

Meet a New ASP Member

by Dr. Diane S. Swaffar

ASP welcomes several new members to the Society this year. We are pleased to feature our newest Associate member, Adam Kavalier. He is a fourth-year graduate student in the Plant Sciences Doctoral Subprogram of the Biology Department of the Graduate Center, City University of New York. We are grateful to him for giving us the opportunity to get more acquainted with him.

Why did you join ASP?

I wanted to become further involved with the pharmacognosy community. My colleagues highly recommended the society, and of course, my advisor Dr. Ed Kennelly is an active member and the editor of this *Newsletter*. So, with some good advice on the side, I thought it was a great opportunity.

When did you first learn of the ASP?

When I was an undergraduate student, I attended a meeting of the Society for Economic Botany and met several scientists, including Dr. Michael Balick and Dr. Kennelly. I was interested in their work and found out that they belonged to the ASP. I attended my first ASP meeting in the fourth year of my undergraduate studies.

What was your background before joining Dr. Kennelly's lab?

I obtained a B.S. degree in Biology from the College of Charleston in Charleston, South Carolina. This is where I conducted undergraduate research using poplar, or cottonwood trees, as a model for the study of how plants communicate with insects using volatile signals during herbivory-stress related reactions. The experience was very inspiring and led me to seek further insight into the complexity of plant systems. I have been able to study this complexity further in Dr. Kennelly's lab because of the collaboration between the graduate program and the New York Botanical Garden, along with other CUNY resources.



Adam Kavalier with a ring tail lemur on a recent trip to Madagascar.

What are your current research interests in pharmacognosy?

I am currently studying the medicinal properties of hops (*Humulus lupulus*). My studies include research into compounds with marked anti-cancer and phytoestrogenic properties. In particular, I am looking into the metabolomics of hops and how enzyme inhibitors affect the metabolic flux, in hopes of producing a model of hops in which anti-cancer compounds accumulate. My research involves metabolomics, gene expression, and the isolation and identification of biologically active compounds from hops. Although over 98% of the world's hops are currently produced for brewing purposes, we believe that the future may bring the production of hops to a new level with important medicinal uses, and one day most hops will be produced for medicine.

What would you like to achieve through your membership?

I would like to be able to meet more scientists and conduct additional networking with investigators involved in similar areas of research. I also hope to increase my exposure to the area of pharmacognosy.

Do you belong to any other organizations?

Yes, I am also a member of the Society for Economic Botany, the American Chemical Society, and Sigma Xi.

What do you like doing in your spare time?

When I have spare time and can get out of the city, I enjoy biking, hiking, camping, and fishing. When I can't get out of the city, I enjoy reading and yoga.

What are you currently reading?

When I'm not pile-high in hop literature, I enjoy reading personal favorites that address yoga, such as "Autobiography of a Yogi," or "Moving into Stillness."