



Notes from the Field

September 2004

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A Natural Setting For the Summer Mini-Symposium

The Ecology Summer Mini-Symposium and potluck/ barbecue was held this year at the Millbrook Marsh Nature Center. July 28th was a beautiful summer day, perfect for an outdoor picnic in celebration of nine Ecology students headed for graduation. Students included Karen Sughrue, Ylva Besmer, Hugo Castillo, Adam Kaeser, Jeff Kuhn, and Matt Lis, with Ph.D. degrees, and Joe Dauer, Jen Rubbo, and Susan Laubscher, with Master's degrees.



Strolling along the boardwalk at Millbrook Marsh

Photo: Emily Rowlands

The Mini-Symposium began under an outdoor pavilion and later the event moved to a nearby barn, for final presentations to the Ecology group. Additionally, Molly Hetrick, who is in charge of coordinating events and research opportunities for the nature center, spoke about considering Millbrook Marsh as a research facility in the future. Plans are currently in the works for a new building, equipped with some classrooms and wet laboratories. For more information, Molly can be contacted at mhetrick@crcog.net.

At the end of the night, those in attendance would agree that the event represented a pleasant shift from the typical mini-symposium setting. Please be sure to congratulate all of the graduates as they move toward other endeavors.

~Glenna Malcolm, PhD Student



Potluck feasting and socializing

Photo: Emily Rowlands

More photos from *PSU Live* are linked at:

<http://www.ecology.psu.edu/calendar/calendar.htm>

Tea Anyone?

Ecology Tea is an informal get-together to discuss current articles on topics that are of broad interest in ecology. This gives us an opportunity to meet and talk with other people in the Ecology Program, and it broadens our horizons by offering opportunities to read and discuss papers outside of our own narrower fields.

We'll be starting up Ecology Tea again this semester, meeting every other Friday from 3:40-4:30 in 116 Tyson. This meeting time is right after the Ecology seminar series, so folks can hop right across the street to Tyson from ASI. Our first meeting will be on Friday, September 17, and we'll be discussing an essay by David Orr, from the August issue of *Conservation Biology*, on the relationships between science, politics, and ethics: "The corruption (and redemption) of science". This paper will be posted on the Ecology Program website and we'll send a PDF to the Ecology listserv. Anyone inside or outside of the Ecology Program who's interested in joining us is, of course, welcome. We hope to see you there!

~Angela Anders, PhD Student

Introducing...



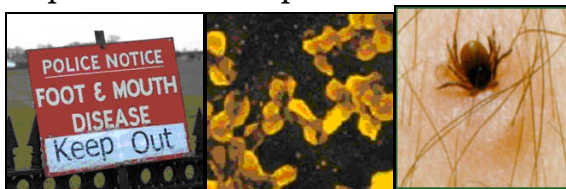
Juan Carlos López Gutiérrez is currently a postdoctoral fellow with Roger Koide studying the causes and consequences of the structure of ectomycorrhizal fungal communities in the pine forest floor. He was awarded a PhD in Ecology from Universidad

Central de Venezuela in Caracas, Venezuela, where he worked on the role of arbuscular mycorrhizae and soil microorganisms in the mineralization of organic phosphorus in acid savanna soil. Shortly afterwards he took a one year postdoctoral position in the Laboratoire de Microbiologie de Sols at INRA-Université de Bourgogne in Dijon, France, where he familiarized himself with soil molecular techniques by using real-time PCR to study denitrifying and atrazine degrading communities in agricultural soils. Juan Carlos' general research interest is the study of the interactions between plants, mycorrhizae and the associated microflora and how they relate to nutrient cycling.

Congratulations to:

Dr. Tracy Gartner, 2004 Best Poster Award, Ecology Society of America
Arrangement of litter types can influence mass and N dynamics in mixed-species litter decomposition experiments. Gartner, T.B. and Z.G. Cardon, Univ of Connecticut, Storrs, CT .
The Best Poster Award is given by the Physiological Ecology section of the ESA to recognize significant advancement in physiological ecology; entrants are judged on the rigor, creativity, importance, and presentation of the research. Past winners include: 1998 Louise Comas "Root efficiency in fast- and slow-growing species of maple and oak"

Check out The Center for Infectious Disease Dynamics new webpage
<http://www.cid.d.psu.edu>



Schedule of Events:

Sept 15 *EGSO Meeting 5:30 p.m.*
Panera
Sept 15 *Tee-shirt orders due*
Oct 7 *Ecology Social 5:30 p.m.*
Zola's

Sports News



OCTOBER 2nd IS COMING SOON

If you would like to run on our Ecology team in the 50 mile Tussey Mountainback relay, contact Randa Jabbour rxj156@psu.edu by Sept 10th.
<http://www.tusseymountainback.com>

And here is Joe Dauer with a snapshot report from the Ecology Picnic's spectacular Sunset Park Beach Volleyball Tournament...



Dave Mortensen (R) and Ottar Bjornstad (L) of the Phd-ers dive for a power slam by Eric Long of the Nearly-Theres. The Phd-ers (plus a few Nearly-Theres to fill the roster) fell in 3 straight games before putting up a resemblance of a fight. Puddles left over from heavy afternoon showers didn't dampen the rivalry but muddied more than a few players. Future battles will be waged and with a little luck and some team bonding, the Nearly-theres will continue their winning ways.

Welcome New Students!

Tom Adams
Tiffany Bogich
Casey Godwin
James Julian
Angela Luis
Tricia Miller
JB Moon
Jessica Peterson
Matt Ryan
Eileen Stocum
Andy Wilson