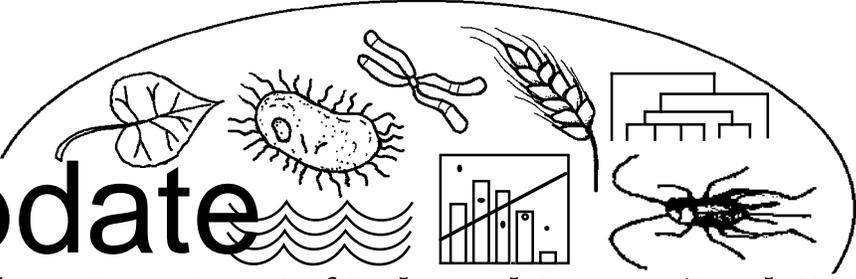


Issue #5 January 2005 - Special Graduate Student Edition



Bio-Update

University of Lethbridge - Department of Biological Sciences Newsletter

From the Chair

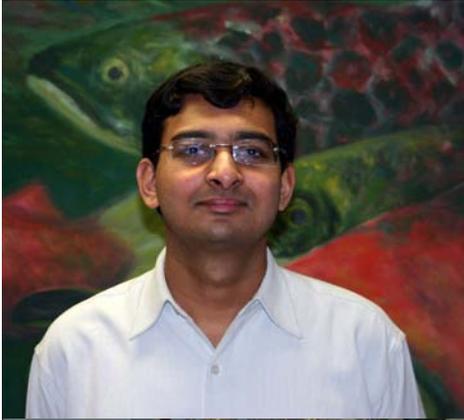
I would like to extend a hearty welcome to all of our new graduate students. You have embarked on an exciting journey of research and scholarship that will most assuredly change your lives. During our graduate years we face and overcome challenges that we would have thought insurmountable just a year or two earlier. We develop new ways of thinking and we often set the course for our future careers. We make new friends with whom we keep in contact for decades, or who may show up unexpectedly in the future as our career paths cross once again.

Make the most of these years – intellectually and socially. I encourage all of our graduate students to interact with students in other labs, and with students in other departments. You will be surprised at how much you can learn from others - and how much you have to share. A geography or chemistry student may offer you a new method of analysis, or they may spark an idea that you can develop into an entirely new approach to your research.

Interact with professors too. We chose our careers because we love to exchange ideas with others who share our excitement for knowledge and discovery. Graduate students are an important part of our research programs and an important part of the Department. Have a great year!

FROM THE NEWSLETTER TEAM

We hope all of you are having a great new semester. We would like to thank those who have provided comments and ideas for the newsletters. As always, this newsletter cannot be produced without the input and support of all Department members, so if you have suggestions, please send them along to Katrina White (katrina.white@uleth.ca) or Laurie Pacarynuk (pacarynuk@uleth.ca).



Saikat Kumar Basu began his M.Sc. with Dr. Jim Thomas (University of Lethbridge) and Dr. Surya Acharya (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada) in January, 2004. Saikat is from Kolkata, India and he did his post-graduation at the University of Calcutta in Botany, and specializing in Microbiology. His research topic is Development of Seed Production Technology for Fenugreek in the Prairies. Reading books, writing and traveling are his favorite pastimes. Saikat is passionate about photography, soccer and cricket.



After graduating in 2003 with a B.Sc. in Environmental Science, Sarah Bigelow started her M.Sc. in Dr. Stew Rood's lab in January, 2004. The focus of Sarah's research is investigating the hydrogeomorphic parameters that determine plant communities along the Little Bow River in southern Alberta. She has a ranching background and spent time in Europe, Australia and Alberta training horses. Currently her spare time is spent running with her dog Jake and riding horses back home in Cochrane.



Lars Brinkmann started his M.Sc. program in September 2004. His research deals with mercury biomagnification in the food web of the South-Saskatchewan river system and domestic sewage as a potential point source for mercury contamination in this ecosystem. His supervisor is Dr. Joe Rasmussen. He likes organismal level biology, with a strong bias towards arthropods, fish, and amphibians, and as such, has taught labs in Biology 1020. He attended High School in Germany, moved to Canada in 1998 and started his undergraduate degree at the U of L in 2000. His primary hobby is fishing, but he also enjoys any automotive work, from engine to body and the whole story in between.



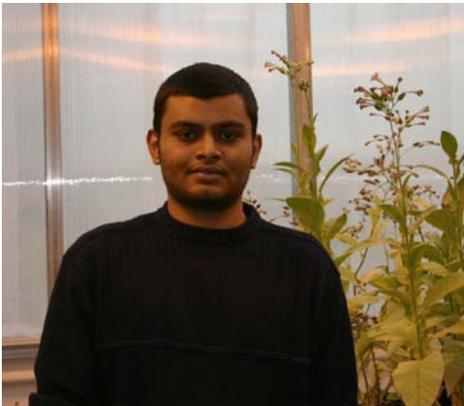
Carmen Frank grew up in Alberta, but started her bachelors in Environmental Science at the University of Saskatchewan. She finished her degree at The University of Lethbridge and started on her M.Sc. in the same field with Dr. Stew Rood in May of 2005. Her primary research focuses on the potential of common wetland/riparian vegetation to phytoremediate trace pharmaceuticals and chemicals in surface and waste waters. She taught labs in Bio. 2000. Carmen enjoys the eclectic in music, reading, Latin dancing, and all that nature has to offer through hiking, photography and houseplants.



