

# *The Microbial Taxonomist*

*A Newsletter Published by Bergey's Manual Trust*

## Inaugural meeting of BISMIS in Beijing

The first meeting of Bergey's International Society for Microbial Systematics (BISMIS) will be held in the Friendship Hotel Beijing, on 19–23 May 2011. The purpose of BISMIS is to promote the importance of teaching and research in microbial systematics and to foster communication between microbial systematists across the world. These objectives include the pressing need to promote an understanding of the vast, largely unstudied, microbial diversity which has untapped genetic and industrial potential. Indeed, a basic aim of the society is to enhance efforts to isolate microorganisms in pure culture and to describe, classify, name and identify them and, where appropriate, to use them for exploitable biotechnology. The meeting in Beijing is designed to help realize these aims.

The conference – Microbial Systematics: Concepts, Practices and Recent Advances – will be held over 4 days. The Opening Ceremony on Thursday, 19 May will include a welcoming address from Professor L. Huang (Director, Institute of Microbiology, Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), Beijing) and a keynote lecture by Barry Sharples, Nobel Prize Laureate (Scripps Institute, USA). Thereafter, the conference will be divided into four mini-symposia: 20 May, Microbial Systematics and

Diversity and Eukaryotic Systematics (simultaneous sessions) plus a workshop on Biosystematics; 21 May, Microbial Diversity and its Impact on Biotechnology and associated Young Scientists Forum; 22 May, Pure and Applied Archaeal Systematics and associated Young Scientists Forum and Closing Ceremony; 23 May, Post-conference outing. The aim of the Young Scientists Forums is to highlight the work of younger scientists amongst whom will be tomorrow's stars and leaders in microbial systematics drawn from across the world. In addition, there will be poster sessions and a Trade Fair.

Around 300 participants from academia, industry and research institutes are expected to attend to exchange ideas, establish or further develop research networks, promote global friendships and to explore the importance of microbial systematics, not least from the biotechnological perspective. There will be a reduced registration fee for BISMIS members. Details of the scientific and social programs will be available shortly on the conference website ([www.BISMIS.org](http://www.BISMIS.org)). Bergey's Manual Trust is indebted to the local organizer, Professor Lixin Zhang (Institute of Microbiology, CAS, Beijing) and his team for all of the

### VOLUME 4 PUBLISHED!

Volume 4 of *Bergey's Manual of Systematic Bacteriology* was published on 17 November. It covers the phyla *Bacteroidetes*, *Spirochaetes*, *Tenericutes* (*Mollicutes*), *Acidobacteria*, *Fibrobacteres*, *Fusobacteria*, *Dictyoglomi*, *Gemmatimonadetes*, *Lentisphaerae*, *Verrucomicrobia*, *Chlamydiae*, and *Planctomycetes*.

Thank you to all the authors, editors, freelance colleagues, and those at Springer and our typesetters, SPi, over the last few years for their work in preparing this volume of the *Manual*.

Volume 5 (*Actinobacteria*) is nearly completed from a copy-editing perspective, although there are a few chapters that have yet to be submitted for review, and others are undergoing final revisions prior to processing.

*Aidan Parte, Managing Editor*

selfless work they are doing on behalf of the global community of microbial systematists. Lixin and his team can be contacted at [BISMIS2011@gmail.com](mailto:BISMIS2011@gmail.com).

*Beijing awaits you!*

## BISMIS CHARTER MEMBERSHIP ENDS 31 DECEMBER 2010

Bergey's International Society for Microbial Systematics was formed in January 2010. Those who are interested in joining BISMis can become Charter Members by applying for membership this year, i.e., no later than 31 December 2010. The annual membership fee is \$50 for full members and \$30 for students. Applicants should visit the website, [www.bergeys.org/bismis.html](http://www.bergeys.org/bismis.html), for more information and to join online. Membership application forms are also available at the end of this newsletter.

One of the benefits of the new Society is the new journal, the *Bulletin of BISMis* which contains opinion articles, review articles, reports, methods

articles and autobiographies of noted microbial systematists. The first issue of the *Bulletin* will be published at the end of this year.

