

## *INTERREGNUM 2*

August 2009

### DEPARTMENT OF INVERTEBRATE ZOOLOGY NEWSLETTER

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### INVERTEBRATES AS DANGEROUS GOODS. NO. 2

By Paul Greenhall

Biological specimens, may be living or dead, whole or even pieces of shell, a tentacle, spicules, tissue, DNA individually or in combination. Words such as 'dead animal', 'tissue' and 'DNA', formalin and alcohol are specific 'red flags' for customs agents and usually are reasons that have resulted in a quarantined shipment requiring additional documentation. Whenever considering mailing specimens internationally the material should be declared as *Museum Specimens* regardless of their wholeness, eventual fate or collection worthiness. You may be surprised to learn that overnight carriers, such as Federal Express, have a shipping code for everything imaginable - everything has its Harmonized Code. The general code that has worked without event for Biological or Museum Specimens is 9705000090. This code becomes a part of the waybill on-line record.

To expedite overnight international mailings always include in the waybill plastic pouch a cover letter addressed to both the international carrier representative and customs agent that briefly and specifically describes the contents of the parcel (common and scientific name), preservative, Harmonized Code. The pouch should also contain a Cleared export declaration, the Package copy of the USNM Shipping Invoice. This procedure towards preparing any museum specimen for mailing informs everyone along the international transit route from carriers' international representatives to Customs Agents. For the role of the cover letter on letterhead performs a crucial role in this regard, for example, Australian Customs agents quarantine any parcel with specimens lacking an AQIS Declaration, they are specifically looking for the acronym and language that describes precisely the preservative(s) chemical make-up even if the liquid is not regulated. Ideally, the overnight carrier waybill should be prepared on-line as the process is quick, self-explanatory, all zip codes are linked to all postal systems that the carrier services, and a bar code is automatically generated for carrier use and delivery. Federal Express' on-line program gets high marks, and is continually being upgraded. My experience with their representatives is that they are helpful and responsive when trying to understand and why specimens may not be shipped for Door-to-Door delivery to a particular country. And the list changes daily. For example the US does not accept such dangerous goods shipments from Qatar - not even Ostracods preserved in Excepted Quantities of alcohol. Further, when a country does not accept dangerous goods for Door-to-Door delivery, the more expensive delivery method, Door-to-Airport delivery is available. A non-regulated preservative is preferred in such cases. Mis-delivered or returned FedEx parcels for USNM has been incorrectly linked to the use of the SI's 20560 zip code, it was an issue associated to the lack of a bar code. Preparation of the waybill on-line will resolve such matters.

The Museum's Shipping Office (NHB/MSC) probably processes thousands of parcels yearly, and not all of them contain specimens! For example, IZ Collections Staff **alone** process an average of 392 incoming parcels yearly (Borrows, Acquires, Return of Loans of wet/dry, domestic or international), as well as approximately 600 outgoing parcels are processed (Loans, Disposals for Analysis, Return of Borrows, wet/dry, domestic or international) yearly. Occasions arise when the preservative is substantial exceeding the Excepted or Small Quantity description, such as the recent loan of a Giant Squid to the Georgia Aquarium. Full-fledged HAZMAT and HAZWOPER regulations are followed by staff to ensure the specimen processing and shipping procedures is well coordinated between the responsible units.

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The main purpose of **Interregnum** is to promote "togetherness" among members of the department, but it does have some wider readership: **Paul Greenhall** received an e-mail at his home from **Ms. Suelin Low Chew Tung**, a consultant with the **Ministry of Tourism and Culture, Grenada, West Indies**, saying that she was impressed by the work being conducted here. According to Paul, her statement was based on reading our July newsletter on the computer.

## THE MARY J. RATHBUN MEMORIAL LIBRARY OF CRUSTACEAN LITERATURE

The move of the crustacean library to MSC was completed this month. The facility at MSC will be a good home for it, and the library will bear the same name.

