ISE Newsletter

October 2002, Volume 2, Issue 1

Editorial

Dear fellow members of the ISE

I am happy to present you the second Newsletter of our Society again largely prepared by our board member Dr. Barbara Frei. She is putting a lot of effort into this and she and all other board members would appreciate your feedback about the Newsletter's content and style. May I also encourage you to consider the electronic version of the Newsletter.
Our next conference is approaching rapidly. As you know it will be held from 8. - 11.1.2003 in Pretoria, South Africa and will be organised together with the South African Association of Botanists. Its theme will be: How can ethnobotany and ethnopharmacology bridge the gap between traditional knowledge and sustainable development?
Of course, much attention will be paid to the use of plants in Africa, a continent which is in urgent need of improved health care and where ethnopharmacology may play a much more prominent role in such efforts. We will have several keynote speakers with many years of experience in African medicinal plants, including our Past-President Prof. Nina Etkin from the University of Hawai'i, Dr. A. Cunningham from South Africa, Prof. M. Iwu from Nigeria and Prof. A.E. van Wyk from South Africa. I look forward to welcoming you at this very exciting conference. There also will be several post-congress tours to interesting regions in South Africa (e.g. Little Karoo / Cape Fynbos and Pilanesberg National Park). Details are available on the web. I also would like to take the opportunity to thank Prof. Marion Meyer and his team from the Botany Department of the University of Pretoria for hosting the joint conference. Please register on-line or send a fax to

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Also, we will have a General Meeting of our Society and I would like to take this opportunity to ask you for nominations for board members and officers of the Society. As you will remember Prof. Elaine Elisabetsky, our current President Elect will become our new President for the period 2003 - 2004. However, we need to fill several vacancies on the board and most importantly we need to elect a new President Elect. All officers of the ISE look forward to your proposals.

With my best regards,
Prof. Dr. Michael Heinrich
(President ISE (2000-2002))

In this Issue

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Message from the Editor

Dear reader
No, you haven't missed an issue of the ISE Newsletter. Although I had promised to publish two issues per year, I didn't manage to complete the second issue of the ISE Newsletter this past spring. Was this due to the birth of a future ethnobotanist in my house, or rather that ethnopharmacologists are too busy to contribute to the Newsletter? I don't want to blame others for the delay of this issue since many of the contributions reached my desk in time. Thanks a lot!

The intention of this and following issues of the ISE Newsletter is to present university programs in ethnopharmacology/botany/biology (EthnoPBB) from all over the world. ISE Newsletter (2)1 starts with a contribution from Roy Ellen and Gary Martin on the program "Ethnobotany and Ethnobiology" offered at the University of Kent, Canterbury, United Kingdom. This article is succeeded by five abstracts written by students enrolled at different universities, conducting thesis research in numerous regions around the world. The aim of these résumés is to open a platform for discussions, interchange and interactions among students and other researchers in our field. The academic portion of the Newsletter ends with an amusing Student's Viewpoint of studying at the University of Kent, Canterbury.

It is important to keep you, fellow member, informed of what is happening in the society, as well as to let you know which other organizations exist in related fields. In this regard, the last article describes for you the goals, structure and position of "The Society for Economic Botany".

Please let me know what you think about the content of the last two Newsletters and send me information on other programs in EthnoPBB for interesting publications in future issues.

And here is a special request for student readers: if you would like to send me an abstract on your EthnoPBB thesis to share with the rest of our society, please contact me (bfreihaller@bluewin.ch) and I will publish it in an upcoming issue. This is an excellent opportunity for global networking!

With best regards,
Barbara Frei Haller

Ethnobotany and Ethnobiology at the University of Kent, Canterbury, UK

The University of Kent initiated the MSc programme in ethnobotany in 1998, and began to offer MPhil and PhD degrees in ethnobiology in 2000. The UKC Ethnobotany programme, the first of its kind in the United Kingdom, combines the different strengths of three institutional partners, each at the forefront of work in its own field. Firstly there is the Department of Anthropology, which has pioneered research and teaching in ethnobiology and human ecology. It has been rated excellent for teaching by the UK body responsibility for quality assessment, and was awarded a top rating in the most recent United Kingdom Research Assessment Exercise. Secondly, there is the Durrell Institute for Conservation and Ecology (DICE), located within the Department of Anthropology, which is known internationally for its work in the study and practical implementation of biodiversity management around the world. Finally, there is the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, with its unrivalled plant collections and library resources for the study of ethnobotany, and a longstanding commitment to expanding training in the economic and cultural aspects of botanical knowledge.

