



The International Biogeography Society

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

In August, I attended a conference in Wales that included a symposium on historical biogeography. A colleague at this symposium indicated that the International Biogeography Society currently has a reputation among some European biogeographers for having a strong North American bias. Indeed, this observation is understandable given that the first two conferences were in North America, and most of the society's officers have to date been drawn from North American institutions.

Officers of the IBS have recognized this North American bias—in fact, even considered it something of a logistical advantage during the critical first years of the society's existence. However, we have always looked forward to, and are actively working toward, a maturing IBS that is much more international in character.

The most important event to take us in this direction will come in January 2007, with the convening of the 3rd biennial IBS conference in the Canary Islands. At the aforementioned conference in Wales, I heard a number of attendees express enthusiasm for the Canary Islands conference, in no small part because "vacation travel packages" should make attendance affordable for many colleagues and students from Europe.

Along with the Canary Islands conference, we are enthusiastic about actively supporting the "Palaeogeography and Palaeobiogeography: Biodiversity in Space and Time" conference, to be convened in Cambridge, U.K., next April (see announcement in this newsletter)—yet another excellent opportunity to increase the international network of the IBS. And with an increasing relevance to biogeographers beyond North America, we should see a significant boost in the number of active members.

Meanwhile, I encourage all active members to invite colleagues and students to become members; and all lapsed members to consider renewing your membership. We will soon introduce an "active members only" area on the IBS website that will provide a convenient portal to an array of biogeographic resources and information—one of a growing number of good reasons to be an active member of the IBS.

- Brett Riddle

2007 CONFERENCE INTERNATIONAL BIOGEOGRAPHY SOCIETY TENERIFE, CANARY ISLANDS

The 2007 biennial conference of the International Biogeography Society will be held in Puerto de la Cruz, Tenerife, Canary Islands (Spain) between January 9th and 14th.

The board received many excellent proposals for symposia topics and is working hard to select the five that will be presented at the conference. Announcement of symposia selections will be made soon.



Conference center



View from nearby hotel

2006 CONFERENCE Palaeogeography and Palaeobiogeography: Biodiversity in Space and Time

April 10-13th April 2006

Hosted by the National Centre for Environmental e-Science.

This meeting aims to broaden scientific understanding of the evolution of Earth's biodiversity by facilitating collaboration between palaeogeographers, palaeobiogeographers, and modern day geographers and biogeographers. The meeting will consist of invited speaker seminars, workshops and poster sessions.

The meeting will take place at Cambridge University. Registration will be announced soon and more information can be found at <http://www.es.ucl.ac.uk/research/forthcomingevents.htm>. The organizers may also be contacted directly at:

Dr. Paul Upchurch (p.upchurch@ucl.ac.uk)

Dr. Alistair McGowan (a.mcgowan@nhm.ac.uk)

Claire Slater (c.slater@nhm.ac.uk)

NEW WEBSITE PROVIDES BIOGRAPHIES FOR OVER 250 HISTORICAL NATURALISTS

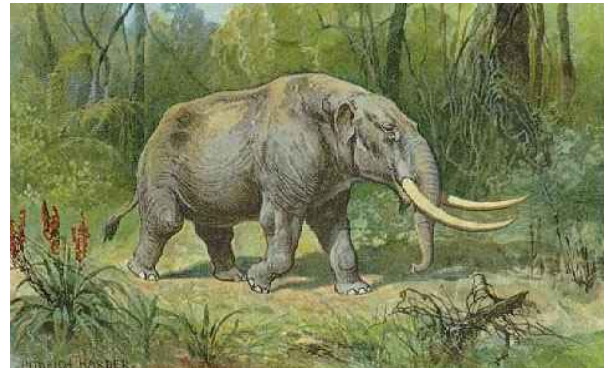
I am pleased to report that I have just opened a new website containing what might be described as "chrono-biographical sketches" of over 250 historical naturalists (all now deceased) connected with biogeography studies. This new site is designed both to stand on its own as a biographical service, and to form the main biographical component of my already operating "Early Classics in Biogeography" sites.

Early on it was apparent that the web-based biographical information I linked to to support the latter services tended to be both spotty and transient, so I decided to create something more consistent, and permanent. Each "sketch" consists of a brief overview of a few to several sentences, followed by a chronological accounting of the main events in the individual's professional life, and finally some pointers toward sources and/or further reading.