### MARY JANE RATHBUN

1860-1943

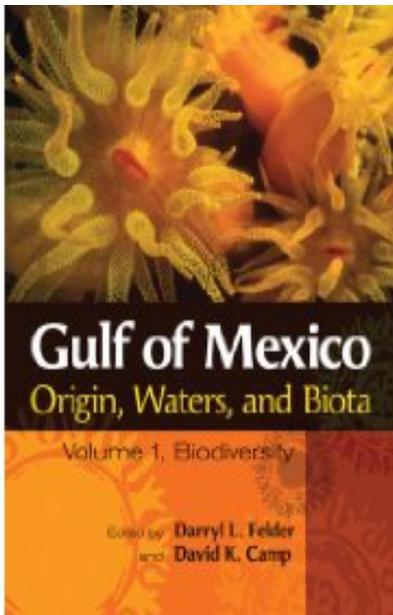
Ascended from “copyist” to assistant curator in charge of the Department of Marine Invertebrates\*, U.S. National Museum. Prodigiously productive, considerably advanced knowledge of fossil and Recent decapods crustaceans of the world, describing **1147** new species, **63** genera, and **5** higher categories. Best known for her unparalleled, monumental 4-volume monograph of New World brachyuran crabs, and a treatise on freshwater crabs.

\*Now Department of Invertebrate Zoology, National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution.



### BIOTA VOLUME I BIODIVERSITY

Wes Tunnel has announced that the long awaited volume: Gulf of Mexico Origin, Waters and Biota Volume 1, Biodiversity, edited by D. L. Felder and D. K. Camp, has been published. It covers **15,419** species in **40** phyla and is by **140** authors from **80** institutions in **15** countries. Among the authors the members of this Department are: Louis Kornicker, Rafael Lemaitre, Elizabeth Harrison-Nelson, Kristian Fauchald, Duane Hope, Jon Norenburg, Mary Rice, Stephen Cairns, Linda Cole, David Pawson, Klaus Ruetzler, Frederick Bayer, Marilyn Schotte, Mike Vecchione, and Clyde Roper.



## AND THE BEAT GOES ON

By Louis Kornicker

The word “OUTREACH”, now so popular at the museum, includes the education of the public. The non-word “INREACH” could apply to the education of prospective scientists, long a gift of the Smithsonian. For an example of “INREACH”, I give you Anne Cohen, who was employed as a Technician and Specialist (1963-1966, 1968-1982), first in the S.I. Sorting Center and then in the Department of Invertebrate Zoology. In 1979, Anne received a “Smithsonian Institution Award for Exceptional Services Rendered in Performance of Duty”. While here, she obtained a Master’s degree from the University of Maryland (1972). Clyde Roper was on her Committee, and the thesis concerned Cephalopods. While working as an assistant to both Tom Bowman and myself, she obtained a Ph. D. from George Washington University (1987), and the Dissertation concerned the Ostracoda in the vicinity of Carrie Bow Cay, Belize, near the locality of the S. I. marine station. She also studied live ostracodes in Walter Adey’s research marine aquarium then located in the basement of the museum. After leaving the Smithsonian, she held positions in the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History and the University of California. She is also an “Honorary Fellow of the California Academy of Sciences”. After retiring in 1997, Anne has been informally associated with the Bodega Bay Marine Station. In addition to producing about 35 publications, a dozen presentations at Symposia, and conducting other professional activities including extensive fieldwork, she has mentored two graduate students, who have since made their mark in advancing the study of OSTRACODA. Working with James Morin, Anne has greatly advanced our knowledge of *bioluminescence* in Ostracoda, and they discovered that males of some species produce a special lighting pattern that attracts females of the same species.



Anne in her home office, July 2009

## MOLLY, WE HATE TO SEE YOU GO

The Photo shows the ever-smiling MOLLY KELLEY RYAN being presented with a framed photograph showing invertebrates that had been illustrated in journals by members of this department. The photos were signed by the author of each paper. Additional illustrations by Molly are mounted on the wall in the background. The bottles on the table are for scale, each being about 10 in.

