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June 2003

American Society of Parasitologists

NEWSLETTER



Newsletter:

Released on the ASP web-server [<http://asp.unl.edu>]
June 20, 2003

From the *Editor* of the Newsletter

The ASP newsletter accepts information and news of a parasitological nature from all disciplines. Please assist me in making the content of the ASP newsletter highly relevant. We will be posting material on the web as they are generated by you, the **reader** and **contributor**. One thing that has been interesting is how the newsletter and the web site are beginning to merge. We continue to produce the newsletter because it will be a “permanent” snapshot of the information that is on the web and in our minds at specific times in history. The web based data are forever changing, so we will continue with the newsletter for both current data and archival “snapshots.” Two hundred years from now, people might want to see what we were doing about parasite biodiversity while there was still time...

Scott L. Gardner, Curator
Harold W. Manter Laboratory of Parasitology
School of Biological Sciences
University of Nebraska - Lincoln

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From the Editor –

News from the Manter Laboratory of Parasitology

I feel both sadness and relief as I write this editorial column. As many of you know, the research divisions in the University of Nebraska State Museum were eliminated by the Chancellor of University of Nebraska – Lincoln, Harvey Perlman, as part of the budgetary reductions to the University that were mandated by the Governor and the Legislature of the State of Nebraska. This reduction resulted in the elimination of all faculty and staff who conduct research in the University of Nebraska State Museum. This means the end of most state based support for one of the top 5 university based natural history museums in the United States. Without an active research program behind the science in a museum, public displays are a thin and oftentimes meaningless veneer; basically supporting nothing more than a public amusement park. I am sad that, in this time of extreme pressure on natural ecosystems from expanding human populations and with the continuing loss of biodiversity world-wide, museums that might have a positive effect in training our young people about the importance of understanding ecology and natural systems are under attack by uninformed, short sighted, and myopic bean counters. So it goes.

(Current news [20 June 2003] is that many staff at the LA County Museum were just fired....

The Purge of natural history collections and resources in the USA Continues)

The relief part comes in here: even though several of the divisions in the UN State Museum were gutted, because of the stature and importance of the Harold W. Manter Laboratory of Parasitology to world parasitology, the position of “Curator of Parasitology” was transferred laterally under the umbrella of the School of Biological Sciences at UNL. Under this new administrative setup, I will continue to serve as Director of the H.W. Manter Laboratory of Parasitology and all space allocations and Manter Lab materials will remain the same. In addition, the position of “collection manager” was also retained for the lab. Despite this, Skip Sterner, collection manager in the HWML for the past 15 years, has taken a new and upgraded job at the Wildlife Laboratory in Madison Wisconsin and so we are now actively searching for a new collection manager in the Harold W. Manter Laboratory of Parasitology (contact Scott directly if you are interested in this position).

The bottom line is that even though the Manter Laboratory has been dealt a severe public relations blow, we are operating at normal levels and we are accepting specimens, making loans of specimens from the HWML collections, and we are still working to train the next generation of Parasitologists at the University of Nebraska – Lincoln. Your support during this time was and is very much appreciated.

In other newsletter and web-based news, we are working to provide more information on-line for the annual meetings of the ASP and we are moving toward preparing even more web-based services for members of the ASP. See you at the meeting in Halifax!

Scott Lyell Gardner, Ph.D.

Editor, Journal of Parasitology Newsletter

Director, Harold W. Manter Laboratory of Parasitology

From the President of the American Society of Parasitologists

Annual Meeting of the ASP in Halifax!

Planning and preparations are well underway for the ASP annual meeting in Halifax Nova Scotia! There is still time to register to attend the meeting even if you have not yet registered! . It looks like there will be a large number of attendees! (See note below from David Cone, chair of the local committee in Halifax) So, go to the ASP web site (<http://asp.unl.edu>) to check out data on the meeting. See you in Halifax!

