

Bugged

FROM
MSU DEPARTMENT
OF ENTOMOLOGY

FALL 2010



All insect images: Dave Cappaert, MSU

FROM THE CHAIR

This is the second issue of our new Departmental newsletter. The reception of the first issue of *Bugged* was outstanding. We look forward to continuing to provide our alumni and friends with the latest information on your Department of Entomology. I welcome your suggestions on what you'd like to see in the future.

In this issue we highlight research by Dr. Richard Merritt on Buruli ulcer, a terrible disease caused by *Mycobacterium ulcerans*. Buruli ulcer affects people in over 30 countries. We hosted Mr. Emmanuel Agumah from Ghana, who has established a foundation to support Buruli ulcer victims. His is a truly compelling story that exemplifies how entomology contributes to the benefit of humans on a global scale.

We welcomed 11 new graduate students and three new undergraduate students to the department this fall semester. Dr. Susan Erhardt joined the Department as an Assistant Professor and Coordinator of the North Central Regional IR-4 Laboratory. Our students, faculty and alumni received several significant awards and honors, and these are discussed in the accompanying columns.

Several significant administrative changes are in the works at MSU that will affect the Department. Our lead college, Agriculture and Natural Resources (CANR), is undergoing significant reframing (See <http://bit.ly/CANR-shape>). CANR Dean Jeffrey Armstrong has proposed that CANR will go from 13 to 8 departments and schools. There are also major changes in MSU Extension and the Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station that will affect the Department.

The Department of Entomology is proposed to remain as a stand-alone unit. Joint administration of the Department by the College of Natural Science will be discontinued. In his discussion of the rationale for leaving the Department intact, Dean Armstrong stated the following:

"The unique location of the department within the college along with the strong productivity at the research, Extension and graduate levels resulted in what I believe is a straightforward decision to leave this department as a stand-alone unit." Further, "Entomology's uniqueness adds to the College's reputation, and the department's research, teaching and outreach portfolio is strong. This is a strategic decision to strengthen CANR's work across

other colleges and with other universities with a breadth and depth of intellectual activity."

I encourage you to look at the *Shaping the Future: Reframing CANR -- Vision and Plan for 2011-2015* proposal at the website given above for more details of the reorganization proposal. Also, you may view the White Paper that we submitted to the Dean at this website.

Finally, we have instituted a new opportunity for you to become a *Friend of the Bug House*, and contribute to the Bug House outreach activities. Our Bug House outreach programs receive no direct funding from MSU, and with increasing budget constraints, are in jeopardy. We will do everything possible to continue to support these programs, and are seeking your help in keeping these vital activities alive and strong.

Please drop by the department when you are in town.

Best wishes,



Ernest S. Delfosse

RESEARCH & PROJECTS



For over five years, **Professor of Entomology Rich Merritt and his students have been working in West Africa conducting research into links between aquatic insects and Buruli ulcer disease.** Patients with Buruli ulcer develop painful sores on their bodies that can eventually cripple and even kill them. In November, the Department welcomed **Mr. Emmanuel Agumah** as a guest seminar speaker. Agumah spent almost three years receiving treatment for Buruli ulcer at St. Martin's Hospital in Ghana where he met Merritt. Agumah has overcome health and societal difficulties to complete a Higher National Diploma in accounting at Kumasi Polytechnic in 2009 and hopes to begin an MBA program after obtaining sponsorship.

Recently, Agumah was a featured speaker at the WHO meeting in Geneva, Switzerland on Buruli ulcer disease. Having known the plight of Buruli ulcer victims first-hand, he has established an NGO, the BUVA Foundation, to support Buruli ulcer victims and to help fight the disease.



Agumah

Three MSU Entomology graduate students are receiving organic research initiative grants from the Ceres Trust, a private charitable trust based in the Midwest. Ceres awarded 10 student grants for 2010 research for organic and sustainable agriculture. The three students are advised by Matt Grieshop and are working on the following projects:

- **Krista Buehrer**, "Potential of Organic Hogs as a Tool for Post-Harvest Orchard Floor Sanitation and Pest Management."
- **Emily Pochubay**, "Improvement of Arthropod Biological Control Systems for Organic Greenhouse Production."
- **Nathaniel Walton**, "Soil Invertebrate Biodiversity Under Contrasting Orchard Management Regimes in Michigan."

MSU's forensic entomology course went to Florida for the 2010 spring break. Doctoral candidate Ryan Kimbirauskas, Dr. Mollie McIntosh (MSU alumnus now at Xavier), and [Dr. Rich Merritt](#) developed and taught a new spring break Study Away Program for students interested in learning about forensic entomology. The one-week program focused on the role of insects as evidence during death investigations and was complemented with guest lectures from prominent forensic scientists in forensic anthropology, toxicology, botany, and veterinary medicine. The course is held at the University of Florida's Gainesville campus and will be offered in 2011 through the Department of Entomology and College of Natural Science. For more information contact Ryan Kimbirauskas (kimbiral@msu.edu).



PEOPLE



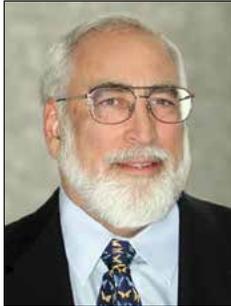
Isaacs



Grieshop

Congratulations to our recently promoted Entomology faculty members. This summer, small fruit entomologist [Rufus Isaacs](#) was promoted to full professor, and [Matt Grieshop](#) was reappointed as assistant professor. Grieshop's expertise is organic pest management in a variety of crops.