Over the last four years, 20 students from 12 countries have participated in the MSc programme, and we are expecting some 10 students in the 2002-2003 course. During the time they spend in the United Kingdom, MSc students gain practical experience during visits to collaborating research centres, including the Centre for Economic Botany and Jodrell Laboratory at Kew, Wakehurst Millennium Seed Bank, Eden Project and others. The UK Economic and Social Research Council provides funding for some MPhil/PhD Ethnobiology students, and several MSc students have obtained British Council grants, Chevening scholarships and other forms of support for their studies and research projects.

The MSc programme in Ethnobotany consist of six core units, The botanical foundations of ethnobotany, Contemporary Issues in Ethnobiology, Ethnobiological knowledge systems, Plant resources and their conservation, Environmental anthropology and Research Methods. In addition, students participate in a Departmental Methods Workshop and take three optional units chosen from those available in the UKC Anthropology Masters programme and from Conservation Biology and Biodiversity Management units offered by DICE. There is also a special field project which culminates in a written dissertation. The programme covers twelve months, and is taught on a full-time and part-time basis to UK and EU students, and on a full-time basis to overseas students. Many students undertake fieldwork for their dissertation, in places as diverse as Bhutan, the Caribbean, Italy, Mongolia, Morocco, Nepal, Peru, South Africa and, of course, Britain. Students with the appropriate qualifications and experience may be admitted directly for research, registered initially for an MSc or M.Phil. subject to satisfactory progress, this may be upgraded to a Ph.D.

There are currently ten students registered for MPhil./PhD degrees in the field of ethnobiology broadly defined. Staff and students undertake research on diverse subjects, including: ethnobiological classification systems; historical ecology; applied aspects of ethnobotany; intellectual property rights in relation to ethnobiological knowledge; cultural and natural rights; local ecological knowledge and social change; farmer perception of environmental problems; indigenous knowledge as used in environmental arguments; environmental change and its impact on ecological knowledge, non-timber forest products and non-cultivated foods; cultural and genetic diversity; germplasm exchange; sustainable use and management of plant resources; legal frameworks of conservation; community-level approaches to conservation; and symbolic and aesthetic aspects of ethnobotanical knowledge.

THE MAIN GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS OF THIS WORK HAS BEEN INDONESIA, MALAYSIA, PAPUA NEW GUINEA, SOLOMONS, PHILIPPINES, MEXICO, ECUADOR, BRAZIL, AND GUYANA.

Professor Roy Ellen, the convenor of the Ethnobotany MSc programme, is a specialist of ethnobiology, environmental anthropology; the human ecology of rainforest populations, deforestation and inter-island trade, with a particular focus on South-east Asia. Several other researchers specialized in ethnobiology and environmental anthropology have joined the faculty in recent years. Dr. Rajindra Puri is the convenor of the Environmental Anthropology Programme and co-convenor of a Departmental Methods Workshop. His long term research interests lie in the historical ecology and ethnobiology of Central Borneo, tropical forest ecology, conservation and development, and the application of social science methods to biodiversity conservation and development planning. Dr. Serena Heckler, currently a lecturer in Ethnobotany and Human Ecology, has just been awarded an ESRC postdoctoral fellowship based at the University of Kent and Kew. Her research interests include the historical ecology and ethnobotany of the Amazon, particularly focused on the response of indigenous knowledge to economic development and the market economy. Dr. Gary J. Martin, Director of The Global Diversity Foundation (www.globaldiversity.org.uk)

and author of the Ethnobotany Methods Manual, has been a parttime lecturer since the Ethnobotany MSc programme began. His current focus is on longterm comparative research projects on biocultural diversity in Malaysia, Mexico and Morocco.

