



International Society of Chemical Ecology

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Newsletter - Volume 26, Number 3, December 2009

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President's message

Having the privilege to write a "President's Message" for the International Society of Chemical Ecology, I cannot help but reflect on what our Society has meant to me, and to ponder the state of our discipline.

Thanks to my mentor and major professor, Dr. Murray Blum (emeritus, University of Georgia, Athens), I attended the first ISCE meeting in Austin, Texas, in 1984. Rereading [Lincoln Brower's \(1984/85\)](#) President's Message reminded me that I was actually an invited speaker (undoubtedly due to Murray), thus bolstering my then meager résumé. To be honest, what I remember most about this meeting was driving around the countryside of Austin with Jean-Luc Clément (2002/03 ISCE President) and some University of Texas grad-students in an old station wagon, stopping occasionally to collect our favorite bugs in the Texas scrubland. Now I, along with my fellow ISCE executive committee members and councilors, look to our young chemical ecologists to lead us into the future. In fact, over the past few years we have increased grants for students to attend meetings, and we welcome suggestions that will help stoke the participation of students in the ISCE. I view past President Wilhelm Boland's ISCE councilor appointment, Dr. Anke Steppuhn (see biographical sketch below), as a vote of confidence in our next generation of scientists, and in our Society's future.



Jeffrey R. Aldrich (2009/10 ISCE President)

We chemical ecologists are a team, perhaps more so because of our interdisciplinary nature, and there is power in our team's devotion to a cause in which we believe: Because we understand the subtleties of chemical communication, we are in a unique position to convey to others the importance of nurturing and protecting our planet. And don't underestimate the value of camaraderie that grows over a career of devotion to and involvement in such a cause. I'm reminded of another mentor and past ISCE President's message: "As a non-member...you are exhibiting parasitic behavior in benefiting from the efforts of those who are members and keep this a strong Society" ([Wendell Roelofs, 2007/08](#)). Don't be a parasite! Join us! Get involved! And, feel free

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to use the ISCE Newsletters as a forum for communication of your ideas, events and information—send me items for future Newsletters (Jeffrey.Aldrich@ars.usda.gov)!

Something else struck me when I reread the first ISCE Newsletter, the title of the banquet speech: "Adopt, Adapt, Improve" (David Jones, 1986/87 ISCE President). To me this seems especially appropriate 25 years after the creation of our Society. Who would have imagined back then that catch phrases of our world today would include "going green" or "genetically modified organisms"? So, the science of chemical ecology is maturing (or is that just me?). In either case or both, I think we as chemical ecologists should welcome the vast opportunities to integrate our science with the genetic and organic revolutions. (Yes, organic is in!) Furthermore, I suggest we continue and expand past efforts to translate our discoveries to the public realm for the good of all. It seems to me that we, who have the good fortune to be 'paid explorers' (Baker, 2003/04 ISCE President), also have a duty to bring home the ecological and social implications of our work. (If ants can do it, so can we!) Finally, as I can still hear my main mentor and favorite ant-man, Murray Blum, saying: "The best is yet to come!"

Jeffrey Aldrich, ISCE President

Secretary/Editor's Message



As new secretary I would like to thank our outgoing secretary, Erika Plettner for her kind introduction, and for encouraging me to take over these responsibilities, and to our past-president, Dr. Wilhelm Boland, for his excellent leadership of the Society in 2008/2009. In addition to me, other newly elected officers include Vice President Monika Hilker, and the five newly elected councilors: Stefano Colazza, Kotaro Konno, Peter Witzgall and Robert van der Meer; plus the first presidentially appointed councilor (by Wilhelm Boland), Anke Steppuhn (<http://www.chemecol.org/society/councilors.htm>; and below).

A big thank-you goes to Ted Turlings, the organizer of the 2009 annual meeting held in Neuchâtel, Switzerland. The meeting was attended by over 300 persons from 33 countries, of which 96 were students—one of two most visited ISCE meeting so far. As usual, the scientific program was stimulating and informative, and the location and weather were so fantastic that many of our members cooled off in Lake Neuchâtel when temperatures soared. Some pictures can be seen [here](#).



Ted Turlings (Neuchâtel meeting host, left) & Wilhelm Boland (2008/09 ISCE President)

We are grateful to our sponsors Trécé Inc., Suterra LLC and Springer for funding the Student Travel Awards, Silver Medal Award and the Silverstein Simeone Award, respectively. The Silver Medal lecture was presented by Dr. Ring Cardé (University of California, Riverside), and the Silverstein-Simeone was presented by Dr. Richard Lindroth (University of Wisconsin, Madison) Student awards were given to 10 students, from eight countries.