Robin Overstreet

President of the American Society of Parasitologists

ASP Weighs in on NEON – The proposed National Ecological Observatory Network

17 June 2003

From: Robin Overstreet, Ph.D.
President - American Society of Parasitologists

“The American Society of Parasitologists supports the views expressed in IBRCS’ white paper “Rationale, Blueprint, and Expectations for the National Ecological Observatory Network.” The 1200 members of the ASP include a wide range of research/teaching scientists with expertise ranging from taxonomy and systematics through ecology, physiology, molecular biology, immunology, epidemiology, and medical parasitology. The ASP understands that the implementation of NEON (as indicated in the IBRCS document) will significantly enhance the ability of the United States to understand current and future issues in global biodiversity and to predict changes in the natural ecosystems and biodiversity of the United States. NEON will also significantly enhance the ability of biologists to prepare the next generation of scientists for the future by providing training, long term data sets, and collection resources that will be used in a long-term and predictive framework. Because parasites are the most prevalent form of life on earth, the Biological Observatories that will be associated with each NEON must take the biology of parasitism into full account through all phases of NEON, from planning through implementation.”

A resolution in support of NEON will be formally considered at the annual business meeting of the American in Halifax, Nova Scotia, in August, especially as it impacts ecological research and systematic collections of parasites. This resolution may be too late for the NRC’s current deliberations, but we will send the result to you in early August.”

Robin Overstreet, Ph.D.
President
American Society of Parasitologists

From David Cone – Chair of the Local Organizing Committee – ASP Annual Meeting in Halifax!

Registration for the 78th annual meeting of the society planned for Halifax, Nova Scotia, August 1 to 5, is well underway. The scientific program is full of interesting and diverse symposia and regular contributions, and registrants to date are coming from all over (Australia, Korea, Cameroon, Nigeria, Slovakia, France, Ireland, Mexico, Canada and the US). There will be numerous social activities including a reception at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, a student get together at a House of Blues, a lobster feast with entertainment from a Scottish piper and some of the best young fiddlers in the region, an entertaining auction, a night on the downtown waterfront with a background of fireworks, a sail on a tall ship, and much more. Those who plan on attending but have not yet registered should be aware that August is peak tourist time for Halifax and vacant rooms are difficult to find. Our agreement with the Westin Hotel states that “Reservation requests must be received no later than Monday, June 30, 2003. After that date, reservations re-requested will be accepted at the best

available Westin Nova Scotian rate of the day, provided guest rooms are available.” So if you are planning on coming, be sure to book your rooms NOW!

There are numerous members that have yet to register for the meeting itself. This makes life really difficult for the Local Organizing Committee, who are trying to make predictions about the day-to-day needs of the meeting. Although walk in registration will be available during the meetings, we encourage everyone to try and submit their registration as soon as possible. This would be most appreciated.

Job Mart -

Health Laboratory Scientist Position

(PT0614) #44910 (one year, term appointment) \$53,608-commensurate. Initial advertising period ends 5/14/03. One year term appointment to prepare grants and contracts and perform R & D activities for vector borne agents and their zoonotic diseases. To provide liaison to clinical and veterinary worlds regarding disease outbreak. Requires a doctoral degree in epidemiology, microbiology, biochemistry, medicine or immunology and five years experience in a research lab with at least two years specifically working with zoonotic disease. Solid oral and written communication skills are necessary. Some management and supervisory experience is desirable. Publications in peer reviewed journals and grant writing experience desirable. Experience in a Public Health lab setting desirable. Additional desirable qualifications include, ABMM Diplomate status or board certification or eligibility in a field of medicine. Basic knowledge of molecular microbiology sufficient to interpret results in light of conventional methods desirable. Involvement in national organizations desirable. Send resume to: Pat Kosier, Hygienic Laboratory, The University of Iowa, C-214-OH, Iowa City, IA 52242. 319/335-4446. Email: patricia-kosier@uiowa.edu

Postdoctoral Position, Nematology or Soil Microbiology, University of Florida

Postdoc research scientist position (nematology or soil microbiology). The study will focus on developing sustainable production systems for vegetables based on use of nematode- and pathogen-resistant cover crops as alternatives to methyl bromide. The candidate should have experience and interest in conducting field experiments along with laboratory and greenhouse investigations. Position is available immediately. Please contact: Waldemar Klassen, or Yuncong Li, Tropical Research and Education Center, University of Florida, 18905 SW 280 Street, Homestead, FL 33031. Tel. 305-246-7001 ext 257; Fax: 305-246-7003; Email: <mailto:Wklassen@mail.ifas.ufl.edu> klassen@mail.ifas.ufl.edu.