In addition, a handsome certificate is available for Charter Members of BISMis at a cost of \$10 to cover postage and handling. Finally, as an added enticement, Charter members, i.e., those who have joined by 31 December 2010, do not have to pay dues for 2011. Members will also be eligible for reduced registration costs for BISMis meetings, the first of which will be held in Beijing, China on 19–23 May 2011.

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## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ANNUAL MEETING IN SEVILLE

This year the annual meeting of Bergey's Manual Trust was held in Seville, Spain, on 11–12 May. In attendance were four trustees (Paul De Vos, Mike Goodfellow, Peter Kämpfer and Barny Whitman), Karl-Heinz Schleifer and Jim Staley (emeritus members) and four associates (Hans-Jürgen Busse, Wolfgang Ludwig, Ken Suzuki and Martha Trujillo). Fred Rainey participated in the meeting via Skype, and the remaining trustee, Jongsik Chun, was unable to participate. Our Managing Editor, Aidan Parte, set out for Seville but had to return home due to flight disruptions caused by clouds of volcanic ash from Eyjafjallajökull. In addition to the usual business, notably reports from the Secretary, Treasurer and Managing Editor, the main issues addressed were: consideration of proposals submitted by prospective partners for the electronic publication of the next edition of *Bergey's Manual of Systematic Bacteriology*, the promotion of Bergey's International Society for Microbial Systematics (BISMis) and plans for the inaugural meeting of the Society.

Proposals submitted for the electronic publication of the next edition of *Bergey's Manual of Systematic Bacteriology* were reviewed independently by two groups, one composed of the Trustees and the other by Emeritus Trustees and Associates. The proposals were considered within the context of guidelines drawn up by the trustees earlier in the year. Each of the independent groups were impressed by the quality of the proposals. De Vos moved and Kämpfer seconded a motion to authorize BMT to begin negotiating a new contract. The motion was

passed unanimously. Whitman, Rainey and Goodfellow were charged with these negotiations. In addition, Kämpfer moved and De Vos seconded a motion to authorize Whitman to negotiate a termination agreement with Springer upon completion of the 2nd edition. This motion was passed unanimously.

Trustees reiterated their view that Bergey's International Society for Microbial Systematics was an appropriate vehicle to promote microbial systematics and thereby help promote and encourage this subject in many parts of the world. It was agreed that a draft constitution of the society be drawn up by Jim Staley. The society currently has 47 charter members. All members of the society will have immediate access to our online bulletin which will feature articles/hot topics of current relevance to microbial systematists. It was agreed that BISMis meetings be held biannually in different parts of the world, where appropriate in conjunction with meetings of learned societies. The inaugural meeting will be held in Beijing, China on 19–23 May 2011.

It was agreed that nominations of new trustees be delayed until it was clear how current technological advances were likely to impact on microbial systematics, not least the move towards electronic publishing. However, it was unanimously agreed that Antonio Ventosa receive the Bergey Award and that Olga Nedashkovskaya become an Associate Member of BMT.

The next annual meeting of BMT will be held in Beijing, China on 18 and 19 May 2011.

## ANTONIO VENTOSA RECEIVES BERGEY AWARD

At its recent annual meeting, the Bergey's Manual Trust voted to present the award for 2010 to Professor Antonio Ventosa, Department of Microbiology and Parasitology, University of Sevilla, Spain. The Bergey Award has been presented annually since 1979 in recognition of outstanding contributions to the systematics and taxonomy of prokaryotes. The award is supported by Bergey's Trust and Springer, which publishes *Bergey's Manual of Systematic Bacteriology*. In addition to a cash prize of \$2000, the award includes travel to the meeting of the Bergey's International Society for Microbial Systematics.

