

2015 – Mark Brigham – A lack of attention to detail.

Linked to the following:

2015 saw Mark Brigham win the Oops Award for the 3rd time. This year the award is given for a clear lack of attention to detail. The award stems from two incidents over the past year. Both indicate a similar lack of attention to details.

1. In August 2015 Brandon Klüg needed a new Animal Care Protocol approved in regards to a new component of his project which required that he undertake respirometry trials on bats. He asked his supervisor to review the proposed protocol and to ensure it was read, carefully embedded the following under training. “Dr. Brigham, **who’s very old** and thus has a lot of mist netting experience, has seen only one wing broken”. He embedded this following his winning of the 2012 Oops Award for a lack of attention to detail. Mark of course did not read the proposed protocol carefully and never found the embedded statement. The protocol was approved with only minor revisions. The “old” statement remains embedded. Sometimes the truth really does hurt.
2. In October 2015, Mark arranged to send a telemetry receiver to Ryan O’Conner, a co-supervised PhD student in South Africa who was doing field work on nightjars involving 170 MHz transmitters that he could not detect with his equipment. Several weeks later for similar reasons, Mark arranged to have Brandon send another receiver, this time ostensibly to Zenon Czenze, another co-supervised PhD student working in New Zealand. Mark, in his usual rush, forwarded an email with the address to send the receiver to as he rushed out to head to the airport – but forwarded the wrong address, meaning that the 2nd receiver was also sent to South Africa rather than where it was needed in New Zealand. Clearly the only word that describes this is “dufus”.

Mark accepts the award with a great deal of humility and embarrassment. Anne says that it is getting embarrassing that he is winning it so often and that the criteria needs to be changed or he will have to retire. On second thought, she says that he needs to keep working (she has a lifestyle that needs to be maintained) but needs to be exempt from now on. Its just embarrassing.