RESEARCH ASSISTANT (BIOLOGY)

Job description: We seek a broadly trained Biology/Ecology Research Assistant to assist faculty and graduate students with research in ecology and organismal biology. The Assistant will perform a variety of duties to include maintenance of a fisheries project, mammal trapping, stream and river sampling, molecular genetic analysis using mitochondrial and microsatellite techniques, and general assistance in biology laboratory and field studies. The applicant should have field experience and a strong background in vertebrate field zoology and general plant and animal ecology. The position may also involve some teach-

ing of a Nonmajors Introductory Biology course and advising of undergraduates.

Qualifications: Bachelor of Science, Master's preferred, in biology or related field. Training in various aspects of ecology and field biology; experience with molecular techniques using microsatellites and other genetic procedures is considered desirable but not required. Some teaching experience or working with undergraduates and familiarity with computers and various software packages are also desirable.

Salary: \$25,369/year plus benefits

Applications should be sent or emailed directly to: Dr. Jerry O. Wolff, Department of Biology, The University of Memphis, Memphis, TN 38152. For more information about the position: jwolff@memphis.edu or 901 678-2581.

Job announcement — Lyme disease community intervention – Upstate NY

**Lyme-disease reduction in Dutchess County, New York
Research Assistant needed at the Institute of Ecosystem Studies in Millbrook, NY**

One full-time, year-round Research Assistant (RA) is needed for a start date of approximately June, 2003. The RA will conduct field and laboratory research under a three-year grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to support community-based intervention aimed at reducing the incidence of Lyme disease in Dutchess County, NY. The RA will be responsible for installing and maintaining deer-feeders and mouse-feeders that are intended to reduce numbers of ticks on these hosts. The RA will also monitor sampling transects to assess the abundance of ticks, deer, and rodents in forests and residential areas. The RA will work in a two-person team. Position is intended for one year with possibility of extension pending funding.

Requirements for the positions include: (1) Bachelors degree in biological or environmental sciences; (2) experience in field-related research; (3) ability to work independently; (4) meticulousness; (5) ability to interact with the public concerning public health issues. Experience with wildlife, particularly deer, or with arthropods is highly desirable, as is experience with ArcView GIS. Salary commensurate with experience, and excellent benefits package.

Please send a letter of application, resume, and the names, phone numbers, and email addresses of three professional or educational references to:

Richard S. Ostfeld, Ph.D.
C/O Jessica Greenstein
Institute of Ecosystem Studies
Box AB
Millbrook, NY 12545

emailed applications should be sent to BOTH GreensteinJ@ecostudies.org,

AND ROstfeld@ecostudies.org

Closing date for applications is 1 June, or until position is filled.

Members on the Move

Dear all:

My e-mail address will be changed to konishi@cetacean.jp from April 24th.
Please arrange that mail setting after April 23rd.

Sincerely yours,

Kenji Konishi, Ph.D.

Dear all:

After June 23, 2003, my new address will be:

National Wildlife Health Center

6006 Schroeder Road

Madison, Wisconsin 53711

PH: (608) 270-2449

email: msterner@usgu.gov

Sincerely, Skip Sterner

In The News—

TAPEWORM'S CHEMICAL TRICK COULD MAKE DRUGS MORE EFFECTIVE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

2/28/03

CONTACT: John Oaks, (608) 263-1107, oaksj@svm.vetmed.wisc.edu; Paul Bass, (608) 262-5753, pbass@pharmacy.wisc.edu

MADISON - To survive and thrive in a decidedly hostile environment, the lowly tapeworm uses a chemical trick to evade the propulsive nature of its intestinal home.

Capitalizing on that tapeworm chemistry, scientists at the University of Wisconsin-Madison believe they may have found a way to slow the transit of drugs through the intestine, making them more effective in their delivery and holding out the promise not only of more effective treatment, but also of lowering dosage and cost, and eliminating wasted medicine.

This new insight comes via the tapeworm *Hymenolepis diminuta*, a species found in rats and long used as a research model by parasitologists. By sorting through the soup of biochemicals the tapeworm uses to influence muscle activity in the gut, a group led by John Oaks of the School of Veterinary Medicine, and Paul Bass of the School of Pharmacy has isolated a chemical signal factor that may help prolong the time it takes for medicines to move through the small intestine.

