



eLIFE – news on life at LIFE

Thursday, 17 April 2008

Email to the editors: elife@life.ku.dk

Final deadline for editorial changes is Wednesday before publication of eLIFE on Thursday.

Editorial changes may occur in relation to the online newsletter.

As regards links in the newsletter, please refer to the Danish online version at the faculty's website http://www.life.ku.dk/Maalgruppe/medarbejdere/life_internt/nyhedsbrev.aspx.

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, Editor, Communications, gib@life.ku.dk

Life at LIFE

The Copenhagen Chainsaw Massacre – or common sense

Having to put down your pet because of old age or illness is a tough decision none of us like to make. Perhaps it could wait a bit – the animal could get better...

The decision can be equally tough for old trees, because trees are like animals in the sense that they rarely speak up when they get sick and are in pain.

An old tree in a park or next to a busy road requires extra attention, and evaluations need to be made regularly as to whether the tree has outlived its useful life and is becoming dangerous to its surroundings. As with animals, different species of trees have different lifespans. A common alder which is 60-70 years old is considered ancient, whereas a 60-year-old beech is only just past its early youth. An oak tree usually outlives the beech, and there are oaks in Denmark which are still going strong after 500 years. The King Oak (Kongeegen) in Jægerspris Forest District is actually believed to be about 2,000 years old.

We can thus establish that oaks can grow very old – at least sometimes, but certainly not always. In the

Faculty gardens, we had a Turkey oak which was planted in 1858 and should thus have had many useful years yet to live. However, we had discovered some fungi on the trunk and were a bit worried and were considering cutting down the tree before long. Then, some of our students drew our attention to the fact that this was a very rare type of fungus which had only been observed in five places in Denmark, and it would therefore be a shame to cut down the tree. We then decided to bide our time and postpone the felling, but one morning, in completely still weather, we heard a loud crack from the gardens. The oak was lying with its top on the Bülowsvej sidewalk. Fortunately, there was no young mother and pram trapped under the treetop, so we could breathe a little more easy and just marvel at the fact that the trunk was completely rotten with only a small strip of fresh xylem.

About 15 years ago, we also had a beautiful collection of elm trees in area 3, where the children's house is today. The elms had died from Dutch elm disease and needed to be cut down. We did most of the work ourselves. One of the trees was right next to Åboulevarden, leaning over one of the most heavily trafficked ring roads in Copenhagen. I was not prepared to take responsibility for felling that particular tree, so we had a tree-felling company cut it down and reel it in using hoists. And thank heavens that we had not put our own chainsaws into it, because it was rotten to the core – the wood was like butter to cut. The rot was not caused by the elm disease, because it takes many more years for an otherwise healthy tree to rot, but our Lord must have sent us the Dutch elm disease so we could cut down the tree before it fell on Åboulevarden of its own accord.

In January of this anniversary year, the gardeners again went amok with their chainsaws. This time, the victim was an old locust in area 3, which was right on the edge of Rolighedsvej. For a number of years, the tree's foliage had been thinning with large dead branches in the top, and bits and pieces were frequently falling down onto the pavement. In December, I passed the tree and noticed that it sounded hollow when I knocked on the trunk, and that was its death sentence.

In the middle of January, we rented a hoist, and as we proceeded to cut down the locust, it turned out that one of the main trunks was hollow with both rot and cracks going all the way out to the bark, so those of us involved in felling the tree were very pleased that the tree was felled before any serious accidents occurred.

Our assessment was also accurate when – much to our regret – we had to cut down one of the 150-year-old lime trees in the gardens. One of the two main trunks was so rotten that it did not know which way to fall and so remained standing. However, as it was leaning over Thorvaldsensvej, it would probably have fallen that way if we had not beaten it to it.

Until a giant scanner is invented which can reveal precisely how weakened an old tree is, we have to rely on sound common sense, but rest assured that the old trees on the Frederiksberg Campus are not felled without good reason. So, even though there is a Danish song that goes "Leave the old tree standing", it is the gardeners' responsibility that employees, guests and passers-by are not killed while others may, irresponsibly, just be enjoying the sight of an old tree slowly dying with grace. The pictures were taken during the fellings this year.

