

Phaëton

The Official Newsletter of the
Maryland Entomological Society

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Meeting Announcement

The Maryland Entomological Society's 265th regular meeting will be held **Friday, November 21, 2008**; beginning at 8:00 P.M., in **Room 004** (one floor below the street level), Biological Sciences Bldg., University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC). Bring a friend and specimens/observations to share. Refreshments will be provided. Presentations are scheduled to begin about 8:15 P.M.

Speaker: **Dr. Susan E. Gresens**, Associate Professor
Dept. of Biological Sciences, Towson University
Towson, MD

Title: **“Chironomidae, the non-biting midges: modest, but not to be underestimated!”**

Susan Gresens earned her B.S. in Biology in 1980 from SUNY College, Oneonta, NY; her M.S. in Zoology in 1982 from the University of Wisconsin – Madison; and her Ph.D. in Ecology and Evolution in 1990 from the University of Chicago. Her dissertation topic was “spatial patterns and competitive interactions among grazing invertebrates.” She was a postdoctoral fellow at U.C – Berkeley from 1993 to 1995, studying interactive effects of thermal regime and food quality on production of a keystone herbivore in the San Francisco's Eel River. Her specialty is aquatic ecology, with a focus on the ecology and diversity of Chironomidae, and her current research relates species distributions to land use and impact of stormwater runoff. Chironomids include more than 2,000 species in North America. They are often the most numerous macroinvertebrates in many freshwater habitats, and usually play a significant role in the primary food webs and energy flow patterns of freshwater streams, ponds, stormwater catchments, and lakes. Dr. Gresens will present and discuss some of the results and importance of some of her complex laboratory and field studies and observations.

If you want more information concerning this meeting, contact one of the following people:

Annapolis Area - Harold Harlan (410) 923-0173 (Home) “haroldharlan@comcast.net ”
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Minutes of the October 2008 MES Meeting

The 264th general meeting of the Maryland Entomological Society was held on Friday, October 17, 2008 at UMBC and was begun at 8:46 p.m. Many items of equipment, entomological study and publications, from Dr. Platt's former UMBC lab, were available for free to MES members at the meeting, and this evoked much pre-meeting interest. The meeting began with a short business segment. The May 2008 meeting minutes were read and approved, then the Treasurer's report was read with the MES Funds total standing currently at \$701.34. A major portion of the fund total had been used recently to publish the latest issue (Vol. 4, No. 4) of the society's journal *The Maryland Entomologist*, comprised of several papers on Hart-Miller Island insects. (This island is located in the Chesapeake Bay just offshore from Baltimore Co.) As to the final publication cost, a large number of copies of this issue are on order and will be sold to non-MES members and other organizations. The MES Fund will be recouped later this year by the returns from these sales. We all congratulated Gene Scarpulla, the current journal editor, for the professional quality and impeccable appearance of this latest issue. Continued UMBC faculty sponsorship and reservation for our general meeting room is an item of recent concern to the MES due to Dr. Frank Hanson's retirement later this year. The UMBC Biological Sciences Department is in favor of our continued relationship with the university, and several formal solutions to the sponsorship and reservation of the room are being considered. Fred Paras will let us know when a resolution is reached. Under announcements, Pete Osenton mentioned the Patuxent Research Refuge Open House on Oct. 18.

The main program for the meeting, a behind-the-scenes look at several entomological publications, was presented next by their author Dr. Arthur Evans, Research Associate at the National Museum of Natural History and consultant with the Natural Heritage Program, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation in Richmond, VA. Dr. Evans grew up in Southern California, earned his Ph.D. at the University of Pretoria, South Africa, was Director of the Los Angeles Insect Zoo for several years, and served at the Sonoran Desert Institute in Scottsdale, AZ. His early interest in insects was motivated by the whimsical use of ants in a 1940's movie ("The Bride Goes Wild"). Popular publications about western U.S. insects were actually very scarce prior to the 1980's. *California*

