

EVOLUTION MEGALAB NEWSLETTER: ISSUE 2 JULY 2008

Thank you to everyone who submitted news for this issue. If you have any news that you would like to be included in a future issue, please email it to Jenny at j.p.worthington@open.ac.uk by the 20th of the month.

EVOLUTION MEGALAB TRANSLATIONS

Both the Hungarian and Latvian translations of the website are now complete! The website is now in ten languages.

DOWNLOADING CURRENT RECORDS

When you download a current record some of the text in the CSV file may be incorrect, do the following to rectify it:

- Download the record in the CSV format.
- Open a blank workbook in Excel
- Import the CSV file into Excel, ensuring the text format is UTF-8

PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE EUROPEAN WORKSHOP

Photos taken on the day of the work shop are available at:

[http://picasaweb.google.co.uk/jenny19833/
EvolutionMegaLabWorkshop2008](http://picasaweb.google.co.uk/jenny19833/EvolutionMegaLabWorkshop2008)

SNAIL ID GUIDES

Thank you to all who have submitted the list of snail species which are similar to *Cepaea* in your country.

We would be grateful if those with lists outstanding could submit them. We can then customise the snail ID guide for you.

Please send your list to:
j.p.worthington@open.ac.uk

If you have any news or information on how the Evolution MegaLab is developing in your country please send to j.p.worthington@open.ac.uk by the 20th of each month to be included in the following month's newsletter.

EVOLUTION MEGALAB ACTIVITIES: NETHERLANDS

A recent graduate, Ben Nelemans has started compiling the historical data from a variety of sources. These include: reports from undergraduate ecology and genetic courses at the Universities of Leiden, Wageningen and Groningen; data from the museum collections of the Zoological Museum of Amsterdam and the National Museum of National History and published data from local journals. For this, a grant from the Pontium Foundation has been gratefully acknowledged.

The Netherlands Institute of Biology (www.nibi.nl) is supporting the MegaLab by devoting part of a special feature to it in the biweekly biologists' newspaper Bionieuws (www.bionieuws.nl) and also by preparing and disseminating lessons for secondary school biology teachers.

EVOLUTION MEGALAB ACTIVITIES: HUNGARY

Peter Solymos is relocating to Canada in September and therefore will not be able to take as active a part in the Evolution MegaLab.

We therefore welcome Zoltan Feher of the Hungarian Natural History Museum to the project. Both Zoltan and Peter will be coordinating activities in Hungary.

**EVOLUTION MEGALAB
ACTIVITIES: ITALY**

A working group has been setup to implement the Evolution MegaLab in Italy (EMI). The first meeting was held on the 11th July 2008 at the University of Ferrara. The group is coordinated by Giorgio Bertorelle (University of Ferrara) and includes 11 people from two universities (Ferrara and Florence), three museums (Natural History in Ferrara, Zoology in Rome, Natural History in Milan), the Italian Association of Science Teachers (ANISN), and two private associations producing teaching activities for the schools. The complete list of people involved is available if you need it.

The Evolution MegaLab has endorsement from SIBE (Italian Society for Evolutionary Biology), ANISN (Italian Association of Science Teachers), ANMS (National Association of Scientific Museums), and SIM (Italian Malacological Society).

The activities to promote the Evolution MegaLab in Italy are as follows:

1. Prepare by September 2008 a short description of the project and what teachers can do with it, with a draft of the teaching package. The information will be in three different versions, for teachers in the primary schools (6-11), secondary schools of first grade (11-14) and secondary schools of second grade (14-18). These documents will be distributed to teachers via the ministry web site, regional and local school agencies, associations of teachers, etc. Teachers will have to October to decide what they will do during the year, so we need to inform them as soon as possible. Teachers will also have the opportunity to have a look to the snail ID guide and the recording sheet in Italian.
2. By February 2009 a refined version of the teaching packages will be produced. These packs will provide enough information for motivated teachers to participate in the project. Also, private associations who are producing

teaching activities for school will propose EMI to schools so that less motivated teachers are able to take part in the project. This will need some funds, either from the single school, or, if they agree, from the families of the pupils.

A package will also be prepared for people outside of schools (e.g. individuals interested in the project, families, environmental or conservation of nature associations, etc).

A list of people at ANMS, SIBE and SIM are prepared to help with the localization of the sampling sites, and, if necessary, with the input of data. Some people have already indicated that if necessary they can go in the schools and talk to the teachers.

3. Between February and March 2009, coordinated with other European countries, EMI will be communicated via different means to the general public.
4. The project will be realized between March and September 2009
5. Between September and December 2009, the results (both from the teaching and the scientific point of views) will be analysed by the working group, and communicated to all participants and the media.

The analysis of the historical collection which is available in different museums, (this is part of EMI but running independently from the public project) has already started. Fourteen Museums in 14 different cities (from Milan the Naples) have been contacted and Marco Pezzi has already started to visit them to record the data in their collections.

