

Dear Prof. Danforth,

I am writing to thank you for your excellent course "Alien Empires". I admit that I first took the class to fulfill a science requirement but within the first couple weeks I considered it one of my favorite courses at Cornell. Your extensive knowledge, enthusiasm and organization made the class a pleasure to attend and study for. I also loved writing the term paper (mine was the "Thin Is Not In" article on praying mantids).

Your class was exactly the college course that I will miss. It was a subject matter I knew little about...and even feared. After learning about the complex and alien world of bugs however, it has honestly given me a new understanding of the world. Every lecture blew my mind.

I'll have you know that as I was packing up for the last time from Cornell, I saw a silverfish crawling about. Before your class I would cringed in fear and disgust, but after knowing more about their evolution, traits and behaviors I stared at it with sheer fascination. Thank you for completing my Cornell experience, I really appreciate it. Good luck next year.

Dear Professor Danforth,

I just wanted to say thank you for the great experience I had in Alien Empire this year. Spring 2008 was actually my first semester at Cornell, and I am so glad to have taken your class. As a new transfer student, I couldn't have asked for a more welcoming and friendly professor, or a more interesting topic. This class was great way to begin my Cornell career, and I loved learning so much about bugs!

Your lectures were always so well organized, I greatly enjoyed all of the assignments, and the material really stayed with me. In fact, I just completed an internship in the Arnot Forest this summer and what caught my attention most in the forest was not the birds, or the trees, or the flowers... but the insects! I have never seen so many fascinating insects (and, unfortunately, mosquitoes) in the wild in my life!

I have attached some pictures that I took of the bugs. I am not sure what kind of insect the first one is, but I think that the second photo shows monarch butterfly caterpillars on a milkweed plant. And, lastly, I was so excited to find this parasitic wasp injecting its eggs into the bark beetles apparently in this tree! Amazing!

Thank you again for increasing my fascination with arthropods that continues today in Dr. Rayor's Spider Biology class! I hope that your semester is off to a wonderful start!