"Most oral medications would benefit from prolonged small intestinal residence," says

Bass, an emeritus professor of pharmacy. “Almost all drugs we take orally are absorbed from the small intestine. By prolonging the medication’s residence time in that organ, we should enhance its absorption and obtain higher blood levels of the medication.”

The compound characterized by Oaks and Bass, known in scientific shorthand as cyclic GMP, is a member of a family of compounds known generically as signal factors. Its role is to alter the electrochemical activity of the muscles in the intestine, slowing or shutting down



intestinal transit of the host, actions that help the tapeworm obtain a meal or otherwise survive in an organ designed to quickly sweep food along.

“Inside cells, cyclic GMP is a signal molecule,” notes Oaks, a professor of comparative bio-science. “It tells cells how to behave. When the tapeworm secretes this signal molecule, the intestine closes off and nothing moves. That suggested to us that the intestine is not digesting material as it normally would.”

The cyclic GMP compound, Oaks adds, is cheap and easy to synthesize. Its use as an additive to medicines has been patented by the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation.

“Many drugs are absorbed at less than 50 percent from the intestine,” says Oaks. “The key will be can we use cyclic GMP with certain kinds of drugs to increase their level of uptake into the blood?”

An example of a drug that might be more effective if it passed through the intestine at a slower pace is Fosamax, a medicine used to combat osteoporosis that is made by the pharmaceutical giant Merck. The company claimed Fosamax sales totaling \$1.3 billion in 2000.

“It currently is taken by many women to prevent or treat osteoporosis,” Bass says. “But this medication is only 1 percent absorbed. We believe our signal factor could possibly enhance absorption and thereby reduce the amount of medication that is taken.”

By lowering dosages of different medications, it might be possible to lower the cost of medicines. Some drugs are prohibitively expensive to produce and reducing dosages could help consumers now contending with the escalating costs of many pharmaceuticals.

Other potential benefits associated with lower dosages include lessened side effects and fewer chemicals released into the environment. A recent survey of surface water in the United States revealed a growing presence of drugs in the environment. The suspected sources are medicines that are not completely metabolized by the humans and animals they are administered to.

“If we could halve the dosage, we could lower the percentage of nonabsorbed drug that ends up in the environment,” says Oaks.

The work done by the Wisconsin team, which also included K. Dubear Kroening and Noah P. Zimmerman, was funded in part by a grant from the National Institutes of Health.

Terry Devitt (608) 262-8282, trdevitt@wisc.edu

From Larry Roberts

Dear Colleagues:

The House of Representatives is considering the Human Cloning Prohibition Act of 2003, H.R. 534 (Bills on controversial issues are named to gather the widest number of supporters, even if they address only part of an issue or do something quite different from the title). H.R. 534 would criminalize the technique commonly referred to as “therapeutic cloning,” developing and using blastocyst stem cells for research into, and use for, human disease amelioration.

Every year Congress has had bills introduced that ban some area of research, and every year we have managed to see that they are not now the law of the land. CSSP does not endorse any blanket ban on research, and believes it is a bad precedent for Congress to get into the habit of banning research.

The President and the new Senate Majority Leader have spoken in favor of this particular ban. Other very senior Senate Republicans have spoken out in defense of “therapeutic cloning.” There is a useful action we should take now in case this bill can pass in the House of Representatives:

It is very timely to contact YOUR OWN members of Congress to express your views on an amendment sponsored by Representative Jim Greenwood (R-PA). The amendment, introduced as H.R. 801, would permit nuclear transplantation to produce stem cells, with strict oversight.

MARTY

From: Mammalian Biology [mailto:MAMMAL-L@SIVM.SI.EDU]

Sent: Thursday, March 06, 2003 12:24 PM

To: MAMMAL-L@SIVM.SI.EDU

Subject: Re: Dr. Jane Goodall's Comments

Supposedly, “Bigfoot” occurs with regularity in 47 states and across Canada [<http://www.bfro.net/GDB>]. Additionally, sightings have been made across Russia, China and other countries, and even on island nations such as Indonesia. The only other mammals with terrestrial geographic distributions this extensive are humans and their associated rats, mice, and domesticated animals. Can a large undiscovered primate (it would be the largest primate ever discovered) exist somewhere on earth? Yes, but it is

highly improbable, and if such a species were discovered, it would almost certainly have a very small geographic range. Every few years a new large terrestrial mammal (deer, cow, peccary, etc.) is found in remote forests, such as those of SE Asia or South America. They are always rare and of limited distribution, which is why they were not discovered sooner. Sometimes a new species of large mammal, such as the African forest elephant, can exist without having been recognized as being a species that was genetically different from the African elephant, although both elephants had been discovered long ago.

