



eLIFE – news on life at LIFE

Thursday 6 December 2007

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, glb@life.ku.dk

Life at LIFE

Darwin at the Department of Ecology

LIFE's contribution to the University of Copenhagen's Programmes of Excellence is based on Darwin's theory of natural selection – Read Professor Jacob Weiner's article on Evolutionary Agroecology:

Evolutionary Agroecology:

Developing high-density crop plants for weed suppression and increased sustainability

New knowledge in the field of plant ecology and evolutionary biology has given birth to a new interdisciplinary science known as Evolutionary Agroecology. In this field, principles of ecological and evolutionary science are used to develop and test hypotheses that can increase agricultural sustainability and/or yield.

Darwinian evolution via natural selection is often the result of differences in survival and reproduction fitness within a population. Maximising the fitness of individuals does not lead to optimum population yielding capacity.

This is because the individuals use resources to compete with each other – resources that could, instead, be used to increase the communal yield or sustainability.

Because yield is measured for the entire population and not just for each individual, evolutionary theories suggest that the goal of plant breeding is to develop a plant behaviour that benefits the entire performance of the population, while reducing the Darwinian fitness of the individuals. This is called “group selection”.

Theories of plant ecology suggest that increased crop density and spatial uniformity can reduce weed growth and consequently herbicide usage. Higher crop density results in more biomass in the field, which in turn increases the agricultural sustainability. Higher crop density also increases competition between crop individuals and consequently the possibility of reducing competitive behaviour among crop plants and increasing the crops' communal weed suppression.

The project uses wheat as a model crop. Various hypotheses will be tested, including:

(1) The response of plants to shade is not favourable under circumstances with high density and uniformity. Crop types that do not show this response should be able to grow and suppress weeds better than normal plants in a cultivation system of this type.

(2) Within the old wheat varieties, there are many latent genetic qualities that might contribute to high yield and weed suppression under these conditions and might form a basis for the development of new varieties that are suitable for high density and spatial uniformity.

If the findings support these hypotheses, there is a good chance of reducing herbicide usage and increasing the sustainability of grain production significantly.

*By Jacob Weiner, Botany Section, Department of Ecology and
Sven Bode Andersen, Plant and Soil Science Section, Department of Agricultural Sciences*

[Link to PDF version](#)



Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gjb@life.ku.dk – latest update 6 December 2007

Announcements

With 155 new workshop times – Registration is now open for the LIFE School Service workshops for lower secondary school grades 7-10 for the rest of the school year!

There are four 2.5-hour workshops for lower secondary school grades 7-10:

The reversed diet pyramid

Biotechnology – *Cloning and pretty plants*

Microzoo – *A digestive environment*

Animals as models

LIFE's workshops for lower secondary school classes are very popular. Since we launched the programme two and a half years ago, the workshops have been booked as soon as they have been posted on the website. So if you think your child's class should visit LIFE, let their teacher know that now is the time to book a workshop.

Registration and more information about the workshops:

www.life.ku.dk/skoletjenesten

Pick up a folder on lower and upper secondary school visits at:

School Service, Communications in Vandrehallen, Thorvaldsensvej 40, ext. 33668, skoletjenesten@life.ku.dk

Dorthe M. Christensen, Communications, dc@life.ku.dk

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, glb@life.ku.dk – latest update 6 December 2007

Election: Two technical/administrative staff candidate lists for the Academic Council

There are two candidate lists for the election of technical and administrative staff representatives on the Academic Council. The ballots will be sent out this week.

Introducing the candidates:

Technical/administrative Staff Academic Council at LIFE: 60 supporters have nominated the following two candidates:

1. Pia Degn, departmental administrator
2. Maja Puk Nielsen, departmental administrator

Pia Degn, departmental administrator

I have been an employee at KVL/LIFE since 1986. For the first four years, I was secretary for the three academic committees in place at that time (Veterinary Science, Agricultural Science and Natural Science), followed by eight years as head of secretariat at the Department of Agricultural Science.

Since 1997, I have been departmental administrator at the Department of Human Nutrition. Through my background at KVL/LIFE, I have had plenty of chances to learn all about LIFE, its departments, academic areas, study programmes, staff groups, finances, strategy etc. – and I have exploited every opportunity.

I am a highly motivated employee and really want to focus some of this motivation on the Academic Council, where I would, among other things, ensure that the technical and administrative area is not overlooked in the debates. The Academic Council is not a decision-making body, so it is important to contribute with the right input during the Council discussions.

