

**The American Museum of Natural History and Yale University  
Proudly Announce a Major International Symposium**

## ***Assembling The Tree of Life***

To be held at

American Museum of Natural History  
New York, New York  
May 30 - June 1, 2002

It has been over a decade since there has been a general synthesis of knowledge about the history of life. Recent years have seen remarkable advances in our understanding of organismal relationships, thus the time is ripe to take stock of the state of current knowledge. Moreover, accumulating knowledge about phylogenetic relationships is playing an ever more important role in addressing societal problems, from diagnosing disease agents, predicting outbreaks of infectious disease, to identifying and tracking invasive species. Knowledge of phylogenetic relationships is also at the heart of all comparative biology, and numerous biologists outside mainstream systematics are using hypotheses of relationships to interpret a host of biological phenomena, including the history of behavioral, ecological, and developmental change.

The Tree of Life Symposium will bring together dozens of the world's authorities to produce a summary of our current knowledge of life's history that will at once propel the science forward to new understanding and at the same time be accessible to the broad general public. A major objective of the symposium is to bring the Tree of Life into society and the classroom.

The period 2001-2002 has been designated the International Biodiversity Observation Year (IBOY) by the international biodiversity science programme, DIVERSITAS. As part of IBOY, a series of signature projects have been identified that will be international in scope, advance knowledge in biodiversity science, and communicate that new understanding to society. One of the flagship IBOY initiatives is Assembling the Tree of Life (ATOL).

### **Venue**

The Tree of Life Symposium will be held at the American Museum of Natural History, New York, 20-22 September 2001. It will include three full days of scientific papers summarizing current understanding of phylogenetic relationships of all major groups of organisms. In addition, a series of plenary lectures will address the importance of phylogenetic knowledge for advances in human health, genomics, developmental and comparative biology, as well as the implications of phylogenetic knowledge for understanding humanities place in nature.

## **Sponsors**

The Tree of Life Symposium is a product of the International Biodiversity Observation Year of DIVERSITAS. Its major sponsors are the American Museum of Natural History and Yale University. Other support comes from the International Union of Biological Sciences (IUBS), one of the sponsors of Diversitas and IBOY, as well as from the U.S. National Committee/IUBS.

## **Participants**

The following is a list of scientists who have agreed, at this time, to participate in the symposium; others have been invited. Papers will be multi-authored, thus numerous other leaders in phylogenetics can be expected to attend.

*Participants in plenary talks or panels:* Rita Colwell, Sean Carroll, Terry Bates, Douglas Futuyma, David Hillis

*Invited speakers:* Norman Pace, Sandra Baldauf, W. Ford Doolittle, John Taylor, Michael Donoghue, Andre Adoutte, Ward Wheeler, Jacques Gauthier, Hervé Philippe, Rytas Vilgalys, Charles Delwiche, Kathleen Pryor, Pamela Soltis, Timothy Littlewood, Frederick Schram, Mark Siddall, David Lindberg, Jonathan Coddington, Michael Whiting, Andrew Smith, Melanie Stiassny, David Cannatella, Michael S. Y. Lee, Joel Cracraft, Maureen O'Leary, and Bernard Wood.

## **Contact for Information**

To place your name on the mailing list for the conference and to receive further details regarding the conference and registration, please send an e-mail with your name and mailing address to [tolsymposium@amnh.org](mailto:tolsymposium@amnh.org) .