My research team and I have discovered dozens of new mammals in Argentina. None is large and none is widespread. Most are rare, although a few are locally common. We work very hard to find these species, but find them we do. Can a large undiscovered primate really exist in every part of the United States? The probability of such a species not having been collected in two centuries of research, collecting, hunting, wildlife studies, exploration, colonization, habitat conversion, and other human activities-not to mention avoiding being hit by the more than 160 million cars that are driven 1.7 trillion miles each year over 8.2 million miles of highways-approaches zero.

I heard Dr. Goodall's comments on NPR and wondered what on earth she could have been thinking to make such an outlandish statement. All of us would like for new species to be discovered, for there is little to match either the thrill of discovery or the amazement that new things are still out there waiting to be found. Maybe it was this kind of romantic ideation that led to Dr. Goodall's articulating her dreams. I hope that anyone who believes that enormous primates are running around the entire US and much of the rest of the Northern Hemisphere will recognize the great improbability of one never having been collected, and appreciate the high probability of fraud, hysteria, ignorance of nature, misidentification of known species, and just plain goofiness on the part of many so called observers.

Probably more people have reported sightings of aliens and chupacabras than have reported bigfoot, yet I do not expect to see those "species" showing up in my collection any time soon, anymore than I expect someone to drag in the Oklahoma bigfoot that is seen regularly, or to call on me to identify an eight-foot tall 150 kg primate that was shot by a hunter.

That said, if anyone has any credible evidence that a large primate exists, turn it over to a trained mammalogist at a major museum who will identify any portions of the animal that might be discovered and arrive at an informed identification. Anecdotes and sightings, however well intentioned, will not suffice. "Scientific evidence" of dubious merit that has not been published in peer-reviewed literature will not solve the dilemma of the giant primate that is more elusive than smoke and more widespread than domestic cattle. If you want the mystery solved, collect an animal. Pictures, sound recordings, witness statements, friction ridges (fingerprints), tracks, broken twigs, odors, jumpy horses, barking dogs, nesting sites, and every other type of so called "evidence" are meaningless. Only part or all of an actual specimen will suffice. Any competent mammalogist will be able to identify any mammals that are found that are purported to be bigfoot, and any mammalogist will know bigfoot when he sees it.

If you really want to know what it is like to search for undiscovered life, read "A Desert

Calling: Life in a Forbidding Landscape” [http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0674007476/qid=1046966497/sr=8-5/ref=sr_8_5/102-0223931-3961701?v=glance&s=books&n=507846].
The book will give you a good idea of how difficult it is to find new species, as well as provide a feel for the thrill of discovery of animals new to science.

National Space Biomedical Research Institute
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Houston, TX 77030
(713) 798-7412
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Liesl Owens
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lkowens@bcm.tmc.edu

UT-Houston’s Gilbert A. Castro named to NSBRI External Advisory Council

HOUSTON – (April 15, 2003) – Dr. Gilbert A. Castro, interim executive vice president for research and academic affairs and professor of integrative biology and pharmacology at The University of Texas Health Science Center in Houston, has been named to the External Advisory Council for the National Space Biomedical Research Institute (NSBRI).

The NSBRI, funded by NASA, is a consortium of institutions studying the health risks related to long-duration space flight. The Institute’s External Advisory Council is composed of leaders in research fields central to the Institute’s mission and advises management on strategic issues and programmatic effectiveness.

Castro has served in his leadership role in the executive vice president’s office since March 2001.



Castro earned his bachelor’s degree in biology from Lamar University and his master’s degree in zoology at the University of Arkansas. He received his doctoral degree in microbiology at the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston. Castro is a member of the American Physiological Society and past president of the American Society of Parasitologists.

