named as one of two beneficiaries of a portion of the earnings from Foundation assets. The Nature Conservancy of Alaska was named as the second beneficiary.

Annual decisions on the amount of grants made to the IBA and to the Nature Conservancy of Alaska from the Bevins Foundation are made by three Bevins Foundation Directors. Since 1993, these directors have been Sterling Miller from the IBA, Susan Ruddy from The Nature Conservancy of Alaska, and Julia Bevins (President of the Board of Directors). The Directors make decisions on investments and review financial performance, and allocate equal grants to each of the beneficiary organizations. The Directors may make different allocation decisions, but only once has the Foundation directly allocated money to a project instead of to the beneficiary organizations.

The IBA decided to use the funds received from the Bevins Foundation to help fund bear research and management programs around the world. In 1993, the



Fig. 1. John Sheldon Bevins

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IBA appointed a Grant Review Committee to review funding proposals and make decisions on how to best allocate the funds received from the Bevins Foundation and other sources to maximize their benefit to biologically sound bear conservation and management. The grants were frequently called “Bevins grants” in recognition of the source of most of the funding in the first decade. Proposals were considered for field studies, for support of graduate students working on bear projects, for publication of findings on bear biology or management, for preparation or publication of public information and education projects about bears, for conference organizers providing travel grants to conferences, and for other projects. In most cases the grant constituted only a portion of the support needed for the project. Starting in 2000, the IBA Council began automatically allocating 15% of funds received from the Bevins Foundation to conferences for travel grants.

The original Grants Review Committee consisted of five members of the organization: Erich H. Follmann (1993–2001), chair; Todd K. Fuller (1993–2002); Sterling D. Miller (1993–95); Malcolm A. Ramsay (1993–2000); and Gordon S. Warburton (1993–present). Albert L. LeCount (1996–2002), Frederick C. Dean (2002–to present, chair), Jon E. Swenson (2002–to present), and Jörg Rauer (2003–present) have also served on this committee.

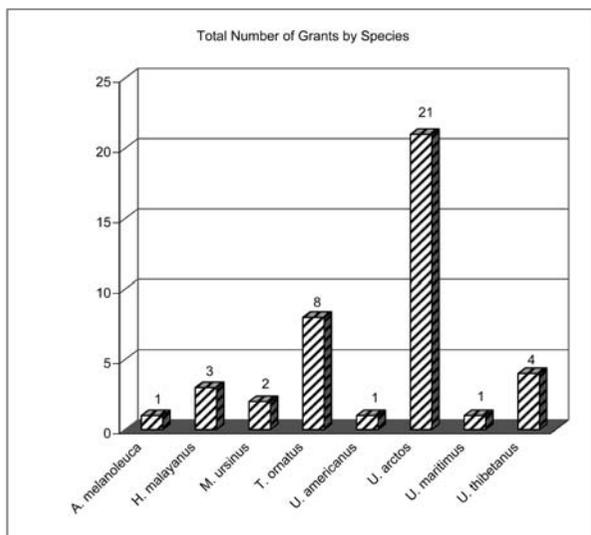


Fig. 2. Grants by species of bear from the IBA Grants Program, formerly the John Sheldon Bevins Memorial Foundation, award years 1993–2003.

Between 1993 and 2002, the principal source of funds used to make grants was the Bevins Foundation; additional small grants for special purposes were funded by the IBA. In 2002, additional sources of funding became available for the grant program, tipping the balance to non-Bevins sources. At that time the IBA Council, with the concurrence of Julia Bevins, changed the name of its grants program to the “IBA Grants Program.” The name of the IBA’s Grant Review Committee became the Grants Program Committee (Committee or GPC).

Forty-five grants totaling \$169,350 were made during the 11-year period (Table 1, Fig. 2, 3). The work accomplished ranged from initial surveys of distribution and status of several bear species in remote areas to highly sophisticated use of current techniques of population and habitat analysis. Local people were incorporated into many programs, both at the level of data collection and as part of resultant conservation programs; integration with local communities was an important consideration for proposals under consideration by the Committee. The quality of the GPC’s work has been recognized internationally. In 1998 the Committee was asked by the IUCN to review proposals received in connection with special grants for work on endangered bears the organization offered that year.

