



Corn Poppy, from the 2007 exhibit from the MBL Archives, Botany as Biology

report of the library director

The dream of having the published legacy of biodiversity information linked to the Encyclopedia of Life (EOL) is becoming a reality through funding from the Biodiversity Heritage Library (BHL). An “open-access” repository of biodiversity literature is being built and is growing at a rate of 100,000 pages per week. Trucks arrive bi-weekly at the library to pick up volumes and bring them to the Northeast Scanning Center at the Boston Public Library. After scanning, the files are sent to the Internet Archive in San Francisco for optical character recognition processing and are finally ingested into the BHL portal at the Missouri Botanical Garden. Along with out-of-copyright books and journals, the library has secured permission from copyright holders to scan newer materials and put them in the open-access environment. Our uBio software adds taxonomic intelligence to the entire process for research and data-mining purposes. Both the BHL and the Boston Library Consortium have large-scale digital projects underway, and the MBLWHOI Library has currently scanned more than 2 million images that are available on the Internet Archive, www.archive.org and the BHL portal, www.biodiversitylibrary.org.

In 2007, the Ellison Medical Foundation funded a project in the MBLWHOI Library, “Biology of Aging Across the Spectrum of Life,” that embraces the interplay of genes and environment. This comparative biology initiative spanning the entire tree of life will bring molecular, phenotypic, and demographic data together into an interactive “lifespan”

library researchers

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portal in the Encyclopedia of Life. The portal will include data on traditional biomedical model organisms as well as on thousands of wild-type organisms, which will be made possible with the EOL initiative. Ultimately, we seek environmental connections to genetic patterns that give insight into the aging process. A database and repository of aging genes and the surrounding references is being compiled and will be available for testing and feedback by summer 2008.

The 2007 Arts and Sciences exhibit, *Botany as Biology*, curated by Ann Weissmann, highlighted botanical prints from volumes in the Rare Book Room. Showcasing the prints as scientific documents as well as works of art, the exhibit is currently on display in the MBL Meigs Room.

Also in 2007, the summer library speaker, Dr. Gerald Weissmann, discussed his latest book, *Galileo's Gout: Science in the Age of Endarkenment* before a standing-room-only crowd in the Grass Reading Room.

Woods Hole Open Access Server (WHOAS) is archiving the scientific literature, technical reports, and theses produced by the Woods Hole scientific community. WHOAS ensures our researchers have perpetual open-access to their scientific output. The library continues to employ and develop Web 2.0 and beyond technologies. Our Web site now has wikis and direct links to RSS feeds, and we are moving toward interactive pages rather than general inventories of materials.



Ann Weissmann, curator of the MBL's Arts and Sciences Exhibits and Gerald Weissmann, MBL Trustee and author of Galileo's Gout: Science in the Age of Endarkenment at the Library's Book Reading (C. Norton)

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The Data Library and Archive staff worked with Scripps Institution of Oceanography on a test project dealing with long-term preservation of digital data. One Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI) research cruise was staged, quality checked, and “published” with a complete set of metadata. A Controlled Vocabulary Dictionary was created with a record for every authorized metadata value in the project. Seven hundred floppy disks of cruise data have been migrated to CDROM, plus several disks of source code and executables. This WHOI cruise data is now available online to researchers around the world. The project wrapped up with an abstract and poster presented at the fall meeting of the American Geophysical Union.

The National Library of Medicine continues to use MBL library staff members for support and instruction in the MBL Biomedical Informatics course, which in 2007 celebrated its 25th session and its 16th year of support from the National Institutes of Health.

“Don’t forget, beer on the landing later to celebrate my impending death,” is how our colleagues at the Buck Institute in California, an independent institute devoted to aging research, tend to invite people to celebrate birthdays. Here in Woods Hole, rather than mourning the death of the traditional print-based library, we are actively celebrating the rebirth of libraries that rely on secure, reliable network connections; research into information retrieval and presentation; and delivery of authenticated, authoritative research.

—Catherine N. Norton



Diane Rielinger and Matt Person send books for scanning in the Biodiversity Heritage Library project (J. Walton)

library volunteers

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