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Newsletter of the American Society of  
Parasitologists

Parasitology, Harold W. Manter Laboratory of

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Winter 2009

## American Society of Parasitologists Newsletter, v. 31, no. 3, Winter 2009

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ASP Newsletter

Vol 31. No. 3.

Winter, 2009

American Society of Parasitologists

# Newsletter

*Usually Published Quarterly by the American Society of Parasitologists*

**Newsletter:** Released on the ASP web-server  
[\[http://asp.unl.edu\]](http://asp.unl.edu) December 25, 2009

## From the *Editor* of the Newsletter

Consider publishing your parasite poems, posting a link to your favorite "parasite lecture," providing an actual parasite lecture, or otherwise send "something" in to the editor. Your contribution is valuable and anything sent in to me will be considered for publication. See below.

Sincerely,

Scott Lyell Gardner, Ph.D.

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## ASP ON FACEBOOK

ASP is on FACEBOOK! Many of you or perhaps, most of the membership may already be aware of this. However, we have to thank the hard work of Mike Moser and the rest of the ASP membership committee for getting this completed. To get to the ASP FACEBOOK page go to <http://facebook.com> and then search for The American Society of Parasitologists. This should afford a good way for members and nonmembers alike to keep in touch or to get in touch.



Join me on FACEBOOK as I probably have lots of trematodes to share. *Rana* sp. from the cascades of Oregon.



## BOOK REVIEWS

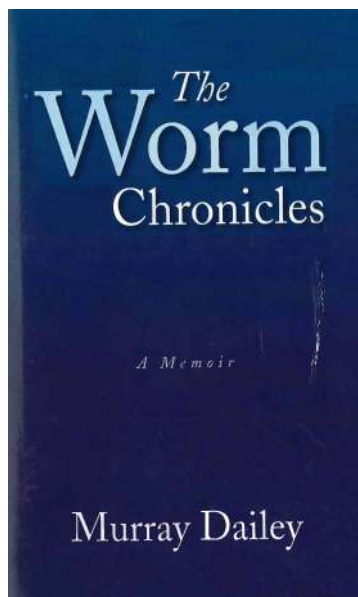
The ASP newsletter is actively soliciting book reviews from the membership and welcomes reviews, short or long, with or without graphics. Please consider sending in a review of a book in the next year. Send your contribution to the editor. -slg

By Mike Moser, Ph.D.  
Academic Coordinator for Biology  
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University of California  
3060 VLSB, MC#3140  
Berkeley, CA. 94720  
Tel. (510) 642-8123  
FAX (510) 643-6264  
E-Mail: [mmoser@berkeley](mailto:mmoser@berkeley)

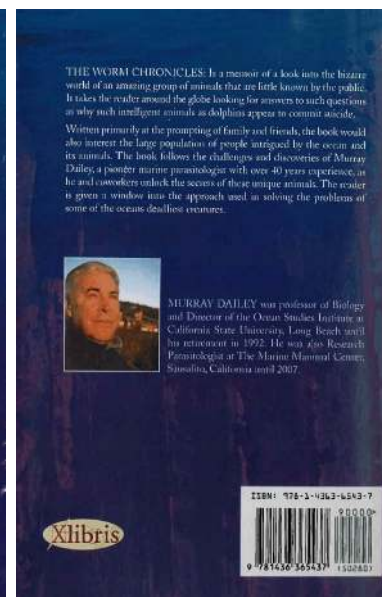
### The Worm Chronicles, A Memoir by

**Murray Dailey - Published  
2008**

Xlibris Corporation  
1-888-795-4274  
[www.Xlibris.com](http://www.Xlibris.com)  
[order@Xlibris.com](mailto:order@Xlibris.com)



Front cover - The Worm  
Chronicles



Back cover - The Worm  
Chronicles

ISBN: Hardcover 978-1-4363-6543-7  
Softcover 978-1-4363-6542-0

### AMAZON DATA

158 pages  
Publisher: Xlibris  
Corporation (October 8, 2008)  
Language: English  
Product Dimensions: 8.5 x 5.5 x 0.4 inches  
Shipping Weight: 9.1 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)  
Average Customer Review: No customer reviews yet. Be the first.



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Amazon.com Sales Rank: #1,668,565 in Books

As the title indicates, this book is a memoir of Murray Dailey's 40 plus years in parasitology. It was originally conceived as a way to summarize his adventurous career in an understandable way for his family. The book has 157 pages and is divided into 27 short chapters. The events are related in their chronological order from 1962 in Lebanon to 2004 in the Galapagos Islands. I will discuss the events by their geographical locations. It is an easy read and will appeal to both students and teachers looking to add interesting and amusing material to their lectures.

As a beginning Assistant Professor at Long Beach State University, CA, he became involved in a catch-22 situation for a San Francisco Japanese restaurant. The restaurant was being sued by a Japanese national who claimed he had anisakiasis as a result of eating infected sashimi at their restaurant. Murray describes why the customer could not have become infected at that restaurant and the dilemma of the restaurant as they had to decide if they would compromise their reputation or pay off the customer.

During this time he was asked by the Navy to help solve the mysterious death of California sea lions. After determining the problem was the lungworm (a nematode that lives in the lungs of its host), he found the source of the infection and how to prevent it. This is an example of a marine mammal's parasite adapting to its environment. In his Long Beach lab he also showed that dolphin strandings can be caused by fluke eggs (eggs of trematodes) and adults in the brain of the host.

The scene changes to Kingdom of Tonga where Murray was invited to work on elephantiasis. Upon his arrival he was put on the spot to diagnose the cause of the unexplained mortality among young chickens. The first and only examination would be in the presence of His Royal Highness, Crown Prince Tupouto'a. The results of this diagnosis and the suggested solution served Murray well with the Crown Prince on his next stop in Tonga.

