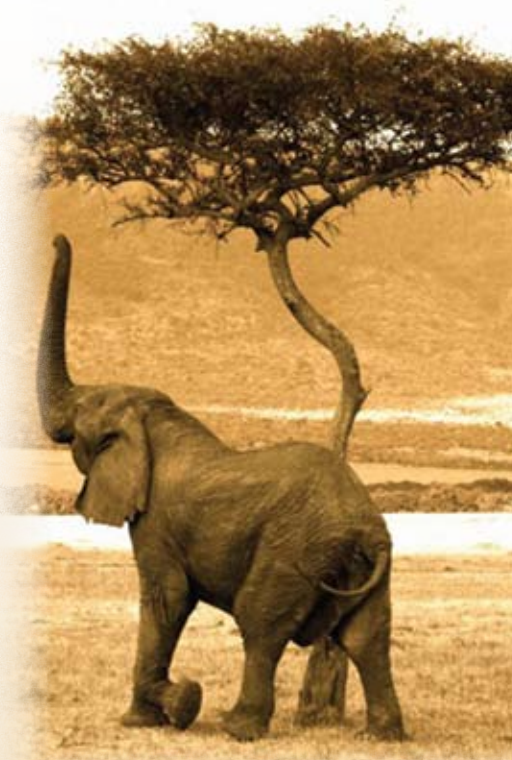


In Memoriam

Ronald G. Wolff, emeritus associate professor, passed away in August 2009. Ron joined the Department of Zoology in 1973 and retired in 2008. Our department and undergraduate students across campus benefited from Ron's dedication to teaching, particularly in Functional Vertebrate Anatomy, which has been especially popular with pre-medical and pre-veterinary students. He loved learning about his students and their goals. Ron had a passion for biophotography, which he taught for many years. He spent many hours perfecting devices for 3D photography for his paleontological specimens that he collected in Bolivia, Kenya, and South Africa. Ron was instrumental in establishing the Interdisciplinary Studies (IDS) Major in Integrative Biology, which led to the creation of our current, very popular, Biology major. In honor of the contributions Ron made to our department, his students, and the field of anatomy, we have named the anatomy laboratory the Ronald G. Wolff Functional Vertebrate Anatomy laboratory.

Ron is survived by his wife Lilia C. Koo and daughter Huiling Wolff-Koo, who is majoring in Biology and Anthropology at the University of Florida.

Donations in his memory may be sent to Dr. Alice Harmon, Chair, Department of Biology, University of Florida, PO Box 118525, Gainesville, FL 32611 or made at www.biology.ufl.edu/donate.



