Gleanings

Journal articles

Assessing the need for aspecies conservation action in British Columbia
F.L. Bunnell, R.W. Campbell and K.A. Squires.
2005
BC Journal of Ecosystems Management 6: (2) 29-37

The paper is an Extension Note. The authors see flaws in BC species recovery plans arising biogeographical diversity. They call for the recording of species in decline so that attention can be given to advanced warning that they are becoming rare and the trend can be stopped. Species that are already rare but may in fact be in a stable state and may not need as much attention as those that are sliding down.

Genetic engineering of terpenoid metabolism attracts bodyguards to *Arabidopsis*
I.F. Kappers, and 5 others.
2005
Science 309: 2070-2072 (September 23rd 2005)

Once more the basic research is done on *Arabidopsis*. Grazed plants produce compounds (terpenoids) that may deter their grazers. This very biochemical paper reports on genetically engineered plants that now contain chemicals that attract the natural predators that eat the grazers. One prospect is that this approach may be another way to get nature to do our pest control for us.

News items

Images Plant Pinups
Science 309: 27 (July 1st 2005).

On an appropriately Canadian day, the UBC Botanical Garden website feature Photo of the Day (*Scilla peruviana*, Peruvian lily, that appeared on June 2nd 2005) received coverage in the NetWatch section of *Science*.

For those who do not know, the Photo of the Day changes daily and is available on the Garden's website at (http://www.ubcbotanicalgarden.org/potd). Put our website in your bookmarks and see the beautiful images that Daniel Mosquin finds to post every day.

Learning to adapt – a news focus
Science 309: 688-690 (July 29th 2005)
Erik Stokstad

The headline writer for this report states, "The ambitious Northwest (of the USA) Forest Plan tried to balance the desires of timber and biodiversity, but preservation trumped logging – and research. Can the plan be made as adaptable and science friendly as intended?"

Calming fears, no foreign genes found in Mexico's maize.
Science 309: 1000 (12th August 2005)
Jocelyn Kaiser

This short report notes a paper in the Proceedings of the National Academy of the United States reporting a search for foreign genes in native varieties of corn in southern Mexico. The research was undertaken to follow up on a paper in *Nature* in 2001 that reported genes from genetically engineered maize in 4 corn cobs collected in the state of Oaxaca. These two papers together give a small insight into what happens when scientists ask questions in different ways….they get different results!