

AIBS *news*

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Martyn Caldwell, of Utah State University Ecology Center, AIBS President Alan Covich, and Raleigh Hood, of the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Sciences (left to right) stand near the AIBS exhibit at a Capitol Hill event that highlighted NSF-funded research and education projects.

AIBS Participates in 6th Annual Congressional Exhibition and Reception

AIBS joined over 30 exhibitors, including two AIBS member societies—the Ecological Society of America and the American Society of Plant Physiologists—at the 6th Annual Congressional Exhibition and Reception in Washington, DC. This Capitol Hill event, organized with the help of ESA, showcases research and education projects supported by the National Science Foundation. Coinciding with NSF's 50th anniversary, the 17 May 2000 event was organized by the Coalition for National Science Funding (CNSF), an alliance of more than 80 organizations united by a concern for the future

vitality of the national science, mathematics, and engineering enterprise.

The AIBS exhibit used eye-catching posters to highlight two research projects. The first poster featured a study exploring the role of nitrogen-fixing bacteria on marine productivity and global carbon cycles, a project that is part of the NSF-funded "Biocomplexity in the Environment" initiative. Researchers Raleigh Hood, Victoria Coles, and Ronald Seifer, of the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Sciences (Horn Point Laboratory), are principal investigators on the project.

The second poster highlighted the proposed National Ecological Observatory Network, an NSF initiative to establish a nationwide network of

observatories that would enable state-of-the-art investigations in field biology. Martyn Caldwell, of Utah State University Ecology Center, and AIBS members Hilary Swain, of Archbold Biological Station, H. Jane Brockmann, from the University of Florida, and Amy Ward, of the University of Alabama, have participated in the development of this initiative. Both Hood and Caldwell were on hand at the reception to field questions about their respective projects. AIBS President Alan Covich, of Colorado State University, also participated in the event.

A sizable Congressional contingent attended the exhibit and reception, including House Science Committee Chair James Sensenbrenner, six other members of the House of Representatives, and more than 92 Congressional staffers. In addition, several NSF representatives were present, including NSF Director Rita Colwell, who stopped by the AIBS exhibit to express her thanks for AIBS's support of NSF.

For more information on the CNSF exhibit, contact AIBS Public Policy Representative Ellen Paul at 202/628-1500, ext. 250, or e-mail epaul@aibs.org.

—Casey E. Moulton



NSF Director Rita Colwell talks with Raleigh Hood (left), of the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Sciences, and AIBS President Alan Covich (center), at the 6th Annual Congressional Exhibition and Reception.

I N S I D E

AIBS Participates in 6th Annual Congressional Exhibition and Reception

BioScience Features Editor awarded Marine Biological Laboratory Fellowship

American Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists joins AIBS.



BioScience features editor Elia Ben-Ari (third from left) was one of eight science writers selected for a week-long hands-on environmental science program at the Marine Biological Laboratory, in Woods Hole, Massachusetts. The writers, decked out in their wet-weather gear, posed for a group photograph along with one of their instructors, Kris Tholke (fourth from left), from the Ecosystems Center at MBL.

BioScience Features Editor awarded Marine Biological Laboratory Fellowship

BioScience Features Editor Elia Ben-Ari was one of 19 science reporters, producers, and editors chosen from a pool of international applicants to participate in the 2000 Science Writing Fellowship at the Marine Biological Laboratory (MBL) this summer. Now in its 15th year, the MBL's Science Writing



Science journalists who participated in the hands-on environmental science course at the Marine Biological Laboratory, including Jessica Gorman of Science News (left), and David Poulson, of Booth Newspapers (right), collected groundwater samples from a developed area and from an undeveloped site, shown here, in the Waquoit watershed in Cape Cod, Massachusetts.

Fellowships Program offers print and broadcast journalists and editors an opportunity to “step into the shoes of the people they cover” by awarding them fellowships to study basic biomedical and environmental science at the Woods Hole, Massachusetts laboratory. Participants were chosen based on writing samples, letters of recommendation, and an essay describing their professional background and goals and how the fellowship would benefit their career.

The fellows arrived at MBL in early June and took part in one of two hands-on mini laboratory courses, each designed specifically for the non-scientist. One course explored techniques used in biomedical research, while the other, which Ben-Ari participated in, featured research techniques used by ecosystem scientists both in the field and in the laboratory. Among other activities during the week-long program, Ben-Ari and her colleagues sampled groundwater at different sites, analyzed the samples for levels of various forms of nitrogen, input the data into a computer spreadsheet, and compared the results with those from a computer model, allowing them to go through the research process from start to finish.

Ben-Ari says the MBL course will help her in writing and editing articles on environmental science because she now has a better understanding of what environmental research is like

and what some of the issues and challenges are in this field. The course also enhanced her appreciation and sense of stewardship for estuarine and marine environments. “Doing field-work during rain and shine, holding a live horseshoe crab, and handling live fish and other marine creatures that we collected and released were part of an unforgettable experience,” she said.

—Casey E. Moulton

American Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists joins AIBS

In June 2000, the AIBS Board of Directors voted to welcome the American Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists (ASIH) into the AIBS Federation, bringing the total number of AIBS member societies and organizations to 73.

Founded in 1913, ASIH has a membership of 2400 and is dedicated to the scientific study of fishes, amphibians, and reptiles. The primary goals of the society are to increase knowledge about these organisms; disseminate that knowledge through publications, conferences, symposia, and other means; and encourage and support young scientists who will make future advances in these fields. Such activities are part of the society's global effort to interpret, understand, and conserve the earth's natural diversity and to contribute to the wise use of natural resources for the long-term benefit of humankind.

ASIH also publishes the journal *COPEIA*, which contains original research on fishes, amphibians, and reptiles with emphasis on systematics, ecology, behavior, genetics, morphology, and physiology. Issued quarterly, *COPEIA* is found in over 1000 institutional libraries worldwide.

For more information about the activities of ASIH, visit their Web site at www.utexas.edu/depts/asih.