In addition to these faculty members, we have a growing presence of postdoctoral fellows and visiting scholars who are practicing ethnobotanists. Dr. Miguel Alexiades, author of Selected Guidelines for Ethnobotanical Research: A Field Manual joined our faculty in March 2002 on a three year Nuffield Fellowship. Dr. Christian R. Vogl of the Institute for Organic Farming of the University of Agricultural Sciences, Vienna is making regular visits under a British Council scholar exchange program.

All students, staff and visitors have access to the Ethnobiology Laboratory of the University of Kent, which was first established in 1995. The Laboratory is in the process of developing physical infrastructure for teaching and research in ethnobotany, ethnozoology, indigenous environmental knowledge systems and related areas. It currently provides equipment and specimens for teaching ethnobiological research skills, and it serves as a transit station for receiving, examining and redirecting field material. It houses the Powell-Cotton Collection of plant-based material culture from Southeast Asia, and small reference and teaching collections of herbarium and spirit specimens (comprising some 1000 items) arising from recent research projects.

Staff and students have attracted research grants to the value of several million GBP over the last five years. These have included projects on deforestation and forest knowledge in the Moluccas, the depletion of ethnobotanical knowledge in Brunei, ethnobotanical knowledge transfer and environmental change in New Guinea, ethnomedical knowledge among the Ovambo of northern Namibia and southern Angola, conservation and the rights of local people in Guyana, and the impact of social change on local ecological knowledge in Southeast Asia and the Pacific. The most extensive programme we have been involved in is an EU-funded programme on the future of tropical rainforest peoples. Faculty members have organised conferences on the social significance of trees and the uses and abuses of indigenous knowledge. DICE and the Anthropology won the bid to organise the 2002 meetings of the Society for Conservation Biology, which brought over 1000 colleagues to the campus in July.

In June 2004, the Department will host the ninth International Congress of Ethnobiology and the 45th annual meeting of the Society for Economic Botany. For updates about these meetings, consult http://www.ukc.ac.uk/anthropology/ise-seb2004/. For pre-registration, visit http://www.econbot.org/events/2004 on the Society for Economic Botany website.

If you are interested in our postgraduate degree programmes, you may request a Higher Degrees Application Form from

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By *Roy Ellen* and *Gary Martin*

Impressum

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Deadline for next issue: 01.03.03

Abstracts of Student's Thesis

Medical ethnobotany of the Ch'orti' Maya in Eastern Guatemala

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Guatemalan partner institution: Herbario de Investigaciones, Universidad del Valle de Guatemala

The Ch'orti' are a Mayan group living in semi-dry areas of Eastern Guatemala and near the archaeological site of Copán (Honduras), which was presumably inhabited by their ancestors. In contrast to Mayan groups from the Western and Central highlands of Guatemala, the more visible aspects of their traditions have largely vanished, e.g. the typical dress and picturesque ceremonies. This is mainly due to extreme pressure towards acculturation by the dominant Ladino culture from early colonial times on. However, they are considered to be very conservative with respect to their language, which is still spoken in some hamlets.
This led us to investigate the traditional uses of medicinal plants among the Ch'orti'. During 15 months of fieldwork, the use of medicinal plants as home remedies and by traditional healers was studied using informants' consensus as a quantitative criterion. These data are now compared with partly unpublished historical data collected in the 1930s by the cultural anthropologist Charles Wisdom, and with data from other Mesoamerican ethnic groups. In order to contribute to the safe and efficacious use of native herbal remedies, a literature search on phytochemical and pharmacological data is being performed for the most important medicinal plants of the Ch'orti'.

