

## AIBS News

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# AIBS*news*

APRIL 2009/VOLUME 59 NUMBER 4

## Registration and Poster Submissions Open for 2009 AIBS Annual Meeting

The 2009 AIBS annual meeting, "Sustainable Agriculture: Greening the Global Food Supply," will be held 18–19 May at the Westin Arlington Gateway Hotel in Arlington, Virginia. The program chair is 2009 AIBS President May R. Berenbaum, of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Registration, poster submission forms, and the preliminary program are online at [www.aibs.org/annual-meeting/annual\\_meeting\\_2009](http://www.aibs.org/annual-meeting/annual_meeting_2009).

The meeting will bring together plenary speakers, panelists, and discussion groups from the basic and applied life sciences to examine food sustainability, supply, and security. The two-day program is geared toward the science-policy interface for an audience of scientists, educators, students, representatives of non-governmental organizations, members of Congress, and the media.

The rest of the meeting's program will be rounded out by, among other events, a contributed poster session, AIBS awards, a teachers' workshop organized by the Biological Sciences Curriculum Study and the National Association of Biology Teachers, and a workshop led by the AIBS Public Policy Office focusing on *Communicating Science: A Primer for Working with the Media*, an AIBS publication.

As a special event, Robert Pennock, of Michigan State University, will give a lecture at 7:00 p.m. on 18 May at the National Academies' Keck Center, in Washington, DC. Pennock, recipient of the 2009 AIBS Outstanding Service Award, will give the lecture "Reason Enough for Scientific Researches: Darwin and the Scientific Virtues." The evening will also include a reception and an after-hours tour of the Koshland Science Center at 6:30 p.m. (The \$35 fee for the

reception includes return bus transportation from the meeting hotel and after-hours access to the Koshland Science Museum.)

The meeting is taking place during the "Year of Science 2009," a year of activities aimed at engaging the general public in the nature and value of the scientific enterprise. Year of Science 2009, which is co-organized by AIBS and the Coalition on the Public Understanding of Science, involves more than 500 organizations. Recordings of the plenary lectures from the meeting will be available online for free viewing in the AIBS Media Library ([www.aibs.org/media-library](http://www.aibs.org/media-library)) about two months after the meeting. The meeting's confirmed speakers and the topics of their presentations are listed below:

- Bruce Alberts (Department of Biochemistry and Biophysics, University of California, San Francisco; *Science* editor-in-chief): "Why Redefining Science Education Is the Key to Enhancing the Public Understanding of Science"
- May R. Berenbaum (Department of Entomology, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign); sustainable agriculture and greening the global food supply
- Fred Gould (Department of Entomology, North Carolina State University): "From Transgenic Crops to Transgenic Pests: How Can AgBiotech Be Green?"
- Hans R. Herren (Millennium Institute, Arlington, Virginia): "Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security: The Wake-up Call for Change"
- Louise E. Jackson (Jackson Lab, University of California, Davis): "Biodiversity-friendly Agriculture: Why Scale Matters" (in collaboration with the National Council for Science and the Environment)
- Taylor Ricketts (Conservation Science Program, World Wildlife Fund-USA); agriculture and conservation
- Scott Swinton (Department of Agricultural, Food, and Resource Economics, Michigan State University); agriculture and ecosystem services
- Robert Tauxe (National Center for Zoonotic, Vectorborne, and Enteric Diseases; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention); foodborne diseases

## I N S I D E

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## Breakout discussion sessions

- “What Does the Public Learn from the Media about Sustainable Agriculture?” Cathlyn Stylin-ski, senior agent, University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science; and Martin Storksdieck, director of project development, Institute of Learning Innovation, Annapolis, Maryland
- “The Science and Technology of Biofuels”; Sheri Potter, COPUS Network Manager, AIBS; Alan Hecht, US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); John Regalbuto, National Science Foundation; Donna Perla, US EPA; Robert Larson, US EPA
- “Agriculture: From Genes to Landscapes”; David E. Blockstein, National Council for Science and the Environment
- “NAS Report on Agriculture and Undergraduate Science Education”; Adam P. Fagen, senior program officer, National Academies Board on Life Sciences
- “Changing the Way We Talk about Science: Understanding Science and Year of Science 2009”; Sheri Potter, COPUS Network project manager, AIBS

## Workshops

- The National Association of Biology Teachers and the Biological Sciences Curriculum Study (BSCS): “Fuels for the Future? Helping Students Use a Systems Approach to Analyze Biofuel Production”; Paul Beardsley, BSCS, of the University of Washington
- AIBS Public Policy Office: *Communicating Science: A Primer for Working with the Media*; Robert Gropp, director of public policy, AIBS

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## AIBS Partners with Member Organizations to Bring New Lobbying Tool to Scientists

The AIBS Public Policy Office is pleased to announce that through a partnership with four member organizations, biologists and science educators may now quickly and effectively influence policy and public opinion. In February, the Public Policy Office launched the AIBS Legislative Action Center. This new tool is made possible through contributions from the Society for the Study of Evolution, the American Society for Limnology and Oceanography, the Association of Ecosystem Research Centers, and the Botanical Society of America.