The story continues as Murray catches a small boat for the 350 mile trip to the island of Niua. It is a memorable trip shared with a nun. He was to spend the next six months determining which species of mosquito was the vector of elephantiasis and why this island had such a high incidence of infections. Upon his arrival his hosts dropped all of his belongs by the side of the road and told him this is where he was to build his house and lab. His adventures continued from there. He learned about the hierarchy of Polynesian societies while trying to collect blood samples from the male population. When the men would not cooperate, he informed the women that elephantiasis in males threatened their sex life. You can guess the result. The Tonga saga ends with an ironic twist involving the diurnal periodicity of the mosquito, the infrequent visits of the traveling physician, the long lines of local people waiting to see him, and the location of the clinic.



Murray writes about his numerous trips to the Hawaiian Islands over the years to study parasites in a variety of hosts, some of the studies include: the description of a new species of cestode from the very rare megamouth shark; describing for the first time, the life-cycle of a trematode from a marine mammal and simultaneously determining that the methods used by the US Navy to train their dolphins were increasing the prevalence of the parasite in these same dolphins. He also surveyed the endangered Hawaiian monk seal for parasites during a relocation project and he studied the relationship between large external tumors on green turtles and fluke eggs embedded in the tumors.

In 1986 Murray was invited to the USSR to consult with colleagues on problems they were having with their Black Sea dolphins. This story shows the repressive climate in which soviet scientists had to work during those years and the intrusion of the KGB into even parasitology. In his globe trotting career he worked on the Pribilof Islands, Alaska on hookworms in fur seals and a tissue nematode that might be the cause of blindness in the seals. In the Gulf of California, while studying parasites of sharks, he tells about losing Sea World's boat in a storm and its fortunate return. In northern California, Murray worked on the decline of sea otters and grey whales and showed that helminths could contribute to their mortality.

For anyone who has tried to work on a research vessel at sea Murray's Chapter 12, subtitled "-The Trip from Hell" will ring a responsive chord. Imagine spending six months (24/7) on a whaler in the Antarctic in crowded conditions and with a crew that would rather you not be there. Then try looking for parasites while the crew processes the whales on the open deck and takes pleasure in making your tasks as difficult as possible. All of this in an environment where the food and customs seem very alien. This is the tale Murray tells of his and a graduate student's trip on a Japanese whaler in 1984. It is not surprising that two parasitologists walked on to the ship and one parasitologist and one non-parasitologist left the ship.

The last chapter of book describes his work on an eye fluke infecting sea lions pups in the Galapagos Islands. I believe this classic study combines the all the skills he had honed over his long career. It combines his knowledge of systematics, field parasitology, behavioral biology, and evolutionary ecology. It is a lesson in patience, hard work, and knowledge of the host and the parasite.

I will conclude the review with an incident that should be a reminder to all of us of the importance of collegiality and intellectual honesty. Murray had discovered cestodes in a relatively rare deep-water shark that he thought might represent two new species in a new order. But he wanted to be sure and felt he needed to collect more specimens. He had to wait two more years before another of these sharks became available. It contained the same two new species of worms in the same possible new order. He was relatively new in the American Society of Parasitologist and wanted to present his findings in a poster session at an ASP meeting before publishing his results. The following is from page 79, paragraph 2. " *I was very excited as I saw two renowned marine parasitologists approaching my display. They were the big names in the field. Little did I know I was about to get a reality check in*

the cutthroat business of academic greed. They both expressed doubt that the worms represented a new order. They felt that the unusual holdfast (anterior attachment area) mechanism that set it apart was probably just something called a pseudo scolex, or false head. They felt, at most, it could be a new family or genus. I was crestfallen. I thanked them for their comments, and at the close of the session, retreated to the local watering hole to lick my wounds. As the crowd gathered at the bar, I asked a friend to join me. I poured out to him my tale of woe and lamented having had my great discovery dashed by the icons of the field. As fate would have it, he had also been presenting a poster several spaces past mine earlier that day. He told me he had heard the two discussing the possibility that they might be able to elevate the worms to a new order after my data was published. I believe I had an epiphany of sorts at that moment and came of age as a researcher. I learned to always trust my own judgment after that."

By Mike Moser, Ph.D.



Red-spotted purple butterfly also known as *Limenitis arthemis* from the garden of SLG in Lincoln, NE.

The Dangerous World of Butterflies:  
The Startling Subculture of Criminals,  
Collectors, and Conservationists  
(Hardcover)

BY Peter Laufer

<http://www.peterlaufer.com>

**AMAZON DATA**

Hardcover: 288 pages

Publisher: The Lyons Press; 1 edition  
(May 5, 2009)

