



**June 2004**

## **Faculty News**

Professor Emeritus **Malcolm T. Sanford** participated in the 15th Brazilian Beekeeping Congress held in Natal, Brazil. He reports that Brazilian beekeeping is undergoing a revolution provoked by the coming together of a number of events; advances in managing the Africanized honey bee, interest by Brazil's innovative organization SEBRAE: <http://www.sebraern.com.br/apicultura/>, and recognition that the northeast and its sertao is the frontier of Brazil rather like Texas was the frontier in the U.S. He reports that another beekeeping congress is scheduled for Paraguay in September: See <http://www.7conapi.com/7conapi/DesktopDefault.aspx>.

The Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) invited Dr. **Marjorie Hoy** to visit Jamaica, 24-29 May, and provide information on the biological control of brown citrus aphids and the Asian citrus psylla. She toured citrus groves and presented a talk at the Psyllid Training Workshop and a technical seminar on Biological Control of the Brown Citrus Aphid and Asian Citrus Psyllid.

Negotiations with the candidate offered the **Insect Physiologist** position are completed and the candidate has accepted. However,

the department has not received the official approval from the Deans' offices as yet, so we can't officially announce the name of our newest faculty member. Maybe next month. Meanwhile, our search for candidates for the **Veterinary Entomologist** position continues. See the departmental Web site at <http://entnemdept.ifas.ufl.edu/> for details.

## **Publications**

**Dunford JC, Barbara KA.** (May 2004). Hieroglyphic moth, *Diphthera festiva* (F.). *UF/IFAS Featured Creatures*. EENY-326. [http://creatures.ifas.ufl.edu/veg/potato/hieroglyphic\\_moth.htm](http://creatures.ifas.ufl.edu/veg/potato/hieroglyphic_moth.htm)

**Meeker, JR.** (May 2004). Southern pine coneworm, *Dioryctria amatella* (Hulst). *UF/IFAS Featured Creatures*. EENY-325. [http://creatures.ifas.ufl.edu/trees/pine\\_coneworm.htm](http://creatures.ifas.ufl.edu/trees/pine_coneworm.htm)

**Persad A, Hoy MA.** 2004. Predation by *Solenopsis invicta* and *Blattella asahinai* on *Toxoptera citricida* parasitized by *Lysiphlebus testaceipes* and *Lipolexis oregmae* on citrus in Florida. *Biological Control* 30: 531-537.

**Persad AB, Jeyaprakash A, Hoy MA.** 2004. High-fidelity PCR assay discriminates between immature *Lipolexis oregmae* and *Lysiphlebus testaceipes* (Hymenoptera):

Aphidiidae) within their aphid hosts. Florida Entomologist 87: 18-24.

**Edwards GB.** (May 2004). A cribellate spider, *Metaltella simoni* (Keyserling). *UF/IFAS Featured Creatures*. EENY-322. [http://creatures.ifas.ufl.edu/misc/spiders/metaltella\\_simoni.htm](http://creatures.ifas.ufl.edu/misc/spiders/metaltella_simoni.htm)

**Stange LA.** (March 2004). Applesnails of Florida, *Pomacea* spp. *UF/IFAS Featured Creatures*. EENY-323. [http://creatures.ifas.ufl.edu/misc/gastro/apple\\_snails.htm](http://creatures.ifas.ufl.edu/misc/gastro/apple_snails.htm)

**Walker TJ, Moore TE.** (May 2004). Cicadas of Florida. *UF/IFAS Featured Creatures*. EENY-327. <http://creatures.ifas.ufl.edu/misc/bugs/cicadas.htm>