Each day lawmakers must make tough decisions about science policy. For example, lawmakers must consider what investments to make in federal research programs and biodiversity conservation, how to mitigate climate change, or under what circumstances to permit stem cell research. Scientists now have the opportunity to help elected officials understand these issues.

This exciting new advocacy tool allows people to quickly and easily communicate with members of Congress, executive branch officials, governors and state legislators, and selected media outlets.

AIBS and its partner organizations invite scientists and science educators to become policy advocates today. Simply go to <http://capwiz.com/aibs/home/> to send a prepared letter and to sign up to receive periodic Action Alerts.

For additional information about the AIBS Legislative Action Center, please visit [www.aibs.org/public-policy/legislative\\_action\\_center.html](http://www.aibs.org/public-policy/legislative_action_center.html). To further help AIBS advance biology and science education, consider joining AIBS. To learn about other membership benefits and to join AIBS online, please visit [www.aibs.org](http://www.aibs.org).

## AIBS Now Hosting NESCent's "Evolution in the News" on YouTube

AIBS is pleased to host on its YouTube channel the video series “Evolution in the News” from the National Evolutionary Synthesis Center in Durham, North Carolina. The series is a collaboration of NESCent and the Understanding Evo-

lution Web site project at the University of California, Berkeley, to produce brief monthly stories and podcasts for the public about current happenings in evolutionary biology. Some of the topics recently explored include “superbugs,” “living fossils,” and “HIV’s not-so-ancient history.” See AIBS’s YouTube channel at [www.youtube.com/user/rogrady](http://www.youtube.com/user/rogrady) for the videos, and the Understanding Evolution Web site at [www.understandingevolution.org](http://www.understandingevolution.org) for links to background literature and classroom resources.

### **AIBS Teams with University of Oklahoma on Introductory Biology Experience Project**

The US National Science Foundation (NSF) has awarded a \$398,020 research coordination network (RCN) grant to the University of Oklahoma to help university and college faculty members improve instruction in introductory biology courses. AIBS partnered on the proposal and, through a subaward, will provide programmatic staffing as well as expertise in building an online communication network for the RCN project’s participants over the five-year grant period.

The principal investigator on the grant, which is titled “Preparing to Prepare the 21st Century Biology Student: Using Scientific Societies as Change Agents for the Introductory Biology Experience,” is Gordon Uno, chairman of the department of botany and microbiology at the University of Oklahoma and a member of the AIBS Board of Directors. Uno, a recognized leader in science education, is chairman of the AIBS Education Committee.

The NSF’s RCN program supports projects that encourage and foster interactions among scientists to create new research directions or advance a field. This RCN grant builds upon previous NSF initiatives, including the recent AIBS Biology Education Summit and the NSF Conversations in Undergraduate Biology (see [www.aibs.org/special-symposia/aibs\\_biology\\_education\\_summit.html](http://www.aibs.org/special-symposia/aibs_biology_education_summit.html)).

The “Preparing to Prepare” project will work with scientific societies and their individual members as the key agents of

change to reform undergraduate introductory biology. It will produce a shared vision for the future of undergraduate introductory biology education; develop, promote, and share effective teaching and learning practices; and coordinate a sustainable communication network to connect the biology education community. These goals will be achieved by bringing together scientists, science educators, and members of biological professional societies through a series of small face-to-face meetings to stimulate innovative ideas about biology education and to outline ways to engage the entire biology education community in reform efforts. Meeting participants will gather annually with other biology educators, scientists, and science education specialists to share and promote the diverse and valuable education reform activities taking place on university campuses across the nation, thereby increasing the number of individuals involved with these efforts and prepared to implement change at their own institutions.

The project’s first planning meeting was held in Washington, DC, in mid-February. Participants established an advisory board, outlined plans for the first year, and identified potential additional project participants. A project Web page will be created and maintained by AIBS at [www.aibs.org](http://www.aibs.org).

### **AIBS Welcomes New Policy Staff**

The AIBS Public Policy Office (PPO) is pleased to announce that Julie Palakovich Carr joined the PPO in February as a public policy associate.

Carr has a master’s degree in biology from the University of Minnesota, where she studied the activity patterns and habitat use of Canada lynx. As an undergraduate, she concentrated in ecology and conservation biology and conducted research on Atlantic cod population dynamics and oyster reef restoration in the Chesapeake Bay.

“We are very happy to have Julie joining the policy team at AIBS,” said Robert Gropp, director of the PPO. Carr spent the past year working in the office of US Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA) on marine policy issues. Carr advised the

senator on fisheries management, marine mammals, Pacific salmon recovery, ocean acidification, NOAA, and the Coast Guard.

### **Notre Dame Bio Students Receive Policy, Media Training from PPO**

On 28–29 January, Jenna Jadin, AIBS public policy associate, was in South Bend, Indiana, to share with University of Notre Dame biology graduate students insights into how to effectively communicate their science to the media and policymakers.

