

# EES<sup>LMU</sup> Newsletter

## Issue 03: September 2008

### What's new with the EES<sup>LMU</sup> Program?

The EES master program has accepted its second cohort of students. There will be 9 students, and once again it will be a very international group with students from Guatemala, Romania, Norway, The USA, Columbia and Germany.

### Visiting Students from The Netherlands and Sweden

This December the EES will welcome master students from programs of evolutionary biology at the Universities of Groningen and Uppsala. The topic of the week will be human evolution, during which professor Joachim Burger from Mainz will give an invited lecture on the evolution of lactase persistence.



EES excursion, students after surviving their canyoning tour.

### EES Excursion to the Austrian Alps

This year's EES excursion was a true alpine experience! The group was a mixture of diploma, master and PhD students, led by Herwig Stibor and Sebastian Diehl. The group stayed in St. Martin am Tennengebirge, a beautiful region near Salzburg. The theme of the excursion was the role of geology on ecosystem function, looking at how the Alps consist of limestone rock from ancient coral reefs. The excursion had 5 hiking trips, including one on the Dachstein to see the glacier near to its summit (photo below). On the last day as a special event a canyoning tour was organized, a photo of which is shown above. A canyoning tour consists of swimming, climbing and jumping inside of a canyon stream, the wet suits are necessary as the water is directly from the glaciers. The students returned from the trip with many memories and in great physical shape.



Photo taken from on top of the Dachstein glacier, glacial ice is visible on left and right sides.

### EES Agenda 2008

8 <sup>th</sup> Sept	-Seminar: Jeff Jensen (California)
14-19 <sup>th</sup> Sept	-2 <sup>nd</sup> EES Summer School
1-2 <sup>nd</sup> Oct	-2 <sup>nd</sup> EES Conference
21 <sup>st</sup> Oct	-Seminar: Spencer Hall (Indiana)
28 <sup>th</sup> Oct	-Seminar: Susan Ptak (MPI Evolutionary Anthropology)
11 <sup>th</sup> Nov	-Hanna Kokko (Helsinki)
18 <sup>th</sup> Nov	-Jody Hey (Rutgers)
25 <sup>th</sup> Nov	-Nico Michiels (Tuebingen)
9 <sup>th</sup> Dec	-Luc de Meester (Leuven)
15-19 <sup>th</sup> Dec	-Master students from The Netherlands and Sweden visit the EES program
20 <sup>th</sup> Jan	-Wolfgang Schroeder (TUM)
3 <sup>rd</sup> Feb	-Georg Fussman (McGill)

### EES Master Program Welcomes its new Coordinator

On October 1<sup>st</sup> Elisabeth Brunner will be joining the EES program as the new coordinator of the master program. Elisabeth replaces Pleuni Pennings who will now focus on getting the EES PhD program up and running. Elisabeth is currently finishing her PhD at the University of Regensburg in the group of Jürgen Heinze where she works on reproductive conflicts in ant societies.



### EES Master Program Update

The first EES master students have now finished up year one in the program. During their second semester they completed their second research projects and have now begun to plan their master theses. The students also held a poster session at the Biozentrum, the theme of which was ideas in science. Each student read a book about how a great scientist came up with his/her idea or discovery and then presented a poster about the book. In the next semester, some of the master students will be taking on their first teaching responsibilities; Rebecca Meredith and Rob Morisson will be teaching the evolutionary ecology tutorials together. The students are also inviting a speaker to come to the Biozentrum at the beginning of the summer semester 2009 to discuss the role of gender in science. In addition, for the upcoming EES conference the master students will present posters of the individual research projects (IRT's) they completed during the winter semester of 2008.



Matthias Konrad at the Edmund Niles biological station in Albany County, New York. Bottom right: ants in acorn.

### EES Grants: Successful Applications

During the last year EES funds have helped 16 diploma, master and Phd students visit other institutions around the world to further their education and research. Diploma student Matthias Konrad travelled to the Edmund Niles Huyck Preserve and Biological Research Station in Albany County, New York to investigating reproductive conflicts in insect societies for his diploma thesis (picture shown above). Meike Whittman, an EES master student went to the PIMS Mathematical Biology Summer Workshop at the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Canada. After this experience Meike is now moving to Canada for one year to continue studying mathematical modeling at the University of Alberta. From the Phd program student Christoph went on a field trip to Malaysia to study the behaviour of different arthropod species which invade ant colonies (myrmecophiles).

### The 2<sup>nd</sup> EES Conference

The 2008 EES conference will be held on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> of October in the main auditorium of the Biozentrum. This years invited speakers are Siv Andersson from University of Upsala, Sweden and Franjo Weissing from the University of Groningen, The Netherlands. The second day of the conference is open to the public. Below is this years program:

#### Wednesday October 1<sup>st</sup>:

- Welcoming of new students
- Presentation of courses
- Professors and students meet and greet
- Lunch at the Freshmaker
- Students and invited speakers interactive session
- Tour of downtown Munich
- Meeting of all EES staff
- Dinner in city center

#### Thursday October 2<sup>nd</sup>:

- Talks by invited speakers
- Poster presentations by EES master students
- Lunch catered at the Biozentrum

If you would like to attend the EES conference on the 2nd of October please send an e-mail to Kathrin Kämpfbeck at [k.k@lmu.de](mailto:k.k@lmu.de).

Upcoming EES Courses	
29.10.08	-Cladistics (Renner & Haszprunar)
13.10.08	-Theoretical Population Genetics (Stephan) -Ornithology (Kempenaers) -Field Mycology (Agerer)
10.11.08	-Experimental Plankton Ecology (Diehl) -Biogeography and Nature Conservation (Renner)
01.12.08	-Experimental Evolutionary Ecology (Laforsch & Wolinska) -Computational Methods in Population Genetics (Metzler)
12.01.08	-Functional Anatomy and Archeobiology (Grupe) -Fungal Interactions: Lichens (Beck) -Pearl for Beginners (Hutter)
26.01.08	-Palynology (Heubl)
09.02.08	-Bioinformatics (Suhre) -Ornithology Practical (Kempenaers) -Tropical Plant Diversity (Döbbeler)
23.02.08	-Programming and Statistics with R (Pennings & Diehl)

### EES Summer School 2008

This year's summer school will be held at the Fraueninsel in Chiemsee. The speakers will be comprised of professors and researchers from the USA (Daven Presgraves, Rochester; Sander van Doorn, Sante Fe), Sweden (Judith Mank, Uppsala) and Scotland (Deborah Charlesworth, Edinburgh). The instructors will cover theoretical aspects of sex chromosome evolution, along with empirical results from the diverse systems of plants, insects and birds. Participating students working on a related topic will be asked to give a short presentation on their research. Included will be an afternoon excursion to the nearby alps. Details are available on the EES website and questions can be directed to John Parsch ([parsch@zi.biology.uni-muenchen.de](mailto:parsch@zi.biology.uni-muenchen.de)).



#### Siv Andersson: Upsala

Siv Andersson is the head of the department of evolution, genomics and systematics. Her research focuses on molecular evolutionary analysis of microbial genomes, the tree of life and of the origin of mitochondria. Her group is trying to understand mutational mechanisms and evolutionary forces in microbes.



#### Franjo Weissing: Groningen

Franjo Weissing is a professor of theoretical biology in the centre for ecological and evolutionary studies. His research deals with the development of mathematical models to gain insights into various biological disciplines, most notably evolutionary biology, ecology, and the behavioral sciences.