

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Noted British Biographer Ann Thwaite and AU's Gary Mullen to Speak on Naturalist Gosse

On Thursday, October 11, 2007, at 4 p.m. noted British biographer Ann Thwaite and AU professor of entomology Gary Mullen will speak at the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Art on the life and work of Philip Henry Gosse.

One of the most important naturalists of the 19th century, Gosse made major contributions to biology and natural history. His best-selling books fed a public fascinated by the natural world and, as a contemporary of Darwin, engaged in the debate about the relationship of science and religion. Gosse also spent a brief but very formative time in the Black Belt region of Dallas County, Alabama, in the 1830s. While there, he studied and beautifully illustrated native insects and flora.

Thwaite is author of "Glimpses of the Wonderful: The Life of Philip Henry Gosse." A fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, her other works include "Waiting for the Party," a biography of "The Secret Garden" author Frances Hodgson Burnett, and biographies of A.A. Milne and Emily Tennyson. She resides in Norfolk, England, with her husband, the poet Anthony Thwaite.

Gary R. Mullen is a professor in the Dept. of Entomology and Plant Pathology at Auburn University, where he specializes in medical-veterinary entomology. He is also an accomplished scholar on Philip Henry Gosse.

To complement the lectures, the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Art has on display 24 reproductions of watercolors produced by Gosse during his stay in Alabama in 1838. Gosse recorded in watercolor paintings many of the insects he collected while in the state. His intention was to publish the paintings when he returned to England, but other projects took precedence, and the folio, which he had named "*Entomologia Alabamensis*," was never published. It is now held by the British Library.

The lectures are cosponsored by the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Art, the AU English Department, AU Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology, the AU College of Agriculture and the Caroline Marshall Draughon Center for the Arts & Humanities in the AU College of Liberal Arts.

Seating will be limited and reservations are encouraged. Please call JCSM at 334-844-1484 for information. A reception will follow the lectures.

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