The Grants Program’s first 11 years had an effect across much of the worldwide distribution of bears. The

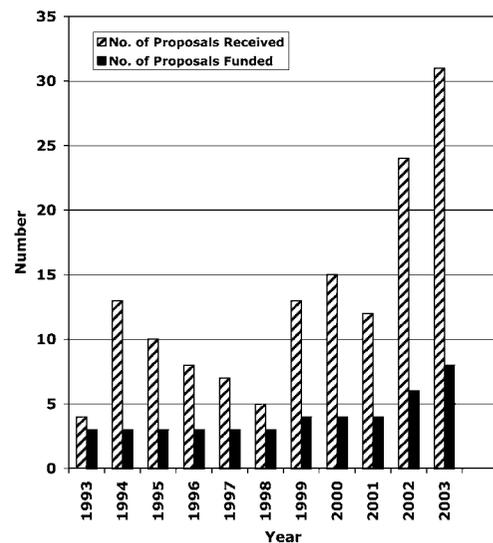


Fig. 3. Grant requests received vs. funded by the IBA Grants Program, formerly the John Sheldon Bevins Memorial Foundation, award years 1993–2003.

Table 1. Summary of grant information from award years 1993–2003 for the IBA Grants Program, formerly the John Sheldon Bevins Memorial Foundation.