Professor Ventosa is recognized for his seminal studies of the biology and systematics of halophilic *Bacteria* and *Archaea*. At the time he began his research on halophiles in 1977, there were only five species on the Approved Lists of Bacterial Names. Now there are more than 200 species, many of which he has helped describe. Likewise, Professor Ventosa has made major contributions to the study of the extremely halophilic archaea. When he began his work on this group there were only two genera, but he and his colleagues proposed two others, *Haloarcula* and *Haloferax*, which in turn spurred the description of more than 20 additional genera. In addition to his more than 200 primary journal publications, he has edited a book entitled *Halophilic Microorganisms*. Also, he has published 37 chapters in books, many of which included taxonomic treatments of halophilic *Bacteria* and *Archaea* for Bergey's publications, including *Bergey's Manual of Systematic Bacteriology*, and *The Prokaryotes*. His 1998 review paper published in *Microbiology and Molecular Biology Reviews* is among

the most highly cited articles in that journal. At this time, Professor Ventosa is arguably the world's authority on the taxonomy of halophiles.



In addition to his research contributions, Professor Ventosa is a leader in microbial systematics. He proposed the creation of the Subcommittee on the Taxonomy of *Halobacteriaceae* in 1982 and more recently of the *Halomonadaceae*, efforts which have led to a modern view of their taxonomy. He also promoted the publication of the Minimal Standards for the description of taxa within these two families. Antonio Ventosa is currently serving as an Associate Editor for the *International Journal of Systematic and Evolutionary Microbiology* and is on the editorial boards of *Systematic and Applied Microbiology*, *Extremophiles* and *International Microbiology and Saline Systems*.

Professor Ventosa will receive his award at the forthcoming inaugural meeting of Bergey's International Society for Microbial Systematics in Beijing, China in 2011, where he will present a lecture on his work.

*Mike Goodfellow*

### REQUEST FOR NOMINATIONS FOR THE BERGEY AWARD

Nominations are sought for the 2012 Bergey Award.

The Award was initiated in 1979 to honor an individual for outstanding contributions to microbial taxonomy. The Award, donated by the

Board of Trustees of Bergey's Manual Trust, consists of a certificate, a \$2000 prize and expenses for travel to receive the Award at the society meeting. Previous winners of the Bergey Award are listed at the Bergey's website. Nominations in the form of a letter of nomination and a CV of the nominee should be forwarded to [bergeys@uga.edu](mailto:bergeys@uga.edu) by 1 May 2011.

## ERKO STACKEBRANDT RECEIVES BERGEY MEDAL

Erko Stackebrandt was awarded the Bergey Medal in 2009 in recognition of life-long contributions to the field of systematic bacteriology. He recently retired as the Director of the German Collection of Microorganisms and Cell Cultures GmbH (DSMZ) and as a full professor at the Technical University in Braunschweig, Germany.



His education in microbiology started with a Diploma (1971) and a PhD (1974) from Ludwig-Maximilians University in Munich followed by a postdoctoral fellowship in the lab of Carl Woese at the University of Illinois in 1978. From 1979 to 1983 he was a member of the research group of Karl Schleifer at the Technical University in Munich. Erko's academic appointments included terms as the head of the departments of Microbiology at the University of Kiel (1984–1990) and at the University of Queensland, Australia (1990–1993). In 1993 he returned to Germany to be the Managing Director of the DSMZ, a service and research organization at which he had previously worked as a scientist in the Munich branch from 1979 to 1983.

*The Microbial Taxonomist* is a copyrighted publication of Bergey's Manual Trust. Current members of the Board of Trustees are:

Michael Goodfellow, *Chair*  
 Peter Kämpfer, *Vice Chair*  
 William Whitman, *Treasurer and Director of the Editorial Office*  
 Fred Rainey, *Secretary*  
 Jongsik Chun  
 Paul De Vos

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 James Staley, *Contributing Editor*  
 Aidan Parte, *Managing Editor*