Insects (1980) by Powell and Hogue was one of the first. California did have some dramatic public insect exhibits, however, such as giant mechanical insect models in the "Backyard Monsters" exhibit at the San Diego Zoo. Dr. Evans assisted with programs to introduce children to insects, such as "Bug City" (1998) with Christina Ricci. He later contributed to the book, *A Natural History of the Sonoran Desert* (1999), concentrated mainly on the area's invertebrates and birds. Other books he coauthored included: *An Inordinate Fondness for Beetles* (2000) (with Charles Bellamy), *Introduction to California Beetles* (2004), and *Field Guide to Beetles of California* (2006) (both of the latter with James Hogue). Recently (2007-08), he has worked on *Grzimek's Animal Life Encyclopedia: Insects* (with several co-authors) and a book for older children, *Grzimek's Student Animal Life Resource - Insects and Spiders*. His latest published guide, *Field Guide to Insects and Spiders of North America* (2007) and an intriguing general interest insect text, *What's Bugging You* (2008), were available for purchase at the meeting. Several of his photos appear in the latter field guide along with those of Edward Ross, a professional nature photographer. Key identification characteristics are highlighted with short notes on each descriptive photo. Future books that he has planned include: *An Introduction to the Insects of Virginia and the Carolinas* and *Beetles of Eastern North America*. Art discussed some interesting life history descriptions planned for these books. For example, the larvae of mantidflies (Neuroptera: Mantispidae) undergo "hypermetamorphosis" wherein they assume completely different forms between first and later instars. First instars are active with three pairs of functional legs and seek host spiders; later instars are grub-like, feeding on spider egg masses. If the first instars happen to attach to a male spider, they transfer to a female during mating and thereby gain access to subsequent egg masses. Velvet ant females have a movable, flexible, curvature-controlled stinger nearly as long as their abdomen. Bombardier Beetles project a caustic, hot defensive chemical, associated with a popping sound and smoke. Whirligig Beetles produce a chemical that repels water and facilitates their maneuverability on the water's surface. Dr. Evans was available for book-signing after the presentation.

Respectfully submitted,
Richard H. Smith
MES Secretary

Announcements

1. The **Audubon Naturalist Society** (ANS) offers various nature events & experiences for all ages. They are currently featuring their "Autumn Lights" Auction and Reception at Woodend, Sat., Nov. 22, 6-9 P.M. They are opening early registration for children's 2009 summer "camp(s)". Their website includes information on local & regional conservation issues & their education outreach program: "Green Kids". They offer PDFs of local & regional Nature activities, School Programs, and the Naturalist News, which you can download. Some of their classes, events, and bird walks are free, but most require a fee and pre-registration. For more details, or to register, you can call them at: (301) 652-9188, ext. 10, or go to their website at: "www.AudubonNaturalist.org".

2. Regular MES meetings are held the 3rd Friday of each of 6 months each year: Oct., Nov., Feb., Mar., Apr. & May (parallel to UMBC's academic year). The remaining meetings for the 2008 "MES year" include:

month	date	speaker (if known)	topic
Nov. 08	21 st	Dr. Gresens	(See First Page)
Feb. 09	20 th	TBA	TBA
Mar. 09	20 th	TBA	TBA
Apr. 09	17 th	TBA	TBA
May 09	15 th	TBA	members' "pot-pourri"

3. The **Washington Area Butterfly Club** (WABC) is very active in local & regional nature education, observation & conservation. The WABC website features butterfly gardening, wildlife habitats, and related youth education. A very informative subpage is titled the "Baltimore Checkerspot page", to which several MES members have contributed, especially Pat Durkin. It contains extensive details and links to butterfly biology, rearing for personal interest or even for commercial purposes (*i.e.*, "farming" them for releases at weddings and special events). Included are many very good images of the insects and people enjoying and working with them. That website also has articles, lists of plant sales, & "links" to other nature and conservation resources. For more details, go to: <http://users.sitestar.net/butterfly/>, or contact Pat Durkin at: (202) 483-7965, or at: plusultra@aol.com.

4. The **Maryland DNR** website this month has news about recent state actions to improve several parks and recreational areas. It offers a list of sources for locally-raised turkeys (to support sustainability of local

producers). There's a lot of information (and 'links'), about hunting & fishing regulations, seasons, & advice for outdoorsmen. There is a section about the B.O.W. (*i.e.*, Becoming an Outdoors Woman). There is information about trees available for plantings, volunteering, reservations, recent fish stocking, camping, & "Bayscaping." There is a good article about the history and current status of the Emerald Ash Borer, especially in Maryland and this region. There is a very good article on recent significant local and regional bat population and some possible reason(s) for them. They offer facts and suggested guidance about buying firewood. One "featured creature" on their home page is the Turkey Vulture. For more details about these, or for related information, go to their website : www.dnr.state.md.us.