Kim Greiner, Senior Gardener

Announcements

Buy flowers in the greenhouses on Thursday, 8 May and Wednesday, 4 June between 7 am and 2 pm

Spring is here, and with it comes the desire to fill your window boxes and flower beds with fresh flowers and fertility. It may be a short-lived pleasure if you start too soon, so wait until there are no more night frosts – that is what we do at Green Support Services.

The sale of surplus summer flowers therefore takes place on Thursday, 8 May and Wednesday, 4 June between 7 am and 2 pm in the greenhouses at Rolighedsvej 23. All employees and LIFE students are welcome.

Hanne Lipczak Jakobsen, Green Support Services, halj@life.ku.dk

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gjb@life.ku.dk – latest update 15 April 2008

KUeren, April 2008

KUeren for April 2008 is now available - [read it here](#)

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gjb@life.ku.dk – latest update 15 April 2008

Applications for the Competence Fund – application deadline Friday, 23 May

It is now time to send applications to the Competence Fund for competence courses starting in 2008. The deadline for this application round is 23 May 2008.

Grant letters will be sent out in July.

Please note that it is permitted to apply for long-term internal courses with external suppliers working on market terms. PUMA offers two study programmes for which this applies, i.e. the Case worker training programme and the Project manager training programme. The committee will therefore also consider applications for support for these two training programmes.

Guidelines and application forms can be found at the PUMA website: www.ku.dk/puma. Please study the guidelines carefully before filling in the application form.

Lisbeth Stenlien Hansen, PUMA, lish@adm.ku.dk

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gjb@life.ku.dk – latest update 14 April 2008

Harmonisation of the Competence Fund administration at the University of Copenhagen

The Management of the University of Copenhagen decided on 9 April to harmonise practices regarding the administration of the Competence Fund.

In 2007, LIFE and FARMA still had their own Competence Fund resources at their disposal, whereas the rest of the employees at the University of Copenhagen applied for the funds via the joint Competence Fund Committee, a subcommittee under the Central Cooperation Committee (HSU).

In future, all the University of Copenhagen's Competence Fund resources will be managed by the joint Competence Fund Committee.

This means that from now on, applications from LIFE and FARMA employees must be sent to the joint application pool. Competence Fund applications should thus no longer be sent to HR at LIFE.

Next application deadline is 23 May 2008.

Read more about the guidelines for awarding Competence Fund means via this link, where you will also find the application form: <http://puma.ku.dk/finansiering/kompetencefonden/>

Henriette Lieblein, HR, hel@life.ku.dk

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, glb@life.ku.dk – latest update 14 April 2008

The University of Copenhagen will participate in the DHL relay run on Monday 1 September – sign up soon, and no later than Monday 30 June

Join us and meet colleagues from the entire University. The Rector's office and the deans at LIFE hope for really strong participation in this year's DHL relay race. So sign up your teams soon – prefix your team name with KU-LIFE.

This year, there is a free running T-shirt for all University of Copenhagen runners.

Before and after the run, we will meet at the University tent to enjoy an organic draught beer and organic grilled sausages.

Registration

All teams must sign up via the Sparta website www.sparta.dk – registration takes place under Sparta løb -> Løboversigt -> DHL Stafetten. We recommend that you sign up soon – experience shows that the run is quickly sold out.

Team name

It is recommended that all team names are prefixed with "KU". This makes it easier to find the teams on the list of participants, and it facilitates recording the results of all University of Copenhagen teams afterwards at www.motion.ku.dk.

How do I get a running T-shirt?

Send an email to Niels Wollesen, niw@adm.ku.dk, stating your team number and contact as well as the sizes of T-shirts needed for the team (Small to XX Large). The email must be received no later than 30 June 2008 and the T-shirts will then be sent to the team contact before the DHL relay run.

Further information

Contact Niels Wollesen via email niw@adm.ku.dk and see further information on our new website www.motion.ku.dk as well as at the DHL relay run website at www.sparta.dk.

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, glb@life.ku.dk – latest update 16 April 2008

Education

Open day event about MSc programmes, Friday, 25 April

Choose an MSc programme that boosts your credentials on the labour market!

Open day event about the 17 MSc study programmes – Friday 25 February at 1-4 pm in the Marble Hall. [See the programme here.](#)

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gjb@life.ku.dk – latest update 16 April 2008

Make your first career move – visit the LIFE company fair

At the fair, you have the chance of meeting 22 exciting companies which are just waiting to talk to your about the opportunities for your BSc or thesis project, about trainee programmes, student jobs and job opportunities for graduates.

