

NRES WEEKLY NEWS

November 9 - 13, 2009

A newsletter for faculty, staff and students
who participate in the
Natural Resources & Environmental Studies Institute
and NRES Graduate Programs

COMING EVENTS

NRESI RESEARCH COLLOQUIUM SERIES

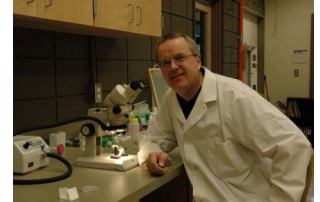
This Friday

Rob Higgins

Asst. Prof., Thompson Rivers University
PhD Candidate, UNBC

The Ants of British Columbia

Ants are a common element in our urban landscapes but are usually overlooked, literally, or considered only in the context of a household nuisance. Their presence in our urban lives, however, does not properly reflect their broader ecological significance. In British Columbia, ants are an important food source for vertebrates ranging from birds to bears. Their social organization has given rise to behavioural systems that include the ranching of aphids, a form of agriculture that can have complex effects upon the trees they consider to be their rangeland. It has also given rise to remarkable forms of slavery and parasitism within the taxon. To thrive, however, ants require heat, and the climate of BC can be challenging. Here I will consider some of my work on the ants of British Columbia over the past several years, their ecological roles, and their adaptations to surviving in our cool climate.



Nov. 6, 2009

3:30 - 4:30 pm

Lecture Theatre 7-152



Dr. Scott M. Ramsay

Dept. of Biology, Wilfrid Laurier University

Reproductive Ecology in Songbirds: Does the Early Bird Get the Worm?

In the 1950s and 1960s David Lack synthesized the knowledge of reproductive ecology of songbirds, primarily focusing on patterns that had been observed in long-term studies of titmice from England and the Netherlands. His key observations were that females who began laying earlier produced larger clutches, in years when the mean laying date of a population was earlier clutches were larger, mean clutch sizes increase with latitude, and females are capable of raising more offspring than they naturally produce. In my work on white-throated sparrows I am testing Lack's observations in white-throated sparrows (*Zonotrichia albicollis*) with an eye to addressing the factors that influence clutch initiation date and clutch size for females. As a variation on that theme, I have examined whether females are stimulated to lay earlier or larger clutches by the dawn singing of their partners. In the long-term I am hoping to determine how they may be affected by climate change.

**Next
Friday**

Nov. 13, 2009

3:30 - 4:30 pm

Lecture Theatre 7-152

Unable to make it in person? Watch the colloquium at your desk!

For Elluminate information and link to the webcast: http://www.unbc.ca/nres/nresi_webcast.html
Log in as "Guest"

OTHER COMING EVENTS

Global Fridays
Senate Chambers
12:00—1:30 pm

November 6, 2009
Godwin Ugah (Council for Renewable Energy) and Juliet Olory (Development in Nigeria)
Striving for Equity in Nigeria

THESIS DEFENCES

Ms. Xiaoxi Zhang is a candidate for the degree:
Master of Science in Natural Resources and Environmental Studies (Environmental Science)

Ms. Zhang will be defending her thesis entitled:
“Surfactant Enhanced Biodegradation of Petroleum Hydrocarbons in Oily Sludge”
Supervisor: **Dr. Jianbing Li**

Date: November 9, 2009 Time: 3:00 pm Room: 6-205, Conference Centre
UNBC Prince George campus

Ms. Danielle Smyth is a candidate for the degree:
Master of Natural Resources and Environmental Studies

Ms. Smyth will be defending her thesis entitled:
“Sustainability and Solid Waste Management in Higher Education: an Inquiry into the Composition and Management of Solid Waste at the University of Northern British Columbia”
Supervisors: Drs. **Annie Booth** and **Art Fredeen**

Date: November 12, 2009 Time: 9:00 am Room: 6-305, Conference Centre
UNBC Prince George campus

Ms. Prudence-Elise Breton is a candidate for the degree:
Master of Natural Resources and Environmental Studies

Ms. Breton will be defending her thesis entitled:
“Organizing for Sustainability at a Small Scale: A Case Study of an Ecovillage Experiment”
Supervisor: **Dr. David Connell**

Date: November 27, 2009 Time: 2:00 pm Room: 1079, Senate Chambers
UNBC Prince George campus

Ms. Alyssa Shaw is a candidate for the degree:
Master of Science in Natural Resources and Environmental Studies (Biology)

Ms. Shaw will be defending her thesis entitled:
“The Use of Platelet Monoamine Oxidase-B as a Biomarker for Mercury Neurotoxic Effects Among Inuit in Arctic Canada”
Supervisor: **Dr. Laurie Chan**

Date: November 27, 2009 Time: 3:00 pm Room: 6-205, Conference Centre
UNBC Prince George campus

CONFERENCES / TRAVEL

Oscar Garcia attended the 2009 Southern Mensurationists Conference in San Antonio, Texas, on 25-28 October. He talked about “Reconciling forest stand modeling approaches”. Forest biometricians have made infrequent use of typical dynamical system formulations, but some of their methods are closely related to recent mathematical work on phase flows, continuous groups, and invariants.

Scott Green is attending research meetings in Whitehorse and Kluane, Yukon 5-9 November.

We're on the web at : www.unbc.ca/nres/newsletter

REMINDER: Share your information about recent publications, grants, and/or other honours you may have received with others interested in NRES issues.

PLEASE EMAIL ALL INFORMATION AND MATERIAL TO MICHELLE KEEN: keenm@unbc.ca