Erko Stackebrandt has made immense contributions to microbial taxonomy and ecology as well as the education of more than 100 graduate students that he has supervised over the years. His major scientific interests are the development of molecular approaches for the characterization and identification of prokaryotes. Erko has authored over 600 peer-reviewed publications and 80 book chapters describing his scientific findings. He has been involved in the description and taxonomic revision of more than 400 taxa across the spectrum of the *Bacteria* and *Archaea*, from the species to the class level. His microbial diversity research has examined diverse habitats including, German soils and peat, Mediterranean coastal waters, the North and Baltic Seas, Antarctic lakes, as well as giant ants, holothurians, the cow rumen and the digestive tract of koalas. His contributions and service to microbiology and the scientific community have spanned the globe and he has received recognition for this from the Göttingen Academy of Sciences, the 1991 Bergey Award, Bergey's Manual Trust, the American Society for Microbiology, the Technical University, Munich, the American Academy of Microbiology, the Australian Society for Microbiology and the Hungarian Society for Microbiology. Erko Stackebrandt has served on the editorial boards of numerous journals and as the Editor of *IJSB* and *IJSEM*. He currently serves as the Editor of *Archives of Microbiology*, *Current Microbiology* and *The Prokaryotes*.

*Fred Rainey*

***A History of Microbiology in Philadelphia: 1880 to 2010 – Including a Detailed History of the Eastern Pennsylvania Branch of the American Society for Microbiology from 1920 to 2010; 432 pp.***

The above book by James A. Poupard, the archivist of the Eastern Pennsylvania Branch of the ASM, has just been published. There is extensive coverage of David H. Bergey, the eminent Pennsylvanian bacteriologist for whom the Trust and *Manual* are named.

It is available from [www.philamicro.com](http://www.philamicro.com) in paperback, hardback, and eBook format for \$23.99, \$34.99, and \$9.99, respectively.

### **BARNY WHITMAN RECEIVES USFCC-PORTER AWARD**

William Whitman received the 2010 United States Confederation of Culture Collections – Roger Porter Award offered by the American Society for Microbiology. The Award was presented at the annual meeting in San Diego, California in May 2010. The Award recognizes outstanding achievement in microbial systematics microbial metabolism, diversity and taxonomy.

William “Barney” Whitman is a Professor and Department Chair of the Department of Microbiology at the University of Georgia. Professor Whitman’s major research area is the study of methanogenic *Archaea*. In keeping with Roger Porter’s interests, Whitman helped elucidate our knowledge about the unique metabolism of methanogens while he was a postdoctoral student in Ralph Wolfe’s laboratory. In addition, he and the late David Boone, played key roles in methanogen taxonomy by their contributions to the first and second editions of *Bergey’s Manual of Systematic Bacteriology* edition and his establishment of methanogen culture collections. Furthermore, Professor Whitman has published several important research papers on bacterial taxonomy including those noting the utility and limitations of 16S rRNA gene sequences in delineating species. From 1995 to 2001 he served as an Associate Editor for the *International Journal of Systematic Bacteriology* and

*International Journal of Systematics and Evolutionary Microbiology*. For these and his many other outstanding contributions in microbial systematics he received the Bergey Award in 2000. In 2006 he was elected to the Board of Trustees of Bergey’s Manual Trust, and in 2007 he became Director of the Trust’s Editorial Office which was relocated to his department at the University of Georgia.



Professor Whitman has also made significant contributions to understanding microbial diversity. One exceptional example of this is his seminal 1998 paper published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* which provided evidence that the biomass of *Bacteria* and *Archaea* was at least equivalent to that of all plants and animals. This was a revelation not only to microbiologists but to all other biologists.

### **MIKE GOODFELLOW AWARDED HIS MBE FROM THE QUEEN**

In the 2010 New Year’s Honours list, the Trust’s Chair Mike Goodfellow was made an MBE or Order of the British Empire, Member, for voluntary service to education in his work as Chairman of Governors, Gosforth High School, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, UK. This is a great honor for Mike, and in his typically self-effacing style, I only learned of it recently when reading his email signature. He has already used it to great effect by managing to extract a permission letter from a major publishing house’s permissions department. No mean feat!

*Aidan Parte*

### **ANTONIO VENTOSA, A MOST GRACIOUS HOST IN SEVILLE**

The Trust would like to extend its sincere gratitude to Antonio Ventosa and colleagues at the University of Seville for hosting its annual meeting with such wonderful hospitality.

