

August 2007

## Faculty News

Dr. **Jennifer Gillett** was recently elected by the Senate to serve on the Joint Senate-Presidential Sustainability Committee. This committee promotes sustainability within the University and in the University's relations with the larger community and seeks to enhance the University's standing as a global leader in sustainability. It assesses the progress of the University of Florida's sustainability efforts as compared to national and international best practices and pursues their implementation when appropriate.

Drs. **Eileen Buss** (Campus), **Ron Cave** (Ft. Pierce REC), **William Kern** (Ft. Lauderdale REC) and **Catharine Mannion** (Homestead REC) all received tenure and promotion to Associate Professor. Dr. **Heather McAuslane** was promoted to full Professor. Dr. **Norman Leppla** received a Senior Faculty promotion.

Dr. **Billy Crow** was elected to the IFAS Faculty Advisory Council.

Drs. **Jaret Daniels** and **Rob Meagher** (USDA-CMAVE) were featured in a Herald Tribune online video at <http://www.heraldtribune.com/apps/pbcs.dll/section?Category=NEWS10>. They were interviewed about *Papilio demoleus*, an invasive butterfly species with origins in Southeast Asia which could cause damage to nursery settings

across Florida. To view the video, click on "Small bug could cause damage."

Dr. **Mike Scharf** was offered and accepted the Insect Molecular Toxicologist position. On 1 July, he "joined" the department as an Assistant Professor with a 70% research and 30% teaching appointment. Mike originally came to UF in 2004 as an Assistant Research Scientist. He headed a project funded by Procter & Gamble to characterize new classes of volatile insecticide chemistry. Currently, funded research in the toxicology laboratory focuses on volatile insecticide chemistry, termite semiochemicals and developmental biology, termite cellulase biochemistry, termite gut metagenomics, and insecticide resistance in urban pests. In addition, Mike assumes Dr. **Simon Yu's** insect toxicology course, complete with lecture and lab components, during spring semester every year. Other continuing members of the toxicology laboratory include senior biological scientists Drs. **Xuguo (Joe) Zhou** and **Cheol Song**, biological scientist **Sam Nguyen**, and Ph.D. student **Matt Tarver**. A second Ph.D. student, Ameya Gondhalekar, joins the toxicology lab this fall. Originally from the Chicago area, Mike has officially adapted to life in Gainesville and is looking forward to many prosperous years and great interactions at UF.

More than one hundred forest entomologists from across the South met on Jekyll Island, Georgia, 23-26 July, for the 50th anniversary Southern Forest Insect Work Conference.

Among those attending was Dr. **John Foltz** who concluded 15 years of service as secretary-treasurer for the group. A poster, "African honey bees in wooded areas," co-authored with **MK O'Malley** and Dr. **Jamie Ellis**, was on display throughout the conference. It may also be seen in the south corridor outside Ellis's lab.

Dr. **Gomaa Abou-Elella**, Plant Protection Department, National Research Centre, Cairo, Egypt, arrived on 2 August to spend six months in Dr. **Marjorie A. Hoy's** laboratory. Dr. Abou-Elella is an acarologist.

Dr. **Bob Woodruff**, Emeritus Taxonomist & Curator, Florida State Collection of Arthropods and an Adjunct Professor with the department, is making his fourth insect collecting trip to Guatemala from 27 August - 12 September. He will camp in the field most of the time with José Monzon, a former student of Dr. **Jack Schuster** (Ph.D. '75) who is head of Entomology & Ecotourism at Universidad del Valle in Guatemala City. The following local entomologists have been on one or more of José's expeditions: Dr. **John Heppner**, Dr. Charles Covell, Bruce Sutton, Dr. **G.B. Edwards**. You can contact Dr. Woodruff at [BobsGems@aol.com](mailto:BobsGems@aol.com).

## Staff News

**James Kocher**, Senior Teaching Lab Specialist, recently left our department for a teaching position at Hoggetowne Charter Middle School in Gainesville. Kocher worked on distance education software modules while he was with us. Before non-residents laugh at the name "Hogtown," they

should know that Gainesville was called Hogtown a long time ago, and that Hogtown Creek runs through the middle of the city and occasionally floods during heavy rains.

## Student News

New officers for the department's Entomology and Nematology Student Organization are: President: **Andres Sandoval**, Vice-President: **John Herbert**, Treasurer: **Christian Salcedo**, Secretary: **Delano Lewis**, Historian: **Margie Pfiester**

Ph.D. student **Susan Gruner** was featured in the UF/IFAS news release "Of Maggots and Murder," about her research. See the 07/27/07 entry on Pest Alert at <http://pestalert.ifas.ufl.edu/>.

Dr. **Pauline Lawrence's** laboratory hosted two high school students for seven weeks this summer as part of the UF Science Student Training Program (SSTP). Ph.D. student **Luis Matos** served as their principal mentor. **Chantel Johnson** (Miami, FL) determined whether the *Diachasmimorpha longicaudata* entomopoxvirus (DIEPV) is confined to the poison gland or occurs throughout the body of its parasitic wasp adult, while **Ashis Patel** (Newark, NJ) tested the hypothesis that DIEPV is inherited through the wasp's egg. The students presented posters of their work at the SSTP Professors Reception. Their posters may be viewed outside Room 2218.