There are three menu-organized sortings of the basic information: (1) by author name (2) by author nationality, and (3) by the main subjects the individuals were identified with. The full title of the new service is "Some Biogeographers, Evolutionists and Ecologists: Chrono-Biographical Sketches"; it may be entered at: <http://www.wku.edu/~smithch/chronob/homelist.htm>

Contents of the new site may be searched from the search window installed at the "Early Classics...To 1950" site; it is relatively easy to navigate back and forth. Future enhancements to the new service are likely to consist of the preparation of perhaps twenty or thirty further profiles, and the addition, as possible, of portraits of the naturalists. Biogeography is a field with a long history and a tendency from time to time to re-invent the wheel--hopefully this service will help to re-introduce workers to some of its past foremost thinkers.

CHARLES H. SMITH
Professor of Library Public Services and
Science Librarian
Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green.
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SPOTLIGHT ARTICLE

Re-wilding North America
Donlan et al. 2005.
Nature 436:913-914.

Should we introduce African lions, Asian and African elephants, cheetah, wild horses, camels, and other megafauna into North America? In a recent commentary published in *Nature*, Donlan and his colleagues¹ suggest that doing so would help to meet several conservation challenges.

This proposition seems somewhat outlandish at first glance, anathema to mainstream conservation efforts of biological diversity. Should we really introduce nonnative species to North America? Aren't 'exotic' species a large threat to biological diversity? Such questions cut directly to the heart of issues that must be addressed by today's conservation biologists, issues that cannot be resolved without considering the temporal and spatial context of species distributions, i.e. without a biogeographic context.

Prior to human arrival in North America, 13,000 ybp or earlier, a great number and variety of large mammals inhabited the Americas. Shortly following human occupation of the continent, most of these species went extinct. Some debate exists in the literature, but it is clear that humans contributed, if not largely caused, these species extinctions². The loss of these large herbivores and carnivores has undoubtedly had profound impacts on the distribution and abundance of the species surviving today in North America³.

Many of these extinct megafauna have no surviving analogs: giant ground sloths, saber-toothed cats, etc. Other species extinct in North America have closely related analogs that survive on other continents: lions, cheetahs, elephants and the like. Some species, such as camels and horses, evolved in North America and expanded into Eurasia before subsequently going extinct in North America.

It is unclear exactly how genetically similar these surviving species are to those that went extinct in North America. Certainly, they cannot be identical, but how closely similar is close enough? Would such introductions be best thought of as returning species to their native geographical ranges or instead as the introduction of nonnative species? Would these functionally similar species help to restore missing ecological dynamics - dynamics that could not be restored otherwise? Further, would these introduced populations help to secure biological diversity that is at risk in Africa and Eurasia?

These scientific questions together with a host of social and economic ones are raised prominently by Donlan et al.'s proposition. While it is unclear how such questions will ultimately be resolved, it is clear that raising such questions can help to stimulate much needed debate in the conservation biology literature. Hopefully, such debate will not only allow us to make optimal decisions for the conservation of North American biota, but also help to promote the adoption of longer term

and broader spatial perspectives into the continued development of conservation science.

References:

1. Donlan, J., Greene, H.W., Berger, J., Bock, C.E., Bock, J.H., Burney, D.A., Estes, J.A., Foreman, D., Martin, P.S., Roemer, G.W., Smith, F.A., and Soulé, M.E. 2005. Re-wilding North America. *Nature* 436:913-914.
2. Barnosky, A.D., Koch, P.L., Feranec, R.S., Wing, S.L. and Shabel, A.B. 2004. Assessing the causes of Late Pleistocene extinctions on the continents. *Science* 306:70-75.
3. Janzen, D.H. and Marten, P.S. 1982. Neotropical anachronisms: The fruits the gomphotheres ate. *Science* 215:19-27.

DOV SAX

IBS Secretary

Assistant Research Biologist

University of California Santa Barbara

Ecology, Evolution and Marine Biology



Hurray, 4-1 to us!



Actually, if you use the correct null model the score is 5-3 to us

Rich

POSITIONS of INTEREST

Professor of Applied Physical Geography

The Institut fuer Physische Geographie of the Department Geowissenschaften/Geographie at the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University Frankfurt am Main invites applications for a Professorship of Applied Physical Geography (W2).