As well as helping with accommodations and travel arrangements, which turned out to be more challenging than expected due to the Eyjafjallajokull volcano’s activity, Antonio hosted a joint dinner between the Trust and the editorial board of IJSEM, a gala dinner and dance for the Spanish Society of Microbial Taxonomists’ meeting and a tour and tasting at the Tio Pepe distillery.

# Bergey's International Society for Microbial Systematics (BISMis) Full Membership Application Form

The Society invites applications for full membership from any person who is interested in the subject of microbial systematics and holds a bachelor's degree in microbiology or a related subject.

The annual dues are US\$ 50.00. Members are entitled to receive the online *Bergey's International Society for Microbial Systematics Bulletin*, which is published twice a year beginning in Fall 2010, and the online Bergey's Manual Trust Newsletter. Full members will also receive a reduced registration fee for attendance of meetings.

Memberships will be renewed on 1 January of each year. Unless indicated otherwise, applications received before 1 November will be credited to the current year. Applications received after 1 November will become effective the following year. Return the form with payment to: **BISMis, Bergey's Manual Trust, 527 Biological Sciences Building, The University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602-2605, USA.**

*Alternatively, please join BISMis online using our secure credit card facility at [www.bergeys.org/bismis.html](http://www.bergeys.org/bismis.html).*

First name: \_\_\_\_\_ Initial(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Last name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State and Zip/Post Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone no. incl. Country/Area Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Highest degree: \_\_\_\_\_ Year received: \_\_\_\_\_ Subject: \_\_\_\_\_

Degree-granting institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Current position: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership dues (add \$10 for Charter Member Certificate)

Amount paid\*

Full member	US\$50.00	_____
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Lifetime	US\$500.00	_____
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Institutional	US\$1000.00	_____
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\*Credit card no.: \_\_\_\_\_ Name on card: \_\_\_\_\_

Card type: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry date (mm/yy): \_\_\_\_\_ Card ID (CVV2/CID) no.: \_\_\_\_\_

Checks in US\$ should be made payable to: Treasurer, Bergey's International Society for Microbial Systematics.

# Bergey's International Society for Microbial Systematics (BISMiS) Student Membership Application Form

The Society invites applications for student membership from any person who is interested in the subject of microbial systematics and is enrolled as an undergraduate or graduate student in microbiology or a related subject.

The annual dues are US\$ 30.00. Student members will receive the online *Bergey's International Society for Microbial Systematics Bulletin*, which is published twice a year beginning in Fall 2010, and the online Bergey's Manual Trust Newsletter. Student members will also receive a reduced registration fee

for attendance of meetings. Memberships will be renewed on 1 January of each year. Unless indicated otherwise, applications received before 1 November will be credited to the current year. Applications received after 1 November will become effective the following year. Return the form with payment to: **BISMiS, Bergey's Manual Trust, 527 Biological Sciences Building, The University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602-2605, USA.**

*Alternatively, please join BISMiS online using our secure credit card facility at [www.bergeys.org/bismis.html](http://www.bergeys.org/bismis.html).*

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First name: \_\_\_\_\_ Initial(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Last name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State and Zip/Post Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone no. incl. Country/Area Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Degree in progress (BS, BA, MS or PhD, etc): \_\_\_\_\_ Subject: \_\_\_\_\_

Degree-granting institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Head of Department\*: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Head must write a brief supporting letter verifying that the student is in their department, and it must accompany the application. For online applications, please send letter to the address above or by email to [bergeys@uga.edu](mailto:bergeys@uga.edu).*

Applicant's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership dues (add \$10 for Charter Member Certificate)

Amount paid\*\*

Student member

US\$30.00

\_\_\_\_\_

\*\*Credit card no.: \_\_\_\_\_ Name on card: \_\_\_\_\_

Card type: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry date (mm/yy): \_\_\_\_\_ Card ID (CVV2/CID) no.: \_\_\_\_\_

Checks in US\$ should be made payable to: Treasurer, Bergey's International Society for Microbial Systematics.