

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

While enjoying football on TV over the holidays, I had an epiphany—American television advertizing is biological. Geckos, emus, ducks, woodchucks, and “hump day” camels are selling insurance. Polar bears are promoting soft drinks. Horses and dogs are plugging beer. Cows are hawking fast-food chicken. Bunnies are peddling batteries and candy. Elephants are flogging pistachios. Tortoises are pushing broadband services. Bears are marketing toilet paper. Not to mention all the family pets that make cameo appearances looking cute, or knocking over Christmas trees and otherwise causing havoc. Botanical subjects have not much got in the act, yet.

I am unsure what all this means other than, as animals ourselves, we are attracted to, immersed in, and part of, the great biomass on this planet, which as far as we know right now, is unique in this solar system. Perhaps it is an indicator that Biology is the foremost area of scientific study, and as such, it should rank the Biology Unit first among all the study units in the ATA.

In January, a stamp show here in the Pacific Northwest had to cancel the day before it was scheduled to open. The show was planned for the same weekend at the same venue it had used for the past two decades. Dealers and collectors were looking forward to the event because it had been a while since the last big show in the area.

On Friday, the show chairman received a call from the person at the venue in charge of renting the hall. They had received one of the advertising postcards sent by the club and this alerted them to the fact that the club was expecting to use the venue. It seems that the person in charge of renting the hall did not record the show on their schedule, apparently due to a lack of follow-up by the club, and proceeded to rent it to another group. They did not realize the conflict until the postcard arrived.

There is a lesson here for us all. One of the “laws of life” is: “If something can go wrong, it will go wrong, and it will go wrong at the earliest opportunity.” Both the club and the venue made mistakes. If you are planning an event, it is essential to verify your plans and to not assume that everyone is on the same wavelength.

As you may have noted on the contributors page, we are missing associate editors for **Invertebrate Zoology** and **Microbiology**. If you have an interest in either of these areas, please contact me. Even if you feel you have no editing skills, you surely have the information needed for such columns and we can work together to produce them.

Our **Fungi** editor has been under the weather recently, but he summoned the strength to produce another column for this issue. The **Herpetology** editor has informed me that due to the dearth of new issues, he plans to submit his columns semi-annually instead of quarterly, so that column will next appear in the June edition.

If you have not yet renewed your membership for 2020, now is the time. A membership form is included again with this edition. Please fill it out and send your dues to the secretary. Donations are also greatly appreciated.

The ATA is working to produce a new handbook on topical collecting to replace HB #133, *Adventures in Topical Collecting*. Yours truly is serving as co-editor. We expect that the new book will be available by this summer. The Biology Unit has helped with this project by providing a \$200 donation for its production.

Jack R. Congrove



DUES RATES (US\$)

Regular membership (US & Canada)	\$25
Canada membership	\$30
Worldwide membership	\$45
On-line membership	\$15

ADVERTISING RATES

Full page insertion	\$20
Half page insertion	\$10
Quarter page insertion	\$5

Please see the Biology Unit website (www.biophilately.org) for membership applications. Several payment options are available. Send applications and payments payable to the **Biology Unit of ATA** to: Chris Dahle, 1401 Linmar Drive NE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52402