The position will be filled for six years at which point it will become permanent pending positive evaluation. The appointment will start as soon as possible.

The Institut fuer Physische Geographie focuses on dynamics in terrestrial human-environment systems under the impact of global change. To strengthen our research profile, we are looking for a personality who is recognized for her or his research in sustainable development of human-environment systems, in particular in the field of biogeography. Methodologically, the incumbent should focus on mathematical modeling or other quantitative techniques. We expect experience in transferring research results to applications outside of academia, in cooperating with national and international agencies, and in acquiring external research funds. We also expect teaching experience, an interest in innovative teaching methods and participation in the new Bachelor and Master programs. Teaching is conducted in German. The incumbent will participate in the education of future school teachers; therefore, experiences with and ideas for teaching of geographical knowledge in schools are welcome. She or he should be willing to participate in the Zentrum für Interdisziplinäre Afrikaforschung (ZIAF).

The advertisement is subject to the conditions of employment of the State of Hesse (§§ 70(6) and 71 of the Hessisches Hochschulgesetz HHG). The job holder is expected to participate in the self-administration of the University. The Johann Wolfgang Goethe University seeks to increase the number of female professors and

strongly encourages women to apply. Following the law, handicapped persons with comparable qualifications will receive preferential status.

Applications including the usual documents (no reprints) should be sent by 28 October 2005 to

Dekan des Fachbereichs
Geowissenschaften/Geographie
Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität
P.O. Box 11 19 32
D-60054 Frankfurt am Main
Germany.

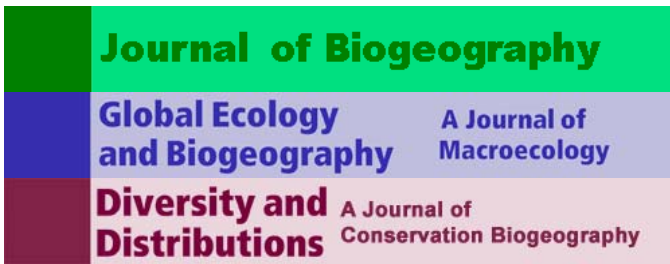
Please find information on the Institut fuer Physische Geographie at
<http://www.geo.uni-frankfurt.de/ipg/>

MEETINGS of INTEREST

19 - 22 October 2005
Society of Vertebrate Paleontology annual meeting
Mesa, Arizona, USA
Info: www.vertpaleo.org/meetings/index.html

8-12 January 2006
Ecological Society of America conference
Ecology in an Era of Globalization
Merida, Yucatán, Mexico
Info: <http://esa.org/mexico/>





Blackwell Publishing has supported the science of biogeography for the last 31 years. In 1974 we launched the Journal of Biogeography, providing an important independent source of scholarly communications to the growing community of scientists working in biogeography. In 1991, in response to the volume of articles on macroecology coming out of research, we launched Global Ecology and Biogeography. The science of biogeography continued to develop and in 1998 Diversity and Distributions was launched to focus on the ecology of biological invasions.

The field continues to grow and the establishment of the International Biogeography Society is a clear signal that biogeography is maturing and is a science that is here to stay.

Blackwell Publishing is pleased to be able to support the IBS, through sponsorship of awards and providing discounted online subscriptions to IBS members to all the biogeography journals. This year we will be working with the IBS officers to see how we can extend our support.

To take up the offer of discounted online access to the Journal of Biogeography, Global Ecology and Ecology and Diversity and Distributions, go to the subscription page at <http://www.blackwellpublishing.com/subs.asp?ref=0305-0270> and click on the amount for your region to go through to the ordering site.

DEBBIE WRIGHT
Journal Publishing Manager
Blackwell Publishing

IBS on the WEB

Minutes from board and business meetings, as well as reports from the officers may be found at <http://www.biogeography.org/newsletter.htm>

Membership information may be found at <http://www.biogeography.org/Membership.htm>

Information about past meetings may be found at <http://www.biogeography.org/meetings.htm>

Member Publications:

Joshua Drew of Boston University is compiling representative publications from members to post on the IBS website. We have created this site with the intention of facilitating collaboration, communication, and networking between our members and the greater scientific community. If you are interested in posting select publications on this site, please contact Joshua at jdrew@bu.edu. Be sure to include your contact information and a link to your personal webpage address if you would like it to be posted alongside your publications.

