

George C. Eickwort Student Research Award

This award is given in memory of George Eickwort and is designed to recognize exceptional research and scholarly activity by students in the field of social insect biology. The award consists of a certificate, an honorarium, and a one-year subscription to *Insectes Sociaux*. This year's Selection Committee consisted of Phil Starks, Bryan Danforth and myself (Kenna MacKenzie). Many thanks to Bryan and Phil for their assistance this year.

General Statement

As always, the quality of the nominees for the Eickwort Student Award was outstanding. The committee had a very difficult time choosing a single recipient. If it were allowed, we would have given two awards this year – it was just that close between the two top nominees. Thus, we would like to recognize a runner-up. Amy Toth, PhD (2006), University of Illinois studied physiological and genomic bases of division of labor in honey bees and paper wasps in Gene Robinson's laboratory. One of her references described her as “an outstanding young scientist of extraordinary accomplishment and promise”, and we certainly agree.

The North American Section of the International Union for the Study of Social Insects is proud to announce that **Alexander Mikheyev, University of Texas** was selected as the recipient of the **2007 Eickwort Student Award**. Alexander has carried out research in both field and laboratory, and has the ability to combine ideas from very different research areas (invasive species, biogeography, population genetics, biodiversity) into interesting and ground-breaking theory and experimentation.

Alexander (Sasha) Mikheyev is a student of Ulrich Mueller at the University of Texas in Austin. His PhD research examined attine ant-fungus mutualism. As a result of this work, the long held belief of coevolutionary specificity in ant/fungus interactions was overturned and a new paradigm, that of “many-to-one coevolution” was developed. He has received numerous awards during his graduate studies including a Liebmann Fellowship, a University of Copenhagen Fellowship, and an EPA STAR Fellowship (2004-2006). Alexander is a very productive young scientist. In addition to the four papers from his dissertation, he has already published nine papers (four as first author). As well he received a Fulbright Fellowship (2006-2007) to study the impact of *Wasmannia auropunctata*, an invasive ant species, on biodiversity in Africa – research totally independent of his PhD studies. The following statement from one of his references perhaps best sums up his qualities “Sasha is not only one of the most gifted social-insect researchers I know, but is overall probably the most versatile scientist I have ever worked with”. Alexander is currently finishing up his dissertation while teaching a full course in Evolution at Southwestern University as an adjunct instructor. The Award Committee is very pleased to announce that Alexander Mikheyev is the recipient of the 2007 Eickwort Student Award.