## Florida Society Meeting

The 87th annual meeting of the **Florida Entomological Society** is scheduled for 25-28 July, 2004, in Fort Lauderdale, FL, in conjunction with the **5th International Caribbean Conference**. Meeting highlights include six symposia (Whitefly-Plant Interactions, Weed Biocontrol, Pests of the Caribbean, Insect Genetics, Urban Pest Management, and Coccoidea), student competition, submitted papers, posters, and much more. (As in, don't forget the world-famous garlic crabs at The Rustic Inn in nearby Hollywood, FL. Its parking lot also became famous as one of the infestation sites of an exotic termite, *Nasutitermes costalis* - since eradicated. See the <http://extlab7.entnem.ufl.edu/PestAlert/> entry for 05/21/04)

The registration deadline for group rates at the Radisson Bahia Mar Beach Resort (800-531-2478) is 6 July, 2004. Detailed

meeting and hotel information is available at <http://www.flaentsoc.org/>.

## Seminar

Fall Seminar: ENY 6934, Section 4571, 1 credit, "**Designer Insects**", or Transgenic Insects for Pest Management Programs: Ecological, Ethical, Social and Logistic Issues. Students can participate in this seminar even if they do not have prior experience in molecular genetics. Contact Dr. **Hoy**, Room 3111, ext. 153 or [mahoy@ifas.ufl.edu](mailto:mahoy@ifas.ufl.edu).

## Benthologists?

**The Torre-Bueno Glossary of Entomology** defines **benthos** as "in freshwater and marine ecosystems, the collection of organisms attached to or resting on the bottom sediments." And for several days in early May, the **Florida Association of Benthologists** resided in our departmental ecosystem by hosting a workshop on aquatic Hemiptera in one of our teaching labs. Association president **Palmer D. Kinser, Jr.** wrote a very nice letter expressing his Association's gratitude for the use of our facilities and praising our staff for accommodating the Association's needs.

## Meetings and Presentations

Dr. **Julio Medal** attended the 15th International Plant Protection Congress 11-16 May in Beijing, China, and presented an invited paper on "Biological Control of *Solanum viarum* in the USA: Current Status and Perspectives." Dr. James Cuda co-authored the presentation.

Dr. **Julio Medal** was an invited speaker at the Tropical Soda Apple Task Force semi-annual meeting in Tifton, Georgia, during May. He gave an update on “The Mass Rearing and Post-release Evaluations of the South-American Leaf-beetle *Gratiana boliviana* (Chrysomelidae), the First Biocontrol Agent Released in Florida to Control Tropical Soda Apple.”

Dr. **Julio Medal** attended a joint meeting of the 6th Annual Southeast Exotic Pest Plant Council and the 19th Annual Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council in Pensacola Beach, FL, 28-30 April. He gave a paper on “Tropical Soda Apple in Florida: One Beetle Released, Four more coming.” The presentation was co-authored by Drs. **James Cuda**, **Bill Overholt**, and **Philip Stansly**

Dr. **Oscar Liburd** presented a paper entitled "Evaluation of Monitoring Techniques for Detecting Cranberry Tipworm in Rabbiteye and Southern Highbush Blueberries" at the International Symposium on *Vaccinium* (blueberry) Culture held in Portugal and Spain. The first part of the meeting that included the opening ceremony dealt mainly with production issues was held in Portugal, while the second part of the meeting dealing with insect pests and diseases was held in Spain. About 200 participants, including scientists, growers, and consultants from around the world, attended the meeting. (Note: cranberry tipworm is known in Florida as the “blueberry gall midge,” but the latter is not the correct common name.)

