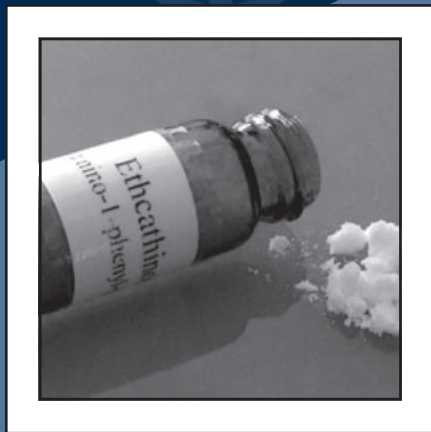
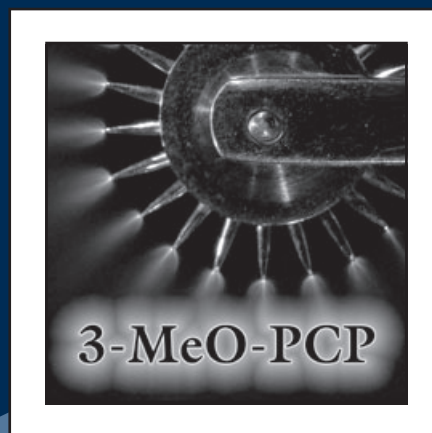
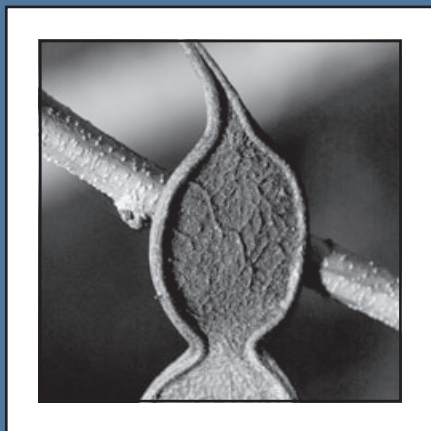
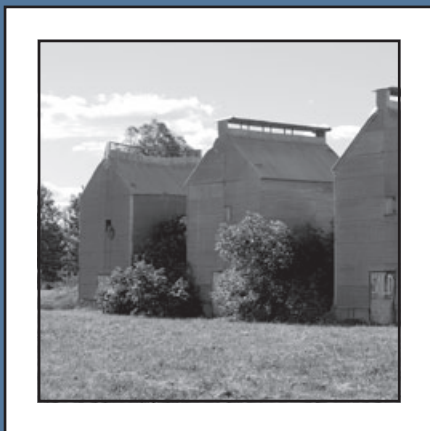


Erowid Extracts

DOCUMENTING THE COMPLEX RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HUMANS AND PSYCHOACTIVES

June 2012

Number 22



Three Weeks of Plant Geekery: An Australia Travelogue • Psychoactive Stamps
A Study of Four Cathinones • Vision: What Erowid Center Does and Why We Do It

LETTERS & FEEDBACK

"Your website played a large part in my development as an inquisitive student and lover of science."

— DM
Erowid Member

"I try to share my copy of *Erowid Extracts* at my place of business to open people's minds and increase awareness of your important website."

— MB
Erowid Member

"I am an addictions counselor. Thanks for your outstanding work and help with my job."

— PC
Erowid Member

"Several years ago, you were the first people I turned to for advice when I embarked on my quest for an effective treatment for chronic pain, and my gratitude will always remain."

— C
Erowid Member

"This website has informed me for the last ten years. It has helped me make safer, smarter decisions *and* has entertained me. Keep up the good work! One of the most important websites in my life..."

— HP
Erowid Member

"People come to you for the truth, and you've saved many lives because of it. Not making substances out to be any more dangerous or safe than what they are, and allowing everyone to share their experiences, good or bad. It's a great thing you guys are doing [...]."

— F
Email from Visitor

"My motto is, 'an informed user is a safe user'. You have been an *invaluable* resource for me since my teenage years."

— EG
Erowid Supporter

"Erowid is a non-profit that's primarily known for their website which provides non-biased information about psycho-active chemicals. Erowid is arguably the single most important source for information about these chemicals today, and is responsible for helping millions of people every month to make safer and healthier choices about the drugs they use, both prescription and recreational. Even for people who get their information about drugs from talking to a knowledgeable friend, odds are that one way or another that friend got much of their information from Erowid. Not only is this an organization that's keeping countless people safe, it's become so pervasive that it's literally saving the lives of people who have never even heard of them, almost certainly including people you know."

