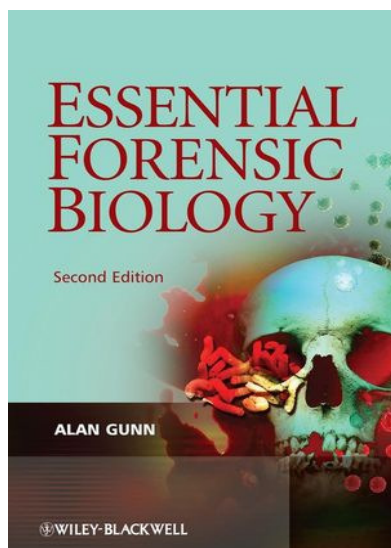


Marine biology in Australia

Dr Simone Dürr attended the International Temperate Reef Conference in Adelaide, Australia (11th to 16th January 2009) presenting a talk '*Patterns of recruitment and development of biofouling at European aquaculture facilities over a 2-year period*' and a poster on *Stereological analysis of biofouling*. Manishadevi Patel and Eric McEvoy also contributed a poster on *Biogenesis of tetrodotoxin in British marine nemertean worms*. Simone's visit was funded by the School and the Royal Society. *Right:* The weedy seadragon *Phyllopteryx taeniolatus* is the emblem of South Australia and the conference.



© S. Dürr.



Essential Forensic Biology

The second edition of Dr Alan Gunn's popular forensic science book has just been released in full colour. Published by Wiley-Blackwell, it covers decay processes and forensic indicators such as human fluids and tissues, teeth, bones, plants and micro-organisms.



Invited paper at Greek Psychology Conference

Professor Pamela James was an invited speaker at the Future Developments in Counselling Psychology conference organised by the Psychology Society of Northern Greece at Aristotle University in Thessaloniki in December. Prof. James spoke on the Centrality and Consistency of Counselling Psychology, including a review of the current and probable future nature of the discipline, in the NHS, in the next few years, and the implications for theoretical viewpoints and philosophical underpinning.

Earth Science Teachers Conference

The School of Natural Sciences and Psychology hosted the Earth Science Teachers' Association (ESTA) 41st Annual Conference on the 19th-21st of September 2009. Organised by Dr Jason Kirby, Dr Siobhán Power and Hazel Clark, the meeting consisted of two days of talks followed by fieldtrips to local sites of geological interest.

Media workshop for Ecologists

In September at the British Ecological Society meeting at Imperial College, London, Dr Jenny Sneddon (NSP) and Prof. Steve Miller (UCL) ran a media workshop on 'How to create a press release'. The participants wrote mock press releases on their work, which were then critiqued by Professor Miller.

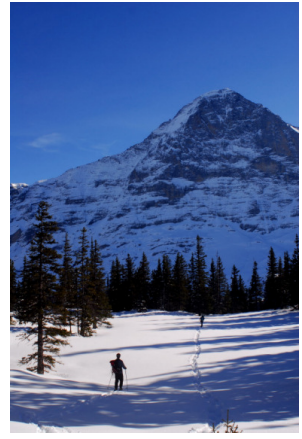
Mexican adventures

Staff and students from the School of Natural Sciences & Psychology recently returned from fieldwork in Mexico (4th to 17th January). This was the first run of the new Mexico Research Expedition module for level 3 geoscience students. The group spent the first week in the Mexico City area studying volcanoes and the effects of volcanic hazards on the population of the area. The second week was spent in the Cuatrocienegas desert, where the processes of travertine formation were studied, from modern day rimstone evaporation pools to 15m high quarry faces where the finished product is extracted. All the sites visited are part of the department's ongoing research in the area, led by Professor Silvia Gonzalez and including PhD student Nick Felstead.

Left: Examining rimstone pools which evaporate to form travertine in the Cuatrocienegas desert, Mexico. Photo by Dr Anne-Marie Nuttall.

Climate change in the Alps

Dr Dave Wilkinson is on sabbatical this semester, visiting the laboratory of Dr Edward Mitchell at the Swiss Federal institute for Forest, Snow and Landscape Research in Lausanne. This is one of the leading laboratories in Europe for the study of the ecology of testate amoebae – shell building protozoans common in soils and freshwater. Wilkinson's research this semester will concentrate on various aspects of the distribution of these protozoa and the effects of climate (and climate change) on their distribution and ecology. In addition to this work he has been helping with ongoing work by the Lausanne group on seasonal variations in microbial activity and nutrient cycling in alpine peat bogs. *Right:* the flat area in the centre of this photograph is a peat bog under 1m of snow, which is being sampled at regular intervals by the Lausanne team. Photo: D. Wilkinson



BIAL grant awarded for meditation and brain activity study

A one-year research project *Does meditation practice modulate the dynamics of attentional neural networks? An EEG study* by Dr Peter Malinowski, in collaboration with the Universities of Hamburg and Osnabrück, has been funded by the BIAL Foundation and will begin in August 2009. The project will investigate how regular meditation practice influences different aspects of attentional functions and in particular what the psychophysiological mechanisms are that underpin those changes. The new Tom Riley building laboratory facilities (particularly the electroencephalography (EEG) chamber) make it possible to run this project to the highest international standard.



Above: The Sichuan partridge, *Arborophila rufipectus*.