Maja Puk Nielsen, departmental administrator

I have been with KVL/LIFE since 1995, first as student assistant for, among others, the Senate and Business Committee, later as clerk in several Administration offices, primarily at the Research and Innovation Office. In 2004, I

took a position as strategy officer at the Department of Plant Biology, where I am now departmental administrator. The many different positions I have held have given me a good overview of LIFE as an institution seen from several angles, as well as in-depth knowledge of the daily life, specialist areas and strategies of the Faculty. The fact that the Academic Council will now have representatives from the technical and administrative staff is a new initiative, and I think it is important that we accept the invitation.

I will focus my energy on the Academic Council to ensure that the technical and administrative staff area is taken into account in connection with discussions on the Faculty's development, strategies and targets for the future.

Laboratory technicians directly involved in research and teaching:

Jette Petersen, laboratory technician

I have worked at the Department of Natural Sciences at the University of Copenhagen-LIFE (KVL) for twelve years and before that I worked for ALK-Abelló.

I have also studied environmental chemistry at H.C. Ørsted Institute. My position at LIFE involves, among other things, research in antibiotics in the form of peptides and studies of environmentally harmful compounds. I am also a health and safety representative, deputy member of the local consultative committees and member of the Department of Natural Sciences trainee committee.

Søren Olsen, laboratory technician

I have worked at the Department of Natural Sciences at the University of Copenhagen-LIFE (KVL) for 27 years. I have also held positions at the University of Copenhagen's Freshwater Biological Laboratory, the laboratory technician school at what is now University College Øresund and at the University of Copenhagen's Department of Medical Microbiology. Many years ago, I was on what was then the Department of Chemistry Board. And for many years now, I have been, and still am, a member of the department's teaching committee.

For almost my entire working life, I have focused on the preparation and instruction of lab courses in several disciplines. In addition to research, I am very interested in the science of teaching and learning, the communication of knowledge and teaching methods.

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gjb@life.ku.dk – latest update 4 December 2007

Education

New board for the Union of Natural Resources Students

The board comprises:

Eskild Hohlmann Bennetzen, Chair
Mette Nordvig Sonne, Deputy Chair
Kasper Jakob Jensen, DSR representative
Lene Nielsen, Educational Policy Coordinator
Rune Kragh Tøttenborg, Events Coordinator
Jon Selmer Friborg, First-year Student Coordinator
Christian Elleby, Cashier
Trine Marie Dippel, Secretary
Pelle Frederik Clauson-Kaas, PR Coordinator
Morten Henriksen, WEB manager
Mille Krambeck Hansen, Special Interest Group Contact

[Read more here](#)

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gib@lfe.ku.dk – latest update 4 December 2007

Staff news

Jan Leschly to become University of Copenhagen's first honorary alumnus

On Friday, Jan Leschly, MSc Pharmacy, will be appointed honorary alumnus at the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences. He will be the first honorary alumnus at the University of Copenhagen.

When Jan Leschly first appeared in the newspaper headlines, he was a rising tennis star. In 1965 – the same year he graduated from the Danish University of Pharmaceutical Sciences with a degree in pharmacy – he was ranked 10th in the world of professional tennis. No other Danish tennis player has since made it that far. After that time, the headlines have dealt with his impressive international career.

After seven years with Novo Nordisk and ten years with Squibb Corporation (now Bristol Myers Squibb), Jan Leschly took a position in 1990 with SmithKline Beecham (today GlaxoSmithKline), where he was chief executive from 1994 to 2000. From 2000 he has been chief executive of – and partner in – Care Capital LLC, a venture capital firm that invests in biotech companies.

Pro-rector for the University of Copenhagen Lykke Friis will be conferring the title of honorary alumnus on 7 December at the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences' FARMA-dag event. There Leschly will speak on the Emerging Partnership Between Pharma/Biotech and Universities and Its Impact on R&D Productivity.

The event will begin at 3.00 pm in lecture hall 4 at the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences.

Stine Rasmussen, communication officer, Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences, tel. +45 3533 6368, sr@farma.ku.dk.

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gib@lfe.ku.dk – latest update 4 December 2007

Research

2006 Annual Report for the Danish Committees on Scientific Dishonesty (UVVU)

In 2006, the Danish Committees on Scientific Dishonesty concluded ten cases. In one case – case number 2 in the report – the Committees found proof of scientific dishonesty.