FUNDING FOR BIOGEOGRAPHY

For each charitable donation made by a US Citizen the US Federal Government (via a tax deduction to the donor) channels funds that would otherwise be spent by the US government to IBS. Charitable gifts reduce your tax burden and they help IBS.

Non-US citizens may benefit from similar tax advantages. Inquire for more information.

NEWS TO SHARE?

Please forward news items for inclusion in the next IBS membership newsletter to:
Katherine Smith: k_smith@lifesci.ucsb.edu

IN CUBA (HAVANA): COMPLEXITY THEORY. SHORT HIGH LEVEL INTERNATIONAL COURSES.

Short Courses (one to three weeks) for post-graduates in diverse Complexity Theory topics, at the facilities of the National Botanic Garden in Havana.

Organized by the Cathedra for the study of Complexity Theory of the Instituto de Filosofía de La Habana.

Directors: Dr. Pedro L. Sotolongo, President of the Cathedra

(pedro.sotolongo@infomed.sld.cu)

Dr. Angela T. Leiva, General Director of the National Botanic Garden

(leivajbn@ceniai.inf.cu)

General Description:

An intensive introduction to the complex behavior of physical, chemical, biological (living), social, technological, logical systems, for university graduates in the natural, social, technical and formal disciplines. Open to registration applications from all countries. It is expected that the students will be present during the entire duration of the courses (one to three weeks).

Professors:

Relevant international personalities working in the Complexity Theory field and the best national specialists in it will be the Professors (commonly no more than 3) of the Courses.

Short Course in Macroevolutionary Studies of Complexity

19-23 December 2005

Instructor: Daniel R. Brooks, University of Toronto, Canada

Day 1 – Introduction to analysis of complex historical associations

Topics: Philosophy (Assumption 0 analysis) and Methodology (PACT)

Day 2 – Applications I: Phylogeny and Tokogeny

Topics: Sources of complexity; delimiting species; horizontal transfer; hybrid speciation

Day 3 – Applications II: Biogeography and Phylogeography

Topics: Sources of complexity; Taxon pulses in mainland and island settings; frequency of modes of speciation; empirical examples

Day 4 – Applications II: Coevolution

Topics: Sources of complexity; Ecological fitting; empirical examples

Day 5 – Integration: Evolutionary Radiations, Community Evolution

Topics: Sources of complexity; Species-area relationships; rate determinants of diversification; episodic changes; empirical examples

There will be a follow-up session 3-6 January, focused on analysis of personal data sets, followed by the third biennial conference on complexity theory 9-12 January

<<http://www.complexity-cuba.org>>

Who can apply to the Courses?

Any person from any country and field, but with some scientific background and a minimal knowledge of mathematics up to the university level.

Accommodations:

At the Scientific Residence of the National Botanic Garden, with options for single, double and multiple rooms; air-conditioned, hot and cold water interior bathroom.

There is a family-room for students with accompanying family members.

International communications and e-mail.

No additional financing will be provided for family trips.

Surroundings:

Bucolic surroundings. Living Nature. Sessions in classrooms with audio-visual equipment and open-air Sessions surrounded by exotic natural vegetation.

Restaurant options: Ordinary in-doors restaurant; open country (ranch-type) restaurant; vegetarian restaurant.

Transport to Havana city. Ad-hoc excursions to different tourist sites in Havana City and to other Provinces in the country.

Costs:

Inscription Fee: 100.00 U.S.D.

Breakfast: 2.00 U.S.D.

Dinner: 4.00 U.S.D.

Lunch at the various restaurants (in-doors; out-doors country; vegetarian) near the Courses facilities, with prices according to the individually selected Menu.

Lodging:

Single Rooms 15.00 U.S.D.

Double Rooms 11.00 U.S.D.

Multiple Rooms 8.00 U.S.D.

Instructions for Course Application:

To send a one-page Summary about your current research interests, a brief actualized Curriculum with the list of your publications (if you have them), and stating why you wish to attend the Course. With two accompanying Recommendation Letters from academics that know your work. Give your e-mail address and fax number.