Recognition from the North of England Zoological Society (NEZS)

Two NSP staff members have recently been made honorary fellows of the North of England Zoological Society (= Chester Zoo). Dr Simon Dowell is an Honorary Conservation Fellow in recognition of his work as project co-ordinator of the Sichuan Forest Biodiversity Project, which has led to the establishment of three new nature reserves in China to help protect endemic biodiversity including the endangered Sichuan partridge (*Arborophila rufipectus*). Professor Filippo Aureli is an Honorary Scientific Fellow in recognition of the continuing research work in collaboration with NEZS on the behaviour of the spider monkey (*Ateles geoffroyi*).

Observing spider monkeys overseas

Professor Filippo Aureli has been awarded a fieldwork grant from the North of England Zoological Society to continue his work on spider monkeys in Costa Rica and Mexico.

Research in the *other* lake district

Dr Jane Fisher and Dr Simone Dürr have been working on a joint project on the Shropshire and Cheshire Meres. Dr Fisher is investigating decomposition rates in the lakes to see if they are sites of carbon sequestration, while Dr Dürr is looking at the development of biofouling on panels suspended in the lakes.



© S. Dürr

Upland Caves Network begins

The Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) funded Upland Caves research network is being launched in February. This project, run by Dr Hannah O'Regan in collaboration with

a number of other institutions and individuals, is intended to bring together researchers on cave archaeology and related topics for a series of meetings over the next two years. The first conference will be held in Autumn 2009 on *Cave exploration and excavation*. Further details can be found on the network website: www.uplandcavesnetwork.org.



Forthcoming research seminars

Natural science research seminars take place every week on Wednesdays at 4.30pm in room 327, Byrom Street. Upcoming talks for this semester are:

February

18th Marian Holness, University of Cambridge. *Towards an understanding of microstructural development in partially melted crustal rocks*. Mineralogical Society Distinguished Lecturers Seminar.

25th Natalie Uomini, Liverpool University. *Going nuts: hand preference and language origins*.

March

11th Andrew King, Institute of Zoology, London. *Cooperation, conflict, and coordination in baboon groups*. INCORE seminar.

18th Martin Wahl, University of Kiel. *Marine stress ecology*.

25th Annie Worsley, Edge Hill University. *Dust, mud and the lungs of Liverpool*.

Some recent publications by staff within the School

Adams, T., **Glenn, S.** 2008. Psychosocial support for patients with skin disease. *Dermatological Nursing* 7: 11-16.

Boys, C., **Cunningham, C.**, McKenna, D., Robertson, P., Weeks, D., Wishart, J. 2008. Prenatal screening for Down's Syndrome: editorial responsibilities. *Lancet* 372: 1789-1791.

Clare, T., O'Regan, H.J., Wilkinson, D. 2008. Greenwell's lost barrow CLXXIV in Crosby Garrett parish. *Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmoreland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society* VIII: 1-17.

Dai, B., **Dowell, S.D.**, Garson, P.J., He, F.Q. 2009. Habitat utilisation by the threatened Sichuan Partridge *Arborophila rufipectus*: consequences for managing newly protected areas in southern China. *Bird Conservation International* 19: 1-12.

Fisher, J., Stratford, C. 2008. Does reconnection mean restoration for an oxbow lake, Hungary? *Journal of River Basin Management* 6: 201-211.

Glenn, S., Cunningham, C., Poole, H., Reeves, D., Weindling, M. 2008. Maternal parenting stress in families with a young child with cerebral palsy. *Child: Care, Health and Development* 35: 71-78.

Hodkinson, I.D. 2009. Life cycle variation and adaptation in jumping plant lice (Insecta: Hemiptera: Psyllodea): a global synthesis. *Journal of Natural History* 43: 65-179.

Kirby, J.R., Kirby, R. 2008. Medium timescale stability of tidal mudflats in Bridgwater Bay, Bristol Channel, UK: Influence of tides, waves and climate. *Continental Shelf Research* 28: 2615-2629.

Louys, J., Aplin, K., Beck, R.M.D., Archer, M. *in press*. Cranial anatomy of Oligo-Miocene koalas (Diprotodontia: Phascolarctidae): stages in the evolution of an extreme leaf-eating specialization. *Journal of Vertebrate Palaeontology*.

Malinowski, P. *in press*. Mindfulness as psychological dimension: Concepts and applications. *Irish Journal of Psychology*.

Moore, A., **Malinowski, P.** *in press*. Meditation, mindfulness and cognitive flexibility. *Consciousness & Cognition*.

O'Regan, H., Chenery, C., Lamb, A., Stevens, R., Rook, L., Elton, S. 2008. Modern macaque dietary heterogeneity assessed using stable isotope analysis of hair and bone. *Journal of Human Evolution* 55: 617-626.

Romero, T., Colmenares, F., **Aureli, F.** 2009. Testing the function of reconciliation and third-party affiliation for aggressors in hamadryas baboons (*Papio hamadryas hamadryas*). *American Journal of Primatology* 71: 60-69.

Slater, K.Y., Schaffner, C.M., **Aureli, F.** 2009. Sex differences in the social behavior of wild spider monkeys (*Ateles geoffroyi yucatanensis*). *American Journal of Primatology* 71: 21-29.