## Publications

**Hall DW, Branham MA.** (2007). Banded net-winged beetle, *Calopteron discrepans* (Newman). *Featured Creatures*. EENY-413. [http://creatures.ifas.ufl.edu/misc/beetles/banded\\_net-winged\\_beetle.htm](http://creatures.ifas.ufl.edu/misc/beetles/banded_net-winged_beetle.htm)

**Grissell EE.** (2007). Scoliid wasps of Florida. *Featured Creatures*. EENY-409. [http://creatures.ifas.ufl.edu/misc/wasps/scoliid\\_wasps.htm](http://creatures.ifas.ufl.edu/misc/wasps/scoliid_wasps.htm)

**Hall DW.** (July 2007). Eastern dobsonfly, *Corydalus cornutus* (Linnaeus). *Featured Creatures*. EENY-414. [http://creatures.ifas.ufl.edu/misc/eastern\\_dobsonfly.htm](http://creatures.ifas.ufl.edu/misc/eastern_dobsonfly.htm)

Gandolfo D, McKay F, **Medal JC, Cuda JP.** 2007. Open-field host specificity test of *Gratiana boliviana* (Chrysomelidae), a biocontrol agent of tropical soda apple in the USA. *Florida Entomologist* 90: 223-228.

**Medal J, Bustamante N.** 2007. Weed biological control in Latin America. *In* Proceedings XX Congreso Venezolano de Entomologia, San Cristobal, Venezuela. Universidad Nacional Experimental del Tachira.

## Meetings and Presentations

Dr. **Julio Medal** attended the 10th International Symposium on Biological Control in Brasilia, Brazil, 30 June - 4 July. Medal gave the poster presentation "Biological control of *Solanum tampicense* in Florida: Field surveys and host-specificity tests." The presentation was co-authored by **Nikary Bustamante**, Dr. Juan Barrera (Ecosur, Mexico), Jose Monzon (Museo Entomologico, Universidad de San Carlos, Guatemala). Oscar Avila (MAG-Costa Rica), and Dr. **James Cuda**.

Dr. **Julio Medal** and **Nikary Bustamante** were invited to give the opening talk on "Biological control of invasive plants in Latin-America" at the XX Venezuela Entomological Symposium held in San Cristobal, 22 - 26 July. After the meeting

**Medal and Bustamante** conducted a one-week field survey in Venezuela searching for natural enemies of wetland nightshade (*Solanum tampicense*) and turkeyberry (*Solanum torvum*), invasive weeds in Florida.

Ph.D. student **Rosy Gill** participated in the 90th Annual meeting of Florida Entomological Society (FES) held in Sarasota, 15-18 July. She presented the poster "Susceptibility and fitness cost of cotton bollworm, *Helicoverpa armigera* (Hübner) associated with Cry 1Ac toxin of Bt cotton."

Graduate student **Gaurav Goyal** received 2nd prize in the FES Ph.D. student paper competition for his talk "Establishing the identity of corn silk fly."

Graduate student **Hardev Sandhu** presented a paper, "Life cycle of lesser cornstalk borer, *Elasmopalpus lignosellus* (Zeller) (Lepidoptera: Pyralidae) on sugarcane" in the FES Ph.D. student paper competition. Co-authors were Drs. **Gregg Nuessly, Susan Webb, Ron Cherry, and Robert Gilbert**.

Dr. **James P. Cuda** attended the FES meeting and organized and moderated a symposium in collaboration with Adam Silagyi, USDA, APHIS, PPQ on "Invasive species: update on new pests, early detection and management strategies." He also presented the paper "Establishment of the UF/IFAS Invasive Species Coordinating Council," which was co-authored by Drs. **Lance Osborne, Chuck Jacoby and Ken Langeland**.

Dr. **James Cuda** was invited to participate in the 2007 Everglades Invasive Species Summit held in Miami, FL, 25-27 July.

Cuda, who is a member of the Research Committee, facilitated the Research Workshop in collaboration with Paul Pratt, USDA, ARS. Cuda also was asked to serve on the Rapid Identification and Assessment Team where he will be responsible for identification of new insects and invertebrates invading the Everglades.

## Grants

Drs. **Julio Meda** and **James Cuda** received an extension of the USDA-APHIS grant (\$180,000) to continue during 2007 the "Implementation of Biological Control of Tropical Soda Apple."

Ph.D. student **Rosy Gill** received a \$200 IFAS travel grant to attend the recent FES meeting.

Ph.D. students **Gaurav Goyal** and **Hardev Sandhu** received \$100 FES travel grants to assist in traveling to FES meeting. They also received \$100 FES research mini grants.

## Segments

The latest Web site to receive our **Best of the Bugs** award is the **Online Guide to Insect Songs**. This site lets the user see and hear 76 species of U.S. crickets, katydids, and cicadas. A separate window for each species displays a stunning photograph of the songster, the wave form of the song, and a verbal description of the song. The species windows is accessible from a master list or from a photographic key to families, species groups, and species. Find this site and others via <http://pests.ifas.ufl.edu/bestbugs/>.

Free to a good home! Scores of back issues of the Florida Entomologist are waiting in the lunch area for you to adopt them. Many

of the issues date back to the late 60s, early 70s.

The Homerus swallowtail is the Western Hemisphere's largest butterfly, but University of Florida researchers say its numbers are so small that conservation and captive breeding efforts are needed to save the insect, found only in two parts of Jamaica. See the story from the 08/09/07 link on Pest Alert at <http://pestalert.ifas.ufl.edu/>.

## Bug Quote

The thing called a chigger  
Is really no bigger  
Than the smaller end of a pin.  
But the lump that it raises  
Just itches like blazes  
And that's where the rub sets in.

- Attributed to entomologist **H.B. Hungerford**, University of Kansas

## Newsletter Minutia

**Thomas Fasulo** is the newsletter editor. You can submit news anytime to him at [fasulo@ufl.edu](mailto:fasulo@ufl.edu). Issues are published the middle of each month. Submit items for an issue by the 7th of that month.

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