

A few lab rules and procedures

- Top priority when using the pond lab: take care of your animals. Basic respect for live animals means keeping them in containers that are appropriate, keeping lids on the containers so the animals do not crawl out, changing water when appropriate, feeding the animals as necessary, and checking on them periodically to be sure they are healthy. Aside from the ethical considerations, most of the animals we work with are protected by federal or local laws, and our collection permits stipulate that we return them alive to nature when the experiments are over.
- The pond lab is a shared facility. In most years, there are many people working around the lab at once. This means we all have to help keep the place neat and clean. Put stuff away and straighten up each day before you go home, so that when the next person arrives everything is available and prepared for use. No one should have to start out in the morning cleaning off their work space or equipment.
- General policy: white plastic bins and their red lids must be washed (inside and out) and returned to the Bienenhaus after use; the blue predator cages should be washed after use (discard the fiberglass screen covers and Styrofoam floatation); the 80-L green tubs should be washed and put away after use; the big fiberglass cattle tanks do not need to be washed after use; the white plastic picnic cups do not have to be washed after use.
- Please do not leave stuff lying outside unnecessarily. Aside from the fact that it gives our facility the appearance of being sloppy, exposure to the sun accelerates the rate at which stuff gets brittle and decomposes. Really!
- The blue Scaletec electronic balances in the container and Bienenhaus should remain right where they are. If you need a balance somewhere else, there are extra balances for that purpose in the middle room of the Bienenhaus.
- Do not ever use soap in the Bienenhaus or at the container. Wash stuff without soap. It can be hard to ensure that all soap is properly rinsed off, and amphibian larvae are easily killed by a small amount of residual soap.
- There are paper towels around the pond lab, but you should not use these for drying off tadpoles. Live amphibians are very unhappy when their skin is dried with paper towels. We have cloth towels for blotting animals dry when you are measuring wet mass.
- Use the colored label tape to mark labels on tubs and other materials. Do not use masking tape (sometimes leaves a sticky residue behind). Do not write directly on plastic bins or tubs. If you accidentally mark up a bin, use alcohol to remove the mark.
- Tools and other equipment can be used by anyone, and freely loaned out to people in other lab groups. But it all has to come back when it's no longer being used.
- We keep a supply of aged tap water available in most places: back room of the Bienenhaus (to the right of the sink), container (just in front of the door), and in the frog room. Everyone is welcome to use this water. Please refill the container when it gets low.
- Do not use formalin in the back room of the Bienenhaus.
- We don't have much valuable stuff lying around, and people seem pretty honest around here, but it's best to keep the container and Bienenhaus locked up.

Josh Van Buskirk
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