Language: English

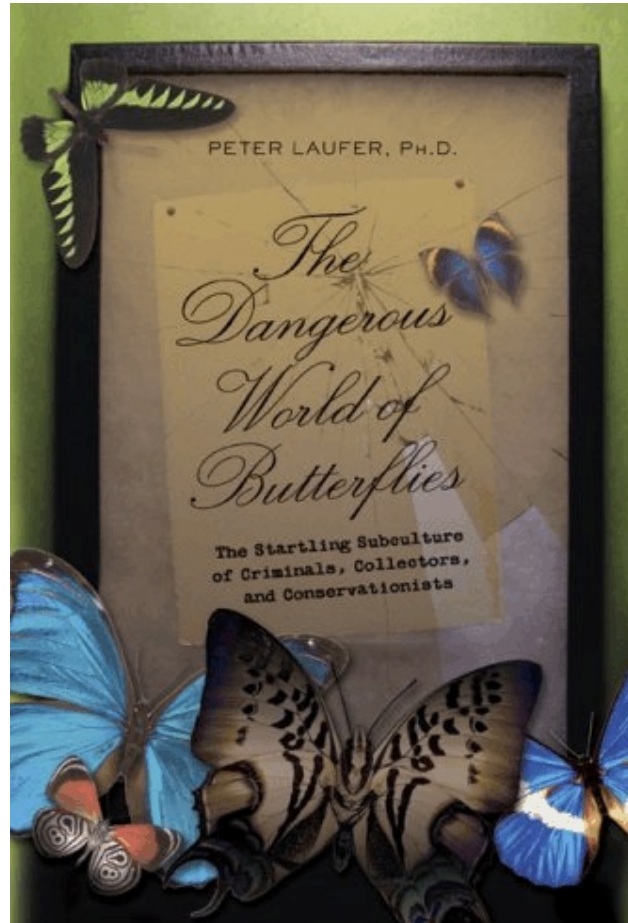
ISBN-10: 1599215551

ISBN-13: 978-1599215556

Product Dimensions: 9.1 x 6.1 x 0.7  
inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View  
shipping rates and policies)

Amazon.com Sales Rank: #10,335 in  
Books



Book review by Scott L. Gardner

I first met Peter Laufer in the airport at El Alto, when our team was traveling back to the states after about 2 months of field work in the wilds of Bolivia. Peter was working on a radio story about the legal coca fields and the illegal cocaine trade in Bolivia, and I was collecting data for my dissertation as a relatively new graduate student of Don Duszynski and Terry Yates at UNM in New Mexico. We were just beginning what turned out to be a long-term project in Bolivia. Peter and I hit it off and we then had an immediate mini-adventure (see the book for details). After we made it back to the states, we lost contact until I looked him up on the web a couple of years ago. Back then, he told me he was writing a book about butterflies, so I finally got a copy and here is my review.

Peter is a great writer, one who can grab your attention and then keep it through many pages. When I first got the book from Amazon, it was hard to put down because the dust cover was so beautiful, being adorned with blue morpho's and 88's. The 88's were cool because they used to fly into our lab tent when we were working in the Beni or Santa Cruz departments in Bolivia. So many would come in that it



was hard to get them out alive and some would inevitably get crunched up when the tent was folded up for the move to the next collecting site.

In Peter's book, he tells a tale of endangered species of butterflies, butterfly collectors who may pay huge amounts of money for specimens, butterfly farms, and crazies who go on field trips to try to "watch butterflies" as many amateur biologists watch birds. Peter describes several of his meetings with my old friend Dr. Art Shapiro at UC Davis. Peter was lucky to go out to the field with Art to learn about the science of biodiversity and butterflies, first hand. In the book, Peter also delves into the dark underworld of the butterfly illegal importers and exporters and he describes the tracking and final arrest by agents of the US Fish and Wildlife Service of Toshi, a number one illegal trader in butterflies in Japan and the USA. It is interesting and appalling to me that people would enter into these illegal deals to secure dead bugs on a pin that have either no or faked data associated with the specimen. After putting our lives on the line out in the field for so many years, I want all the data associated with all the specimens that I collect. Otherwise, what is the use in collecting them at all?

However, butterflies are amazingly beautiful, and seeing a species of *Morpho* flitting through the primary lowland tropical amazonian rain forest in eastern Bolivia is something that I will never forget. Neither will I forget the cool *Speothos venaticus* that we saw standing in a trail in the same forest nor the first time I found *Echinococcus vogeli* in a specimen of *Cuniculus paca* collected in the same kind of forest. But of course I digress into parasites and this is supposed to be a review of Peter's book.

If you read it, this book will enthrall you and also make you aware of the problems that biologists face in the race to attempt to save species from extinction. After I started reading it, I could not put it down. -- highly recommended!

## FIELD PHOTOGRAPHY - A FEATURE OF THE ASP NEWSLETTER



Small marsupial in the Beni of Bolivia.



“Arbol con flores” near Corico, Bolivia. Photo taken in 1985 in the Yungas - foothills of the Andes -- at around 2000 meters elevation. THIS PHOTOGRAPH IS DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF AUSTIN J. MACINNIS.



## NOTED PASSING

The ASP and the world has lost another great parasitologist and wonderful person. Former editor of the Journal of Parasitology and long time supporter of the ASP in many ways, and good friend to many, Austin J. MacInnis passed from our reality on 13 December, 2009. He will be missed, and any who can may attend a memorial, Saturday January 16, 2010 at Grace Lutheran Church in Culver City, CA (Overland Ave.). People may make memorial gifts to a charity of their choice. If people would like to share special stories of their memories of Austin, they can e-mail Ginny at: [ginnymac13@att.net](mailto:ginnymac13@att.net)

One of the first drawings that I submitted to the Journal was returned with the comment: "Scott, this looks like it was made with a burnt match stick dipped in coal tar. Please re-do." Signed, Journal Editor, Austin J. MacInnis. In early years he would send me notes signed Mac the Knife. After his term as editor, he started signing his letters to me "Mac the Nice." He was a great great friend and he will be missed. (-ed.)

Below is the reprinted presentation of the ASP Distinguished Service Award that was given to Austin in 2004. See also the ASP Newsletter 2006, Vol. 28. No. 1. Page 5 for a summary of how to teach experimental methods in parasitology.

### PRESENTATION OF THE 2004 ASP DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD TO AUSTIN J. MACINNIS

By: **Sherwin S. Desser**

Department of Zoology, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5S 3G5.

