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### on the cover

Live crabs await their fate at the Warrenton Deep Sea Market. Bornstein Seafoods, which owns the market, provides crab for the Astoria Rotary Club dinner and the Astoria Clown's famous clown bread at the Crab, Seafood & Wine Festival.

Photo by Joshua Bessex

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# Out & about

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

## Biodiversity often buzzes under our radars

The sheer magnitude of biodiversity was the focus of last week's engaging Nature Matters lecture at the Fort George Lovell Showroom.

"The first step to learning is realizing how much you don't know," said speaker Jerry Freilich, who works as the research coordinator at Olympic National Park in Port Angeles, Washington.

Freilich's intro to science began in his hometown of Philadelphia when, at 7 years old, he visited the Academy of Natural Sciences, the oldest natural history museum in the Americas. As a boy working as a curatorial assistant for the malacology department, he unpacked and sorted shells from around the world, and their numbers introduced him to the wonder of biodiversity. "It was love at first sight," he recalled.

Now, with a doctorate in entomology under his belt, Freilich deals in the world of insects.

Bugs are the most diverse group of animals on the planet. Freilich said that within the scientific community, experts still debate just how

many there are: anywhere from 3 million to 30 million different species. (That's a lot of uncertainty.)

Freilich helped audience members recall the basic hierarchy of taxonomic groups: kingdom, phylum, class, order, family, genus, species.

Most people can name and differentiate between the different families of carnivore mammals. There are the canidae (dogs), felidae (cats), ursidae (bears), mustelidae (weasels, otters) and

five others that live on land.

In comparison, Freilich said, most people can tell insects apart by their order: beetles, grasshoppers, dragonflies, butterflies. But after that, things get fuzzy.

According to Freilich, there are about 20 families of bees alone, each just as complex and different as the mammalian carnivore families — and even the experts have trouble keeping them straight, since many of the distinctions are only visible under the microscope: the vein patterns on wings, the genitalia, the mouth parts (short tongue vs. long tongue), the placement and appearance of tiny body hairs.

Bees are most closely related to wasps, but they're entirely different insects,



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Freilich said. "For one thing, they're vegetarian!" he said. "That's a radical thing in the wasp world, where they're almost all predators."

Honeybees, which Freil-

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Join us in remembrance of  
**Seddy (Sedagive)**  
while we watch the movie "Young Frankenstein"  
At the Columbia Theatre  
Sunday, April 26th at 2pm



See you  
all there!

Seddy

10/15/2002 - 03/23/2015

Donations to Clatsop Animal Shelter  
in his honor!

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Coast Weekend welcomes comments and contributions from readers. New items for publication consideration must be submitted by 10 a.m. Tuesday, one week and two days before publication.

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