Seize the moment and make your first move.

The fair committee of the students' association DSR organises the company fair, which takes place in the Marble Hall on Thursday, 24 April between 10 am and 2 pm and on Friday, 25 April between 10 am and 3 pm.

For further information, visit our website at www.messe.kvl.dk.

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gjb@life.ku.dk – latest update 16 April 2008

Staff news

Jørgen S. Agerholm is awarded a doctoral degree in veterinary medicine

Associate Professor Jørgen S. Agerholm, PhD, Department of Veterinary Pathobiology, has received a doctoral degree in veterinary medicine for his unique research into genetic defects in cattle. Already, his research has reduced the mortality rate for calves in Denmark. At the same time, he is strengthening the international competitiveness of Danish cattle breeders. [Read the press release here.](#)

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gjb@life.ku.dk – latest update 15 April 2008

Research

The Ice Fjord enzyme on the science programme Viden Om on the Danish TV channel DR2 – and an interview with Associate Professor Peter Stougaard, Department of Ecology

Our researchers are often in the media, but we cannot mention it all in eLIFE. That would – fortunately – exceed our capacity.

The reason why LIFE scientists are so popular in the media could be due to several factors, but two important reasons are probably a true desire to communicate their research in layman's terms, and the fact that the focus of the research often relates to specific aspects of people's daily lives.

This is also true for the enzymes from the Ice Fiord in Greenland. Associate Professor Peter Stougaard was interviewed for the news programme Deadline on the Danish TV channel DR2, which preceded the science programme Viden Om later that day on the same topic.

See the two features:

[DR2 Deadline at 5 pm](#)

[Viden Om](#)

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, glb@life.ku.dk – latest update 15 April 2008

Science workshop focus on equine parasites – Thursday, 31 July and Friday, 1 August

This summer, the Department of Large Animal Sciences will host a workshop with the purpose of formulating guidelines for the detection and handling of vermicide resistance in horses.

It has been ten years since a similar conference was held, and much has happened since then. Today, vermicide resistance is so widespread that horse owners and vets are being forced to change their treatment strategies. But what needs to be done? There is much confusion and lack of consensus in this area, and the purpose of the workshop is to identify evidence-based guidelines for research purposes as well as for veterinary practice.

The workshop will present invited lecturers who are all internationally recognised researchers in this field. They will each prepare a summary article to be printed in a special edition of the renowned journal Veterinary Parasitology. The programme leaves plenty of time for thorough discussions along the way and will also provide time for poster sessions.

The workshop will be held on Thursday, 31 July and Friday, 1 August 2008. Further information and registration is available at <http://www.vet.uga.edu/ID/conferences/equine>.

The Faculty of Life Sciences has a decades-old tradition of parasite research at the highest level, and it was therefore natural to hold the workshop here. The organisers are Ray M. Kaplan, University of Georgia, USA, Jane Hodgkinson, University of Liverpool, UK, and Martin Krarup Nielsen, University of Copenhagen.

Martin Krarup Nielsen, Department of Large Animal Sciences, mkn@life.ku.dk

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, glb@life.ku.dk – latest update 15 April 2008

Belgian scholarships: Bourses d'excellence IN-Wallonie-Bruxelles International

These scholarships are intended for university graduates with an MSc as well as researchers wishing to complete postgraduate programmes or postdoctorate programmes at a university in Wallonia-Brussels within a number of focus areas in transport, logistics, engineering, bio-science and natural science, agricultural industry

and the aviation and space industries. All other research areas can be considered, whether they constitute basic research or recognised science in the humanistic studies.

Application deadlines for research scholarships:

* For study programmes between October 2008 and January 2009: Before 1 June 2008

* For study programmes between February and May 2009: Before 1 November 2008

* For study programmes between June and September 2009: before 1 March 2009

Link to all [necessary information about the scholarships, application deadlines, requirements for applicants and the application forms](#). All material is in French.

The PDF document consists of two parts, of which only one is relevant for students. This is the part called Bourses d'excellence IN-Wallonie-Bruxelles International, which starts on page 17.

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, glb@life.ku.dk – latest update 15 April 2008

Research funds etc.

See the online version at

http://www.life.ku.dk/Maalgruppe/medarbejdere/life_internt/nyhedsbrev/forskningsmidler.aspx

Here you will find all calls with active links.