On September 10-11, **Mark Scriber celebrated his transition from professor to emeritus professor**, which he describes as "work without pay." Scriber will continue to conduct research on a new NSF project entitled "Assessing temperature-related changes across a butterfly hybrid zone" (collaborative with Jessica Hellmann, Notre Dame), and will wrap up another NSF project on "Genetic and divergence mapping of barriers to gene flow across a butterfly hybrid zone" (collaborative with Peter Andolfatto and Matthew Aardema, Princeton University).



Scriber chaired the Entomology Department from 1987-1997. He plans to occasionally lecture in the ENT 844 Insect Ecology/ Evolution Class, and has accepted an appointment by MSU President Lou Anna Simon to serve on the University Awards Committee.

Other planned activities include continued involvement in the Bug House and the Entomology Development Committee.

After a national search, Susan Erhardt has joined the Department of Entomology as an assistant professor and the North Central Regional IR-4 Laboratory coordinator.

Erhardt has 22 years of experience in analytical chemistry. She has given numerous presentations and published papers in journals such as *Pest Management Science*, *Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry*, and *Weed Technology*, as well as authored/co-authored over 50 internal reports at Dow Chemical and Dow AgroSciences.

The Department welcomed 11 new graduate students and 3 new undergraduates

to campus this fall. The students were invited to a mixer in the Natural Sciences building to meet the faculty and staff at the start of the academic year.



As part of our new Michigan butterfly exhibit, retired department member and author of [Michigan Butterflies and Skippers \(A Field Guide and Reference\)](#),

Mogens C. Nielsen, offered a book signing at the [Bug House](#) Open House on July 23. His book can be purchased through Barnes & Noble, Amazon and many other popular book outlets.

We regret to report the **death of Professor Dean Haynes** on September 5. Haynes joined the department in 1966 and retired in 1994.

BECOME A FRIEND OF THE BUG HOUSE!



With the increasing budget strains, the MSU Department of Entomology's Bug House Outreach programs (the Bug House, Bug Camp, Insect Word Science Camp, and Butterfly Flight Room) are in jeopardy. These activities receive no direct funding from MSU. The Bug House alone is extremely popular with over 7,000 people (mostly local student groups) visiting in some years. Bug Camp attracts kids from ages 6 to 11. Additionally, our popular Insect World Science Camp continues to draw in dozens of students from 9-17 years-old each summer. One of these students, who participated in the Camp every year, joined the department this fall as an entomology undergraduate. (How's that for impact!) The new Butterfly Flight Room gives kids of all ages the opportunity to see the wonder of insects in flight. We are seeking your help in keeping these vital activities alive.

Many of you have already made one-time donations to the Bug House, which is greatly appreciated. I'd like to offer you the opportunity to contribute in an on-going way. We have established five donation categories for *Friends of the Bug House* to help support these outreach programs:

Students: \$25
Retirees: \$50
Supporter: \$100
Family: \$200
Gold Member: \$500
Platinum Member: \$1,000
Lifetime Member: \$5,000
Corporate Member: \$10,000

You can donate easily through our web page, www.bughouse.msu.edu (note that "Bug House" appears in the far right column on the donation page), or mail a contribution to the Department at the address on the back of this newsletter. Make checks payable to Michigan State University, designating the contribution is for the Bug House.

Thanks for considering membership as a *Friend of the Bughouse*, and for your continued support of your Department of Entomology!
-- Ernest S. Delfosse,
Chairperson, MSU Department of Entomology.

AWARD-WINNING DEPARTMENT

Dave Smitley was selected by the Michigan Association of Extension Educators to receive its 2010 award for outstanding Extension specialist. MSU Extension's Tom Dudek presented the award at the Entomology Department's October faculty meeting. Smitley was honored for his excellent extension and applied research

work in support of the landscape, nursery, floriculture and turfgrass industries.

Larry Gut has been honored with the 2010 Outstanding Michigan Extension Specialist Award from the Michigan Extension Specialists and State Staff Association. Gut was recognized for his extension activities that educate those in the tree fruit industries in Michigan and beyond through on-farm demonstrations, timely presentations and published information.

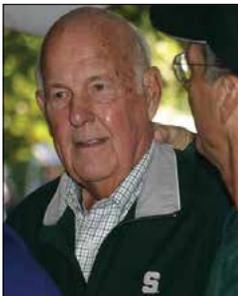
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ALUMNI NEWS

Congratulations to former Entomology chair **Gordon Guyer** for being recognized with the William Milliken Leadership for the Common Good Award. The award is sponsored by the Great Lakes Leadership Academy (GLLA). Along with serving as department chair, Guyer has provided far-reaching leadership including serving as MSU Extension director, MSU's 18th president, and director of both the Michigan Department of Agriculture and the Department of Natural Resources. Guyer received



the award at a gala on September 17 at the Lansing Center.

Tom Dudek has been promoted by MSU Extension to Senior Educator status for his extension work with the greenhouse and floriculture industry in west Michigan.

Richard Cowles has worked for over 15 years at the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station. Cowles notes, he enjoys "working on many practical problems,

ranging from breeding strawberries for resistance to soil-dwelling pests, studying pyrethroid resistance in annual bluegrass weevils, and the dynamics of systemic insecticides in forest trees."

John Chapman, director of technical services at Terminix, passed away on June 21. Chapman had a 38-year career with Terminix, serving in various technical and leadership roles across the country.

WE'D LIKE TO HEAR FROM YOU...

There are lots of ways to keep in touch with the Department - email (entnews@msu.edu), phone the Department's business office 517-355-4663, or use the enclosed postcard. We're interested in hearing about the successes of our alumni and former department members. Also, if you send us your email address, we'll save trees and budgets by emailing you a link to future newsletters. Finally, if you'd like specifics about ways to donate to the Department, the postcard is a handy means to request that information.

