

COLBY

Fall 2018

A Z I N E

FINDING THEIR PLACE

Alfond Commons is gateway to downtown Waterville

Clues to climate change are frozen in time

May we print a tendon for your robot?

Don't throw away that day-old pastry

In 19th century, humor was no joking matter

**Students experience Balkan Route
from a refugee's perspective**

Squirrels and Mules



These California ground squirrels have been getting some good Colby time in recent months. The squirrels are the subject of an intensive long-term study headed up by Jennifer Smith '98, associate professor of biology at Mills College. Last summer Carolyn Kwak '19 joined the research team, bringing things full circle. And the squirrels?

The study revealed that they have defined social groups below ground and stick to those groups

when they leave their burrow systems. And the most socially connected squirrels in the burrows have the same status above ground. The conclusions have implications for public health as squirrels, while cute, may carry diseases, including plague. The most social individuals may act as "hot spots" for disease transmission, Smith's study found. Kwak's research opportunity was made possible through the Russ Cole Research Fellows Program, established to honor Cole, who retired in 2016 as Oak Professor of Biological Sciences. Cole was Smith's mentor at Colby and inspired her to become a behavioral ecologist. Kwak was one of Cole's advisees during his last year.



LAX RISES TO DEMPSEY CHALLENGE

The men's and women's lacrosse teams raised nearly \$15,000 for the 10th annual Dempsey Challenge, an annual fundraiser established by actor Patrick Dempsey for individual and families affected by cancer. The teams compete with Bates and Bowdoin to raise the most money, and the Mules won the College Cup for the third straight year in Lewiston, Maine, in September. The teams were given the trophy by Dempsey, who wears a Colby hat in the front row of the photo.

WATCH THE BIRDS

Noticing how birds' arrival times shift each spring is one way to assess climate change, says Herb Wilson, the Leslie Brainerd Arey Professor of Biosciences, in an article in *Popular Science* in September. Birds, which move when conditions will allow their survival, and not according to a calendar, "are sensitive sentinels of climate change."

DEEP DIVE FOR TUNA

Loren McClenachan, the Elizabeth and Lee Ainslie Assistant Professor of Environmental Studies, and her colleagues at the Monterey Bay Aquarium received a \$46,000 grant from NOAA's Bluefin Tuna Research Program. The project, which involved several Colby students, including Duncan Coles '19 and Sara Pipernos '19, involves collection of documents from historical archives for western Atlantic bluefin tuna. Extending data back in time is expected to allow for better management of one of the world's most valuable and iconic fisheries.

CONSIDER THE NOOSPHERE

That's the two meters just above the earth's surface, and it's the narrow atmospheric zone where all decisions in human history have been made, says James Fleming, the Charles A. Dana Professor of Science, Technology, and Society (See P. 52). Presenting at a conference in Paris, Fleming said Earth is unique in that it is the only planet in the known universe to have such a layer, one where the future of the planet will be decided.