



BIOSPHERE

The Weekly Bulletin of Biology

Biology Colloquium: 16 November 2012, 2:00 pm in CR 5125

“Sea Turtle CSI: It’s all in the Genes”

Kelly Stewart

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MS Thesis Defense

Francis van Ordt will be defending his thesis, entitled “Wing morphology and foraging ecology of Pacific boobies” on next Tuesday, 20 November, at noon in CR 5201. Everyone is invited to attend.

Guest Speaker on Cancer

Dr. Gabriel Pineda will be giving a talk on “Blood Cancers” to the Biology of Cancer class. The talk is at 5:00 p.m. on Monday 29 November in CR 5125. Pineda works as a postdoctoral fellow at the Moores Cancer Center and the Sanford Consortium for Regenerative Medicine at UCSD. His current research aims to understand molecular mechanisms that regulate stem cell functions in blood malignancies. The lecture is open to the public.

Grad Seminars for Spring

Dr. **Polly Schiffman** will lead a graduate seminar in ecology (BIOL 655C) Thursdays 5–8 pm. It will focus on community ecology. There shall be no term paper, nor any exams. The classwork will be 100% reading and discussions, including the new advanced textbook

([Mittlebach 2012](#)), as well as student-selected primary literature on community ecology. This seminar is designed for graduate students pursuing field biology, ecology, and evolution. Students will be encouraged to consider how the various topics addressed in the seminar relate to their own M.S. thesis research.

Dr. **Randy Cohen** will be teaching a seminar in physiology (BIOL 655E). It will meet on Tuesdays 2–5 pm. Graduate students will be discussing the physiological, molecular, biochemical, and morphological causes and effects of human neuropathological diseases like Alzheimers, Parkinsons, Huntingtons, epilepsy, etc.

Dr. **Larry Baresi** will lead a graduate seminar in microbiology (BIOL 655A) titled, “Methanogens, Their Viruses, and Evolution.” It will meet Mondays 5–8 pm. The group shall investigate the evolution, physiology, molecular biology, and genetics of the only bacteria that produce methane, the methanogens, and their related viruses. The coursework is to be comprised of in-class reviews of publications, one presentation per student, and a final short review paper. This seminar is tailored for graduate students in microbiology, cell biology, and molecular genetics.

Dr. **Chhandak Basu** will be teaching a seminar in biotechnology (BIOL 655H) on Fridays 11 am to 2 pm. This course will provide participants with information on new developments and discoveries, as well as cutting edge tools used in biotechnology. Students shall critically review recent journal papers published in top biology/biotechnology journals. Students will be required to present journal papers, and participate in classroom discussions. The course will also cover some of the issues related to public perceptions of genetically modified organisms.

Zavala's Ford Foundation Service

The Ford Foundation invited several senior Ford Fellows, including Dr. **MariaElena Zavala**, to meet in New York City to discuss the activities of the Ford Foundation. In addition, Zavala was invited to help plan a meeting in celebration of 50 Years the Ford Fellowships. The Ford Foundation has sponsored over 5000 people through this fellowship program. These fellowships are highly competitive, and there have been at least three former MARC/MBRS students who have been awarded these prestigious fellowships (**Annette Angus**, **Mayra Bacama**, and **Jaime Lopez**). After all the committee work, there was a banquet followed by an address by Henry Louis Gates.

New Publications on Fishes

Dr. **Larry Allen** and coauthors have two papers just out in the *Bulletin of the Southern California Academy of Sciences*. Allen and Allen Andrews authored, "Bomb radiocarbon dating and estimated longevity of Giant Sea Bass." Allen and **Heidi E. Block** authored, "Planktonic larval duration, settlement, and growth rates of the young-of-the-year of two sand basses (*Paralabrax*

nebulifer and *P. maculatofasciatus*) from Southern California."

At Evolution Meetings

Anu Sadhu Dimashkie and Dr. **Gini Vandergon** each presented at the Evolution Society meeting in Ottawa. The posters were entitled: "Evolution of regulatory genes of the anthocyanin pathway" and "Gene family evolution of linked genes in the anthocyanin pathway."

Panel Service at National Science Foundation

Dr. **Robert Espinoza** recently spent a few days in Washington DC reviewing dozens of proposals for an NSF panel in the Physiological and Structural Systems Cluster of the Division of Integrative Organismal Systems.

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