

JAMES RENNIE BEQUEST

REPORT ON EXPEDITION/PROJECT/CONFERENCE

Expedition/Project/

Conference Title: Evolutionary Biology Workshop in the Alps / XIV Congress of the European Society for Evolutionary Biology

Travel Dates: 18-25 June 2013 / 18-25 August 2013

Location: Riederalp, Switzerland / Lisbon, Portugal

Group member(s): Josianne Lachapelle

Aims: Acquire skills such as research project development, grant writing, and group work /

Give an oral presentation and network with other researchers and students

OUTCOME (not less than 300 words):-

I am grateful for the funding provided by the James Rennie Bequest, as it made it possible for me to attend both the Evolutionary Biology Workshop in the Alps and the XIV Congress of the European Society for Evolutionary Biology.

The objective of the workshop was to provide graduate students with an opportunity to develop research skills such as thinking critically, expressing ideas clearly in writing and orally, and learning to write and defend a grant proposal. All the work was carried out in small groups of five students, and instructors for the course provided feedback and guidance at regular intervals throughout the process. I believe I have benefitted a lot from this workshop, not only from learning about grant writing and group work, but also from meeting many other PhD students, and hearing the advice the instructors had to give about how to be successful as a PhD student and researcher, as well as how they have progressed through life as a scientist. Overall, this has been a rewarding experience.

The objective of me attending the XVIth Congress of the European Society for Evolutionary Biology was to develop a network of researchers, share my work, and practice my oral communication skills by giving a talk. This is one of the largest meetings in evolutionary biology as it attracts about 1500 delegates every two years. I had the opportunity to meet some of the leaders in my field, catch up with some past colleagues and others I had met at previous meetings. Some of the talks I attended were very stimulating and have generated ideas for my own work. It was a great privilege for me to have been selected to give a talk, and I believe I made the most of this opportunity. My talk seemed to have been well received as it stimulated some questions and I had many people come talk to me about it afterwards. The poster sessions also gave me the opportunity to talk more in depth with other students about their research. I come out of this conference with a larger network of researchers and experience presenting my work orally in front of a large audience of experts.