

BioResource Now!

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Hot News <NO.37>

Asian Mouse Mutagenesis and Resource Association (AMMRA)

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AMMRA, inaugurated in 2006, was founded by bioresource centers in Japan, China, Taiwan, Korea, and Singapore, which have been preserving and distributing mouse resources in order to facilitate life science research in Asia through the use of mouse resources.

The AMMRA conference was first organized in Shanghai in 2006, and subsequently in Nanking in 2007, Daejeon in 2008, Kumamoto in 2009, Taipei in 2010, Singapore in 2011, and Nanking in 2012. For the first 4 years, the AMMRA conference was a loosely associated meeting in which updates from each resource center and research topic were presented in order to sustain the development of each resource center.

However, the community has significantly advanced in recent years, as seen in the knockout projects initiated in China in 2006 in association with EUCOMM¹, NorCOMM², and KOMP³, and later in Japan and Korea in 2010. In the light of these advancements, an opinion has been expressed that the administration of AMMRA should be of a higher standard. Accordingly, an outline of the policies and charters of the association, such as the definition, mission, goal, purpose, structure, and governance of AMMRA, was defined at the 5th conference organized in Taipei in November 2010.

In addition, although I have been serving as the de facto chair of AMMRA, the term of the chairperson was defined as 2 years at the conference and Drs. Yamamura and Xiang Gao from Nanking University were elected as the first chair and the first vice-chair of AMMRA, respectively.

Two years later, the vice-chair took up the post of the chair. At the 6th conference organized in Singapore on November 30, 2011, the remaining issues, such as those concerning the head office, website, membership, IT committee (Dr. Masuya at RIKEN BRC serves as the chair), and annual report committee (Dr. Wang from the National Laboratory Animal Center (NLAC) in Taipei serves as the chair) were discussed, and much of the framework of AMMRA was developed.



Photo : Prof. Yamamura (2nd from left in the front row) and members at Kumamoto University in front of the Model Animal Research Center, Nanking University

Meanwhile, in Europe and the US, the EUCOMM, NorCOMM, and KOMP, which were established in 2006, generated the expected results and were slated to be terminated at the end of 2011. In response, the initiation of a phenotype analysis project was then proposed as a subsequent activity. In addition, the International Mouse Phenotyping Consortium (IMPC)⁴ was formed, and KOMP2⁵ was inaugurated in September 2011. The RIKEN BioResource Center (BRC) in Japan and Nanking University in China are the participants of this large-scale project, which aims at developing mice with 20,000 homologous recombinant embryonic stem (ES) cell clones developed by the previous knockout mouse project and analyzing their phenotypes. In accordance with these developments, AMMRA also discussed the issues that may arise after the development of knockout mice, and phenotype analysis was then structuralized, leading to the inauguration of the Asian Mouse Phenotyping Consortium (AMPC)⁶.

At the 7th AMMRA conference organized on March 15, 2012, Dr. Obata at the RIKEN BRC was elected as vice-chair. One of the current issues in AMMRA is the extent to which AMMRA will or can take concerted action with the IMPC. Among the institutions involved in AMPC, only RIKEN BRC in Japan, and not the National Laboratory Animal Center (NLAC) in Taiwan or any institution in Korea, officially participates in the IMPC, which has been advancing as an independent project. This is probably because a participating institution in the IMPC is obliged to develop 50 mouse strains per year from ES clones of the International Knockout Mouse Consortium (IKMC)⁷ and analyze their phenotypes at its own expense, and the achievement is then evaluated. Only one-third of the clones develop germ lines if used without any screening, and therefore, developing mouse strains using the ES clones from the IKMC is inefficient. This requires each institution in charge to conduct quality control, which is expected to incur a huge amount of labor and cost.



Photo : Scene from the AMMRA conference hall on March 15, 2012, in Nanking

In addition, a mid- and long-term issue is whether AMMRA can continuously fulfill its role in future. As we have seen in the past in cases of international consortia such as the Federation of International Mouse Resources (FIMRe)⁸ and the International Gene Trap Consortium (IGTC)⁹, activities of most consortia reduce once their roles are achieved, although active discussions are conducted in the beginning.

↳ To the next page

1. EUCOMM ... European Conditional Mouse Mutagenesis Project
2. NorCOMM ... North America Conditional Mouse Mutagenesis Project
3. KOMP ... Knockout Mouse Project
4. IMPC ... International Mouse Phenotyping Consortium
5. KOMP2 ... Knockout Mouse Phenotyping Project

6. AMPC ... Asian Mouse Phenotyping Consortium
7. IKMC ... International Knockout Mouse Consortium
8. FIMRe ... Federation of International Mouse Resources
9. IGTC ... International Gene Trap Consortium
10. IMSR ... International Mouse Strain Resources

For example, FIMRe achieved its aims by bringing about an agreement regarding the transfer of frozen embryos between 2 institutions, establishing a knockout mouse project, and transmitting the data at resource centers in each country to the International Mouse Strain Resource (IMSR)¹⁰; no more activity has been undertaken subsequently as a consortium. IGTC accomplished its aim by developing an integrated database

and inaugurating a knockout mouse project, and again, no activity has been conducted as a consortium subsequently. It is frustrating to see the many contradictions in international activities that have rarely been resolved. For example, the database developed independently by IKMC has not been integrated into the databases of IMSR and IGTC; thus, each database has remained independent.

AMMRA will not be terminated following the acquisition of project research funds, development of databases, or integration of databases, but it rather aims at vitalizing research activities in Asia through the use of bioresources; hence, whether the aim can be continuously fulfilled is the most crucial issue in the future.