On behalf of the nominators and the committee, it is with great personal pleasure that I introduce Dr. Austin J. MacInnis, recipient of this year's ASP Distinguished Service Award. Dr. MacInnis received his B.A. degree from Concordia College, Moorehead, Minnesota, and headed south with his lovely bride, Virginia to Tallahassee, Florida, where he received his M.Sc. and Ph.D., as well as the Outstanding Graduate Student award in Professor Bob Short's laboratory. Encouraged by Professor Short, he became a member of the ASP. Upon completion of his doctoral degree, Mac proceeded to Rice University for postdoctoral training with Clark Read. Subsequently, he moved to UCLA, where his activities in the Society increased markedly. Mac vigorously promoted experimental parasitology in 2 invited lectures at annual ASP meetings. He served on the committee that established the Stoll Stunkard Endowment and has diligently helped to protect it to this day. He also chaired the committee to establish the Beuding von Brand Award. Mac was elected to Council and later selected to serve as editor of our journal. In a respectful and gentlemanly manner, he succeeded the incomparable editor, Justus Mueller. To this day, he serves our Journal as consulting editor. "Prof." Mac also worked with Bob Short and Steve Kayes to update our bylaws.

Austin instituted editorial training for succeeding editors, a process that is still in force. He served on 3 committees to elect new editors and chaired the joint committee to help the Helminthological Society of Washington survive and revise their journal.

More recently, Mac's service on the Business Advisory Committee has greatly enhanced the protection and growth of our endowment fund and its use. Along the way, he served on the nominating committee that brought Canadian colleagues into the loop, including John Holmes as President, David Mettrick and myself as editors of our Journal, and several others as officer and council members. In recognition of his inspired and inspiring teaching, Austin received the C. P. Read Mentor Award.

One of the nominators stated that Mac's continuing service to the Society, which requires considerable time and energy, is being performed at a time when most retired individuals are "reading good books on sunny beaches, playing golf, or fish ing." Mac performs this service simply for the love of science and the American Society of Parasitologists. Austin personified everything that is good and great in our Society. His devoted service and bountiful contributions over more than 4 decades have enriched the Society immeasurably.

And so, it is with great pleasure and gratitude that I present the 2004 Distinguished Service Award to Professor Austin J. MacInnis.

*J. Parasitol.*, 90(6), 2004, p. 1215  
q American Society of Parasitologists 2004

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## **JOBS**

### Description

Cell Press seeks to appoint an Editor for Trends in Parasitology to be based in its Cambridge, MA office.

As the Editor of a leading international parasitology reviews journal, you will be responsible for the strategic development and management of the content and editorial direction of the journal. You will be acquiring, managing and developing the very best editorial content, making use of a network of contacts in academia, as well as exploiting information gathered at international conferences, to ensure the title maintains its market-leading position. You will collaborate with your Cell Press colleagues to maximize quality and efficiency of content commissioning and participate in exciting new non-journal based initiatives. The Editor will be trained and will work in the context of a highly dynamic and collaborative publishing group which includes the 14 Trends review journal titles and 12 Cell Press titles.

### Qualifications

The successful candidate will have a PhD and preferably postdoctoral training with expertise in any of the diverse parasitology disciplines that the journal publishes, from molecular biology to ecology. Good interpersonal skills are essential because the role involves networking in the wider scientific community as well as collaborations with other parts of the business. For this position, previous publishing experience is not necessary - we will make sure you get the training and development needed. This is an ideal opportunity to stay close to the cutting edge of scientific developments in the field while developing a new career in an exciting publishing environment. Please submit a CV and cover letter describing your qualifications, research interests, and reasons for pursuing a career in publishing.

We are looking to fill the position at the earliest possible and applications will be considered on an ongoing basis till filled. Go here to apply:  
<http://reedelsevier.taleo.net/careersection/51/jobdetail.ftl?lang=en&job=CEL0000N>

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### POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT

Postdoctoral Research Associate  
Soil Fertility Management Effects on Nematodes  
University of Minnesota



Department of Plant Pathology  
Southern Research and Outreach Center  
Waseca, MN 56093

**POSITION DESCRIPTION:** The research associate will be appointed at the University of Minnesota Department of Plant Pathology and Southern Research and Outreach Center to study the manure and chemical fertilizer effect on plant-parasitic nematodes in nematode-suppressive and conducive soils in the USA Midwest cropping systems. The goal of this research project is to develop biologically-based, sustainable management of the soybean cyst nematode (SCN) and other plant-parasitic nematodes using soil fertility management. The responsibility of the research associate will be to study the effects of manure and fertilizer on soil nematode communities, soil suppressiveness to SCN, fungal antagonists of the SCN, and crop productivity. The research associate should be able to work independently in extraction and identification of nematodes, isolation and identification of fungi from nematodes, and ecological analysis of fungal and nematode communities. This is an academic professional, 12-month, full-time position available immediately and for up to two years. Currently, fund is available for one year. Availability of second year fund will depend on our success of the research and funding application. Continuation of the appointment will be based on the progress and performance of the researcher.

**QUALIFICATIONS:** Required: Ph.D. in nematology, microbiology, plant pathology, mycology, or related fields, at time of appointment, with experiences in writing research publications and scientific reports. Desired: Experiences in microbiology, mycology, soil ecology, identification of fungi and nematodes, and/or biological control of nematodes.

**APPLICATION PROCEDURE:**

Please apply online using the following URL and follow instructions:  
<https://employment.umn.edu/applicants/Central?quickFind=81165>

Submit a letter of intent, resume, transcripts (attach as Additional Document 1) and the contact information of three references. The position will be open until filled.

Reviewing the applications will start on January 8, 2010.

