



Another success story!

James Hourston's dream was to undertake research on insects – he took the classic route of a Masters degree, did some real field based research and is now working on his PhD in insect ecology – no wonder he looks happy!

Graduate James Hourston dissecting seeds and looking for insects.

Recognition by the Society of Biology

The Society of Biology is the organisation which represents biology in this country; it advises Government and influences policy, advances education and professional development in life sciences and encourages the public interest in all things biological. We are therefore extremely pleased that such an important organisation has recognised the quality of our BSc (Hons) Biology and BSc (Hons) Zoology courses. The recognition also provides a guarantee to students that our courses meet the educational requirements for Associate (AMSB) membership of the Society of Biology and provides a route to full Membership (MSB) following appropriate professional experience.



Biological Sciences

Vol 2, Issue 1

at the University of Derby

Hello

Welcome to Biological Sciences at the University of Derby.

This newsletter has been put together to keep you informed about all the things happening in our area!

Best wishes

Phil Carey and Graham Rowe
Biological Sciences, Faculty of Education, Health and Sciences, University of Derby.

Our Biology and Zoology courses now recognised by the Society of Biology



See back page for more details

Spooky science

Children enjoying half term in the Derby Westfield Centre got caught up in some spooky Halloween activities on Wednesday October 26, as they concocted scary potions, made flying ghosts and put skeletons back together with science students from the University of Derby.

The six biology and zoology degree students from the University, along with Dr Ian Turner, Assistant Subject Head in Biological and Forensic Sciences, spent the day getting children involved in spooky science fun.

Hands-on science activities included children putting skeletons back together from a number of scattered 'bones'; making a flying ghost out of straws, white plastic and a water bottle; and concocting fizzy potions from baking soda and vinegar.

Dr Ian Turner said: "The students did a fantastic job of engaging children with science through the Halloween-themed activities and even passed on some science facts too."

Rebecca Noskiw, 20, who is in the third year of her BSc (Hons) Biology, said: "Today has been really good fun. Lots of children came up to the stand and got involved in the activities, and I really enjoyed interacting with them and getting them excited about the science of spookiness. As I hope to become a science teacher this has been a valuable experience for me."



Student Volunteer Rebecca Noskiw helping out at the Science of Halloween event.

First year students – icebreakers!

Our first year students got involved in a range of icebreaker events put together by the staff from Biological Sciences.

Graham Rowe acted as master of ceremonies and our new students were encouraged to do some very silly things outside on the lawn! Students also got involved with some simple teamwork which involved making marshmallow towers – the prizes were not very

exciting but everyone joined in and it all got rather competitive! That competition was also evident in Ian Turner's pub quiz later that week.

We will try this again next year with perhaps a few changes – the most inventive dinosaur maybe, or flattest dinosaur as marshmallows don't make very good towers!



(Above) Graham Rowe and fresher's involved in an icebreaking 'name game' and (insert) Biology students compete to make the highest marshmallow tower.

Students have work published on ARKive's award-winning website

ARKive is creating a digital library of life on Earth, including unique audio-visual material, and making it available to all – www.arkive.org. Students at the University of Derby have contributed to the website by writing species profiles. This has allowed the students to gain valuable experience of putting into practise the research and writing skills they are gaining through their studies. The University of Derby has an ongoing collaboration with the project through The ARKive and Universities Scheme, and Helen Roddis of ARKive will be visiting the university in February 2012 to give current students the opportunity of contributing to this incredibly useful resource.



The Michoacan dwarf spiny-tailed iguana (*Ctenosaura clarki*) (profile for this species was written by Marinos Miltiadous).



Two new teaching laboratories

Two of our teaching laboratories have been entirely rebuilt over the summer and were opened for business this semester, providing state of the art learning and teaching environments.

We are not stopping there – over the next year the department's insectory and glasshouse are also going to be significantly updated to provide enhanced environments for students to work.

