

## Invitation to the XX Congress of the International Society of Zoological Sciences

The International Society of Zoological Sciences would like to extend a warm invitation to zoological scientists from around the world to attend the XX Congress of the International Society of Zoological Sciences, to be held in Paris, France in August 2008.

The opportunity to hold a meeting in Paris at this time is fortuitous; Paris has for more than three centuries been a centre for zoological debate, insight and innovative thought. In the 18th Century, George-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon, published his seminal 44 volume *Histoire Naturelle*. In this work, Buffon grappled with the concept of organic change, (a century before Darwin), and although he did not provide a conclusive theory as to how organic change progressed, his ideas laid the foundation for further exploration on the nature of life. Late 18th Century naturalists like Etienne St Hilaire, and Georges Cuvier both of whom worked at the Museum national d'Histoire naturelle in Paris, were able to build on Buffon's work, contributing to the zoological world view we currently possess. Perhaps the greatest zoologist to work in France was Jean-Baptiste Lamarck, whose understanding of natural systems has been pivotal to the development of modern zoology. Lamarck was not accorded fame by his contemporaries something that will no doubt be addressed in 2008.

France's rich zoological heritage provides us with a wonderful setting to share 21st Century ideas, hopes and solutions to the myriad of new zoological problems we face. These include, but are not restricted to: global climate abnormalities, globalization of the world economy and the population explosion. These issues all pose serious threats to the survival of many species, and also facilitate biological invasion and pest outbreaks. As at Athens (2000) and Beijing (2004), a wide range of themes is planned for the congress, from molecular biology, through systematics to ethics, genetics, conservation biology, education, ecology and palaeobiology.

It gives me great pleasure to invite you to Paris in 2008. Start planning now, for a very special congress.

I look forward to seeing you in 2008 !

John Buckeridge  
President, International Society of Zoological Sciences