Surname	Given name	Place	Country
Abdullahi	Ahmed Ysuf	Nairobi	Kenya
Gonzalez Audino	Paola	Buenos Aires	Argentina
Liendo	Carmen Virginia	Caracas	Venezuela
Kah-Wie	Hee Alvin	Serdang	Malaysia

Herrera	Beatriz	Caracas	Venezuela
Bhanu	K.R.M.	Bangalore	India
Drummond Moreira	Laura	Sao Paulo	Brazil
Peñaflor	Maria Fernanda	Piracicaba	Brazil
Pathipati	Usha Rani	Hyderabad	India
Apšegaite	Violeta	Vilnius	Lithuania



Old learning something from the young: Jeremy McNeil (1993/94 ISCE President) & Maria Fernanda Peñaflor

The Society, and its affiliated Journal of Chemical Ecology, remains strong, although many researchers in chemical ecology are still not members. ISCE Treasurer, Kenneth Haynes, reported that we now have 546 members (an increase of 61 from 2008) from 44 countries, including 102 life members, 332 regular members, 110 student members, one sponsoring member and one honorary member. The five countries with the most members are USA (214), Germany (56), Sweden (44), Japan (32) and UK (25). The editor in chief of Journal of Chemical Ecology, Dr. John Romeo, reported that the JOCE impact factor increased to 2.33 in 2009 (the highest so far), with a rejection rate of submitted manuscripts of 55-60%. A substantial number of submissions are from non-English speaking countries which give the editors a heavy workload in correcting the language.



Journal of Chemical Ecology Editor, John Romeo (center), and past ISCE Presidents.

Finally, I look forward to meeting and communicating with as many members of the Society as possible. I hope you will support the Newsletter with interesting information of upcoming meetings, job opportunities and news related to chemical ecology so that this forum truly mirrors the interests of our members. Please update your

membership and invite your lab mates to join! An updated flyer is being designed, and will be available on the ISCE website for down loading, to help spread the ISCE message.

Anna-Karin Borg-Karlson, ISCE Secretary

Conferences

The fifth Asia pacific conference on Chemical Ecology was held Oct 27-30 in Honolulu HI. Researchers from over 17 countries were represented speaking on subjects from insect plant aquatic and vertebrate CE. Over 200 presentations were made in poster, symposia, invited talks and oral presentations. The conference dinner was held at the Waikiki aquarium. President Ritsuo Nishida (Japan) handed over the presidency to Eric Jang (USA) who will preside over the next meeting scheduled in Beijing China in 2011.

Presidential Councilor

(Appointed by Wilhelm Boland)



Dr. Steppuhn is assistant professor for molecular ecology at the Free University Berlin. After her Diploma in 2002 at the Netherlands Institute of Ecology on parasitoid nutrient ecology, she went to the Max-Planck Institute of Chemical Ecology. In Jena in the group of Ian T. Baldwin she elucidated the functions and costs of nicotine and protease inhibitors in plants by using transgenic *Nicotiana attenuata* plants in field studies. She received her Ph. D. in 2007 from the Friedrich Schiller University Jena. In January 2009 she started at the lab of Prof. Monika Hilker at the Free University Berlin. Her research focus is on plant defence responses to herbivory. Using analytical and molecular methods she

studies elicitation of herbivore induced plant responses, costs and benefits of the production of secondary metabolites, interactions among different defences, and the defensive mechanism of secondary metabolites. She has 10 publications from her research for example in PLOS Biology, Ecology Letters, and Molecular Ecology.

Future Meeting Sites (Hosts)

2010 Tours, France (Anne-Genevieve Bagnères) 31 July-4 August 2010

2011 Vancouver, Canada (Erika Plettner)

2012 Vilnius, Lithuania (Vincas Buda)

Call for Nominations for the Year 2011 ISCE Silver Medal and Silverstein-Simeone Awards

The ISCE Silver Medal Award is intended to recognize career achievement by an outstanding scientist working in the field of chemical ecology. The Silverstein-Simeone Award, established in 1995, to honor Milt Silverstein and John Simeone, is made on the basis of recent or current work, by the individual, of an outstanding nature at the "cutting edge" of chemical ecology. The recipient must deliver a plenary lecture at the annual ISCE meeting and publish a paper on the same topic in the Journal of Chemical Ecology. The expenses of the recipient of the Silverstein-Simeone Award to attend the annual meeting are paid by the society through the generous sponsorship of Springer Publishers. Nominators should be ISCE members in good standing. Nominations will be reviewed by the President and Vice President for relevance to the appropriate award, before forwarding them to the full ISCE Executive Committee. Should a nomination for one award be considered more relevant for the other award, the President will contact the nominator(s) regarding reconsideration. Current ISCE officers or councilors are not eligible for the awards because of possible conflict of interest. Note that previous, unsuccessful nominations must be re-nominated to be considered for the awards. It would be helpful to resubmit the nomination packets for these individuals