| Year | Amount | Name | Species | Location | |
|--------------|-----------|---------------------------------------|---|--------------------|--|
| 1993 | \$1,000 | Sanders, A. | <i>U. americanus</i> | USA | Spatial organization, mating, and reproductive success of males, North Carolina |
| 1993 | \$2,000 | Stratton, J. | <i>U. arctos</i> | USA (Alaska) | Procurement of video <i>A gathering of bears: Alaska's McNeil River State Game Sanctuary</i> |
| 1993 | \$2,000 | Johnson, K. | <i>A. melanoleuca</i> | China | Ecology and conservation of biological diversity |
| 1994 | \$3,000 | Kaczensky, P. | <i>U. arctos</i> | Slovenia | Impact of the Ljubljana–Postojna highway on brown bear movement and mortality |
| 1994 | \$1,000 | Gula, R. | <i>U. arctos</i> | Poland | Field training in USA: trapping and radiotracking |
| 1994 | \$1,000 | IBA Conference | NA | Worldwide | Travel for tenth IBA Conference |
| 1995, 96, 97 | \$10,565 | Huber, D. | <i>U. arctos</i> | Croatia | Conservation of bears in Croatia |
| 1995 | \$1,000 | Kretchmar, M. | <i>U. arctos</i> | Russia | Denning habitat, spring ecology, breeding of high density population, Sea of Okhotsk |
| 1995 | \$1,000 | IBA Conference | NA | Worldwide | Travel for tenth IBA conference |
| 1996 | \$4,000 | McCarthy, T. | <i>U. arctos</i> | Mongolia | Status of the Gobi bear in the Great Gobi National Park, Mongolia |
| 1996 | \$2,000 | Quigley, H. | <i>U. arctos</i> , <i>thibetanus</i> | Russia | Ecology of sympatric brown and Asian black bears in Sikhote-Alin Biosphere Reserve |
| 1997 | \$785 | Boone, W. | All | USA | Endangered species and gamete preservation |
| 1997, 98 | \$12,650 | Zakaria, V. | <i>U. arctos</i> | Pakistan | Conservation and management of brown bears on the Deosai Plains |
| 1998 | \$1,000 | Fredriksson, G. | <i>H. malayanus</i> | Indonesia | Adaptation process of re-introduced sun bears in East Kalimantan |
| 1998 | \$3,000 | IBA Conference | NA | Worldwide | Travel for the eleventh IBA Conference |
| 1999 | \$5,000 | Belchansky, G. | <i>U. maritimus</i> | Russia | Satellite remote sensing of sea ice habitats |
| 1999, 2000 | \$9,000 | Garshelis, D. | <i>T. ornatus</i> | Bolivia | A telemetry study of Andean bears in the Apolobamba Range |
| 1999 | \$3,000 | Jorgenson, J. | <i>T. ornatus</i> | Columbia | Numbers and movement patterns in southwestern Columbia |
| 1999 | \$6,000 | Rice, C. | <i>M. ursinus</i> | India | Ecology, behavior, and conservation in the Panna area |
| 2000 | \$4,950 | Augeri, D. | <i>H. malayanus</i> | Indonesia | Mitigating bear–human conflicts and disturbance effects on ecology and landscape use |
| 2000 | \$2,500 | Fredriksson, G., D. Garshelis | <i>H. malayanus</i> | Indonesia | Effects of El Niño and forest fires on a population of sun bears |
| 2000 | \$5,000 | Gende, S. | <i>U. arctos</i> | USA (Alaska) | Diurnal use of riparian areas and nighttime fishing success |
| 2000, 01, 02 | \$15,000 | Robison, H. | <i>U. arctos</i> | USA (Rockies) | Relationship between bears and moths |
| 2001 | \$5,000 | Gutleb, B., R. Ghaemi, J. Kusak | <i>U. arctos</i> | Iran | Distribution and status survey |
| 2001 | \$5,000 | M-H. Hwang | <i>U. thibetanus</i> | Taiwan (Yushan) | Satellite monitoring in national park |
| 2001 | \$5,750 | Romain, K. | <i>U. arctos</i> | Canada, USA | Testing non-invasive genetic monitoring in northwest |
| 2002, 03 | \$9,500 | DeBarba, M. | <i>U. arctos</i> | Italy (Alps) | Genetic non-invasive monitoring of small population |
| 2002 | \$8,000 | Leacock, W. | <i>U. arctos</i> | Russia (Kamchatka) | Population ecology and genetics |
| 2002 | \$3,500 | Peyton, B., H. Plenge | <i>T. ornatus</i> | Peru (Chaparrí) | Ecology and locally-based conservation |
| 2002 | \$1,500 | Sathyakumar, S. | <i>U. arctos</i> | India (Ladakh) | Brown bear–human conflicts |
| 2002 | \$2,300 | Varas, C. | <i>T. ornatus</i> | Ecuador | Population genetics in reserves |
| 2003 | \$5,000 | Castellanos, A. | <i>T. ornatus</i> | Ecuador (Imbabura) | Habitat use, home range, and activity patterns |
| 2003 | \$5,000 | IBA Conference | NA | Worldwide | Travel for fifteenth IBA Conference |
| 2003 | \$4,600 | Galbreath, G. | <i>U. thibetanus</i> | Southeast Asia | Mitochondrial map for Cambodia, Laos, Thailand |
| 2003 | \$4,000 | Garcia-Rangel, S. | <i>T. ornatus</i> | Venezuela | Distribution, habitat selection, and landscape use |
| 2003 | \$5,000 | Gutleb, B. | <i>U. thibetanus</i> | Iran | Distribution and status survey |
| 2003 | \$5,000 | Ratnayeke, S. | <i>M. ursinus</i> | Sri Lanka | Ecology and status in two national parks |
| 2003 | \$3,750 | Velez-Liendo, X. | <i>T. ornatus</i> | Bolivia | Habitat fragmentation in the tropical Andes |
| | \$169,350 | | | | |

grants greatly assisted in personnel training, developing better knowledge of distribution and status, assisting conservation projects, and fostering exchange between bear workers worldwide. The GPC requires reporting. Progress reports in *International Bear News*, presentations at conferences, and publications in *Ursus* and other journals have contributed to information exchange. Twelve students (10 doctoral and 2 masters) received IBA project grants.

More grants addressed the needs of brown bears (*U. arctos*) than other species. (Fig. 2). This reflects the wide distribution and occurrence of many small, precarious, and little known populations of this species. However, projects focusing on all eight species of the world's bears have received grants (Fig. 2). Rarer species have become better represented as the program has matured (Table 1).

In all years, the number and size of IBA grants to individual projects remained relatively small. The number of proposals received and the number funded increased in 2002 and 2003 (Fig. 3). The increase in proposals received probably reflects increasing knowledge of the availability of these grants.

The program is continuing and should be able to build an increasingly significant role. If the additional fund raising is successful, the organization will substantially increase its support to bear conservation around the world.

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