

Cross-Institute Programme for Sustainable Soil Function

SoilCIP

Newsletter for July 2010



Sustainable Soils and Grassland Systems Department

You all know by now that we are members of the new 'Sustainable Soils and Grassland Systems Department' (SGS) that will combine our present Soil Science Department with the science activities at North Wyke. So, what should happen to the SoilCIP, the Newsletter, Management Board, etc? I should appreciate your views, but please wait until I get back from Australia, otherwise my e-mail might block. All being well, I shall be down at NW again on 1-3 September.

Royal Society Summer Exhibition

Many of us were involved in manning our stand 'Journey to the Centre of the Earth: The first 23 cm' at the Royal Society's Summer Exhibition in late June and early July. Because this year marks the Society's 350th Anniversary, the Exhibition was held in the Royal Festival Hall on Southbank rather than Carlton House Terrace. This resulted in many more visitors than one would normally receive, so having 4-5 people on the stand in any one session was much appreciated, especially as the day started at 10.00 and didn't end until 20.30 each day, and the Exhibition ran for over a week.

Questions ranged from the effect of GM plants to the problems of heavy clay soils, from plant diseases to nitrogen losses, and how to identify individual organisms from a jumble of sequence data. The only visitor that we could not satisfy was the man who asked why we didn't work on acrylamide pollution in shell fish, but he wouldn't give us time to answer anyway! More serious and sensible information on the food web and the nitrogen cycle were especially requested by teachers, and we expect more requests over the next few weeks.

Thanks to Penny, Ian and Phil (Murray) for planning and organising the exhibit, to Felicity for providing living specimens of springtails as well as video footage of soil fauna, and to all of you who supplied material or information and manned the exhibit. The BLAST game and some of the panels (as pdfs) will be put on the SoilCIP website.

Most of us came away with the view that the Royal Festival Hall should install air conditioning; temperatures reached the high 30s at times. If you need to claim back travel costs, please contact Sharon Hall. Let Penny, Ian or Phil know if there are any problems.

South West of England Soils Discussion Group (SWESDG)

Jenni Dungait, Chair of the SWESDG, has sent some photos of the meeting held on 2nd July 2008: '**Soil Microbiological Applications in Organic Farming Systems**'. Jenni reports that it was a successful day with lively discussions accompanying papers from Liz Stockdale, Martin Howard, Alison Bennett, Paul Ward, Phil Murray in the morning and a visit to North Wyke field sites in the afternoon led by Jane Hawkins, Debs Beaumont and Chris Hodgson. Rob Parkinson has uploaded a report onto the BSSS website: <http://bsss.somcom.co.uk/pages/south-west-england>

A major outcome of the day was the agreement for a follow-up session at the farms of two of the delegates. This is likely to be in the first week in October. Please contact Jenni or Rob if you want to know more.



Overseas visits

Laura Cardenas visited Chile from 14-25 June in a continuation of the Royal Society grant that she was awarded 3 years ago. The new project is funded by Fondecyt, a Chilean organisation, and is in collaboration with INIA (Instituto de Investigaciones Agropecuarias (The Institute of Agricultural Research)) at its Remehue Regional Research Center, Osorno (<http://www.inia.cl/link.cgi/Remehue/>). They are studying unusual N cycling processes in Chilean volcanic, high organic matter soils.

UKCIP Climate Digest

I regularly receive these updates but don't normally include them in this Newsletter. If any of you don't get them but would like to, please let me know. I can easily add the link to the latest version. For the latest UKCIP Climate Digest, go to http://www.ukcip.org.uk/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=214&Itemid=482

for a summary of recent research relevant to climate change impacts and adaptation. You can also view the last six issues. To search earlier issues go to http://www.ukcip.org.uk/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=16&Itemid=322 and use the search facility on the right.

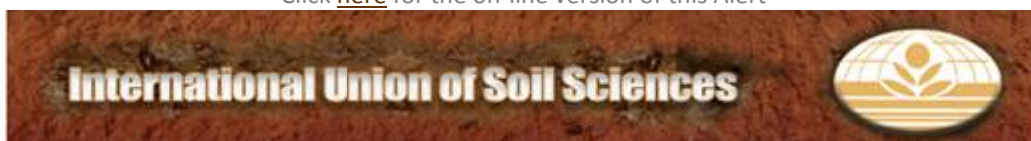
UKCP09 maps for presentations now online

A new feature has been added to the UK Climate Projections website. Users can now download groups of maps for use in presentations, in .png format. The maps are in groups of three, to indicate the range of probable outcomes for a given variable, emissions scenario and time period. This feature will make it easier for users to present the probabilistic information contained in UKCP09, to make explicit the range of futures that decision-makers will need to consider. You can view the directory of available maps at <http://ukclimateprojections.defra.gov.uk/content/view/1124/499/>

Climate change impacts on the natural environment

The UK's nature conservation agencies have produced a booklet that provides information on climate change impacts in the marine, terrestrial and freshwater environments. It brings together information from published sources to give an overview of the evidence of climate change impacts on the natural environment. 'Biodiversity and Climate Change - a summary of impacts in the UK' is available from <http://www.jncc.gov.uk/page-5145>

Click [here](#) for the on-line version of this Alert



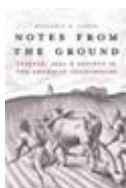
IUSS Alert 63 (July 2010)

Information for and from the global soil science community

Newsletter on Soil Morphology & Micromorphology



The most recent Newsletter from Commission 1.1 Soil Morphology & Micromorphology is now available on the IUSS website. This volume of the Newsletter includes a tribute to Dr. Maria Gerasimova, several reports on workshops, spectacular microscopic images, and the winners of the 2010 Young Micromorphologist's Publication Award are announced. Information is provided about a new intensive training course on soil micromorphology and a new book "Interpretation of Micromorphological Features of Soils and Regoliths" will be available August 2010. To learn more, see this and all previous newsletters go to www.loess.umcs.lublin.pl/micro.htm



Notes from the Ground: Science, Soil, and Society in the American Countryside. Benjamin R. Cohen. Yale University Press, 2009 - Technology & Engineering. 272 pages. Notes from the Ground examines the cultural conditions that brought agriculture and science together in nineteenth-century America. Integrating the history of science, environmental history, and science studies, the book shows how and why agrarian Americans—yeoman farmers, gentleman planters, politicians, and policy

makers alike—accepted, resisted, and shaped scientific ways of knowing the land. By detailing the changing perceptions of soil treatment, Benjamin Cohen shows that the credibility of new soil practices grew not from the arrival of professional chemists, but out of an existing ideology of work, knowledge, and citizenship.

Vacancy: Professor of Soil Geography and Landscape



Vacancy at Wageningen University (Netherlands): The chair in Soil Geography and Landscape studies the dynamic relations between soil genesis, land use and landscape on the larger geographical scales and integrates them with various time scales. The three main research themes are: a) soil development and landscape evolution (geology, geomorphology); b) land inventory and geostatistics and c) scenario studies and land use modeling. The chair holder is expected to initiate, lead and supervise the academic teaching and scientific research in this field, acquire research funding, supervise BSc, MSc and PhD students, and lead the chair group. For more details, please look at: www.academictransfer.com/5410

These are my choice of items from the IUSS Alert. The full version can be read at:



www.iuss.org

I shall be in Australia for most of August at the World Soils Congress and then on holiday. Anyone want to volunteer to write the August newsletter? Please let Phil Murray know otherwise we might get several versions!

Keith Goulding, 30th July 2010