The nomination process is the same for both awards and is as follows

- A nomination letter explaining why the nominee should be recognized for the award, stressing either their current cutting-edge research (for the Silverstein-Simeone award) or their career achievements (for the Silver Medal award)
- Curriculum vitae, including a list of publications pertinent to the research on which the award is based (for the Silverstein-Simeone award), or a full list of publications (for the Silver Medal award). Supporting letters from other colleagues may be included

Please submit all parts of the packet in electronic format (including supporting letters) along with one paper copy to: Dr. Jeffrey Aldrich, ISCE President, USDA-ARS, Invasive Insect Biocontrol Behavior Laboratory, 10300 Baltimore Avenue, Beltsville, MD 14456, USA

Email: Jeffrey.Aldrich@ars.usda.gov

Deadline for receipt of nominations: 31 January 2010

Call for Nominations for ISCE Vice-President, and Councilors for 2010

Nominations for the positions of Vice-President and three new councilors are called. The position of Vice-President is prestigious in that he/she will assume the position of Society President in the year following the tenure as Vice-President.

ISCE councilors are elected for a term of three years. Councilors must commit to attending at least two ISCE Executive meetings during this period. Their other principal responsibilities are participation in the selection of the Silver Medal and Silverstein-Simeone Award, and to provide general guidance and assistance to the Executive Committee. It is expected that all people nominated for the above positions have a strong record of participation in Society activities and meetings. It is highly desirable that the elections have competition for the positions, i.e., that there is more than one high quality candidate for Vice-President and at least 4 candidates for the councilor positions.

Please send names, contact addresses, phone and fax numbers, and e-mail addresses of candidates along with a short description of why you think the candidate(s) would be suitable for office, to: Dr. Jeffrey Aldrich, ISCE President, USDA-ARS, Invasive Insect Biocontrol ; Behavior Laboratory, 10300 Baltimore Avenue, Beltsville, MD 14456, USA

Email: Jeffrey.Aldrich@ars.usda.gov Deadline for receipt of nominations: 31 January 2010

Member News

- Chemical ecologist Walter Leal, Professor of Entomology at the University of California, Davis, is a newly selected Fellow of the Entomological Society of America (ESA). "This is a highly prestigious honor and richly deserved," said Michael Parrella, Professor and Chair of the UC Davis Department of Entomology, and one of 10 other UC Davis entomologists named ESA Fellows since 1947.



Aline Guidolin, Walter Leal & Diogo Vidal (left to right)

This year's 10 Fellows will be recognized at the ESA annual meeting, 13-16 December, in Indianapolis, Indiana. Also, two Brazilian students (Diogo Vidal and Aline Guidolin) have joined the Leal laboratory for three months as part of the Sustainable Crop Protection in Agriculture Program (SUSPROT). SUSPROT is a federally funded program designed to promote scientific cooperation and collaborative education between academic and professional communities in Europe (Belgium, France, Germany and the Netherlands) and the U.S. Diogo Vidal is working with pheromone identification and binding proteins, and Aline Guidolin, is working on gene silencing of pheromone-binding proteins.

- Research Entomologist and current ISCE President, Jeffrey Aldrich, will spend four months as a Visiting Scientist working in the laboratory of Dr. Paulo Zarbin, Department of Chemistry, Federal University of Parana, Curitiba, and beginning in January 2010.

Graduate Level Summer Course in Insect Chemical Ecology at Penn State, June 1-15, 2010.

ICE10 is a continuation of the highly successful ICE short course series that has been taught at the Swedish Agricultural University at Alnarp every other year, in 2005, 2007 and 2009. Now it is coming to North America for the first time next year, and the Center for Chemical Ecology at Penn State is delighted to be hosting it. If you are interested to participate, please contact the host Tom Baker, tcb10@psu.edu

Positions Available:

- Ph.D. Positions in the Insect Symbiosis Research Group at the Max Planck Institute for Chemical Ecology in Jena, Germany. The Insect Symbiosis Research Group at the Max Planck Institute for Chemical Ecology in Jena, Germany (http://www.ice.mpg.de/snwg/home/home_en.htm), will be established by the end of this year to study the evolution and chemical ecology of insect-bacteria symbioses. Two Ph.D. positions are available from January 2010 for an initial period of two years with a prospective third year extension. The Max Planck Institute is an equal-opportunity employer and especially encourages women to apply. Applications from handicapped persons will be favored when all other qualifications are equal. Please send your applications (including cover letter with statement of purpose and previous research experience, CV, and contact

information for 2 referees) until October 31, 2009 to Dr. Martin Kaltenpoth, Zoological Institute, University of Regensburg, Universitaetsstr. 31, 93053 Regensburg, Germany, email: martin.kaltenpoth@biologie.uni-regensburg.de.