Wik and Kugu Medical Ethnobotany, Cape York Peninsula, Queensland, Australia

Sarah E. Edwards (PhD candidate)
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The arrival of Europeans in Australia caused huge disruption to the Indigenous traditional way of life. Cultural erosion continues unabated, typified by the fact that many Indigenous languages are now endangered and with the loss of a language, also disappears a corresponding wealth of knowledge (much of it environmental) and lore. Loss of traditional biological knowledge is compounded by environmental degradation caused by pastoralism, mining and the influx of feral animals and weeds. However, Aboriginal communities are once again gaining autonomy through 'native title' to their lands and are eager to (in their own words) "keep our culture strong".
By collaborating with Wik and Kugu people from the Aurukun community, this ethnobotanical work will focus on local priorities and how ethnobotany can be applied in these areas, i.e. education, health and employment. Specifically: developing culturally appropriate methods to complement oral inter-generational transmission of knowledge using new media; using traditional knowledge to improve primary health care through improved nutrition and plant-based medicines as alternatives to biomedical treatments; and identifying potential commercial opportunities based on sustainable harvesting of local plant species (to remove dependency on welfare). An important prerequisite is that Wik and Kugu intellectual property rights are recognised and respected.

The Taste and Smell of Taban Kenyah (Kenyah Medicine): an Exploration of Chemosensory Selection Criteria for Medicinal Plants among the Kenyah Leppo` ke of East Kalimantan, Borneo, Indonesia

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Doctoral Committee Chair: Prof. Nina Etkin, Department of Anthropology University of Hawai`i Manoa, Honolulu, USA

The Kenyah Leppo` Ke of East Kalimantan, Indonesia rely heavily on plants grown and gathered for healing a wide range of health complaints. For the Leppo` Ke, sensory evaluation of plants plays a critical role in the selection and use of botanical therapies. This study explores the biological evidence for organoleptic selection criteria of medicinal plants vis-à-vis cultural understandings of modes of action and efficacy. The salient taste and smell qualities -- **pa`it** 'bitter,' **pa:t** 'astringent' and more – mirror widespread patterns of interpretation and use found in other plant-dependent medical systems around the world. For instance, bitter plants are favored for resolving febrile conditions while astringent plants are primarily taken internally as antidiarrheals and used externally as wound-healers. Subordinate categories of the Leppo` Ke sensorium such as the property **nglidah**, accentuate the subtleties and sophistication of perception, interpretation and application that guide native therapeutic systems. Although harder to typecast, this elusive property that characterizes different species is in fact distinguished by a number of chemotaxonomic and pharmacological commonalities.
Biocultural and ethnobiological theoretical frameworks informed research. Social and natural science methods were conjoined to address key questions about Leppo` Ke approaches to illness and healing. Open-ended and structured protocols and field observation were used to collect, contextualize and confirm data. Consensus analysis was employed to ascertain which medicinal taxa are identified as most efficacious and why. Voucher specimens were collected and taxonomically identified. A database search on the phytochemistry and pharmacology of plants species is used to suggest how medicinal flora may physiologically influence the health of human consumers.

Indigenous Maasai solutions for the treatment of measles in Kenya

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Collaborators: Loita Ethnobotany project
Funding: Through supervisor's grant (Le Fonds Quebecois de la Recherceh sur la Nature et les Technologie)

The health care systems of most African nations are unable to provide sufficient medical care for the majority due to cost and inaccessibility. The WHO has estimated that 80% of populations in developing countries depend on traditional medicines for their primary method of health care and 85% of traditional practitioners employ plant extracts to treat ailments. The Maasai tribe of East African incorporates local plant species into the diets of sick children. Although ethnopharmacological investigations have emphasized medicinal plants, plants used in conjunction with diet are under-investigated and potentially make more important contributions to health if they are used routinely. The measles virus is known to be the most serious of the common childhood diseases and is responsible for approximately 1 million deaths every year. This project will document traditional Maasai knowledge on the treatment of measles and evaluate their diet-based practices in relation to measles treatment. Two plants integrated into the Maasai diet have previously been proven to function as antiviral agents *in vitro* (1, 2). Using dietary surveys, an array of plants identified as having anti-measles potential will be tested using an anti-viral assay. Deficient dietary intakes of vitamin A are

known to compromise an individual's immune status and, therefore, the amount of vitamin A consumed by Maasai children will be assessed using a food frequency questionnaire and 24-hour recall survey.

References:
Vlietinck, A.J., Van Hoof, L., Totte, J., Lasure, A., Vanden Berghe, D., Rwangabo, P.C., Mvukiyumwami, J., 1995. Screening of hundred Rwandese medicinal plants for antimicrobial and antiviral properties. Journal of Ethnopharmacology 46, 31-47.