— ALEX3917
Review at Guidestar.org

"Thank you for all of your work, for making it free, and for believing and continuing on what you believe in! Truth is one of the most important things one person can give to another, and that is what your site is about. [...] Here's to hopefully many more years of education and truth!"

— EM
Erowid Supporter

"I am a youngish lady from England, and as a mostly solo 'traveller' I am grateful to the Erowid community for all of the information about doses, experiences, preparations, etc. It is hard to get honest, balanced, and clear info about drugs in the social and legal climate we live in and I am very glad to have Erowid to help make my journeys as safe and well-informed as they can be. Thanks Erowid."

— JO
Erowid Member

"Thank you very much for all you do for the harm reduction/substance user community. You are doing a great job. I hope you will be around for many years to come [...]."

— MICHAEL PITTAS
Erowid Member

"Thanks for all of your work, guys. I have never made a donation online to any cause before, and I felt it was time. The possible lives that have been saved and bad experiences avoided, at the very least, are enough to make this information worthwhile. Even those who oppose drug use completely should find solace in the fact that people can educate themselves on the benefits *and* risks before partaking in this kind of behavior. Society needs to be educated, even at the fringes."

— JO
Erowid Member

"The best hope for humanity in these dark times is the free exchange of knowledge."

— BC
Erowid Member

"You guys have provided an invaluable service over the last ~6 years since I discovered you. You are letting people be safe and responsible about their drug usage. I only hope that some day our government will institute a mature system like this when it comes to drug policy. Safe access to reliable information is 1,000 times better than keeping everyone in the dark."

— DE
Erowid Member

"Erowid (www.erowid.org)—extensive database of expert and user opinions on various legal, prescribed, and illegal substances."

— AR WINSTOCK & L MITCHESON
"New recreational drugs and the primary care approach to patients who use them". BMJ. 2012; 344:e288.

Send correspondence to:
extracts@erowid.org

Please include your name, title, and city/state/country of origin to be published with your letter. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

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Erowid Center's mission is to provide and facilitate access to objective, accurate, and non-judgmental information about plants, chemicals, technologies, and related issues that affect the mind, body, and culture. Erowid Center supports and trains libraries, publishers, and other information distributors on issues related to these fields.

It is also Erowid Center's goal to support medical, legal, scientific, academic, and independent experts in developing and publishing related resources.

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Erowid Extracts

Number 22, June 2012

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*Know Your Body
Know Your Mind
Know Your Substance
Know Your Source*

TOR and Online Drug Marketplaces

As commerce and socializing shift towards being conducted online, so do the sales of illegal drugs. In April 2012, the US Attorney's office announced that it is prosecuting the operators of a website called "the Farmer's Market" for selling controlled substances including LSD, ecstasy, and ketamine. Beginning in 2006, this group communicated with customers using Hushmail; in 2010 they switched to Tor.

Originally built by the US Navy, Tor is funded partially by the US Department of Defense to provide privacy support for dissidents and government agents worldwide. Tor (initially an acronym for "The Onion Router") allows websites, file sharing, and communications to be conducted through a network of servers, which encrypt and anonymize information packets multiple times between the sender and receiver. When handled expertly, a website run through Tor can be nearly impossible to locate physically, and its users' identities are masked.

Though using Tor to host a shopping cart for illegal drugs provides anonymity for that part of the process, receiving payments or products is where law enforcement usually steps in. The Farmer's Market used PayPal and Western Union to take payments, and both of these methods are tracked. The Farmer's Market also allegedly sold LSD to undercover DEA agents in exchange for cash sent to an address in Iowa.

As the web continues to mature and develop, new tools making it possible for non-technical people to use state-of-the-art anonymity and encryption go hand in hand with an increased presence of law enforcement tracking systems. These busts stand as a reminder that unbreakable endpoint-to-endpoint security provides no protection if one of the parties to the secure communication is an undercover adversary. ●

UK Uses New Powers to Ban MXE

In April 2012, the British Home Office debuted new regulatory powers and controlled methoxetamine (MXE) with only one week prior public notification. Now designated as a "temporary class drug", MXE is illegal to sell or import, but not to possess.

In 2009, the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) had a disagreement with the Home Office, resulting in the removal of its chairman, David Nutt. In 2011, Parliament passed a new law, the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act (PRSRA), which stripped power from the ACMD and largely transformed it from an expert advisory panel into a rubber-stamping agency for Home Office policies.

