

## Special Issue on

## Hominin Systematics: Current Theory and Practice

### Call for papers

Systematics is the scientific practice of classifying and reconstructing the phylogenetic relationships of organisms. It underpins our attempts to document the diversity of life as well as to understand the processes that produced the vast array of organisms existing today and in the past. Some recent controversies in systematics have included defining an adequate species concept, as well as problems surrounding their recognition, the strengths and disadvantages of morphological versus molecular data, and various questions surrounding cladistic analysis and its theoretical underpinnings and practice. These issues cut across the biological sciences including palaeoanthropological, palaeontological, primatological and molecular investigations.

Many anthropologists consider humans and chimpanzees to have shared a most recent common ancestor around 6 to 7 million years ago. Yet, this view is not universally accepted. Evidence against the hominin status of the Miocene-Pliocene genera *Sahelanthropus*, *Orrorin* and *Ardipithecus* is accumulating, with broad implications for great ape evolution. Moreover, the definition and composition of *Homo* have been major topics of discussion in the last few decades, and recent discoveries like *Australopithecus sediba* offer potential new insights into these issues. Finally, questions surrounding the inheritance of characters and epigenesis, integration of cranial traits, the use of continuous characters and the problem of homoplasy have continued to complicate investigations of hominin phylogenetics.

This special issue of *Human Origins Research* will provide a snapshot of current thinking about theory and practice in hominin systematics. Topics to be covered will include, but are not limited to:

- Species concepts and their application to higher primates and hominins
- Species recognition in higher primates as a baseline for hominins
- Great ape and hominin phylogenies
- Hominin species and genera: delimitation, definitions and diversity
- Molecular systematics
- Impacts of ancient DNA studies
- Evo-devo and 3D morphometrics, and how they inform systematics
- Theory and practice of phylogenetic systematics
- Higher primate and hominin macroevolution

<b>Manuscripts due:</b>	30 August 2011
<b>First round of reviews:</b>	30 September 2011
<b>Publication date:</b>	Within 14 days of acceptance

Submitted manuscripts may follow the author guidelines for *Articles* or *Communiqués*.

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