Simone Franz started her graduate studies in September 2004 in Dr. Andy Hurly's lab. She is examining winter biodiversity in riparian zones that are grazed by cattle, and the mechanisms that lead to changes in biodiversity. A native of Coaldale, Simone finished her B.Sc. at the U of L in spring 2004, and taught two Biology 1020 lab sections in the fall semester. After a three-year hiatus, she has recently picked up her baritone saxophone, and is looking forward to playing in a saxophone quartet again. Simone aspires to be a spinster. Her newest obsession is spinning, and then knitting, and then spinning more. She can do this for hours.



Jennifer Geddes started her graduate studies in January 2005 with her supervisors Dr. Brent Selinger and Dr. Francois Eudes. Jennifer performs the majority of her research at the Lethbridge Research Centre conducting proteomic analyses to isolate and to identify proteins associated with Fusarium Head Blight resistance in *Hordeum vulgare* (Barley). Originally from Red Deer, Jennifer has lived in Lethbridge for 13 years and completed her undergraduate degree here at the U. of L. in 2004. In her spare time, Jennifer enjoys running, snowboarding, and hiking and camping in Waterton.



Palak Kathiria started his Master's program in Agricultural Biotechnology in the Summer, 2004. His supervisor is Dr. Igor Kovalchuk and he is working on several aspects of TMV (molecular components of N gene functioning, effects of stresses on R genes, effects of the virus on genome stability). He is from the city, Anand, in the province of Gujarat, India and completed his B.Sc. Agriculture at B. A. College, GAU, Anand. He loves the richness of culture, dressing, and rituals, of his homeland. Back home, he also loved playing chess, cricket (obviously!) and watching tropical birds, but now he wants to learn photography and how to fly aircraft. He is a long way from home and he misses the Indian eateries, friends and, mostly, his parents.



Rhona Kindopp is motivated by a desire to sustain healthy aquatic species and ecosystems. She has a Bachelor's degree in environmental science and will be defending her thesis dissertation: Habitat preferences and requirements of boreal forest duck and grebe populations, in the Fall of 2005. Her graduate program supervisor is Dr. Joe Rasmussen. Rhona came to the U of L from the Northwest Territories. She remains closely connected to the people and land North of 60° via family and friends and an unconditional love of the North. Rhona enjoys camping trips, canoeing and boating, fishing (even when the fish aren't biting), spring skiing, and perhaps above all else, sipping Mai Tais on tropical beaches.



Igor Koturbash started his Ph.D. with Dr. Olga Kovalchuk and Dr. Bryan Kolb in October, 2004 on a project entitled “Role of PKB/AKT in Cellular Response to Radiation”. He comes to us from Ivano-Frankivsk in the Ukraine. Igor has a strong academic background including finishing his Ph.D. candidacy exams at Ivano-Frankivsk State Medical Academy *Summa cum Laude*, as well as receiving his Diploma of Physician with honours from the same Academy. When Igor isn’t busy in the lab, he enjoys sports such as karate and soccer, as well as literature, music, hiking and numismatics.



Lana Miller started an MSc. with Dr. Alice Hontela in September of 2004. Her research focuses on the effect of selenium on the physiological and oxidative stress responses in fish. It includes both lab exposures and field studies. She has a BSc. in Wildlife and Fisheries Management from the University of Northern British Columbia in Prince George. Lana enjoys learning to play the violin, snow shoeing, hiking, and reading.



Aaron Puhl grew up in Lethbridge. He attained a BSc. (biochemistry) in 2001. After he finished his undergraduate degree, he worked at the Lethbridge Research Station for a year as a lab technician. He backpacked around Australia for a year before deciding to do an M.Sc. In September of 2004, he started his graduate program with Dr. Brent Selinger, studying the mechanism of substrate specificity among proteins belonging to a novel class of phosphatase. He teaches labs for Biology 1010. When he is not working in the lab, he likes to go to the gym and snowboard.

HAPPENINGS AROUND THE DEPARTMENT

As you all know, the chair selection committee has been busy deliberating on candidates for the coveted position of Department Chair. Campaigning for the position has been fierce, as many individuals would love to take on this prestigious role. For those of you who haven't seen all of the campaign posters around the department we have included the slogans here.

For World Peace and chair. Vote Brent.

Don't be a fathead! Vote Cam for Chair!

He's at the top of the food chain. Vote Joe for Chair!

Four More Years Vote Andy (The Committee to Reelect T. Andy Hurly)

Forego Andy. Go For Brent! As Chair

Would you trust this man with you study leave? (picture of Brent dressing as sumo) Vote Cam for Chair (sponsored by: The Social Credit Party of Alberta, The National Rifle Association)

It's the 21st century! Internet Leadership! Networking! Vote Ralph for Electronic Chair!

The agility of Catwoman! The strength of a sumo wrestler! Vote Brent for Chair!

"I served in the Texas Air National Guard with Brent Selinger. He is one of the finest human beings I have ever met. If you don't vote for Brent you're full of bull crap." U.S. President George W. bush, Newsweek Sept. 30, 2004
Vote Brent

Put the Cartar before the department. Vote Ralf

Larry for Chair. It's his turn

Not just any Thomas, Dick, or Harry. Vote Jim for Chair

A senecio for every pot! John for chair, again

Two for the price of one, Vote Kolvalchuks for chair

Let's "gopher" Gail as Chair

Silver back male to lead troop. Vote Brent.

It would be RUDE no to suggest ROOD for Chair

If it ain't broke, Don't fix it!!! Re-Elect Hurly for Chair

Bio needs better chemistry. Roussel for Chair

If you can be Santa, you can be Chair. Vote Dr. Claus for your next leader.