

Life Sciences Newsletter

Department of Life Sciences

June 2014

Welcome to all New Staff

Research Associates

Claire Dooley, supervised by Vincent Savolainen & **Andrew Waters**, supervised by Nikolai Windbichler.

Visiting Researchers

Christopher Edge, supervised by Nick Franks; **Toni Fleming**, supervised by Geoff Baldwin; **Caleb Ingram**, supervised by Steve Matthews.

Talks

Eoin O’Gorman gave a talk on his geothermal stream research at the Joint Aquatic Sciences Meeting in Portland, Oregon in May. The conference brought together 4 of the biggest aquatic organisations in the US and was attended by >3,500 delegates.

Simon Pooley presented a paper entitled 'Human crocodile conflict in South Africa and Swaziland from 1949-2014' at the (biennial) 23rd Working Meeting of the Crocodile Specialist Group, held at McNeese State University, in Lake Charles, Louisiana, USA (May 26-30, 2014).

Appointments

Walter Jetz has been appointed to the Task Force on Data and Knowledge of Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity & Ecosystem Services (IPBES).

Athena Swan

Your department is applying for the Athena Swan Silver Award, and **these awards are likely to become mandatory for eligibility of a Department for Research Council funding**. RCUK states that it expects those institutions in receipt of Research Council funding to "provide evidence of ways in which equality and diversity issues are managed at both an institutional and department level".

It is very important for our Athena application that we receive a good response rates to the surveys specifically designed to our department. **The deadline to complete these has been extended until Monday 30 June** to give all staff and students the opportunity to have their say.

[Staff Survey](#)

[PhD Student's Survey](#)

Useful Information

The College is ranked 5th overall in the 2015 Guardian University Guide. Click this [link](#) for further details.

A new designated resting and nursing room is now available in Room 210-Sherfield Walkway. Follow this [link](#) for further details.

Prizes and Awards

Congratulations to the winners of the Faculty of Natural Sciences Awards for Excellence in Teaching: **Stephen Brickley, Colin Campbell, Brian Carnell, Giovanna De Palo, Christoph Engl, Shannon Ewart, Edward Harding, Stephen Matthews, Shoroko Mombrikotb, Tony Nolan, John Pinney, Rebecca Price, Murray Selkirk and Michael Tristem.**

Helen Pennington (PhD Student) has been awarded two travel fellowships/grants for a three month placement: €3000 (plus travel expenses and insurance) by the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD - German Academic Exchange Service) & €2200 by the European Cooperation in Science and Technology (COST) Short-Term Scientific Missions (STSMs).

Mike Tristem has been awarded the President's Award for Excellence in Teaching.

Giorgio Gilestro's lab has been awarded an EMBO LTF postdoctoral fellowship.

Publications

Baum, J et al (Wilson Wong, Xiao-chen Bai, Alan Brown, Israel S Fernandez, Eric Hanssen, Melanie Condron, Yan Hong Tan, Sjors HW Scheres (2014). Cryo-EM structure of the Plasmodium falciparum 80S ribosome bound to the anti-protozoan drug emetine. *eLife* 2014;10.7554/eLife.03080. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.7554/eLife.03080>. This is the first cryo-EM structure that visualizes an antibiotic bound to any ribosome at atomic resolution and has important implications for development of anti-malarial drugs.

Hodgson JA, Mulligan CJ, Al-Meerri A & Raaum RL paper 'A late Pleistocene back- to-Africa Migration into the Horn of Africa. *PLoS Genetics*' is in press and will be published 12 June 2014.

Crisanti A, Windbichler N et al. (Bernardini F, Galizi R, Menichelli M, Papathanos PA, Dritsou V, Marois E) paper "Site-specific genetic engineering of the Anopheles gambiae Y chromosome" has been published by PNAS on 12 May 2014. PubMed PMID: 24821795.

Windbichler N, Crisanti A et al. (Simoni A, Siniscalchi C, Chan YS, Huen DS, Russell S) paper "Development of synthetic selfish elements based on modular nucleases in Drosophila melanogaster" has been published by *Nucleic Acids Res* on 6 May 2014. PubMed PMID: 24803674.

Dell A, Haslam SM et al. (Wohlschlager T, Butschi A, Grassi P, Sutov G, Gauss R, Hauck D, Schmieder SS, Knobel M, Titz A, Hengartner MO, Aebi M, Künzler M) paper 'Methylated glycans as conserved targets of animal and fungal innate defense' was published by PNAS on 30 May 2014.

Mustafa Djamgoz' book: 'Beat Cancer: How to Regain Control of Your Health and Your Life' was published on 5 June 14.

Windbichler N & Crisanti A et al (Galizi R, Doyle LA, Menichelli M, Bernardini F, Deredec A, Burt A, Stoddard BL) paper "A synthetic sex ratio distortion system for the control of the human malaria mosquito" was published in [Nature Communications](#) on 10 June 2014.10.1038/NCOMMS4977. This ranked 63rd in over 36,000 papers published in all scientific journal of the same age for the interest it raised in the scientific and media communities in terms of citations and downloads (more than 8000 in one week).

Media/outreach activities

Carsten Rahbek's study "Light-coloured butterflies love sunny UK: Hot British summer sees numbers of cabbage whites and clouded yellows soar" was mentioned and quoted in the Daily Mail on 28 May 2014.

Mustafa Djamgoz was mentioned and quoted in the telegraph.co.uk in relation to his new book 'Beat Cancer: How to Regain Control of Your Health and Your Life'.

Lisa Signorile was quoted in an article "Concerns Europe faces grey squirrel invasion", published by Herald Scotland on 6 June 2014.

Walter Jetz's paper 'Global Distribution and Conservation of Evolutionary Distinctness in Birds' received media interest in Cell Press (altmetric.com).

Eoin O'Gorman will be chairing a session at the US Embassy for the upcoming Oceans Conference (hosted by the US Department of State), with a web uplink to US Secretary of State John Kerry talking about how we can change political views on the problems of climate change.

Andrea Crisanti was quoted in an article "Genetically altered mosquitoes could curb malaria", published by The Guardian on 10 June 2014 p13.

Research Grants and Fellowships

Nadia Guerra secured a funding for a £1.5M interdisciplinary research programme named TERACELL that combines research within Physical Sciences, Advanced Engineering, Life Sciences and Medicine. The key objective is to develop new technologies for early cancer diagnosis.

Health & Safety

What does the Life Sciences Health & Safety Committee do?

The remit of the Committee is to advise and assist the Head of Department in the effective discharge of their health and safety responsibilities and in this respect to:

- 1) Promote a positive health and safety culture
- 2) Act as the Departmental forum for consultation with staff and students on health and safety matters
- 3) Monitor, review and advise on safety training, hazards in the Dept., inspections and arrangements for dealing with emergencies
- 4) Discuss reports of accidents, near misses and work related health problems and prevent re-occurrence
- 5) Advise the Head of Department on new guidance, policies and procedures and their implementation



Who goes to the meetings and who represents me?

The current names of key Department representatives on the committee are below. If you have any health and safety related issues you would like raised you can contact the relevant individual:

- Chairperson – Prof Murray Selkirk (Head of Dept)
- Academic rep(s): Prof. George Christophides, Dr. Tom Bell, Dr. Robert Weinzierl, Prof. Pietro Spanu
- Postdoctoral Research rep: Dr Alexandra Anderson
- Post Graduate student rep: Mr Ed Couchman
- Undergraduate student rep: Dr Steven Connolly

The committee meets once per term and minutes of the meetings are available on the Dept. of Life Sciences safety webpage: Click [here](#) to access.

The next meeting is scheduled for the 6th August.