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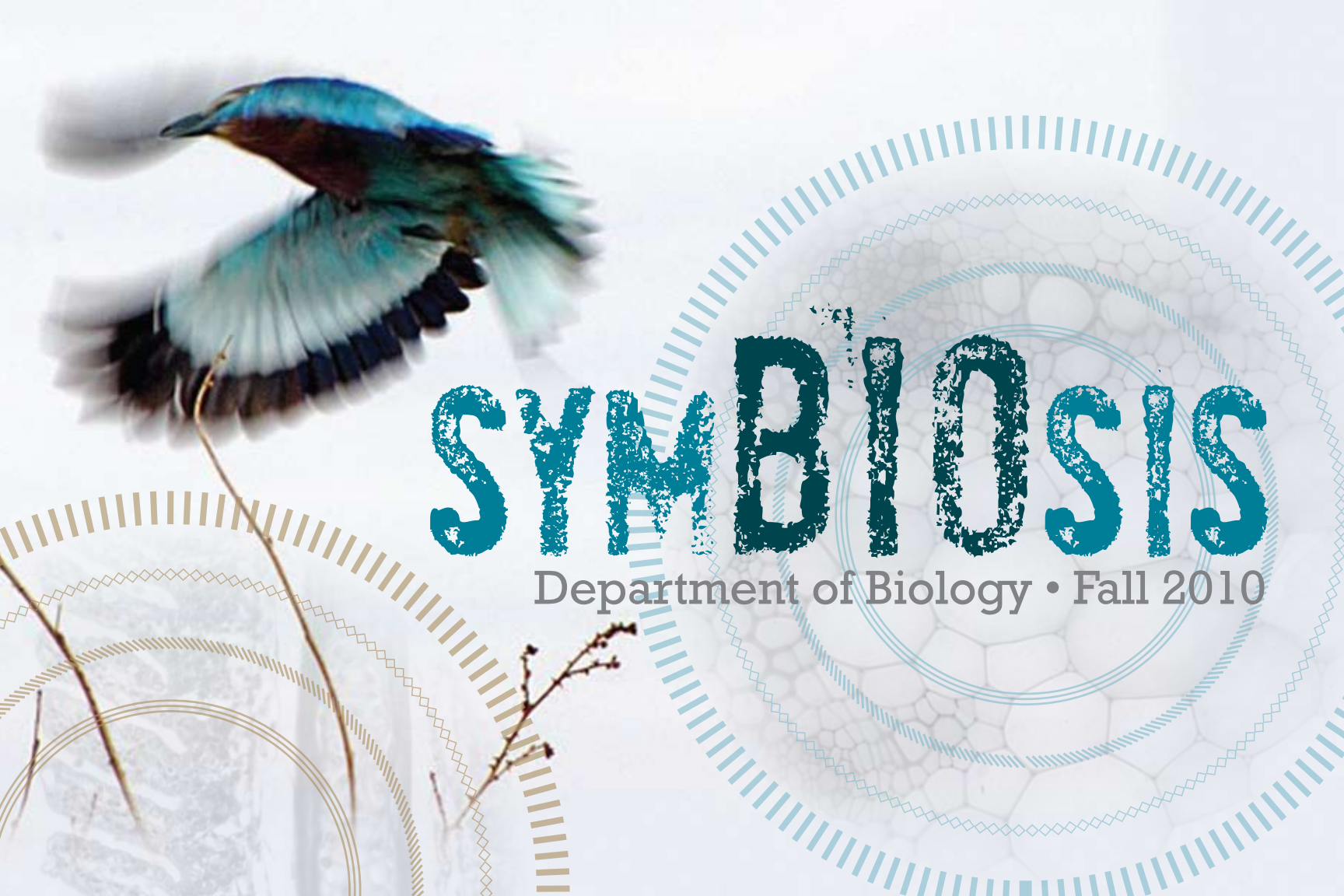
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SYMBIOSIS

Department of Biology • Fall 2010

Thanks To You, Our Graduate Students Thrive!

Our department is fortunate to have funds dedicated to graduate student support that have been established by friends and families of our faculty and students. Our departmental budget from State funds has declined drastically, so we rely on these private funds to provide essential support for our graduate students. Through the generosity of our donors, our graduate students will receive financial assistance for years to come to pursue their academic goals. We would like to pay tribute to these donors here by briefly describing these funds, in order by date of establishment.

The Lewis and Varina Vaughn Endowment for Orchid Biology was established by the Vaughn-Jordan Foundation in honor of Lewis and Varnia Vaughn in recognition of their long devotion to the study of orchids. The fund supports a graduate student conducting research on the biology of orchids.

The Frank Maturo Excellence Endowment was established by James Black III and UF's Alpha Tau Omega fraternity members. Since the endowment was established, many friends and past students have contributed to the fund in Franks' honor. Frank Maturo is a professor emeritus of zoology at the UF and was director of UF's Marine Laboratory at Seahorse Key. Proceeds from the endowment support graduate students in marine biology in the Department of Biology.

The Brian Riewald Memorial Fund was established by the family and friends of Brian Riewald after his death while still a graduate student in the Department of Zoology at UF. The fund provides small research grants for graduate students in Biology who have deserving projects but inadequate funding.

The Carrie Lynn Yoder Memorial Endowment was established by Carrie's parents as a memorial to her. Carrie earned her bachelor's degree from the University of Florida in botany. The fund supports graduate students in the Department of Biology with an emphasis on coastal ecology.

The Cynthia A. Melnick Endowment provides research support for graduate students and was established by Cynthia's parents as

a memorial to her. Funds are rotated annually among three units: Department of Biology, specializing in Marine Biology; Department of Civil and Coastal Engineering; and Program of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences.