Sindambiwe, J.B., Calomme, M., Cos, P., Totte, J., Pieters, L., Vlietinck, A., Vanden Berghe, D., 1999. Screening of seven selected Rwandan medicinal plants for antimicrobial and antiviral activities. Journal of Ethnopharmacology 65, 71-77.

Antidiabetic Properties of Traditional Food and Medicinal Plants used for the Treatment of NIDDM among Transitional Communities of Papua New Guinea

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Funded by: Natural Science and Engineering Research Council of Canada & Le Fonds Québécois de la Recherche sur la Nature et les Technologies

Divergence from traditional food systems has had detrimental environmental and health impacts for Papua New Guineans (PNG). The incidence of type-2 diabetes has reached epidemic proportions, putting additional burdens on an already overstretched health care system. It is well established that traditional diets offer some protection, in part through their nutrient, fiber, mineral and vitamin content. However, nutritionists rarely take into account the contribution of non-dietary elements such as adjuncts, supplements and medicinals to human health. We postulate that these may confer some protection, via specific antihyperglycemic activity. Dietary diversity and medicinal plant use will be assessed using dietary and ethnobotanical surveys in three communities representing different stages of acculturation. Quantitative analysis will determine the most frequently employed and/or ingested plant in each transitional setting. These will be screened for antihyperglycemic activity using streptozotocin-induced diabetic rats. Biochemical mechanisms vis-à-vis insulin resistance will be examined using isolated rat abdominal muscle tissue. The project will provide valuable insights into diabetes etiology from the standpoint of PNG traditional practices, especially in terms of 1) cultural perceptions of diabetes and other diseases, 2) changes in dietary diversity and traditional ethnobotanical knowledge in relation to diabetes incidence, 3) ethnomedical uses of plants for the prevention and/or treatment of diabetes, and 4) antihyperglycemic effects of food and medicinal plants.

Student's Viewpoint

Shift from Survival of the fittest to slickest!

From my neck of the woods, on a Caribbean island, ethnobotany is a living experience, a phenomenon that is enmeshed within an academic pursuit. More than a mare intellectual inquiry ethnobotany is also the actual ways indigenous minds engage in the investigation of plants crucial for their survival. It is marriage of survival inquiry and

intellectual inquiry. In other words, most nationals use plants, in their daily lives, for the basic necessities food, water, shelter, hygiene, as well as, for other human needs, such as religion, games, arts and craft, music, and festivals. The academic jargons like pharmaceutical drugs may be foreign to most locals, but the experiential knowledge of plants and uses are weaved into the very fabric of their daily living. Many natives eat in local plates carved out of the calabash tree (*Crescentia cujete*); some brush their teeth with chew stick (*Gouania lupuloides*), while several local folks, including this reporter, continue to utilize 'bush medicine' for common illnesses such as the common cold.

Thus, I came to Kent conscious that most of my country folk, based solely on their plant knowledge, would have a high chance of survival in a jungle setting. In the same vain, in my mind, I begged the question, could most of the tutors here at Kent survive in a similar context? The usage of plants is a way of life, as our lives depend on them. Thus, I came to Kent knowing humans cannot eat 'books' therefore, the locals who are trusties of this body of ancient knowledge that has been passed on, from on generation to another, and offered to the academic world are themselves true intellects. These traditional folks are the ones who produce sustenance for the rest of the learned class. Clearly, at Kent I was in another type of jungle one where you either publish or perish.

It is against this background that I arrived at University of Kent at Canterbury in the fall of 2000 to read for an MSc degree in Ethnobotany. My innate feeling was I would serve the community better as a specimen or person to be studied and/or understudied, as ethnobotany was a way of life for me, rather that a subject of pure intellectual accent. In addition, I perceived that for most of my existence I had lived closer to nature that most of the tutors and students. In my island, most of us lived and breathed plants. While my tutors read about and discussed plants, my life was intimately plant centered. It was ironic that folks from the center of plant world – the tropics - had to come to Europe to learn about plants and people. What a strange world that we live in! Forget the Cost!