The presentation and meetings with biology graduate students are one of many media and policy training programs offered by the AIBS Public Policy Office ([www.aibs.org/public-policy/policy\\_training.html](http://www.aibs.org/public-policy/policy_training.html)).

The Notre Dame program included a workshop and informal meetings with students and faculty members. Approximately 30 biology graduate students studying everything from infectious disease and genetics to stream ecology and conservation biology participated in the workshop.

Building on the Public Policy Office’s publication *Communicating Science: A Primer for Working with the Media*, the workshop provides participants with guidance and hands-on experience in communicating their science effectively to representatives of the news media and policymakers.

### **AIBS, ESA Team to Conduct Policy Training**

AIBS director of public policy Robert Gropp and Ecological Society of America director of public affairs Nadine Lymn traveled to the Sevieta Long Term Ecological Research station in January to conduct a one-day workshop on communicating science to policymakers. The workshop was part of a multiday program for junior faculty conducted by the New Mexico EPSCOR program. Nearly 25 faculty members from various disciplines and higher education institutions from across the state participated in the workshop. For additional information about AIBS policy and media training



workshops, please visit [www.aibs.org/public-policy/policy\\_training.html](http://www.aibs.org/public-policy/policy_training.html).

### Recent Articles Online at [www.actionbioscience.org](http://www.actionbioscience.org)

#### "Technology: An Educational Issue?" blog post

- Online Darwin Resources
- BioQuest Investigative Cases

#### Spanish translation of a previously posted article

- "Fueron las Bacterias las Primeras Formas de Vida en la Tierra?" [Were Bacteria the First Forms of Life on Earth?], by Daniel Jeffares, University of Copenhagen, Denmark, and Anthony Poole, Stockholm University, Sweden

### Recent Public Policy Reports Online at [www.aibs.org](http://www.aibs.org)

#### Public Policy Report for 2 March 2009

- AIBS partners with member organizations to launch new lobbying effort
- President releases outline for FY 2010 budget
- House passes FY 09 spending bill
- Congressional committees consider climate change, sort of
- National Science Foundation announces search for new AD for BIO
- Directions for the USGS Climate Change Center
- New in *BioScience*: "US struggles to clear up confusion in wake of *Rapanos*"

- From the *Federal Register*

#### Public Policy Report for 17 February 2009

- Stimulus, science, and museums
- Holdren, Lubchenco confirmation hearings held
- Obama plans increased oversight of 2010 census
- House members introduce energy legislation
- Senate environment committee reorganizes
- From the *Federal Register*
- New in *BioScience*: "On Moral Grounds: Bioethics Training for Scientists"
- Now in the AIBS Bookstore: *Communicating Science: A Primer for Working with the Media*

## Calendar of meetings

### April

- 10–15 **Cactus and Succulent Society of America**, Tucson, AZ; <http://2009.tucsoncactus.org>
- 13–18 **Coastal Education and Research Foundation**, Lisbon, Portugal; [www.cerf-jcr.org](http://www.cerf-jcr.org)
- 16–18 **Cooper Ornithological Society**, Tucson, AZ; [www.birdnestings.org/cos2009](http://www.birdnestings.org/cos2009)

### May

- 2–5 **Council of Science Editors**, Pittsburgh, PA; [www.councilscienceeditors.org/events/annualmeeting09](http://www.councilscienceeditors.org/events/annualmeeting09)

- 3–6 **Society for Industrial Microbiology**, San Francisco; [www.simhq.org/meetings/sbfc2009/index.html](http://www.simhq.org/meetings/sbfc2009/index.html)
- 18–19 **American Institute of Biological Sciences**, Arlington, VA; [www.aibs.org/annual-meeting/annual\\_meeting\\_2009.html](http://www.aibs.org/annual-meeting/annual_meeting_2009.html)
- 23–28 **Human Anatomy and Physiology Society**, Baltimore; [www.hapsweb.org/displayconvention.cfm?conventionnbr=5673](http://www.hapsweb.org/displayconvention.cfm?conventionnbr=5673)

### June

- 12–16 **Society for the Study of Evolution**, Moscow, ID; [www.evolutionarysociety.org/meetings.asp](http://www.evolutionarysociety.org/meetings.asp)

- 22–26 **Society of Wetland Scientists**, Madison, WI; [www.sws.org/2009\\_meeting/index.mgi](http://www.sws.org/2009_meeting/index.mgi)
- 23–27 **American Public Garden Association**, St. Louis, MO; [www.publicgardens.org/web/2006/06/annual\\_conference.aspx](http://www.publicgardens.org/web/2006/06/annual_conference.aspx)
- 26–1 July **American Arachnological Society**, Russellville, AR; [www.americanarachnology.org/AAS\\_Meetings/AAS\\_meetings.html](http://www.americanarachnology.org/AAS_Meetings/AAS_meetings.html)



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