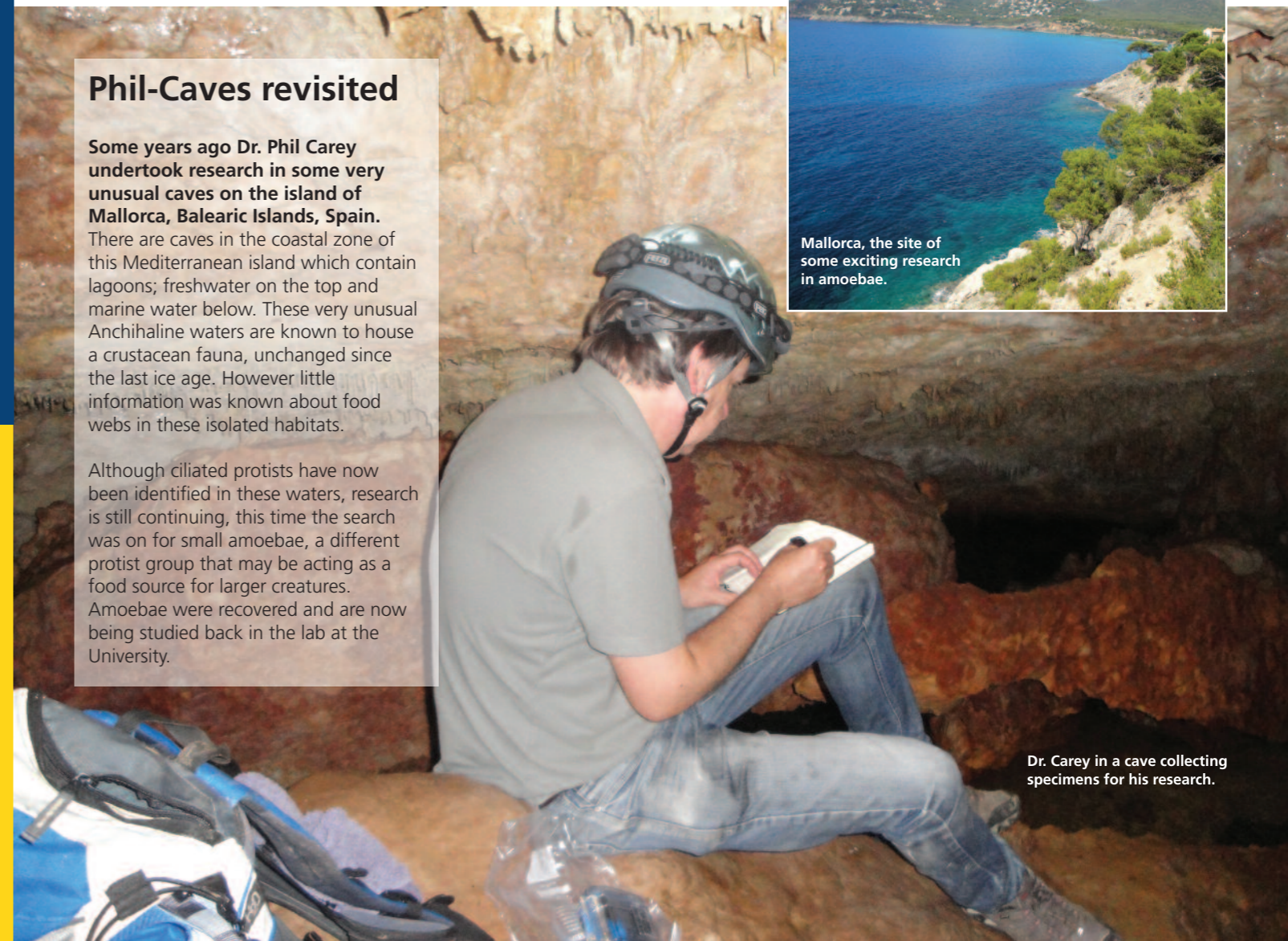
Phil-Caves revisited

Some years ago Dr. Phil Carey undertook research in some very unusual caves on the island of Mallorca, Balearic Islands, Spain. There are caves in the coastal zone of this Mediterranean island which contain lagoons; freshwater on the top and marine water below. These very unusual Anchihaline waters are known to house a crustacean fauna, unchanged since the last ice age. However little information was known about food webs in these isolated habitats.

Although ciliated protists have now been identified in these waters, research is still continuing, this time the search was on for small amoebae, a different protist group that may be acting as a food source for larger creatures. Amoebae were recovered and are now being studied back in the lab at the University.



Mallorca, the site of some exciting research in amoebae.



Dr. Carey in a cave collecting specimens for his research.