5. Distributing this newsletter by e-mail saves costs of printing and mailing, and allows rapid distribution of information. Members with no current e-mail address will still be sent hard-copies for the foreseeable future. For questions, please contact any person listed at the bottom of the first page. **Also** please provide your current e-mail address. Dues for **1 Oct. 2007 through 30 Sep. 2008**, are **\$10.00/year**. Please send dues & any address or other corrections to:

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6. A recent event of entomologic interest is a reported human case of apparently (probably) autochthonous (locally-transmitted) malaria from near Fort Meade, MD. A small number of preserved female Anopheles mosquitoes, from population surveys done in the general area earlier in the year, were found "negative" via PCR for known genetic markers for the genus Plasmodium. Local military & civilian public health officials are still following-up the reported case.

7. **Science Café**. Multiple "Science Cafés" will be offered in the DC area Friday evening, Nov. 21, 2008. Gordon Biersch, Regional Food & Drink, the Marriot Renaissance, & the new location of Busboys and Poets will be adding a scientist to the Friday-night crowd to stimulate some lively, maybe controversial, discussion on something that is essential for us & our planet--water. The café at Gordon Biersch will start at 5:30 while the cafe's at Regional Food & Drink & Busboys & Poets will start at 6:30. The café at the Marriot

Renaissance will start at 8:30 P.M. A Science Café is intended to take popular, scientific issues & turn them into accessible topics of discussion over dinner or drinks. This series of Science Cafes, known as the “D.C. SimulCafé”, will focus on “Water.” This may include water chemistry, water policy, hydrology, limnology, or oceanography. The most important part of a Science Café is you don’t have to be an expert in the science to participate in the discussion. A scientist will be on-hand to give background info. & stimulate discussion about topics that relate to your life more than you may realize. Each Café is led by a prominent researcher whose focus includes water, a facilitator to help the conversation along, & some interested people. The SimulCafé will coincide with other events planned for the Sigma Xi Annual Meeting & Student Research Conference held at the Marriot Renaissance that weekend. The D.C. Science SimulCafé is being sponsored by Sigma Xi & WGBH-Boston with support from the Amer. Chemical Soc. & NASA Langley Research Ctr. For details, go to www.sciencecafes.org, or send an e-mail to avelkey@cnu.edu.

8. The **National Zoological Park**, 3001 Connecticut Ave., NW, Washington, **DC**, a wide variety of species (>4,000 animals) displayed for free; including pandas, exotic birds, big cats, and more. Many can be viewed on “live” web cameras. Their web site also has many articles from current & recent research, w/ related images & lots of “links” to other resources. An interesting sub-page is their “Wildlife Gardening” section, which includes information about “citizen science” and butterfly surveys. You may wish to help support these animals by joining the Friends of the National Zoo (FONZ). For more details, go to: www.nationalzoo.si.edu or call: (202) 673-4717.

9. The Entomological Society of America (ESA) has just held their annual conference in Reno, NV; ending earlier this week. Their website: www.entsoc.org, offers a clear and fairly detailed body of publicly available information about Entomology, from professional actions and opportunities to news, & available resources for students and educators. Many facts, text information, images and professional and academic points of contact are included.

10. The National Pest Management association (NPMA) has a very informative website, most of which is publicly available. Besides the expected information about particular urban pests and how to

address those, and how to reach NPMA members who may be able help you in that regard, their website (at: www.pestworld.org) also includes lots of facts about pests, related news items, and a whole section titled: “Pestworld for Kids”. That section includes pest games, guidance for reports about pests and their relatives, science fair “kits,” and some suggested lesson plans for educators. It also has links to other scientific & academic resources. That website goes far beyond the commercial content one may expect.

11. The USDA also has certain offerings for youth and educators, especially in the sub-page entitled: “Soil Education”. They offer links to other related sources, a glossary of technical terms, posters, references for similar resources in various states, references to pertinent regulations, training, job aids, and contacts for scientific professionals, & organizations. To reach their website, go to: <http://soils.usda.gov/education>.

12. Additional websites worth checking include:

- the National Aquarium (in Balto.), “www.aqua.org”
- the Maryland Science Center, “www.mdsci.org”
- The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) www.cdc.gov (then search by topic)
- The Jug Bay Nature Center, at Jug Bay, Lothian, MD. at: www.jugbay.org, or call (410) 741-9930.

13. For current details on a very wide range of topics for central Maryland & DC; like sports, restaurants, special events, & ads, check out the “**What’s Up? Annapolis**” magazine. They even have a live “harbor cam”. For a free subscription mailed to your home address (limited to Annapolis & surrounding areas), or for specific information, you can contact them at their offices at: What’s Up?, Inc., 929 West St., Suite 208A, Annapolis, MD 21401; by phone: (410) 267-9390; or via their website: www.whatsupmag.com.

14. Current (SocietyYear 2009) MES Officers

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