But, it soon dawned on me in the 'University' setting it is not simply one's knowledge and use of plants that matters, but how well one can relate the use of plants to a related body of theory and the statistical analysis of the same. Whether or not one practices conservation and understands sustainability does not count. This must be locked into a theory. Theory and analysis takes precedence over people's lived experiential knowledge with plants. It seems to me more about evaluating diverse practices and customs with know schools of thought.

Well, my first attempt to fit fully into the academic mold was to seek to dovetail two major theories on taxonomy that of Bret Berlin and Roy Ellen. I use my traditional knowledge on local Caribbean plant taxonomy to compare and contrast two systems – traditional taxonomy and the Linnaeus' binominal nomenclature system. I tried to show how the two systems complement each other and they were not perfect descriptions and/or explanations of what occurred in nature, for both systems are human constructs and not a perfect understanding of the natural worlds. I attempted to synthesize the two. Well, theory is not my strong point, thus, I had to struggle through that paper. Later, I attempted to show the role of Botanical Gardens especially the Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew as a political tool to support and enhance colonization. In essence, what they gave to the world with one hand they took back with the other. In another essay, I sort to examine what was behind prohibition of certain specific or selected plants in different cultures. These exercises were very challenging nonetheless rewarding. It broadened my plant horizon as it relates to theory - the why behind the whys, so to speak.

Then came my major dissertation, for this project, I decided to return to the Caribbean to undertake research relevant to the region. I chose to examine the over a century old trading and marketing of *Coccothrinax barbadensis*, a local palm know as Latanyé, as it relates to the broom-making industry. This time the task was to examine the sustainable use of the resources and the impact on both the ecosystem and economic system including socio-economic dynamics. These assignments were by no means exercises in futility rather they opened doors towards further examination of the body of knowledge as it relates to the dynamics between people and plants. It gave me a fresh look at my natural and cultural heritage with new academic lenses somewhat like putting

my own tradition under the microscope; hence broadening my perspective.

My tenure at Kent was challenging and instructive but stopped short of being an arousing or dynamic experience. Nonetheless, it was interesting and eye opening. I think it was not about what one knows and their experience with plants, but how best one expressed what one read and how one can analysis the subject within the context of academia. Of course, some people are better at that than others, thus separating the academics from the rest. I had to unlearn what I had learned or rather put my traditional wisdom in an academic framework - learn the academic methodology. The survival knowledge and techniques I had accumulated in my culture had to be adjusted to fit into the slick academic setting. The change to me was a sort of shift from 'survival of the fittest' to 'survival of the slickest'. In fact, one student said to me, "the bottom line is not how well you do your research or how much you know about plant and people, but how well you can write up your dissertation." This is sound advice! It dawned on me quite early that ethnobotany is not just botany with a 'human face', but it's also botany within a prescribed academic discipline namely anthropology.

The botany aspect of the course itself whether traditional or conventional left a lot to be desired while the ecological/environmental anthropology and conservation aspects were very exciting and rewarding. The lecturers were extremely knowledgeable about the subjects. Yes, world authorities on various plant subjects. But, while I enjoyed and welcomed the introduction to a more rigorous interrogation of my traditional knowledge and cultural heritage I felt that a greater emphasis should have been placed on basic plant identification and some more bio-chemistry and pharmacognosy. It would also be useful to give some directions toward career opportunities.

All in all, Kent was a great experience although I had to make concerted efforts to adjust to academic life. Equipped with my traditional knowledge for survival I would have had the advantage in my native natural forest. Nonetheless, I have been greatly enriched by the program. At the end of the day, the exercise broadened my understandings about plant and people especially the politics of plants. The course has somehow assisted in positioning me to become a better facilitator between the traditional and scientific/academic community. In short, I have been introduced to another language - the academic ethnobotany. My task now is to open the lines of communication between the traditional language and the newly acquired one. The St. Lucian proverb sums it up neatly, "new brooms sweep clean, but old brooms know the corners.