The NSBRI’s research and education program involves investigators at more than 70 institutions and government laboratories across the United States. Projects address space health concerns such as bone loss, muscle weakening, cardiovascular changes, sleep disturbances, immunology, infection, balance and orientation problems, radiation exposure, nutrition, neurobehavioral and psychosocial factors, and remote-treatment technologies.

A letter in support of Natural History Museums

From: Michael A. Mares

Date: March 22, 2003

Dear Chancellor Perlman:

I am the former director of the Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History (<http://www.snomnh.ou.edu>) of the University of Oklahoma. I was director of the museum for 20 years and was responsible for developing what became one of the major university natural history museums in the world. Indeed, it is the jewel of the crown of both the state and university of Oklahoma. I have also been involved in all types of museum assessment programs and service functions to higher education and to museums over the last two decades, both nationally and internationally. I am a member of the Oklahoma Higher Education Hall of Fame and was also a member of the Commission on the Future of the Smithsonian Institution, a special commission that is activated only every half century to plan the future of one of the world's greatest museums. Finally, I was a member of two different accreditation teams of the Nebraska State Museum. I list these bona fides to make it clear that I know something about museums in general and university museums as they relate to their parent organization, as well as the Nebraska State Museum.

State museums contain the tangible heritage of the people of that state. University museums translate that heritage into information and new knowledge. The work of the curators is a requisite to develop exhibits, to serve the public with fundamental knowledge about the materials in the collections, to train new specialists in museum studies, to provide a fundamental database on the biological and cultural underpinnings of the state and region, and to provide experts to answer the questions posed by undergraduate and graduate students, and the general public that are related to the valuable collection resource.

The Nebraska State Museum has a long and noble history. It was founded almost a half century before Oklahoma's museum was established and has done a good job of protecting Nebraska's priceless collections, conducting research, educating museum professionals, publishing and interpreting research conducted on the collections for exhibit use and for the increase of scientific knowledge and public edification in Nebraska and throughout the world. There is no doubt that the museum's buildings could be in better shape, its programs more extensive, and some of its personnel could be more productive, but that is frequently the case. You and I both know that quality varies across any organization, whether one is considering faculty, support staff, or administrators. Nonetheless, the answer to any perceived problems related to management or productivity is not to dismantle the organization. One must remember that a museum is a *permanent* institution. It holds the treasures of the state in trust for the people of the state, and it does so in perpetuity. It is this quality of permanence that must be considered when pondering reductions in budgets or personnel.

It is my assessment as a museum administrator, a faculty member, a curator, and an expert with national and international experience on museum operations, that it would be a mistake for the University of Nebraska to eliminate curatorial and collection support personnel in the State Museum due to a system-wide budget shortfall. It is folly to think that the reputation and all operations of the organization would not be seriously and negatively impacted. I know of no university natural history museum in the United States that is able to operate effectively without curators and collection support personnel. Indeed, those few

that have tried to do this have fallen far below the level of mediocrity. To eliminate the very engine of creativity and expertise that drives the collections—the heart of the museum—is to doom public programs and exhibits in the coming years. No museum of quality has been successful with this strategy. None. It was not too long ago that a common saying noted that great universities have great museums and that is still fairly applicable today. There is a reason for this, as museums reflect a higher pursuit of what is important in life: the sciences, the arts, an appreciation of our own heritage, a better understanding of who we are and where we are going. Museums shine in the darkness like lighthouses that lead us through the storms of life to calmer and more enlightened shores.

I am not familiar with how the law that established the Nebraska State Museum reads, but should the university gut the museum in such a manner that collection care is compromised (as present plans would suggest), I would expect that the institution would open itself to great criticism by concerned members of the public for failure to care for the state's natural and cultural heritage. The University has a moral and fiduciary obligation to care for the heritage of the people of Nebraska. It cannot meet this obligation by eliminating the very positions that are responsible for the care, growth, and development of these collections, materials that are the permanent and priceless treasures of the State of Nebraska.