### **Skipping a M.S.**

In May, the faculty continued discussion of a proposal from the Department Graduate Committee that affects graduate students. The proposal was for direct admission from

the B.S. into the Ph.D. program or transfer into the Ph.D. program from the M.S. without first completing the M.S. The Graduate Committee felt that these admissions should be restricted to the very best students (i.e., top 5-10%) and that there should be a formal policy on which to base these admission decisions. The committee proposed the following criteria for direct admission or pre-M.S. transfer into the Ph.D. program:

- 1) Undergraduate GPA at least 3.5
- 2) GRE Verbal + Quantitative at least 1250
- 3) GRE Biology Subject Exam 80<sup>th</sup> percentile or above
- 4) Previous research experience (e.g., undergraduate thesis, published paper(s), presentation or poster at scientific meeting)
- 5) Clear and focused statement of intent (professional goals and research area)
- 6) Strong letters of recommendation
- 7) Strong support from Dissertation advisor for student to go straight into the Ph.D. program

The GPA and GRE scores selected were approximately minimum scores required of students who are nominated for the CALS Presidential and Alumni fellowship awards as these are students who are admitted to the Ph.D. program without a M.S.

Questions were raised about accepting students without a B.S. in a scientific field. However, current admittance policy requires that students pass the GRE Biology Subject in the 80 percentile or above which shows that they have some scientific background. Also, faculty felt that students in this program need to have some previous research experience. Students would be admitted only after meeting all the criteria

and upon the approval of the Graduate Committee. The faculty voted to accept this proposal. The above is only an overview and specific rules will be provided by the department's Student Services office.

### **Ph.D. Qualifying Exams**

Another topic at the May faculty meeting concerned Ph.D. qualifying exams. Many students are delaying these exams until near the end of their stay here. The Graduate Catalog states that these exams may be taken during the third semester beyond the B.S. degree, but there must be a minimum of two semesters between the oral portion of the exams and the date of the degree. A student may satisfy the last part of this requirement by taking the oral exam before the midpoint of the semester prior to the one in which she/he graduates. The Graduate Committee believes that taking the exams at such a late date defeats the purpose of the exams. The Qualifying Examination is intended to determine whether the student is qualified by training and experience to conduct the research proposed for his/her dissertation. It is not intended as an exit examination. These exams are intended to discover the strengths and weaknesses of the student's knowledge relevant to entomology and to the topic under investigation for the dissertation. The Qualifying Examination can, if approved by the supervisory committee, be taken before all course work has been completed.

The Graduate Committee is proposing that students complete their qualifying exams by no later than the fifth semester in the Ph.D. program (counting summers). If approved, this requirement will be placed in the Department Graduate Handbook. The Graduate Coordinator and Academic Office

will then monitor the student's progress, and if this deadline is not met, the student will be required to petition the Graduate Committee to be allowed to register.

Faculty expressed concerns that the decision to allow the student to register would be decided by the Graduate Coordinator alone. However, the student must petition the Graduate Committee, and the Committee would make the final decision. A suggestion was made to begin this requirement with students admitted in the fall of 2003. Faculty were in general agreement with the concept, but it was sent back to the Graduate Committee for a formal proposal.

Related to these concerns was a suggestion by Dr. **Pauline Lawrence** for students to present their research proposals to the department at the beginning of their program and again at the end as their exit seminar. Some faculty stated that this is done in departments at other universities. In fact, our Nematology students are already doing this as these students are required to take a seminar course during their first spring semester. Dr. **Marjorie Hoy** will take this suggestion back to the Graduate Committee so it could recommend some guidelines.

### **Keeping You Posted**

Last year, faculty requested that the newsletter carry announcements about new poster displays, and their location within the department. The last such information received was in December. Therefore, the usual request for such is being discontinued, but announcements will be made in the future if information is provided.

## Insects Are Essential

A story in the June, 2004 issue of **Discovery** magazine is entitled, “Why insects are vital to human survival.” You can view a copy of the article online at <http://www.discover.com/issues/jun-04/features/bzzzzzzzz/>.

## Alumni News

Dr. **Julio M. Arias-Reverón**, a graduate student from 1989 to 1995 under the supervision of Dr. Harold Browning, recently joined the faculty at the School of Agronomy, Universidad de Costa Rica. He has a full time, tenure-accruing appointment and he will be teaching undergraduate and graduate courses in agro-ecology and the use of computers in agriculture, as well as fulfilling research and extension responsibilities. Dr. Arias-Reverón may be contacted at [jmarias@racsa.co.cr](mailto:jmarias@racsa.co.cr).