Ten cases concluded in 2006

The Danish Committees on Scientific Dishonesty concluded ten cases in 2006. The cases were handled by the following sub-committees:

- The Committee on Scientific Dishonesty for Research in Cultural and Social Science – four cases
- The Committee on Scientific Dishonesty for Research in Natural, Technological and Production Science – three cases
- The Committee on Scientific Dishonesty for Research in Health and Medical Science – two cases

The tenth case (no. 9 in the report) was not handled as it concerned the rejection of an application for project funding, which lies outside the remit of the Committees.

Scientific dishonesty

In one case, the Committees found that the defendant had displayed scientific dishonesty. The case (no. 2 in the report) concerned the copying of an article.

As in previous years, the Committees declined to consider the majority of the cases brought before them in 2006.

When the Committees decline to consider a case, it is often because the complaint lies outside the remit of the Committees. For example, the complaint may be regarding something that does not concern research. Or it may be because the Committees determine beforehand that it is unlikely that the person against whom the complaint is lodged has acted in a scientifically dishonest manner. In addition, the Committees declined to consider cases in 2006 in which the complainant was not personally involved and in which the Committees found no reason to pursue the case further.

The regulatory framework of the Danish Committees on Scientific Dishonesty

The Committees handle cases on dishonesty in research. The Executive Order on the Danish Committees on Scientific Dishonesty defines scientific dishonesty as: "intentional or grossly negligent conduct in the form of falsification, plagiarism, non-disclosure or any similar conduct involving undue misrepresentation of a person's own scientific work and/or scientific results."

All cases from 2006 have been considered according to Executive Order no. 668 of 28 June 2005, which took effect on 1 August 2005. In October 2006, the Committees implemented new procedures, which are laid out on page 39 of the 2006 Annual Report.

Articles on special issues

The 2006 Annual Report contains two articles. The first, entitled "Vitenskapelig uredelighet og forskningsetikk i Norge" (Scientific dishonest and business ethics in Norway), was written by Matthias Kaiser, who is head of secretariat at the National Committee for Research Ethics in Science and Technology (NENT) in Norway. The second, entitled "På vej mod internationale normer for integritet i forskningen" (Moving towards international standards for integrity in research), was written by Professor Vagn Lundsgaard Hansen from the Technical University of Denmark, who is a member of the Committee on Scientific Dishonesty for Research in Natural, Technological and Production Science.

About the Danish Committees on Scientific Dishonesty

The Committees on Scientific Dishonesty comprise one chairperson and three sub-committees:

The Committee on Scientific Dishonesty for Research in Health and Medical Science (USF)

The Committee on Scientific Dishonesty for Research in Natural, Technological and Production Science (UNTPF)

The Committee on Scientific Dishonesty for Research in Cultural and Social Science (UKSF)

More copies of the Annual Report are available at:

Forsknings- og Innovationsstyrelsen (Danish Agency for Science, Technology and Innovation), Bredgade 40, 1260 Copenhagen K
Tel.: +45 35 44 62 00, email: UVVU@fi.dk The Committees' Annual Report is also available on the Agency website: www.fi.dk and in a [PDF version here](#).

For more information, please contact:

Cecilie Dickmeiss, head of section and committee secretary, Danish Agency for Science, Technology and Innovation Direct tel.: +45 35 44 62 79, email: cedk@fi.dk

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, glb@life.ku.dk – latest update 6 December 2007

The Research Communication Award Committee hereby invites nominations for award winners for 2008

Every year since 2004, the Research Communication Award has been given to a scientist who has called attention to his or her research, through lively and topical communication to society in general.

Anyone may nominate a scientist or team of researchers who successfully combine research and communication. Scientists from all fields of research may be nominated for the award. The nomination must be reasoned (max. two A4 pages) and must include a short CV.

The deadline for nominations is 14 January 2008.

The award which comes with a cheque for DKK 100,000 will be presented in connection with the Festival of Research.

Previous award winners include Anja C. Andersen, astrophysicist, Bente Klarlund Pedersen, doctor of medical science, Morten Kringelbach, brain scientist, and Ole G. Mouritzen, biomembrane physicist, who all have an excellent ability to combine pioneering research with engaging and innovative communication.

For more information, please contact Stefanie Bondy Jørgensen, special consultant, stbj@fi.dk

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, glb@life.ku.dk – latest update 4 December 2007

Grants

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.