Along with making changes to the ACMD, the PRSRA conferred emergency drug control authority to the Home Office by creating a new category of controlled substance, the "temporary class drug". Under this Act, each temporary control order must be submitted to and approved by Parliament within 40 days of issuance.

While it requires that the Home Office consult with the weakened ACMD (or solely the chairperson of the ACMD, if the matter is deemed "urgent"), the Act does not impose a waiting period or require that the public be notified of an upcoming emergency drug control.

In the case of methoxetamine, the Home Office announced on March 6, 2012 that it was referring the issue of the drug's control to the ACMD. On March 28, the Home Office announced it was issuing a temporary class drug order; on March 30 it published a "circular" finalizing a twelve-month period of emergency control effective April 5, 2012.

This temporary class drug order for methoxetamine is the first implementation of the United Kingdom's new emergency drug control powers. ●

MDMA & Autism Research

MDMA has a reputation for increasing sociability, feelings of empathy, and psychological insights. Alicia Danforth, a clinical psychology PhD candidate at the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology, is currently conducting a survey study for her doctoral dissertation investigating the therapeutic potential of MDMA as a support for social skills challenges or commonly co-occurring problems (such as anxiety and depression) among adults on the autism spectrum, including but not limited to Asperger's syndrome. No formal studies looking at the use of MDMA by this population have previously been published.

The study seeks to survey people between the ages of 21 and 75 who are autistic or who have Asperger's syndrome, and who have no history of major psychotic disorder. Survey participants are sought who meet these criteria and who have either (1) never taken MDMA; or (2) have taken MDMA no more than 50 times, with their last use having occurred within the past 15 years.

Participants are asked to respond to several confidential online questionnaires, which take about an hour to complete. In addition, approximately 30 respondents who indicate their willingness will be invited to participate in a one-hour Skype interview with Danforth.

Results from the study may increase knowledge about how people with autism and Asperger's syndrome experience life in general, and how they respond to MDMA. Participants who have taken MDMA may come to better understand the influence that these experiences have had on their lives, which may include changes in how they relate to others and think about themselves. Those who complete all of the surveys can receive a summary of key findings once the study is completed. See Danforthresearch.com for more information. ●

Stolaroff Collection Milestone Reached

In March 2012, Erowid completed the time-consuming task of indexing the 5,000+ documents that have been digitized from the Stolaroff Collection. This brings us another big step closer to making the collection available online. Late that same month, Jon Hanna and Tania Manning traveled to the Stolaroffs' home in Lone Pine, California, to deliver a hardcopy of this index (there is no Internet access at their home).

They took the opportunity to wish Myron's wife Jean a happy birthday and videotape an interview with her, exploring the time when she and her husband first started dating and in what ways she felt psychedelic experiences had influenced their relationship. They also reviewed with Jean a number of photos that were scanned as a part of the Collection, to fill in some missing details about these pictures.

During their visit, Jon discovered a number of relevant audio cassettes. Erowid borrowed 44 tapes, in order to have them digitized and catalogued. Recorded between 1979 and 1988, these tapes of talks and interviews feature Joseph Campbell, Ram Dass, Riane Eisler, Jean Houston, Rick Ingrasci, Oscar Janiger, Paul Krassner, Stanley Krippner, Timothy Leary, John Lilly, Terence McKenna, Ralph Metzner, Rupert Sheldrake, Sasha Shulgin, David Steindl-Rast, Roy Tuckman, Frances Vaughan, Alan Watts, Andrew Weil, and others.



Jean, Tania, and Jon hike the hills near Lone Pine.
Photo by David Arnson

Among the tapes was a recording made at a 1988 memorial held for Leo Zeff, the underground psychedelic psychotherapist who Myron profiled in *The Secret Chief*. Erowid has published an excerpt from this recording in the Stolaroff Collection, wherein Terence McKenna explains why he nicknamed Zeff "the Secret Chief". ●

ARCHIVING UPDATES



Alicia & Shawn at the Shulgin Farm
Photo by Jon Hanna

Back at the Shulgin Farm...