For additional information you may contact:

Dr. Senyu Chen

University of Minnesota Southern Research and Outreach Center

35838 120th Street

Waseca, MN 56093, USA

(507 837 5621).

[chenx099@umn.edu](mailto:chenx099@umn.edu)

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A Ph.D. and M.S. Graduate Research Assistantship are available to study the ecological, behavioral and genetic dynamics of contact zones between two species of woodrats (genus *Neotoma*) in California. Successful applicants will play a large role in



the design and implementation of several projects that integrate data from fieldwork focused on individual survival, reproductive success, and resource use with laboratory behavioral trials and molecular genetic analyses. Candidates will also have an opportunity to participate in a high school outreach program focused on the application of molecular genetics in ecology and evolution. Candidates should be creative and highly motivated with strong writing and communication skills. Candidates must have a B.S. in biology or a closely related discipline, field experience, ability to work under rigorous field conditions and interest in evolutionary ecology, genetics, and science education. Positions are available Fall 2010 or earlier depending on applicant availability. Review of applications will begin December 15 and continue until the positions are filled. Submit (preferably by email) a letter of interest that includes a description of work experience and career goals including both research and education, curriculum vitae, transcripts, GRE scores, and 3 letters of reference to: Marjorie Matocq, Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Science, Mailstop 186, University of Nevada Reno, Reno, Nevada, 89509; 775-784-4621; mmatocq@cabnr.unr.edu

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#### Graduate Positions in Evolutionary Biology:

Two PhD level graduate research positions are currently available in evolutionary biology/molecular ecology in my lab at Brigham Young University. The positions are supported by NSF awards and the BYU Department of Biology.

Description: Successful candidates will conduct field and laboratory research on the molecular and evolutionary ecology of terrestrial invertebrates, and help mentor undergraduate student assistants. Projects include, but are not limited to:

- Comparative phylogeography of terrestrial Antarctic invertebrates (nematodes, tardigrades, rotifers).
- Evolution of parasitism, virulence, symbiosis and stress tolerance.
- Role of ecological and evolutionary stoichiometry in Antarctic soil community structure and functioning
- Molecular systematics and molecular evolution of nematodes and tardigrades.

Candidate Experience: Candidates for these positions should have a passion for studying fundamental questions in evolutionary biology and ecology. A background in invertebrate zoology (soil and aquatic meiofauna, especially nematodes, tardigrades or rotifers) is recommended. Experience with molecular biology techniques, phylogenetic/phylogeographic analyses and bioinformatics is a plus, but training in these areas is offered as part of the research assistantship. Fieldwork is an essential component of most of our projects. Candidates should be familiar with



invertebrate field sampling techniques and willing to undertake fieldwork in Antarctica and/or western North America.

To apply: Please send a cover letter, curriculum vitae, a statement of research experience that explains your background and specific interests in the project, and names and contact information of at least two scientists available for reference. Anticipated start date is August 2010.

Please email the above materials as a pdf or Word (.doc) document to:

Byron Adams

Email: [byron\\_adams@byu.edu](mailto:byron_adams@byu.edu)

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## **AIBS PUBLIC POLICY REPORT**

AIBS Public Policy Report

AIBS Public Policy Report, Volume 10, Issue 26, December 22, 2009

- \* NSF, NOAA, NIH to receive budget increases in 2010
- \* Senators Coburn and McCain grumble about 'wasteful' science spending
- \* OSTP requests comments on public access to scientific literature
- \* USDA to spend additional \$90 million on climate mitigation research
- \* House Science and Technology Committee losing chairmen
- \* Italian science agency stirs up controversy with new book
- \* Short takes
- \* From the Federal Register
- \* In the AIBS Bookstore
- \* New in BioScience – "A Research and Education Agenda for Biology?"
- \* Become an advocate for science: Join the AIBS Legislative Action Center

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**NSF, NOAA, NIH TO RECEIVE BUDGET INCREASES IN 2010**



Nearly three months after the 2010 fiscal year (FY) began, Congress has approved significant budget increases for several scientific agencies, including the National Science Foundation (NSF; 6.7 percent increase over FY 2009 appropriations, excluding the economic stimulus), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA; 8.6 percent increase), and the National Institutes of Health (NIH; 3.3 percent increase). The budgets for these agencies passed the House of Representatives and the Senate as part of a package of six appropriations bills (HR 3288) that were signed into law by President Obama on 16 December 2009.

The \$6.926 billion budget for NSF will keep the agency on a path to budget doubling over a ten year period. The Research and Related Activities (RR&A) accounts will receive most of the \$436 million increase, with some of the funding increase going towards high-risk, high-reward basic research, ocean acidification research, support for 2,000 graduate fellowships, climate change education, and the Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR). The Education and Human Resources (HER) directorate will receive a \$27.5 million increase, while the budget for Major Research Equipment and Facilities Construction (MREFC) will decline by \$34.7 million.

The joint statement accompanying the bill calls for "formal reviews from both the NSF directorate and the Office of the Inspector General on the agency's personnel management practices." The Senate Appropriations Committee previously identified "systemic workforce management problems propagated from senior management creating a hostile work environment between Federal employees, rotational directors and the [Senior Executive Service]-level directorate," and with the agency's "enforcement of policies prohibiting gender discrimination, offensive work environments, and retaliation." The joint statement also supported Senate language that addressed NSF grant management, calling for more performance evaluation of awarded grants.

