Agenda - EERetreat 2006

Overview: We hope to make this year's Ecology and Evolution Retreat as fun and successful as possible. Please look over this document as soon as you can as it contains all relevant details, including assignments and links to some papers we'll be discussing. Hope you all can make it!

Important details:

Where: Ravine Lodge, Lake Moasilaue (directions)
When: Saturday, October 7th, 9 am - 3pm
(Friday night dinner, drinks and discussion strongly encouraged for all those willing and able)

* Assignments are italicized and in red - no poster session this year but we've got a few papers to read - all are relatively short and interesting (we hope!)

**Please RSVP. Be sure to indicate whether you plan on coming on Friday and/or Saturday, and if you have any dietary needs or restrictions.

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Friday night:

The Lodge makes great dinner that will be provided for those to come to the Friday night portion of retreat. We'll bring beers and snacks. We will reserve rooms/beds for those who RSVP. Try to show up around 6:30 pm (CHANGED from 6 pm).

Discussion - The Skeptical Environmentalist by Bjørn Lomborg. Moderators: Stephen Taeurn/Mark Borsuk

Readings (please choose two that interest you - one if it's particularly long): Ch. 10 - Forests; Ch. 19 - Water Pollution; Ch. 23 - Biodiversity; Ch. 24 - Global Warming

There are also two copies of the book at the Dartmouth Library here (available as of 9/12), and one copy at Centerra. It may be useful to look up some references. You also might check out www.lomborg.com and/or www.anti-lomborg.com.

We expect that this will be a light exercise, so we'll plan to discuss while its still fun. That said, while in many ways the book runs counter to everything most of us think and believe, it is not easily dismissed, so it should make for interesting discussion. We'll send out some organizing questions and comments in the weeks to come.
Saturday Oct. 7th

9 am - Arrive; breakfast and coffee.

9:30-11 am - Influential paper discussion. Please choose a paper from the last year that you found to be particularly important either in informing your own work, or to the field of ecology/evolutionary biology. Bring the paper and a few things to say about it. Once you've chosen the title, please email Jeff the reference and we'll put together a list to share with the group. Moderator: Jeff Garnas

11 - 12:15 pm Discussion: Neutral Theory of Evolution, Biogeography and Biodiversity  Moderators: Erik Stange/Mark McPeek

Check out the Ecology Special Feature from June 2006 on "Neutral Community Ecology." Please read the Intro and the article by Hubbell, and of course any others that pique your interest. We hope to have a broad discussion which will encompass other neutral theory formulations, including the Neutral Theory of Evolution (check out Kimura 1986 for a refresher).

12:15-1:30 pm Lunch

1:30-1:45 pm Proposed changes to Dept. Seminar series. Sharon M., Matt A.

1:45-3:00 pm Discussion: Networks in biological systems. Moderator: Nick Friedenberg/Albert Erves

Living systems are characterized by complex regulatory networks at all scales of organization (e.g. + and - feedback in biochemical or gene expression pathways). Ecologists often consider how similar feedback influences population and/or community stability. There is a current flurry of interest in how regulatory networks might buffer phenotypes against the effects of mutations. This is analogous to ecology's search for a diversity-stability relationship, though each field approaches the problem from its own perspective. We will read two short papers about genetic networks and then discuss the potential for this work to impact how we think about ecology and evolution.

Bergman, A. and Siegal, M. Evolutionary capacitance as a general feature of complex gene networks, 424(6948), 549-552.


3 pm - Wrap-up and optional hike up/around Mt. Moosilauke (weather permitting).


Crutsinger, GM; Collins, MD; Fordyce, JA; Gompert, Z; Nice, CC, and Sanders, NJ. Plant genotypic diversity predicts community structure and governs an ecosystem process. Science. 2006 Aug 18; 313(5789):966-8.


