

Argentine Professor Begins Residence To Study Plankton, Vital Organisms

Argentine Professor Enrique Balech (pronounced Baylik) who has studied plankton, small and vital organisms, found in the world's seas, is at A&M University for a year to examine specimens from the Gulf of Mexico. In almost a quarter of a century of studies on four continents he has gained an international reputation.

Professor Balech is a visiting scientist for a study sponsored by the National Institutes of Health and headed by Dr. Z. S. El-Sayed of the A&M Department of Oceanography and Meteorology.

The study is aimed at filling big gaps in knowledge of life in Gulf waters.

"The plankton of the Gulf, as far as I know, is little known," Balech said. He cited a description of the Gulf as being "almost a terra incognita" in respect to plankton.

Biological oceanographers such as Balech and El-Sayed know that the microscopic phytoplankton and zooplankton form the basic link in the sea's "food chain." The plankton fills a role comparable to that of grass on cattle ranges. The scientists also know that temperature and salinity are controlling factors in the distribution of the

small organisms, which vary widely in numbers and species.

A&M scientists and others are attempting to learn more of the interrelationships between plankton and their physical environment, as well as other facts.

"When I was a student I first became interested in these little organisms, Balech said of plankton. This was during his undergraduate studies in Argentina in the 1930's, and at first he studied freshwater plankton.

He has studied plankton from the Mediterranean Sea, English Channel, Baltic Sea, Arctic Ocean, Antarctica, the Drake Passage, a large area of the Pacific and off the southeastern coast of South America.

Professor Balech held a Guggenheim Fellowship at Scripps Institute of Oceanography and Hopkins Marine Station on the California coast in 1957-59. Earlier he did research in laboratories in France and Algeria.

Currently he serves as director of the Hydrobiological Station at Puerto Quequen, Argentina, as a staff member of the Latin American Oceanographic Council and scientists for the Argentine Scien-

tific and Technological Council.

A&M and Argentine oceanographers are cooperating in studies of waters off of Argentina and southward into Antarctica with grants from the National Science Foundation and in collaboration with the

Argentine Hydrographic Service headed by Capt. L. R. Capurro.

Balech is author of many publications including writings in English, French and Spanish.

Mrs. Balech is expected to join her husband here about Oct. 1.



ARGENTINE SCIENTIST AT A&M
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NSF Sponsors Students

High ability students from high schools in Texas and 15 other states Monday will begin special programs at A&M University under National Science Foundation sponsorship. Another 34 students Friday (July 10) will complete a six-week program in biology. Thirty-seven students are to study in a geology program directed by Professor Fred E. Smith. The students will visit several locations in Texas and Oklahoma after completing a classroom and laboratory survey of geology. Thirty-two students are expected for the mathematics program directed by Dr. William S. McCulley. Both programs end Aug. 21.

AMONG THE PROFS

Government Prof Publishes Article

Dr. Michael J. Francis of the A&M University government faculty is author of a newly-published article entitled "Military Aid to Latin America in the U. S. Congress." The article appears in the July issue of "Journal of Inter-American Studies."

Francis has taught the first term at A&M and now plans to spend the remainder of the summer researching the interrelationships between the treatment of Fidel Castro and the Cuban Revolution in the United States press and the reaction of the U. S. Department of State to the Cuban situation.

The research is sponsored by an allocation from the University's Fund for Organized Research.

Dr. J. R. Couch of the A&M University Poultry Science Department will be in Springfield, Mo. in late July to confer with Hoffman-Taff, Inc. officials on research at the university.

The research is being done through agreement between Hoffman-Taff and the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station.

Dr. Carl M. Lyman, head of the A&M University Biochemistry and Nutrition Department, will participate in the Conference on Basic Biochemistry of Cotton July 13-16 at Asheville, N. C.

Enroute to the meeting, he will collect plant material for analyses at Caddo Lake on the Texas-Louisiana border.

On his way home, Dr. Lyman will stop at Memphis, Tenn., to consult with National Cottonseed Products Association officials on grants-in-aid to A&M University.

Associate Professor A. H. Thompson of the A&M University meteorology faculty is attending a six-week seminar at the National Hurricane Research Center in Miami, Fla.

Dr. A. V. Moore, professor in the A&M University Dairy Science Department, has been presented a certificate of award for leadership in Student Affiliate Affairs of the American Dairy Science Association.

The award was given to the professor during the ADSA's annual meeting just ended at Tucson, Arizona.

The resignation of William J. Harlan from the staff of the Industrial Economics Research Division, Texas Engineering Experiment Station, to become assistant director of development at Baylor University was announced by James R. Bradley, division head. Harlan assumes his new post July 16.

Dr. W. P. J. Lignac, a physics teacher from the Netherlands, will address National Science Foundation summer institute participants at A&M University Tuesday.

A&M University doctoral student George Blanton will present a technical paper July 15 to a West Coast Water-Flood Association symposium in Long Beach, Calif.

Oceanography Ship Sails For Atlantic

The Research Vessel Alaminos sails from Galveston Tuesday for Atlantic waters off South America and something of a "coming out cruise."

A&M University oceanographers have sailed the Alaminos into all parts of the Gulf of Mexico since 1963. Now she leaves the Gulf behind and will not return to her berth in Galveston until early October.

The 180-foot research vessel whose replacement value is \$3,000,000 was planned for long cruises, as well as her work in the Gulf.

Already several "first" have been established by A&M oceanographers sailing aboard the Alaminos. The most recent cruises have resulted in samples taken from the deepest bottom (more than 12,000 feet) of the Gulf.

"The coming of the Alaminos to A&M has increased considerably the variety of oceanographic and meteorological investigations that we can carry on, particularly in connection with deep-sea problems," Dr. Willis E. Pequegnat of the Department of Oceanography and Meteorology said.

"Even though we are now able to study the deepest parts of the Gulf, when we carry out a few planned structural modifications of the ship it should be possible for us to study all aspects of the deepest parts of any ocean," the acting department head said.

The Office of Naval Research and the National Science Foundation are among the major sponsors of A&M's internationally-known oceanographic program and are closely involved in support of the "coming out cruise."

A&M oceanographers plan the July-October cruise as a two-phase affair. The July 7-Sept. 9 portion will be devoted to learning more about the currents off the northeastern coast of South America. Associate Professor John D. Cochrane heads the scientific party for this 10,000-mile cruise.

In September, a group headed by Associate Professor Guy A. Franceschini will board the Alaminos at a North American port for a cruise northward to Bermuda and then Galveston. Air-sea interaction, a vital but only partially understood phenomenon, will be studied.

The first portion has been dubbed "Operation Equacheque" for equatorial currents check. The study is a followup to EQUAL-ANT, an international study in which A&M oceanographers participated. The A&M scientists this time will be studying the currents in an area westward from the area covered in 1963.

"The objective is to survey rapidly, but in detail, certain characteristics and some current measurements in a few crucial locations," Cochrane said.

The A&M vessel will spend almost 50 days in the area off northeastern South America and researchers will take observations at more than 140 stations, pinpoints on the map. Other instruments will record continually certain data.

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