Other science agencies included in the omnibus appropriations bill will also receive increased funding in FY 2010. NOAA will receive \$4.7 billion, \$372 million more than FY 2009, with some of the increase going to the Integrated Ocean Observing System (\$7.1 million additional), ocean acidification research (\$6.0 million additional), research on and management of marine protected species (\$41.2 million additional), ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes research (\$6.3 additional), and competitive climate research (\$12.2 million additional). NIH will receive \$31 billion, a \$692 million increase. Of interest to some natural history museums, the Institute of Museum and Library Services will receive \$282.3 million, a \$7.4 million increase.

#### SENATORS COBURN AND MCCAIN GRUMBLE ABOUT 'WASTEFUL' SCIENCE SPENDING

On 8 December 2009, Senator Tom Coburn (R-OK), along with co-sponsor Senator John McCain (R-AZ), released a report entitled "Stimulus Checkup: A closer look at 100 projects funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act." The 55-page report takes aim at grants for arts and academic research projects, spending to boost





tourism, improvements for leisure facilities, and administrative and advertising costs associated with the \$787 billion stimulus package. Supersonic jets, toxic clean-up efforts, and several educator-training programs also come under fire.

Coburn, who began the year opposing funding for museums, zoos and aquaria, uses this document to continue the attack on biological and environmental research. Many of the 100 projects referenced are for biological science or biological science-related research projects. These research initiatives range from animal systems studies aimed at understanding alcohol and drug use, climate change, and projects intended to improve curation of science collections. Some of these projects criticized include:

- \* A \$1.57 million NSF grant to researchers studying plant fossils in Argentina in order to understand the region's biodiversity;
- \* A National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism grant for \$390,000 to study risk factors of alcohol abuse in young adults;
- \* A \$95,000 NSF grant to the University of Massachusetts to use pollen grains from Iceland in order to assess environmental variation and answer questions about the intersecting roles of landscape change and farm production;
- \* A \$210,00 grant to the University of Hawaii to study memory and taste in honeybees, the findings of which are expected to improve honeybee health;
- \* A NIH funded study on drinking and sexually-promiscuous behavior in female college students;
- \* A \$448,000 grant for a study measuring the affects of changing temperatures on wildflowers at the Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory;
- \* A National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) grant to protect wildlife and restore habitats along the Oregon coast by recovering crab pots, lines, and other marine debris;
- \* An NSF award to Duke University to send students to study tropical ecology and ecotourism at La Selva Biological Station in Costa Rica as part of the successful Organization for Tropical Studies (OTS) program;
- \* NSF grants to the University of Arizona and Arizona State University to study ant colony fitness;
- \* A \$187,632 grant to Michigan State University to combat carpet beetles which are destroying the extensive national and international holdings in their insect collection; and,
- \* An NSF-funded award to researchers studying behavioral dynamics of bird populations and how this behavior applies to sharing behavior in humans.

Coburn and McCain also took issue with the fact that 25,000 new government jobs were created in order to oversee and implement stimulus spending projects.

#### OSTP REQUESTS COMMENTS ON PUBLIC ACCESS TO SCIENTIFIC LITERATURE

The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) is considering the development of a new policy on public access to scientific literature resulting from federally funded research. A Federal Register notice published on 9 December 2009,



states OSTP's intent to create a policy that increases access for the scientific community and the general public to scientific literature that results from research funded by federal science and technology agencies. Although no specific policy proposal has been released, OSTP is considering the model that the National Institutes of Health (NIH) has implemented: all peer-reviewed manuscripts that result from research funded by NIH must be provided free of charge in an electronic database.

Comments on any aspect of expanding public access to peer reviewed publications arising from federal research are being accepted through 7 January 2010. For more information, please see the notice in the Federal Register at <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/E9-29322.htm>.

#### USDA TO SPEND ADDITIONAL \$90 MILLION ON CLIMATE MITIGATION RESEARCH

Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack announced on 16 December 2009 that the United States would join 20 other countries to form an international research collaboration aimed at combating climate change. The Global Research Alliance on Agricultural Greenhouse Gases will conduct research and development aimed at increasing food production and improving the resilience of agricultural systems to climate change while decreasing the carbon intensity of agriculture. Globally, agriculture produces 14 percent of greenhouse gas emissions. "Just as climate change has no borders, our research should not," said Vilsack. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will contribute an additional \$90 million over the next four years to agricultural climate change mitigation research, bringing the agency's total investment in climate mitigation and adaptation research to \$320 million.

#### HOUSE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE LOSING CHAIRMEN

The House Science and Technology Committee will undergo a major change during the next Congress. Two of the Committee's senior Democrats have announced that they will not seek re-election.

Committee Chairman, Representative Bart Gordon (D-TN), will retire at the end of the 111th Congress. The 13-term Representative made his announcement on 14 December 2009. Gordon joined the committee as a freshman in 1985. He has been a strong supporter of research. Among his accomplishments is the American COMPETES Act, a law which reauthorized the budgets of the National Science Foundation, the National Institute of Standards and Technology, and the Department of Energy Office of Science. Representative Jerry Costello (D-IL) is expected by many science policy watchers to replace Gordon as Committee Chairman; Costello is the second most senior Democrat on the committee.

In a surprise announcement on 9 December 2009, Representative Brian Baird (D-WA), Chairman of the House Science and Technology Subcommittee on Energy and Environment, announced that he will not seek re-election in 2010, citing his need



to spend more time with his family. Baird, who has a PhD in clinical psychology, has ruffled feathers over the years, often voting against his party on issues like the Iraq war and health care reform. He has been a champion for science during his 12 years of service in Congress, and has sponsored such bills as the International Science and Technology Cooperation Act (HR 1736), legislation that would create a committee to coordinate all international science and technology activities among federal research agencies and the Department of State. Baird also sponsored HR 3247, a bill to establish a social and behavioral sciences research program at the Department of Energy.