The Dr. Andrea Trescot Endowment was established by Harold Gear in honor of his wife. Dr. Trescot graduated from the University of Florida with a degree in Zoology and is now a physician who specializes in the control of chronic pain. This fund provides support for graduate students in the Department of Biology.

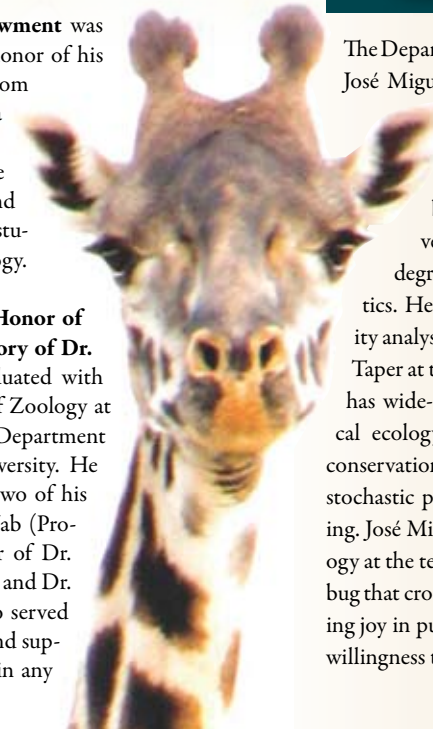
The Michael L. May Fund in Honor of Dr. Brian McNab and in Memory of Dr. Minter Westfall. Dr. May graduated with a Ph.D. from the Department of Zoology at UF and is now a Professor in the Department of Entomology at Rutgers University. He established this fund to honor two of his UF professors – Dr. Brian McNab (Professor Emeritus), who was chair of Dr. May's Ph.D. advisory committee, and Dr. Minter Westfall (deceased), who served on Dr. May's committee. This fund supports graduate student research in any area of biology.



New Faculty

The Department of Biology welcomes Dr. José Miguel Ponciano Castellanos, who joined us in August 2010 as an Assistant Professor. José Miguel has a Ph.D. in bioinformatics from the University of Idaho, and Masters' degrees in both ecology and statistics. He worked on population viability analysis during a post-doc with Mark Taper at the University of Montana, and has wide-ranging interests from statistical ecology, to state-space models, and conservation biology to the application of stochastic processes to population modeling. José Miguel became interested in biology at the tender age of four, dissecting any bug that crossed his path. He admits to taking joy in pulling pranks on his kids, and a willingness to eat just about anything.

Welcome José Miguel!



Excellence in Teaching

The teaching excellence of our department has been recognized by the college of Liberal Arts and Sciences as both faculty member **Rebecca Kimball** and graduate student **Lucas Majure** received teaching awards for the 2009-2010 academic year. Rebecca Kimball was recognized for the excellence, innovation and effectiveness of her teaching. Over the years, she has taught the evolution component of Introductory Biology (BSC 2010), Evolution (PCB 4674), as well as behavioral ecology (PCB 5415) and various graduate seminars. Lucas Majure received the graduate student teaching award for Plant Taxonomy (BOT 2710/5725), which focuses on teaching students how to recognize the major

groups of vascular plants. These awards highlight the dedication of our faculty and graduate students to education in all the many dimensions of biology.

Dear Alumni and Friends,

I am pleased to welcome you to the first issue of our newsletter. The name "symBIOsis" reflects the synergistic outcome of the merger of the Departments of Botany and Zoology and the Biological Sciences teaching program in 2008. We are now the Department of Biology. The faculty, staff, and students have worked hard to make the new department very collegial, and we are dedicated to our missions of research, education, and service. The Department is home to undergraduate and graduate degrees in botany and zoology, and we co-host the undergraduate biology major along with the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. The Department of Biology is now the largest department on campus in terms of the total number of undergraduate majors (about 1400 students) in our botany, zoology, and biology programs! So it is very true that the golden age of biology has arrived in Gator country.

In each issue of *symBIOsis*, we will feature one of our faculty members and bring you news of departmental activities. We invite you to visit our website, www.biology.ufl.edu, where you will find news of recent accomplishments of our faculty and students and see how the Department has changed and grown. We are pleased to have you join with us in *symBIOsis*.

—Alice Harmon