Clearly this plan was developed without much input from museum experts. I hope you have not been misled by advisors who have suggested that such sweeping changes can be made without compromising the quality of the museum's programs, for they can not. Both the exhibits and the children's programs will be severely affected by the proposed changes. One simply cannot continue to enjoy the eggs if the goose is killed, yet that is precisely what this plan proposes. Moreover, the proposed changes mock the legal obligation that was granted by the people of Nebraska to the University to care for their heritage for all time. Universities and their museums have a moral obligation not only to balance the books, but to serve future generations of their public. Like it or not, you, the University, and the Museum, are the keepers of Nebraska's heritage. It is easy to meet your responsibilities in this area during times when funds are readily available, but the true test of meeting one's duty occurs when times are difficult. Now is one of those defining moments when mettle is tested.

Your decision will not only affect the professional lives of those curators and staff members who will lose their positions (and taking the long view, that should not really be a consideration, since many people lose their jobs each day), but the decision to eliminate these positions for short term monetary considerations will result in long-term damage to the collections, the public programs, the scientific reputation of the museum and the University, and the future use of the heritage of the people of Nebraska. Museums are not merely keepers of the past, but guardians of the future, for people who lose their material heritage lose that bridge of memory that connects the past to the future. They are left adrift without the important foundation of support that is based on an appreciation of their natural and cultural heritage. To harm the museum is, therefore, to harm the future, and to harm the future is to deprive Nebraska's children of their connections to their heritage.

I strongly recommend that you give careful consideration to the full ramifications of a decision to damage the Nebraska State Museum. Such a decision will ring across the years long after you have moved on, for museums reach across the generations. For good or ill,

your decision will likely reach well beyond your ability to perceive at this moment. I hope you will permit your vision to guide your decision.

Respectfully,

Michael A. Mares
Noble Presidential Professor and Research Curator
Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History
University of Oklahoma

Committees

Here is a listing of the various committees and contact information for ASP officers.

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Some Last Minute NEON information

**Scott Lyell Gardner Appointed to
the IBRCS Working Group**

Scott Lyell Gardner of the Manter Laboratory of Parasitology at the University of Nebraska - Lincoln has been appointed to the IBRCS Working Group. The IBRCS (Infrastructure for Biology at Regional to Continental Scales) Project is an effort by the American Institute of Biological Sciences (AIBS),

launched in August 2002 with support from the National Science Foundation. The following are the project's goals:

- ↑ Help the biological/scientific community—within and beyond the AIBS membership—to determine the needs and means for increased physical infrastructure and connectivity in observational platforms, data collection and analysis, and database networking in both field biology and other more general areas of biology and science
- ↑ Provide for communications within this community and with NSF regarding the development and focus of relevant infrastructure and data-networking projects
- ↑ Facilitate the synergistic connection of diverse researchers and research organizations that can exploit the power of a large-scale biological observatory program
- ↑ Disseminate information about biological observatory programs and other relevant infrastructure and data-networking projects to the scientific community, the public policy community, the media, and the general public

The project is led by a working group comprising biologists elected from the AIBS membership of scientific societies and organizations and appointed from the scientific community at-large. It is assisted by the project manager on the AIBS staff and various technical advisors. The working group was assembled during the summer and fall of 2002.

The project has a special focus on the National Ecological Observatory Network (NEON) program, which is a major NSF

initiative to establish a national platform for integrated studies and monitoring of natural processes at all spatial scales, time scales, and levels of biological organization. Funding for the NEON program has been proposed in the FY 2003 NSF budget, but Congress has not yet approved the expenditure.

AIBS and the IBRCS working group will

- ↑ Summarize and evaluate past workshops on relevant infrastructure and data-networking projects, such as NEON, and maintain a rolling summary of all future workshops and related activities
- ↑ Conduct collaborative and consensus-generating activities, such as working group meetings, joint sessions at the annual AIBS council meeting, workshops, presentation and discussion sessions at scientific conferences, and coalition meetings with other scientific organizations. All of these activities seek to advance the goal of involving biologists and other scientists in thinking about and working together on the kinds of scientific activities, questions, and applications that require infrastructure and data-networking enhancements
- ↑ Make the biological community aware of relevant infrastructure and data-networking activities in other scientific or technical communities, such as geology, chemistry, toxicology, hydrology, remote sensing and GIS, engineering, nanotechnology, biosensors, mathematics, computer science, and data management and information technology

Jeffrey Goldman, PhD, is the IBRCS project manager. Principal investigator under the grant is Richard O'Grady, PhD, AIBS executive director.