The occasion was Molly's retirement celebrated in the Schmidt Room. Always busy, always accurate, always helpful, she will be missed. Especially by researchers in the department, who's papers were always improved by her illustrations. They were then dismayed when told that she was not to be replaced, but accepted the decision like good invertebrates.



## ANTARCTIC VISITING SCIENTISTS

By Jennifer Hammock

Several visiting scientists have been with us this summer working with the Antarctic Invertebrate Collection. Rebeca Zapata from the University of Sevilla and Michelle Taylor from the Institute of Zoology in London have been working with the Octocoral collection. Marc Eléaume from the Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle in Paris has been studying the Crinoid collection. Johanna Cannon from Auburn University has been examining the Pterobranch collection. All of our visitors have been working mostly with material not previously identified and their visits are a great boon to the Department since they have largely been occupied with determining taxonomic identifications. We look forward to reading the publications that will result from their work.



Rebeca Zapata  
University of Sevilla



Michelle Taylor with Steve Cairns  
Institute of Zoology, London



Marc Eléaume, Muséum national  
d'Histoire naturelle, Paris



Johanna Cannon, Auburn University

## NEWS FROM IZ

By Marilyn Schotte

### TRAVEL:

**Steve Cairns** attended the successful dissertation defense of Peter Etnoyer, “Distribution and Diversity of Octocorals in the Gulf of Mexico,” July 20, Texas A&M, Corpus Christi.

**Jon Norenburg** and resident Research Associate Frank Crandall attended the 7th International Conference on Nemertean Biology, June 28-July 3, hosted at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, for which Jon made two, plus co-authoring five presentations, and Frank presented one, plus co-authoring one.

**Mike Vecchione** (NMFS) was the Chief Scientist on an exploratory expedition to the Charlie-Gibbs Fracture Zone of the Mid-Atlantic Ridge, 8 June – 17 July. The cruise conducted deep, midwater and bottom trawling aboard NOAA Ship Henry B. Bigelow using large, double-warp trawls. Pre-doctoral Fellow Bastian Bentley participated as well. This expedition was a NOAA contribution to the MAR-ECO project (<http://www.mar-eco.no/>) of the Census of Marine Life.

## GRANTS:

**Collins, Allen.** \$242,299. University of Alabama. Collaborative Research: AToL: PorToL – The Poriferan Tree of Life Project.

**Collin, Rachel and Jon Norenburg.** \$30,000 from the Encyclopedia of Life Synthesis Group to host a workshop and training course “Meiofauna Diversity and Taxonomy” in June 2010 at STRI’s Bocas del Toro Research Station.

**Fauchald, Kristian.** \$199,991. U.S. Department of the Interior. Archiving of Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Invertebrates.

**Hershler, Robert.** \$2,100. U.S. Department of the Interior. Bruneau Hot Springmal Genetic Curvey.

## FELLOWSHIPS:

**Rebecca Ritger,** Jon Norenburg’s recent master’s student. Awarded a fellowship from the Encyclopedia of Life to lead development of species pages for the entire phylum Nemertea.

## ABBREVIATIONS\*

I (LSK) recently received an in-house e-mail: “The **MTAs** with Universidade Federal do Espirito Santo are now in **TM**. To find these **MTAs** in **TM**, look under Transaction Agreements, Contracts, under the name **UFES incoming MTA**, or **UFES outgoing MTA**.”

The short 3-line message contains three abbreviations: 1, **TM** (USED TWICE), 2, **MTA** (USED FOUR TIMES), and 3, **UFES** (USED TWICE). Not knowing the meanings of the abbreviations, I asked the sender, but received no reply.

For any member of the Department of Invertebrate Zoology who are also unfamiliar with some non-scientific abbreviations, **TM**: TRANSACTION MANAGEMENT; **MTA**: MATERIAL TRANSFER AGREEMENT; and **UFES**: Universidade Federal do Espirito Santo (Brasil).

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\*A reader supplying a dictionary of abbreviations commonly used in SI mail will be eligible for an SOL award.