- Efficient Email Administration in Gmail - Using Multiple Email Addresses with a Single Account:

Ongoing Column [No. 67]



Many people use various web-based services available today. To access such web-based services, registration of an email address is often required. For such registrations, many people probably use a free email address.

When an email address is registered, one constantly receives advertisement emails and may possibly receive junk mails if the address is leaked. In order to protect against this, one may open a substitute email account rather than register the address that one constantly uses. However, it is cumbersome to open a new email account for each service. In this issue, I would like to introduce a Gmail function that serves as an alternative to opening a new email account.



It is easy to do so. One needs to simply add "+" at the end of the local part of the address and append letters of one's choice (*). Specifically, add "+" and arbitrary letters to an original address, "xxxx@gmail.com," and configure the new address, "xxxx+example(arbitrary letters)@gmail.com", as an alias address.

Procedure to configure an alias address

- 1 Login to your Google account and open Gmail.
- 2 Click on the gear wheel icon on the top right and select "Settings" from the drop-down menu (Fig. 1).
- 3 From the account menu, click on "Add another email address you own" (Fig. 2).
- 4 Input the letters of your choice in the appropriate space on the pop-up "Add another email address you own" window. Type the address as shown previously at * in the email address box, check "Treat as an alias," and click on "Next step."

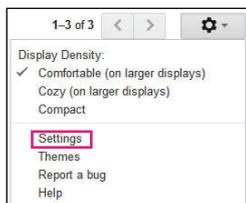


Fig. 1. Settings menu

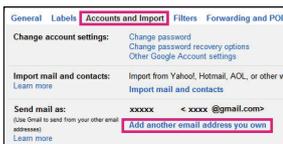


Fig. 2. Account menu

This will complete the process and once the registration is completed, the alias address will be added to your account (Fig. 3).



Fig. 3. Screen showing the added address

Writing an email using an alias address

Once an alias address is added, the "From" drop-down menu is automatically generated and users can freely select and use either account (Fig. 4).

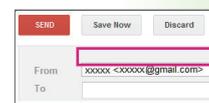


Fig. 4. Drop-down menu

Finally, if an alias account is no longer used, the alias account can be deleted from the account menu and registered to the filter in order to protect from receiving unwanted emails.

First, click on "Create a new filter" in the filters menu, input the registered alias address in the "To" box, and click on "Create filter with this search" (Fig. 5-A).

Next, check the "Delete it" box on the window showing the choices available upon receiving an email that matches the search conditions, and click "Create filter" (Fig. 5-B).

The filter configuration will then be completed (Fig. 5-C).

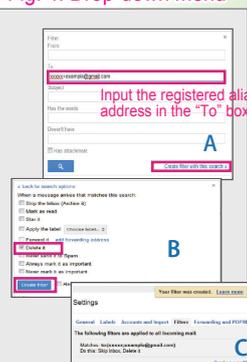


Fig. 5. Filter configuration

This setting can be used in Gmail even if one uses an address of an independent domain. Moreover, emails can be sent also from email addresses of other accounts or other free email addresses by following the same configuration procedure. In this case, the user needs to verify the address via a confirmation email that will be sent to that address.

I recommend using multiple addresses and filters in this manner in order to manage emails efficiently.

(Atsuki Aiba)

*Please keep in mind that some web-based services cannot be used with alias addresses.

Recommended Book ! <NO.3>

Human Body — Biological Historical Considerations

by Shigeo Miki (Ubusuna Shoin, 2005)

The book is not new (the author is deceased), but it contains novel anatomical descriptions of the human body from an extremely unique perspective. According to the author, a human body consists of plant- and animal-like components: Evolutionarily older plant-like organs (digestive, absorptive, circulatory, gonadal, and excretory systems) pass through the central axis of the body while evolutionarily newer animal-like organs (sensory, neural, and muscular systems) are so arranged that they girdle around the plant-like organs.

The descriptions in the book are unique, and the description sequence is completely different from those in conventional anatomy textbooks. In addition, readers will be impressed by the beautiful quality of the Japanese writing and the abundant 'electrifying' expressions. The author says, for example, that the urinary system is one of the plant-like organs but plants do not have a urinary system; a tongue can be considered an arm growing inside the mouth; a lung is incapable of expanding or contracting by itself, and animal-like muscles on the chest wall are responsible for respiration; and menses is utterly unlikely in all animals except humans.

Subsequently, the book ends with the following climax: Land animals have retained unreasonable "lying postures," whereas the emergence of humans made it suddenly possible to stand up to live. The author claims that the upright posture is the most natural pose that is in accordance with the direction of gravity. (K.N.)

(This book is only Japanese)



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Editor's Note

Prof. Yamamura is a central figure associated with the establishment of AMMRA. He contributed a comprehensive article regarding 7 years of AMMRA's history and global leading-edge trends in mouse resources. We anticipate a bright future for AMMRA, which aims at realizing long-term cooperation efforts and establishing collaborative frameworks between participating institutions, in contrast to many other international projects that are established, accomplish their aims, and fade out precipitously.

In Japan, the 3rd stage of the National BioResource Project will begin in April. Since our Information Center was also involved in the project, BioResource Now! is far from over. (Y.Y.)

BioResource Information

(NBRP) www.nbrp.jp/
(SHIGEN) www.shigen.nig.ac.jp/
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(JGR) www.shigen.nig.ac.jp/wgr/jgr/UrList.jsp



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