Charge

AIBS charges the working group to accomplish the following:

- ↑ Involve a diverse array of biologists and other scientists—including and beyond the AIBS membership—in an exploration of the scientific activities, questions, and applications that can be better addressed with both enhanced infrastructure and data-networking capabilities that link field biology and other areas of biological and scientific activity across regional and continental scales
- ↑ Expose opportunities for interaction between infrastructure and data-networking projects in all branches of biology and complementary projects in other scientific fields
- ↑ Promote collaboration between the biological community and other scientific and technical communities
- ↑ Develop processes to build community consensus about the ways to use enhanced infrastructure and multi-disciplinary collaboration to explore important research frontiers

- ↑ Serve as a comprehensive information source about relevant infrastructure and data-networking projects for the scientific community, the public policy community, the media, and the general public
- ↑ Provide means for both synthesizing information generated by the scientific community about the progress and needs of infrastructure and data-networking projects and conveying the information to NSF

78th Annual Meeting of the ASP

August 1-5, 2003
Halifax, Nova Scotia
CANADA

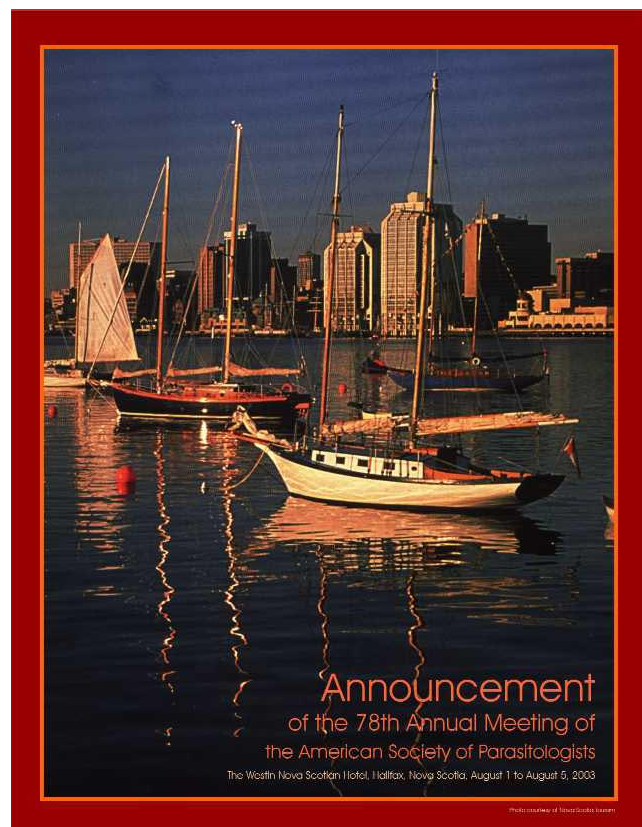
Compliments of Don Duszynski, here is a pdf of the final Program for our upcoming meeting in Halifax! <http://asp.unl.edu/ASPProgram2003.pdf>
[Slow loading file. 50 pages. Please be patient]

Call for Papers (.pdf format)
<http://asp.unl.edu/Aspcall2003-1.pdf>
[Slow loading file. 50 pages. Please be patient]

The meeting will take place at "The Westin Nova Scotian." You can get a view of the hotel at www.westin.ns.ca. We have struck a deal with the hotel and set aside a block of rooms for \$150 CDN plus 15% Harmonized Sales Tax (which foreign delegates can apply for a rebate once out of the country). The total cost will be about \$100US per night for the rooms. A limited 3-day shoulder before and after the meeting has been set aside at these rates for those wishing to vacation. Up to three student-registrants can be housed in a room.

For those folks interested in more information about Nova Scotia and alternative routes to get here check out the following sites: www.marine-atlantic.ca, www.scotiaprince.com

For those interesting in spending some



extra time in the Maritimes try the various provincial tourist sites: www.explore.gov.ns.ca,
www.tourismnbcanda.com, www.gov.pe.ca and www.gov.nf.ca

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Southeastern Society of Parasitologists
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Southwestern Association of Parasitologists

Note to Members

The ASP Newsletter welcomes news stories and articles. Please send your text electronically to Scott Gardner as an e-mail and attach as an MS Word 6.0 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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