

Today's Obituaries

Today's obituaries appear on Page D6 for Jennie M. Carlino, Lucy Rubino DiFillippo and Lane S. Jarrett.

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NPR, PBS could be on their last legs

At first it was unconscious, fiddling with the radio dial to find something to keep me awake or keep me company on a late-night return from a trip.

Sometimes on the way to and from work — after hearing the same song for what seemed like the billionth time, or after getting mad at Howard or some other smart aleck — I'd change stations.

I don't know when exactly it happened, but my radio became fixed on 90.9, WHYY FM. Sometimes Andrei Codrescu amazed me with his foreigner's command of English idiom, or Alan Chews' voice made a book sound so delicious I ran out that day and bought it, opening new horizons for myself. I began to depend on Nina Totenberg to explain what the Supreme Court was actually deciding about, and on Terri Gross to ask the questions of Kurt Vonnegut or some other icon that we all wanted to ask.

Sometimes a report was so gripping I had "driveway moments," unable to leave the car until the story was concluded, many times moved to tears.

Dr. Dan has helped me understand myself and have more compassion for others. I've listened to correspondents from all over the world talk at length about the things they have witnessed. The BBC's World Service reports world affairs from a

Young and old search for insects at WCU

By ANNE PICKERING
Staff Writer

While any summer day may seem like a field day for insects, particularly the biting kind, the tables were turned Saturday when humans studied them during Insect Field Day at West Chester University.

For the 60 adults and children who attended the event, it was a chance to learn more about arthropods, the phylum that bugs are in, and to see how professionals collect, catalog and preserve them. For some, the best part of the day was tramping around the forest and wetlands of the Robert B. Gordon Natural Area, helping scientists collect and identify insects in different environments.

It was the first time that WCU hosted the American Entomological Society's annual field day that seeks to broaden the public's awareness and appreciation of the insect world.

Gerald Hertel, a WCU biology professor, was instrumental in getting the society to use the university as a site for its all-day event.

"It was mutually beneficial," Hertel said. "It allowed the society to go to a new place and it was also a help to us to begin cataloging the insect population at the Gordon Nat-

ural Area."

Hal White, a professor from the University of Delaware whose hobby is entomology — the study of insects — led a group of about eight adults and kids into some wetlands. "I was looking for dragonflies," White said. "The kids were looking for anything you can get your net on." He brought back several dragonfly specimens and a page of field notes listing all the insect species he observed.

Winfield Fairchild, a WCU professor and aquatic ecologist, stood in the waters of Plum Run, a tributary of Brandywine Creek that runs through the natural area south of Farrell Stadium, and turned over rocks with 5-year-old Anneliese Bowers.

The child exclaimed with delight when Fairchild plucked a tiny two-inch-long crayfish from the water. She held it between her fingers for her mother to see before setting it back in the water.

Her sister Lauren Bowers, 8, was further upstream surveying the water for minnows.

Fairchild added that some of the species found in the creek were a predatory stone fly, several kinds of mayflies, caddis fly larvae and crane fly larvae.

The section of Plum Run that Fairchild and the group were



g a bug's life



Kyle Bowers uses a screen to collect life forms out of the creek running through the Gordon Natural Area at WCU during Insect Field Day. Staff photo by Amy Dragoo

surveying "is moderately healthy," said Fairchild. Trees and snags all provide food for aquatic life, he said. The creek starts in a highly developed area in West Chester so there's a lot of sediment that's being washed in with stormwater. The sandbars are an indication of too much sediment, he said. The sediment covers the rocks, which isn't good for aquatic insects that need clean surfaces.

While species were being collected, two entomologists with the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia demonstrated how to mount and display specimens at Schmucker Science Center at the main campus.

Jason Weintraub, a collection manager with the entomology department at the academy, mounted a Royal Walnut Moth, which is the biggest moth in this area, he said. In the caterpillar stage,

hot dog.

Also demonstrating how to mount insects was Greg Cowper, an associate in the entomology department at the academy. He had a Grant's Rhinoceros Beetle in a relaxing chamber waiting to be mounted. The relaxing chamber, which is just a plastic container with a lid that holds water, is used to rehydrate insects so that they are easier to work with. The two-inch-long beetle from Arizona has been sitting in his freezer since 2001.

Cowper was also mounting a crane fly, which looks like a giant mosquito. There are

may have 30 to 40 different species of crane flies, and when the number of species declines, it's an indication that pollution is occurring.

Entomologists do light trapping just to see what they'll find. Increasingly, they find insects outside their original range or insects that were never found in North America until recently.

Over Memorial Day weekend, Weintraub said he

was light trapping insects at his parents home outside Detroit and he found a species of crane fly that was native to Europe. Previously it was

"The kids were looking for anything you can get your net on."

— HAL WHITE,
University of Delaware
professor and amateur
entomologist