



SIR JULIAN HUXLEY LECTURE

SPECIES: KINDS OF INDIVIDUALS OR INDIVIDUALS OF A KIND

Prof. Olivier Rieppel
The Field Museum, Chicago

**The Linnean Society,
Burlington House, Piccadilly, London**

Wednesday 11th July 2007, 6pm

**The meeting is open to visitors
Wine will be served after the lecture to members and guests**

Abstract:

The thesis that species, and monophyletic taxa, are individuals (particulars) was argued by Willi Hennig, and was later introduced into the English speaking community of systematists by Michael Ghiselin and David Hull. Ghiselin and Hull presented the view of species as individuals as a disjunctively opposed alternative to the more traditional view of species as classes, sets, or natural kinds. However, an argument can be made that each species is an individual (i.e., a spatio-temporally localized complex whole or integrated system) that instantiates a natural kind. The consequence is that species names, which are sortal terms, function as proper names in some context (e.g., an evolutionary theory employing the phylogenetic species concept), but as general names associated with natural kind terms in other contexts (e.g., conservation biology).