#### ITALIAN SCIENCE AGENCY STIRS UP CONTROVERSY WITH NEW BOOK

Italy's science agency, the National Research Council (CNR), has stirred up controversy with the release of a new book entitled *Evolutionism: the decline of a hypothesis*. The book was written by Roberto de Mattei, politically-appointed vice-president of CNR and professor of Christianity and Catholicism at the European University of Rome. De Mattei assembled the book from the proceedings of an anti-evolution conference that he organized at CNR in February 2009. In it are claims that evolution is a flawed theory because fossil dating methods are wrong, fossil stratification was determined by the Deluge, and dinosaurs died only about 40,000 years ago.

The book states that it was published with financial contributions from CNR, a statement that has not been denied by agency officials. According to the CNR press office, the president of CNR, physicist Luciano Maini, has confirmed that CNR hosted the conference and contributed to the publication costs of the book, but does not officially endorse the book. Maini does however defend the vice-president's right to publish the book, citing academic freedom. The publication has caused dismay among many Italian scientists, who have issued statements or written letters to the CNR protesting the publication of the book.

#### SHORT TAKES

\* The White House Council on Environmental Quality released a draft framework for marine spatial planning on 14 December 2009, which aims to alleviate competing interests for use of the nation's oceans, coasts, and Great Lakes. The framework plans to sustainably manage, protect, and restore our aquatic ecosystems using science-based approaches while decreasing user conflicts and streamlining regulatory processes. Public comments are being accepted through 12 February 2010 at <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/E9-30071.htm>.

\* The U.S. Forest Service is accepting public comments on the potential environmental impacts of a new land management plan for the National Forest System. Comments are being accepted through 16 February 2009. More information is available at <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/E9-30174.htm>.



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FROM THE FEDERAL REGISTER

The following items appeared in the Federal Register from 7 to 18 December 2009. For more information on these or other recent items, please visit the AIBS Federal Register Resource at [www.aibs.org/federal-register-resource/index.html](http://www.aibs.org/federal-register-resource/index.html).

WEEK ENDING 11 DECEMBER 2009

COMMERCE

- \* Fisheries of the South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico; Southeastern Data, Assessment, and Review (SEDAR)
- \* Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions; National Standard 2--Scientific Information
- \* Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act; Regional Fishery Management Councils; Operations

COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

- \* Draft Principles and Standards Sections of the "Economic and Environmental Principles and Guidelines for Water and Related Land Resources Implementation Studies"; Initiation of Revision and Request for Comments

EDUCATION

- \* Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education--European Union-United States Atlantis Program; Program for North American Mobility in Higher Education; United States-Brazil Higher Education Consortia Program; United States-Russia Program

INTERIOR

- \* Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement Related to Experimental Removal of Barred Owls for the Conservation Benefit of Threatened Northern Spotted Owls

OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

- \* Introduction To The Fall 2009 Regulatory Plan

OFFICE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY

- \* President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology
- \* Public Access Policies for Science and Technology Funding Agencies Across the Federal Government

STATE



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\* Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) Request for Grant Proposals:  
Open Competition for the Professional Fellows Program

U.S. PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

- \* Pilot Program for Green Technologies Including Greenhouse Gas Reduction
- \* Request for Comments on Enhancement in the Quality of Patents

WEEK ENDING 18 DECEMBER 2009

AGRICULTURE

- \* Departmental Management; Public Meeting on BioPreferred<sup>SM</sup> Voluntary Labeling Program
- \* National Forest System Land and Resource Management Planning
- \* National Forest System Land Management Planning
- \* National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council

COMMERCE

- \* Establishment of a Recreational Fisheries Working Group by the Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee

COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

- \* Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force--Interim Framework for Effective Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

- \* Endangerment and Cause or Contribute Findings for Greenhouse Gases Under Section 202(a) of the Clean Air Act

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

- \* Food and Drug Administration Clinical Trial Requirements, Regulations, Compliance and Good Clinical Practices; Public Workshop
- \* Notice of Meeting: Secretary's Advisory Committee on Genetics, Health, and Society

INTERIOR

- \* Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Partial 90-Day Finding on a Petition to List 475 Species in the Southwestern United States as Threatened or Endangered with Critical Habitat



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## IN THE AIBS BOOKSTORE

### "COMMUNICATING SCIENCE: A PRIMER FOR WORKING WITH THE MEDIA"

Evolution, climate change, stem cell research -- Scientists are frequently called upon to provide expert information on hot button issues that pervade the daily news headlines, yet most find themselves woefully unprepared for the bright lights of the television studio or leading questions from a newspaper journalist. A new publication from AIBS, "Communicating Science: A Primer for Working with the Media," by Holly Menninger and Robert Gropp in the Public Policy Office, will prepare scientists for successful and effective media interviews.

Recognizing that many scientists are reluctant to engage in media outreach, "Communicating Science" outlines compelling reasons for scientists to interact with the media and describes key differences between journalism and science that may not be apparent to practicing scientists. Step-by-step, Menninger and Gropp walk scientists through the entire interview process - from appropriate questions to ask when a reporter calls to practical advice for looking and sounding one's best on-air or on-camera.

The information and advice in "Communicating Science" is presented in eight easy-to-read chapters that provide vital information for scientists new to media outreach, as well as a quick refresher for seasoned experts - an ideal text for a graduate course on science communication or a professional development course for students and faculty. The primer's authors speak from their own experiences as PhD scientists in the biological sciences with years of experience in media outreach.

The concise, user-friendly volume has several unique features that set it apart from other media guides for scientists. "Communicating Science" includes first-person interviews with nearly a dozen scientists who have successfully navigated print, radio, and television interviews. The scientists-including the "Island Snake Lady," Kristin Stanford, recently featured on the Discovery Channel show, "Dirty Jobs" - share advice and experiences on a number of topics, including safely speaking on behalf of an organization, avoiding trouble when discussing socially or politically controversial topics, and reflections on first interviews.