Laurent Jean Pierre
Former Research Officer and Herbarium Curator at The St. Lucia National Trust - Caribbean, MSc Ethnobotany student, Member of the International Society of Ethnobiology and TRAMIL (Traditional Medicines of the Islands)

A Selection of More Upcoming Conferences

- February 3 - 7, 2003 - Chiang Mai, Thailand -- The third World Congress on Medicinal and Aromatic Plants for Human Welfare (WOCMAP III): From Biodiversity through Science and Technology, Trade and Industry to Sustainable Use. http://www.wocmap3.org/
- March 26 - 29, 2003 - Seattle, USA: -- Ethnobiology and Sustainability. http://ethnobiology.org/ethnobiology2003/
- May 8 - 10, 2003 - Valencia, Spain -- 5th European Colloquium on Ethnopharmacology: The cultural interbreeding in ethnopharmacology: From indigenous to scientific knowledges. http://www.uv.es/Etnofarmacologia/
- September 16 - 18, 2003 - La Paz, Bolivia -- 2nd International Symposium Ethnobotany. For more Information contact: Ronald Chaves, Head Secretariat, Email: simposio@racsa.co.cr

The Society for Economic Botany

The Society for Economic Botany (SEB) was established in 1959 to foster and encourage scientific research, education, and related activities on the past, present, and future uses of plants, and the relationship between plants and people. It seeks to make the results of such research available to the scientific community and the general public through meetings and publications. With more than 1000 members from all 50 U.S. states and over 60 countries, SEB serves is one of the largest and most-respected professional societies for individuals who are concerned with basic botanical, phytochemical and ethnographic studies of plants known to be useful or those which may have potential uses as yet undeveloped. It is recognized that the field of economic botany includes all or parts of many established disciplines such as: agronomy, anthropology, archaeology, chemistry, economics, ethnobotany, forestry, genetic resources, geography, geology, horticulture, medicine, microbiology, nutrition, pharmacognosy, and pharmacology, in addition to the established botanical disciplines. The Society is interested not only in useful plants, but also in traditional ecological knowledge and management of the environment.

Members in the Society for Economic Botany receive (1) the quarterly journal, *Economic Botany*, and the ability to submit papers to be considered for publication; (2) the *Plants and People Newsletter*; (3) the SEB Membership Directory; (4) an invitation to the annual meeting and symposia; and (5) the 50 year index to *Economic Botany*. Application for membership is available on online (www.econbot.org); alternatively, applications, accompanied by dues for one year, can be mailed to:

Economic Botany Business Office,
P.O. Box 368,
Lawrence, KS 66044 U.S.A.
For inquiries about membership, call 1 800 627-0629 or (785) 843-1235
FAX: (785) 843-1274.

The 2003 Annual Meeting of the Society for Economic Botany will be held at the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum in Tucson, Arizona, from Monday June 2 through Thursday June 5, 2003. The Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum is a unique natural history park devoted to appreciation and understanding of the botanical, zoological, and geological features of the Sonoran Desert region of the southwestern United States and northwestern Mexico. The Museum has modern meeting facilities and a first-class restaurant for the annual banquet. Two ethnobotany symposia are being developed, the first featuring work in the southwestern North America and the second on southern Mexico. A pre-meeting excursion to the Grand Canyon and local environments will be offered, and there will be a post-meeting excursion to the "Sky Islands" region of southeastern Arizona. Other field trips that will be offered include one to the Desert Botanical Garden in Phoenix to see their "Plants and Peoples of the Sonoran Desert" exhibit, one to Native Seed/SEARCH seed preservation farm devoted to preserving and increasing indigenous crop varieties, and one to a nursery specializing in native plants. For more information about the 2003 meeting, consult the SEB website (www.econbot.org) or contact Dr. Daniel F. Austin, Conservation & Science Department, Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, 2021 N. Kinney Road, Tucson, AZ 85743, USA; E-mail daustin@desertmuseum.org.

A Small Selection of Ethnopharmacology Related Web Pages

- Native American Ethnobotany Database: http://www.umd.umich.edu/cgi-bin/herb
- Minnesota Ethnobotany: http://emuseum.mnsu.edu/cultural/ethnoarchaeology/ethnobotany/index.shtml#
- Comisión Nacional para el Conocimiento y Uso de la Biodiversidad (CONABIO): http://www.conabio.gob.mx
- European Society of Ethnopharmacology (ESE): http://membres.lycos.fr/ethnopharma/