

Home:
Jens Juels Gade 33
DK-2100 Copenhagen Ø
Denmark

Tel: +45 35554959
Mobile: +45 23718973
Home page:
www.zi.ku.dk/personal/dmash

DAVID NASH 2004 News

Work:
Department of Population Ecology
Universitetsparken 15
DK-2100 Copenhagen Ø
Denmark

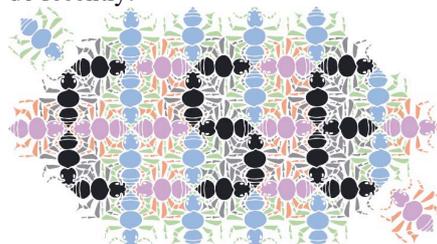
Tel: +45 35321323
Fax: +45 35321250
e-mail: DRNash@bi.ku.dk

It's getting on for midnight on the 10th December as I write this, and in about 9 hours I'll be getting on a 'plane to Western Australia for a three week holiday, so please excuse if my newsletter is rather condensed this year, and probably full of errors – I have a lot to do in the next few hours. 2004 has been another tough year and another year of new

adventures. I seem to have lurched from one major project to another during the year, getting utterly exhausted and then taking some nice breaks to recover. To make things a little different (and to lessen the amount I have to write), I thought I'd try an even more visual approach than usual this year

Work

I spent a lot of the first part of the year helping Koos Boomsma put together a grant proposal for a new centre of social evolution in Copenhagen. The grant was submitted in June, and we heard in November that our application has been successful. This is exciting news for me, because it means that I will be able to do considerably more research over the next five years than I have been able to do recently.

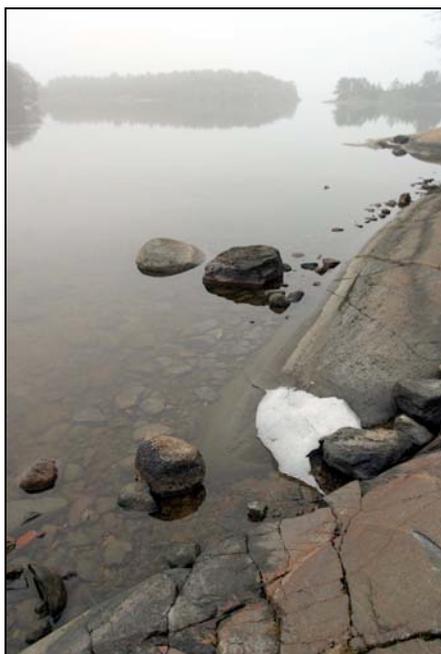


There are a few details to be ironed out yet, but the centre will hopefully start in earnest during mid 2005. It will allow us to continue with some of the work that has been started under the EU-funded INSECTS and MacMan networks, as well as expanding in new directions. So, with the new centre on the horizon, I'm looking forward to the next few years in Copenhagen.

Play

In April I visited Ireland for the first time, spending a very pleasant week with my oldest friend Robert Esnouf and his fiancé Iris Geens visiting Dublin and then the west of Ireland. Despite everything I had heard about the climate, it was glorious weather. I can confirm that the Guinness really does taste better close to the source.

From Ireland, I returned to Oxford in time for the annual May morning celebrations, where I managed to meet up with old friends Julie, Steve, Alexia, Wendy and Jonathan. We only managed to catch the tail end of the choral singing from Magdalen tower, but managed to catch a lot of morris dancing.

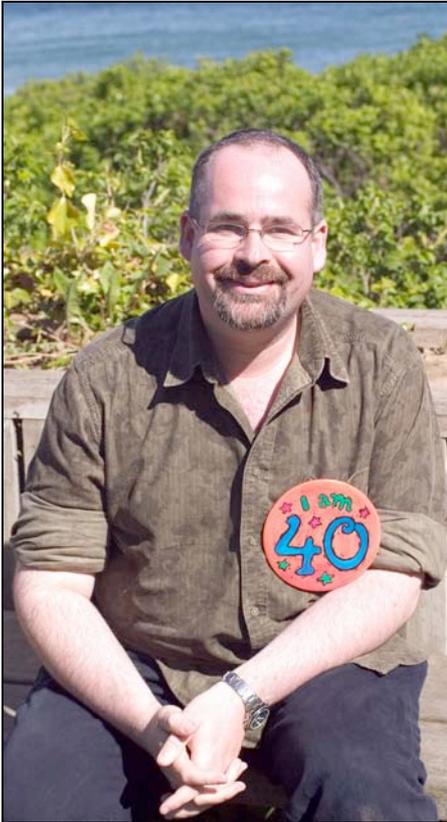


In April, I helped organize and attended a workshop on grant writing in Finland. The workshop took place at the Tvärminne field station, on the edge of the Finnish archipelago. The water is still pretty cold at this time of year (as I found out after trying the sauna), which gives it a still and enchanting quality.



In June, July and August, I spent quite a bit of time carrying out fieldwork on the island of Læsø, in our continuing study of the interactions between *Maculinea* butterflies and *Myrmica* ants – seen in progress above.





After May morning I returned to Denmark and had a few days more holiday in order to properly celebrate my 40th birthday. During three days I had a group outing to Copenhagen Zoo and the Cisternerne glass gallery, saw Marillion in concert in Copenhagen and then had a birthday picnic in the Royal deer park. Many thanks to all who came along – particularly Karel Alders for bequeathing me his badge.



After the celebrations in May, it was a busy working summer, with lots of fieldwork and preparations for the closing meeting of the INSECTS network in Helsingør. I managed to take a couple of weeks off 'though, and did something I've been meaning to do for ages. I attended the Cropredy folk festival, along with my brother Pete and his girlfriend Marion. It's the first time I've been to a festival, and I think I got the authentic experience with rain, mud and scorching sun over the course of three days, as well as some excellent bands.

Shortly after the Cropredy festival I flew back to Copenhagen with Julie, Steve and Alexia, and they stayed for a week's holiday. This is almost becoming an annual event now (with a break last year), and we had the usual hectic time visiting the zoo, churches, museums, parks, swimming pools, playgrounds, beaches, aquaria and the like.



Then it was back to serious work, and the closing meeting of the INSECTS symposium, held in Helsingør (or Elsinore as Shakespeare knew it). The 4-day meeting went past in rather a blur, as I rushed around trying to get computers to work and sort out all sorts of other arrangements. There was an oasis of calm in the middle of the meeting, however, when we had a group outing to Frederiksborg castle in Hillerød.

Ultimately the meeting was a great success, and was worth all the effort that I and others had put in to it, but I am looking forward to *not* organizing another meeting this coming year



Immediately after the meeting, we had a departmental field trip to the Swedish Island of Hven, on a beautiful autumn day. The island is fairly small and flat, and the bicycle population apparently outnumbers the human population ..



My work colleagues gave me a voucher for evening classes as a birthday present this year, and I have enjoyed using it for ceramics classes since October – it is a great way to relax for a few hours and do something creative which doesn't require much brainwork.

Now I'm looking forward immensely to my trip to Australia, and to more than a few hours of relaxation – I'm sure you'll see the pictures next Christmas if not before :-)

I hope that you'll have a very happy Christmas 2004, and a wonderful New Year 2005. If I haven't seen you this year, then maybe it will work out in 2005.

David