"Communicating Science" also provides worksheets to assist readers with interview preparation: building a message framework with talking points and transition phrases, developing analogies, and using illustrative props or images. It includes pages for readers to organize contact information of journalists with whom they have worked directly and those who have reported on stories related to their own research to keep as potential contacts for future story pitches.

"Communicating Science: A Primer for Working with the Media" is available now at <http://www.aibs.org/publications/bookstore/>



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## NEW IN BIOSCIENCE - "A RESEARCH AND EDUCATION AGENDA FOR BIOLOGY?"

In the December 2009 issue of *BioScience*, Robert Gropp writes about two new reports, and a growing call within the biological science community to develop disciplinary research while improving interdisciplinary communication. An excerpt from the article follows, but the complete article (along with prior *Washington Watch* columns) may be viewed for free at <http://www.aibs.org/washington-watch/>.

For some time, biologists have argued that a greater federal investment in biological research and education is required to move science forward and solve urgent societal problems. Arguably, this call has been heard, but a response has been muted by the lack of a clear articulation of need from the scientific community. However, recent efforts from within the community suggest that biologists might be attempting to define plans that will advance science and solve real-world problems. "Plants are central to the future of scientific discovery, human well-being, and the sustainable use and preservation of the world's natural resources," says Andrea Kramer, executive director of the US Office of Botanical Gardens Conservation International. Yet, Kramer and others warn that federal agencies have failed to make investments in research and training that will drive discovery and inform decision-making. Kramer and colleagues recently convened academic scientists, government managers, and representatives from non-governmental organizations. The meeting, held at the Chicago Botanic Garden, assessed the nation's botanical capacity.

To continue reading this article for free, visit  
[http://www.aibs.org/washington-watch/washington\\_watch\\_2009\\_12.html](http://www.aibs.org/washington-watch/washington_watch_2009_12.html)

## BECOME AN ADVOCATE FOR SCIENCE: JOIN THE AIBS LEGISLATIVE ACTION CENTER

Quick, free, easy, effective, impactful! Join the AIBS Legislative Action Center today!

The American Institute of Biological Sciences (AIBS) has launched the AIBS Legislative Action Center. The online resource allows biologists and science educators to quickly and effectively influence policy and public opinion. The AIBS Legislative Action Center is located at [www.aibs.org/public-policy/legislative\\_action\\_center.html](http://www.aibs.org/public-policy/legislative_action_center.html).

This new tool is made possible through contributions from the Society for the Study of Evolution, American Society for Limnology and Oceanography, Association of Ecosystem Research Centers, and the Botanical Society of America.

Each day lawmakers must make tough decisions about science policy. For example, what investments to make in federal research programs, biodiversity conservation, how to mitigate climate change, or under what circumstances to permit stem cell research. Scientists now have the opportunity to help elected officials understand these issues.



This exciting new advocacy tool allows individuals to quickly and easily communicate with members of Congress, executive branch officials, and selected media outlets.

AIBS and our partner organizations invite scientists and science educators to become a policy advocate today. Simply go to <http://capwiz.com/aibs/home/> to send a prepared letter or to sign up to receive periodic Action Alerts.

For additional information about the AIBS Legislative Action Center, please visit [http://www.aibs.org/public-policy/legislative\\_action\\_center.html](http://www.aibs.org/public-policy/legislative_action_center.html). To further help AIBS advance biology and science education, consider joining AIBS. To learn about other membership benefits and to join AIBS online, please visit [www.aibs.org](http://www.aibs.org).

- \* Give your society or organization a voice in public policy. See [http://www.aibs.org/public-policy/funding\\_contributors.html](http://www.aibs.org/public-policy/funding_contributors.html)
- \* Become an AIBS Individual Member and lend your voice to a national effort to advance the biological sciences through public policy, education, and science programs. Visit <http://www.aibs.org/aibs-membership/> to join AIBS.
- \* Become an advocate for science, visit the AIBS Legislative Action Center at <http://capwiz.com/aibs/home/>
- \* Know the news as it happens, sign-up to receive AIBS press releases and policy statements (<http://www.aibs.org/ mailing-lists/ mediaisu.html>).







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## **MUSEUM STUDIES JOURNAL LINK**

<http://www.ou.edu/cls/jms/>

Go to this web site to check out the Journal of Museum Studies. R. Gropp and M. Mares have an article in the most recent issue regarding the economic importance of scientific collections in the USA. --sponsored by The Natural Science Collections Alliance.

## **NATURAL SCIENCE COLLECTIONS ALLIANCE**

Go to the web site <http://www.nscalliance.org/> to learn more about the NSCA. The Natural Science Collections Alliance is a Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit association that supports natural science collections, their human resources, the institutions that house them, and their research activities for the benefit of science and society.

The members of the NSCA are part of an international community of museums, botanical gardens, herbariums, universities and other institutions that house natural science collections and utilize them in research, exhibitions, academic and informal science education, and outreach activities.

Membership in the NSC Alliance links you to a network of institutions, scientists and other professionals in North America through which you can share news, information and common concerns - and help shape the future of our community.



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### Note to Members -

The ASP Newsletter welcomes news stories, articles, poetry. Please send your text electronically to the editor as an e-mail and attach as an MS Word document. Drawings, photographs, charts, or tables can be sent as B/W TIF files at 300 dpi. Please send TIF files one at a time. A general rule is to limit photograph size to 3x5". You may attach both text and graphic files to your email message.

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