



Geum reptans, near Pizol, Kt. St. Gallen

Dear members of SSS,

the Board of the Swiss Systematics Society wishes you all the best for the upcoming 2012. We would like to inform you that our **General Assembly 2012** is planned for the biology2012 meeting at the University of Fribourg from February 8 to 10, 2012. The agenda as well as details on the location of the General Assembly will be sent to you by e-mail one week in advance. Further details about biology2012 are not yet available.

4th “SSS-Day” and 53rd Phylogenetisches Symposium this November in Bern

A very successful SSS Day meeting this year with 37 attendees who came to the Natural History Museum in Bern on November 18. Prof. Marcelo Sánchez, University of Zürich, was our key-note speaker on the contribution of palaeontology to “Evo-devo” studies. The rest of the morning session was dedicated to student presentations: most of them just started their Master or Ph.D. thesis and presented their first research plan and objectives. These short presentations spurred discussions for the following lunch break at the Restaurant Kirchenfeld. Contributed presentations in the afternoon focussed on biogeography and phylogeny of plants and animal, several talks dealing with the pros and cons of the molecular barcoding, and were followed by a farewell apero. Many participants agreed that this meeting now has a prominent place in the agenda of systematists in Switzerland focussing on many different groups of organisms.

Conjunct with the SSS-Day, the 53rd Phylogenetisches Symposium was held in the Natural History Museum of Bern. Stefan Hertwig organised the meeting that gathered 8 talks dealing with phylogenetic issues concerning all the main chordates clades. Discussions were lively and often focused on the interest of morphological versus molecular for reconstruction of phylogenies, a debate still in progress.

Quest for a new secretary for SSS

Dr. Marco Bernasconi has served since 2007 as Secretary of the Swiss Systematics Society. By the end of this year, Marco will end his term as secretary, but he will stay on the Board. We are grateful for the very important service that Marco provided to SSS. The Board welcomes any applications from members of SSS to serve as Secretary. In case you are interested in providing service to our organization to promote systematics in Switzerland please contact any member of the Board for further details.

What happened for systematics in 2011?

The PESI portal has officially been launched on 18 April 2011. PESI is Europe's e-infrastructure for taxonomic information on species occurring in Europe. The portal contains nearly 450,000 scientific names, 240,000 valid (sub)species names, and 140,000 vernacular names in 89 languages. The portal provides an integrated view of the four major European checklists on animals, plants and fungi. Still operating separately (different host institutions, committees, experts and servers) the register's data is merged yearly in the PESI Data Warehouse and is available through this single portal. Look for your favorite taxon on the PESI web portal: <http://www.eu-nomen.eu/portal/index.php>

5th "SSS-Day" in Porrentruy/Pruntrut, November 2012

The 5th "SSS-Day" will be held in Porrentruy during two days (Thursday/Friday) in November 2012 (dates to be decided). The first day will be devoted to a hands-on course in methods of biogeography with an invited instructor from abroad. An invited presentation as well as short communications by students will form the program for the second day. A visit to the paleontological A16 project (dinosaur footprint sites, Tertiary and Quaternary mammals) will offer an interesting opportunity for discussion on issues on paleontology and biogeography. More details will be offered in due time in one of the following SSS-Newsletters.

Spectacular new species discovered in 2011

What's in common between a bioluminescent mushroom, a leech found in the nose of a Peruvian little girl or a rather odd-looking batfish from the oil devastated Gulf of Mexico? Together with 7 other nominates they belong to the *Top 10 new species of 2011!* These recently discovered taxa span the entire diversity of life and have been selected because of their peculiar shape, colours or other biological properties... if you want to know more about them check <http://species.asu.edu/Top10> ... and if you find an extraordinary new taxon, don't forget to submit it for next year selection!

Best wishes for the holiday season and a prosperous New Year!



Reto Nyffeler (President of SSS)

This Newsletter contains contributions by Alice Cibois, Lionel Calvin, Jean Mariaux and Reto Nyffeler