• **Ph.D. Studentship – Molecular ecology of a defensive insect-bacteria symbiosis.**

Solitary digger wasps of the genus *Philanthus* cultivate *Streptomyces* bacteria that protect the wasp offspring against pathogen infestation by producing antibiotics. One PhD position is available to study the dynamics of antibiotic production and to identify the genes involved. We are seeking a highly motivated candidate with strong communication and excellent organizational skills who can operate in an interdisciplinary research environment. The successful candidate should have a strong background in evolutionary biology, genetics and/or molecular biology. Experience with basic molecular techniques (PCR, cloning, analysis of sequence data) is required, more advanced techniques (FISH, qPCR, rt-PCR, rt-qPCR) and basic programming skills (Perl) are advantageous. Applicants should have an excellent Diploma degree or M.Sc. in evolutionary biology, biochemistry or molecular biology.

• **Ph.D. Studentship – Nutritional interactions between insects and actinomycete bacteria.** Many insects require symbiotic bacteria for their nutrition. Most of these symbionts belong to the gammaproteobacteria. The red soldier bug (*Pyrrhocoris apterus*, Hemiptera, Pyrrhocoridae) represents one of the few cases in which an actinobacterium is found as a symbiont in the midgut of an insect. A PhD position is available to study the molecular basis and the specificity of the symbiosis. The successful candidate should have a strong background in biochemistry, entomology and/or molecular biology in addition to a strong motivation and interest for research projects in the evolution and ecology of insect-bacteria interactions. Experience with molecular techniques (PCR, FISH, sequencing) is a plus. Applicants should have an excellent Diploma degree or M.Sc. in biochemistry, molecular biology or entomology.

Research Scientist at the Ohio State University

The Kottman Hall Translational Plant Sciences laboratory (KH-TPS) is a core research facility of The Ohio State University and is seeking applicants for a research scientist with strong expertise in bioinformatics. The successful candidate will supervise and coordinate all core laboratory activities including the use and maintenance of a range of analytical and molecular biology equipment, and user training and assistance. Main duties will include providing bioinformatics support and implementing new computational tools for genomics, proteomics, and metabolomics research. The scientist will be responsible for maintaining the laboratory operating budget and for facilitating the acquisition of extramural funds for new equipment, facility maintenance and improvement. He or she will conduct collaborative research in the bioinformatics area, advise faculty and train students in data analysis and interpretation, and will contribute to project development with faculty, including grant proposal preparation.

Requirements: (1) PhD in Plant Biology, Bioinformatics, Biochemistry, Molecular Biology, or related discipline and (2) demonstrated expertise in bioinformatics, genomics, biochemistry, or molecular biology, including knowledge of computational tools required for genetic database searches, genome annotations, whole genome comparisons, large data set analyses. Must be familiar with Linux and at least one of the scripting languages such as Perl, C, C++, Java or Python, and with MySQL databases. Postdoctoral experience is highly desirable. For more information please contact Dr. Tea Meulia, meulia.1@osu.edu.

Apply on line at <http://jobs.osu.edu>, job requisition #348254

Upcoming meetings

The 2010 Gordon Research Conference on Plant Herbivore Interactions will be held 21-26 February 2010 at a new venue in Galveston, TX. Hotel Galvez is located on the Gulf of Mexico about 40 miles from Houston (<http://www.galveston.com/galvez/>) For over 25 years, the GRC series on Plant-Herbivore Interactions has served as a premier forum for scientists investigating the ecology and evolution of plant-herbivore interactions. In addition to being an important venue for sharing late-breaking results, its broad influence makes the conference series an influential determinant of research directions in the field. The 11th GRC on Plant-Herbivore Interactions will bring together an outstanding group of junior and senior scientists. Sessions will range from genetic and biochemical mechanisms to populations, communities and ecosystems, embrace mechanism and theory, and link chemistry, ecology and evolution. To complement the diverse themes of the session presentations, three poster sessions are scheduled for the evenings and all attendees are encouraged to contribute a poster. The program is at http://www.grc.org/programs.aspx?year=2010_program=plantherb. The collegial atmosphere of this Conference and breadth of research areas represented, with programmed morning and evening discussion sessions and informal gatherings in the afternoons, provides an exciting venue for scientists from different disciplines to brainstorm and debate across disciplinary boundaries.

International Society of Chemical Ecology

Jeffrey Aldrich, President, Anna-Karin Borg-Karlson, Secretary

[Web site questions](#)

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