

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
GREENSBORO

Dr. Olav Rueppell
107 Eberhart
Tel. (336) 2562591
Email: olav_rueppell@uncg.edu

College of Arts and Sciences
Department of Biology

Dr. Jack Werren
Department of Biology
University of Rochester
Rochester, N.Y. 14627

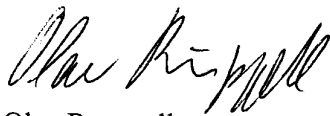
20 July 2004

To Whom It May Concern:

I write this letter in strong support for the request to sequence the genome of the jewel wasp, *Nasonia vitripennis*. With a short generation time, relatively large family size, and much of its basic biology worked out, it has a high potential for genetic studies of life history evolution, including aging. I am interested in finding natural genetic variation that contributes to life history variation. My main study organisms are social Hymenoptera, particularly the honey bee *Apis mellifera*. Even before its completion, the honey bee genome project has caused a surge of research productivity, and it also has significantly facilitated my personal research.

The genome of *Nasonia*, as a solitary Hymenopteran will provide a much-needed comparative data set, bridging the gap in insect genomics between *Apis mellifera* on the one side and *Drosophila* and *Anopheles* on the other. A direct comparison to the honey bee will allow an assessment of the influence of social evolution on genome structure and gene content. Specifically, I am interested in searching for homologues of candidate genes for life history evolution and aging that I study in the honey bee. Furthermore, I will involve myself in annotating homologues of genes that have a demonstrated effect on longevity in other species, such as *daf-2*, *sir2*, or *methuselah*.

Sincerely,



Olav Rueppell