## Reaching Out

**Erika Andersen** (M.S. graduate student) is our current Insect Outreach Program Coordinator. You can contact her at 352-392-1901 or [UFBugs@ifas.ufl.edu](mailto:UFBugs@ifas.ufl.edu) for information and scheduling. Recent activities include:

On Sunday, May 16<sup>th</sup>, at 8:30 am, a new TV 20 (ABC affiliate, cable channel 7) children’s show, The Learning Castle featured UF/IFAS Entomology & Nematology. Erika Andersen was a guest on the show and there were several video clips filmed from around the department!

## Bug Quote

“A solitary ant, afield, cannot be considered to have much of anything on his [sic] mind. four ants together, or ten, encircling a dead moth on a path, begin to look more like an idea. [But] it is only when you observe the dense mass of thousands of ants... blackening the ground that you begin to see the whole beast, and now you observe it thinking, planning, calculating. It is an intelligence, a kind of live computer, with crawling bits for its wits.” - from **The Lives of a Cell** by **Lewis Thomas**

## Pardon Our Mess

It is hard to believe we moved into this “new building” 13 1/2 years ago. But it is long enough for UF/IFAS to feel the building needs a face lift. Over the next few months, workmen will be busy in the corridors replacing the carpet and painting the walls.

## Software Tutorials

**Thomas Fasulo** is author or co-author of a large number of computer-verified tutorials distributed by the UF/IFAS Extension Bookstore. The tutorials provide training to various industries (urban pest control, ornamental and lawn, agriculture, etc.), CEUs to licensed pesticide applicators for recertification, and state-required training to technicians and ID card holders in Florida. Pest control companies in other states report to Tom that they also use them for training. In addition, three other states (Arizona, Vermont and West Virginia) authorize most of the CDs for CEUs. Recently, Tom pulled out his high-tech lead pencil and calculated that just in 2003 the Bookstore sold 666 (Just a coincidence folks!) of his CD-ROMs

to generate over \$15,000. Seventy percent was returned to Tom and his cooperators to support software development. For more information on this software see the UF/IFAS Buggy Software Web site at <http://pests.ifas.ufl.edu/software/>.

## Featured Creatures

This popular UF/IFAS Department of Entomology and Nematology and FDACS Division of Plant Industry Web site is available at <http://creatures.ifas.ufl.edu/>. New files are added every month and older files are updated as information becomes available. Looking for some exposure for you and your favorite creature? During the last 12 months, the Featured Creatures Web site recorded 1,327,976 distinct visitors and 2,456,562 page views.

New text and/or photographs were added to the publications on: lobate lac scale (major revision), la escama lobada de laca, red imported fire ant, granulate ambrosia beetle, beet armyworm, lesser cornstalk borer, pea leafminer, melonworm, corn earworm, Florida predatory stink bug, giant bark aphid, ash whitefly, Camaenidae snails of Florida, varroa mite (major revision), diaprepes root weevil, slugs of Florida (major revision), and the large canna leafroller.

## Newsletter Minutia

**Thomas Fasulo** is the newsletter editor. Please send submissions to him at [fasulo@ufl.edu](mailto:fasulo@ufl.edu). Issues are published about the middle of each month. Items for each month's issue should be sent no later than the 7<sup>th</sup> of that month.

Printed copies are distributed only within Building 970. A notice is sent to all those on the **UF-Bugnews-I** listserv when HTML and PDF copies are posted on the newsletter Web site at <http://entnews.ifas.ufl.edu/>, which contains instructions for subscribing and unsubscribing to the listserv. **Andy Koehler** does the coding for the HTML version.

During the last twelve months, the newsletter Web site recorded 36,131 distinct visitors and 60,632 page views. The newsletter listserv has 243 subscribers.