Mason SCIENCE

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Turn over a new leaf

by Fernando Miralles-Wilhelm

Welcome back. With 2021 behind us, it's time to take stock of our goals and what we, and our students and partners, want to accomplish. George Mason University presents many opportunities to be safe, to grow, to recharge, and to collaborate.

Be safe: I'm grateful for the many COVID-19 prevention mechanisms our university has in place. From on-demand COVID testing, vaccines, and boosters, to a supportive environment if someone you should know is affected by it, remember we've still got your back!

Time to grow: What's on your list to accomplish this semester? Do you want to land that big grant? Whether you start to share your science on social media or perhaps even get paid to take science communication training, we've got resources to help you achieve your goal.

As we start the new semester, I'm hoping we each can 'turn over a new leaf.' And I'm not just referring to Mason's amazing arboretum. Back in the 16th century, people referred to pages in a book as leaves.

So, this idiom ‘turn over a new leaf’ signified that one was turning to the next or a blank page in the book. Over time, it has come to be used to describe a new stage in life or a behavior change, to rebuild, to improve or regenerate.

It’s not just about trying something new. It’s about elevating the way we do what we do.

Read full message



New exhibit highlights the hidden work of African American naturalists

by Jack Del Nunzio



George Mason University scholars from the Department of Environmental Science and Policy as well as the John Mitchell, Jr. Program for History, Justice, and Race at the Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter School for Peace and Conflict Resolution have teamed up to create an online exhibit highlighting and acknowledging the hidden history of enslaved naturalists.

Full article



#FacultyFriday features neuroscience assistant professor

This week we highlight new faculty member L. Ren Guerriero, Assistant Professor, Neuroscience. This semester Guerriero has big plans: starting a teaching-focused lab investigating novel-sleep related genes in fruit flies, advising a new student organization, and serving on the panel discussion for the upcoming Oliver Sacks film screening.

Read Guerriero's bio

RESEARCH & DISCOVERY

Honey bees could help solve police cases

by John Hollis



An unlikely collaboration between George Mason University's Honey Bee Initiative and the new outdoor Forensic Science Research and Training Laboratory could yield critical advances in forensic science. Mason teams from a number of different fields including Mason plant biologists, the Forensic Science Program and CAPMM are working in unison at the Science and Technology Campus on an ambitious project to see if the honey produced by bees after feeding on flowers can help them better locate missing persons. *Photo: Shelby Burgess/Strategic Communications*.

More on this research

Copycat red nectar is Mason gecko-approved

by Andria Waclawski and Tracy Mason

As part of an experiment observing how plants produce distinctive red nectar and its makeup, Assistant Professor of Biology, Ylenia Chiari and graduate student Nick Moreno designed experiments to test the



response of day geckos to colored versus non colored synthetic nectar. The study recently appeared in *Proceedings of the National Academies of Sciences. Photo courtesy of Ylenia Chiari*.

More on this research

IN THE NEWS

Fossil records skew towards wealthier countries

by Ewen Callaway, Nature



A new study finds that 97 percent of palaeontological data comes from scientists in high- and upper-middle income countries resulting in a slanted view of the history of life. Mark Uhen, Chair, Atmospheric, Oceanic and Earth Sciences, and Chair, Executive Committee of the Paleobiology Database says that "being aware of a problem is the first step to trying to solve it." *Photo: Martin Bernetti/AFP/Getty.*

Read full article

Happening at Mason

Sign up for science communication training as part of larger study

Mason faculty, post-docs, and graduate students invited to participate in science communication training this spring - participants are paid for their time.

Researchers in the Department of Communication will offer this training as part of a funded study (IRBNet # 1555681-1). In this training, you refine your approach to communicating the value of research in your field. In addition to the training being free, participants in this study are paid for their time. Participants who complete the training and all study tasks receive a letter acknowledging their work. All training complies with university COVID requirements.

Participants who register by **February 18, 2022**, have the best choice of days for training.

Sign up to participate



Climate Action Plan Townhall
January 28, 2022 | Noon to 1:30 p.m. | Virtual
Engage with the Mason Sustainability Council, hear the latest updates, and share your thoughts about the future of climate action at Mason. Registration required.

Free Screening: Oliver Sacks: His Own Life
February 2, 2022 | 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. | Johnson Center Cinema
Join Mason Interdisciplinary Program in Neuroscience for a free screening of the documentary and discussion with Panelists from IPN, LGBTQ+ Faculty/Staff Alliance, and Disability Services at Mason.

College of Science Faculty Meeting
February 3, 2022 | Noon to 1 p.m. | Virtual
Refer to your email for meeting link

ASSIP 2022 Session: Application Deadline
February 6, 2022 | 11:59 p.m.
Applications for the ASSIP program are now open. If you know a student who may be interested, share this opportunity and encourage them to apply.

Mason Vision Series
February 7, 2022 | 7 to 8:15 p.m.
Join Hakeem Oluseyi, Astrophysicist, Visiting Robinson Professor for his lecture "Hack the Stars." Registration required.

See Full Calendar

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