

BIORHYTHMS



April, 2008

Volume 2 : Issue 7

New Stuff

Possible biology T-shirt designs are still being accepted, but only for a little while longer. If you have a fun idea, please email [biosepc] soon!

If you are interested in working as a field assistant for the UW-Madison this summer (6/1-8/15), please check with [mottll] or email Clayton Kingdon at the University of Wisconsin [kingdon@wisc.edu].

If you are a graduating senior and interested in a two-year position as a lab technician at Brown University, please check your email or contact [biosepc]; we can forward you the information. Undergraduate lab research with an emphasis in molecular techniques is required.

Upcoming Events

Greg Ruthig, a candidate for a visiting position in biology, will lecture on “The Influence of the Environment and Infectious Disease on Amphibian Egg Laying Behavior,” Monday (4/6) at noon in Science 2021.

Please email [biosepc] if you are interested in going to dinner with the candidate on Monday evening. Slots will be filled on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Sign-up sheets for the Biology Spring Picnic will be available soon. SEPC members will be visiting biology classes with more information, so keep an eye out!

Want to be a member of the Biology SEPC for your junior and senior years? SEPC elections will be held in the month of April. You must be a registered biology major with sophomore standing to run. More information will be available shortly; look for SEPC members making election announcements in your classes.

A Study Break/ Open Forum Discussion of the Biology Curriculum will be held in the third week of April (tentatively the 16th). Please join us for treats and give your input on the structure of the biology curriculum and suggestions for improvement.

Student Insider: Katie Kaplan '09

Notes from Down Under

Last semester I studied abroad in the University of Adelaide program in South Australia. When I began what would turn out to be a 36 hour journey from the fertile great plains of Iowa to the driest region of the driest continent on earth I hoped the contrasting environments both physically and academically would provide me with a well-rounded experience. Looking back on it now, my experience abroad did just that. Academically I was able to explore subjects that were presented in a much different way. I went from Grinnell's small intimate classrooms to large lecture halls, frequently not well attended by students. I would be lying if I didn't say that it was nice to have a break from the academic rigors of Grinnell science classes and the perfect 70 degrees and sunny weather everyday seems like more than just an added perk after this winter. Because Australians choose their specialty when they enter University I was able to take Human Physiology, Pharmacology, Marine Ecology and Microeconomics with students who only studied those subjects and were in the process of obtaining degrees for them. I got some funny looks when I told

Australian students the courses I was taking and when I tried to explain the liberal arts philosophy I was often met with a gaze of further befuddlement. This utilitarian approach to education stood out as the antithesis to Grinnell's intellectually nurturing emphasis on a well-rounded multidisciplinary education. Although the Australian students may have had a firmer foundation in these subjects (being that it was all they studied) I found that the skills obtained through my varied coursework allowed me to draw on knowledge of different subjects that other students knew virtually nothing about which was particularly evident in group projects. However, before I get lost in self adulation of liberal arts academic superiority I realize that as my time at Grinnell slips away and graduation is slowly creeping closer and closer the idea of job security and having expertise in a specific topic seems like a real asset. So what's the moral of the story? Well, I don't really have one other than it was interesting to observe and participate in a different educational approach and experience a different part of the world.

Now I wouldn't feel complete in explaining my experience without mentioning my impressions of Australia as a whole. Aside from school, I was able to sleep under the stars in the expansive desert that is the outback with the IES study abroad program as well as go snorkeling on the Great Barrier Reef and hike through the Daintree rainforest with some friends (which was not included in the program). For bio majors interested in exploring wildlife, as a continent isolated for hundreds of thousands of years Australia has evolved some of the most incredible flora and fauna in the world. It was really unlike anything I could of imagined and was the first thing that surprised me when I got off the plane. Everywhere there are odd looking birds and alien like plant species. For example instead of white swans the swans are black with red beaks and even in the city I could occasionally see little marsupials hanging out in trees at night. Not to mention that it is home to the top ten world's most deadliest snakes and basically anything there can potentially kill you including kangaroos and cute cuddly koalas.

Culturally, the enigmatic Australian aboriginals are unlike any other culture on earth and to this day no one has any solid idea as to how they got to Australia in the first place. Not to sound like a travel brochure but

Australia really is environmentally and culturally a unique and amazing continent that should be high on the list of any world traveler or Bio student looking to try out something new.

Biology Comic of the Month



Random Fact of the Month

In the trunk of an elephant there are no bones, but approximately 40,000 muscles!



<http://www.geocities.com/razashome/amazing.html>

http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/c/ce/Asian_elephant_trunk.jpg/520px-Asian_elephant_trunk.jpg

Keep an eye out for future issues of BioRhythms! If you have any questions, please feel free to ask!

We can be contacted at [biosepc].

Your friendly BioSEPC,

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Zach Newman '08

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Nick Vitko '08

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