

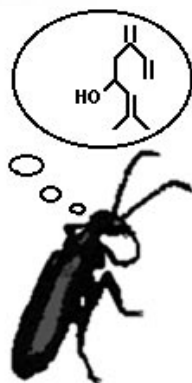


A Bug's Web

Hidden behind hundreds of dubious sites about pheromones on the web, there is the chemical ecology site by John Byers of the Swedish Agricultural University in Alnarp. The entry page (Figure 1) displays general information and a short introduction to chemical ecology, a search engine for the site and the group's home page. The rest of the site is divided into five sections: free

software, research on insects, interactive learning, databases and information, and links. These are potentially valuable for chemists and biologists in the field.

The last two sections are the most interesting ones. In "Databases and Information" there is a continuously updated database of publications on semiochemicals with a total of 11448 entries.



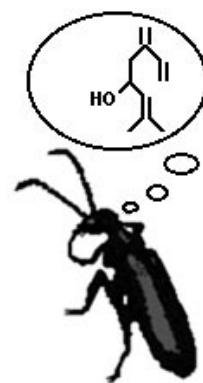
This database actually consists of four subdatabases of publications on semiochemicals of butterflies, beetles and membrane-winged insects. The forth one covers insects which do not belong to one of these groups. You can search by author or your own keywords. The provided keywords are not very useful as far as chemistry is concerned: They are simply too general. Would you volunteer to look for all pheromones that contain an

acetate group? The sectioning of the database is quite inconvenient, because you have to search in all of them if you are looking for a structural detail or an author. Furthermore, you will find information on ecological methods, important forest pests and taxonomic descriptions of European beetles. The site is focused on bark beetles, which may be the reason why there is also a specialized database on bark beetle publications.

In the links section, you will find the International Society of Chemical Ecology and the Journal of Chemical Ecology, but also less well-known institutes and research groups. The links are not restricted to chemical ecology but extend to neighboring disciplines such as statistics, ecology, and diversity.

Not all of them are up to date, however.

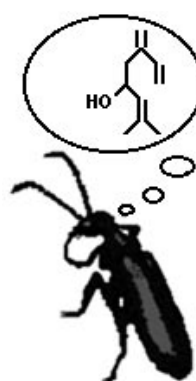
The other sections are more interesting for biologists. The section "Research on Insects" is an extensive presentation of research topics and methods of the chemical ecology group in Alnarp. Clicking on "Interactive Learning" you will find a variety of quizzes, unit converters, some statistics programs, and a program to calculate molality, molarity, and vapor pressure of some common pheromones at variable temperatures as well as an English-Swedish dictionary. In the software section, there are numerous free statistics, taxonomy, and systematics programs.



Suggest a web site or submit a review:
angewandte@wiley-vch.de

The site is a must for bark beetle researchers, but it is also interesting for chemists who wish to gain an insight into important methods of ecological research such as biotests and their evaluation. You will also find links to publications in biology journals, and to other biology sites, especially on entomology. The information on the site can also help to solve questions on taxonomy and systematics. You will not find, however, information on the synthesis of pheromones.

Mirjam Steffensky
Wiley-VCH, Weinheim
(Germany)



For further information visit:

<http://www.vsv.slu.se/cec/h.htm>
or contact
john.byers@vsv.slu.se



Figure 1. Entry page: chemical ecology in Alnarp (Sweden)