



BIOSPHERE

The Weekly Bulletin of Biology

Study smart for finals.

MS Thesis Defense

John Palukuri shall defend his thesis on 5 December at 10:30 am in CR 5102. The title is, "The effects of xylanase on the archenteron morphology of sea urchin embryos."

Weighing in on Wildlands

Dr. **Polly Schiffman**, among others of CSUN's faculty and faculty at other colleges and museums, has been offering expert opinion about land at the north end of the San Fernando Valley. She recently spoke at a LA Planning Commission meeting, and she is quoted in the [L.A. Times](#).

Neuroscience Meetings

This year at the international Neuroscience conference in San Diego, the labs of Drs. Banner, Cohen, and De Bellard represented CSUN with students presenting posters on a wide variety of topics.

- **Evelyn Dubon** and Dr. **Randy Cohen**, "The influence of GABA on the feeding behavior of the cockroach *Rhyparobia maderae*"
- **Fritz Libby** and **Cohen**, "The effects of mushroom body lesions on the

feeding behavior of the cockroach *Rhyparobia maderae*"

- **Angelica Cruz** and **Cohen**, "The impact of GABA receptors on the excitotoxic damage in the *spastic* Han-Wistar rat, an animal model of ataxia"
- **Shahab Younesi**, **Toni Uhlendorf**, and **Cohen**, "High-fat diet reverses Purkinje cell neuroprotection attained by moderate aerobic exercise in *spastic* Han-Wistar rats"
- **Kara Jew** and **Cohen**, "Application of the rotarod to monitor progressive Purkinje cell death exhibited in cerebellar ataxia"
- **Alex Poladian**, **Christina Avoundjian**, **Edward Rosenblatt**, **Sean Lee**, **M. Pecache** and Dr. **Lisa Banner**, "Comparison of hippocampal cytokine expression in different animal models of diabetes"
- **Sean Lee**, **Christina Avoundjian**, **Alex Poladian**, **Edward Rosenblatt**, and **Banner**, "Effects of statin treatment on hippocampal memory and inflammatory response in diabetic mice"
- **Elizabeth Klein**, **Brandan Tong**, **Darwin Martinez**, **Jesus Hernandez**, **Martha Cornejo**, and Dr. **Maria Elena de Bellard**, "NGF, NRG1 and GDNF as chemoattractants and chemokinetic molecules for a Schwann cell line"

- **Sabrina Singh, Toni Uhlerdorf, A. O. Kopyov, L. Peltz, K. Ortiz, and Cohen**, “Do human pluripotent stem cells ameliorate NMDA-induced hippocampal degeneration and related functional deficits?”
- **Toni Uhlerdorf, Ruslan Nuryyev, Shahbaz Doad, A. O. Kopyov, K. Ortiz, L. Peltz, and Cohen**, “Human embryonic stem cells produce structural and functional improvements in the *spastic* Han-Wistar rat model of ataxia”

Herps Appreciated at the Natural History Museum

Drs. **Robert Espinoza** and **Jeanne Robertson**, along with undergraduate **Matt Dickson** and grads **Mark Oliva** and **Dan Winfield** recently participated in the Reptile and Amphibian Appreciation Day. This fifth annual event attracted more than 3000 museum visitors, who were treated to videos of sprinting geckos and facts about introduced lizard species in southern California.

Alumni News

Gordon Goldstine (BS '10) is now at UCSF Dental School.

Behrod Katebian (BS '12) was elected a fellow of the academic honors society [ΦΚΦ](#). Fellows are selected in a national competition for their achievements and accomplishments far beyond mere grades.

New Publications

Drs. **Robert Carpenter**, **Peter Edmunds**, and coauthors have an article in *Oceanography*, “Biological and

physical interactions on a tropical island coral reef.”

Tiffany Smith and Dr. **Steve Oppenheimer** have a new paper out, “Involvement of L(-) rhamnose in sea urchin gastrulation: a live embryo assay.” It is in *Zygote*, a journal of Cambridge University Press. Oppenheimer says, “This paper implicates the sugar L-rhamnose in cell interactions in the sea urchin embryo model.” The sea urchin is a designated NIH model system for which over 20 major mechanisms later found important in human health and disease have been discovered or developed.

Coral Reef Recruitment Workshop in Okinawa, Japan

This past spring, grad student **Alex Yarid** traveled to the Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology in Japan to participate in a workshop focused on coral recruitment. The workshop was cohosted, in part, by Drs. **Peter Edmunds** and **Robert Carpenter**. During the workshop, coral reef experts analyzed past and current trends in coral recruitment and assessed how the changing environment may affect coral recruitment in the future. In addition to being a workshop participant, Yarid served as the data manager for the project, compiling an extensive dataset on coral recruitment rates around the world.

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Department of Biology
California State University, Northridge
Editors: Paul Wilson and Robert Espinoza
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