As Erowid continues the process of scanning, redacting, and transcribing Sasha Shulgin's lab books, it seemed appropriate to garner an invitation to the Shulgins' yearly Easter party for one of our most dedicated volunteers: Shawn. Over the past two years, Shawn has put in more than a thousand hours deciphering Sasha's handwriting and manually transcribing his notebooks into our digital database. Erowid arranged for Shawn to travel from Canada, where he works as an electrician, to Northern California for a few days, so that he would have the opportunity to meet Sasha and Ann. In addition, he met Team Shulgin principals, Paul Daley and Tania Manning, and spent some time with the core Erowid crew. Sylvia met Shawn at the Portland airport

during a layover, while Earth, Fire, and Jon got a chance to visit with him at the Shulgins'. We were all pleased to get to know him better and discuss the future course of the transcribing project in person.

Earlier in the year, Sylvia also visited the Shulgin farm, helping Tania sort and scan a few documents from the lifetime of materials that the Shulgins have collected. They focused on publications related to early 1970s drug testing programs in the United States, such as the St. Petersburg Free Clinic Drug Analysis Project of Florida and the Street Drug Identification Program, a joint project of USC Medical Center and Los Angeles County. Having access to these publications will help Erowid in researching the history of street drug analysis. ●

PSYCHOACTIVE STAMPS

People, Plants, and Postage

by Jon Hanna



Psychoactive drug historian Michael Horowitz recently brought to Erowid's attention some 2011 postage from the Republic of Togo depicting R. Gordon Wasson. He raised the question: Was this the first time that an entheogenic explorer had been honored on a stamp?

The answer depends on who qualifies as an "entheogenic explorer". More than one country has issued postage featuring psychedelic-using musicians such as Jerry Garcia and the Grateful Dead, Jimi Hendrix, the Beatles, and Bob Marley. Entheocognoscenti from the literary world have, to date, only been showcased on "art stamps". Such fake postage has depicted William S. Burroughs, Allen Ginsberg¹ and Timothy Leary,² among others, and a faux stamp of Ken Kesey is the focus of a blotter acid design.³ However, considering only official postage and individuals primarily famous for their psychoactive work, R. Gordon Wasson is the pioneer of postal personalities.

Intrigued by the possibility of "psychoactive stamps", I expanded the inquiry: What, if any, known psychoactive plants are pictured on postage? Quite a few, actually. Considering its historic importance within the United States, tobacco quickly sprang to mind as a likely candidate. Surprisingly, the opposite appears to be the case. In his blog for the *Chicago Sun-Times*, movie critic Roger Ebert quips:

"We are all familiar, I am sure, with the countless children and teenagers who have been lured into the clutches of tobacco by stamp collecting, which seems so innocent, yet can have such tragic outcomes."⁴

Ebert's sarcasm refers to the 2008 Michael Deas portrait of Betty Davis commissioned by the US Postal Service for use on a 42¢ stamp. Though the image is based on a well-known still from her film *All About Eve*, Davis's ever-present iconic cigarette has vanished from

Deas's painting. Her gloved hand remains teasingly poised "in the position", sans smoke. Fourteen years earlier, Robert Johnson, King of the Delta Blues Singers, had the cigarette plucked from his lips by USPS censors in his portrait for a 29¢ stamp. The meager photographic record of this legendary American guitarist makes Johnson's missing smoke feel even more like the hand of Big Brother at work.

In contrast, the French government issued a 30-centime stamp honoring Jean Nicot, the man who introduced tobacco to France in 1560, and whose name was lent to both the plant genus (*Nicotiana*) and its primary psychoactive component (nicotine).

Ebert's warning raises an amusing alternate concern: Could psychoactive plants lure a person into the clutches of stamp collecting? It seemed so innocent, yet it could have a tragic effect on one's pocketbook. Alas, I was hooked before I bought my first stamp.

With tobacco perhaps out of the picture, what about opium? I needed a fix. Just a couple stamps, even if they were only available in digital form. What could it hurt? Thankfully, I was able to score. *Papaver somniferum* was first dealt to the USPS by Moina Michael. Inspired in 1918 by John McCrae's poem "In Flanders Field", she conceived of the idea of selling poppies on Memorial Day to raise funds for disabled veterans. Printed in red ink, the opium poppy and Michael's face were offered on a 3¢ US stamp in 1948. (A \$1.20 stamp from Australia continued this theme in 2011, featuring red poppies, text from McCrae's poem, and the silhouette of two soldiers.) The second stateside poppy postage was a 32¢ stamp issued in 1996 with a Georgia O'Keeffe flower on it.

"My name is Jon, and I'm a pharmacophilatelist." From online ogling to casual collecting, opium art was the gateway. With its beautiful black poppy pod overlaid with a human skull, a stamp issued by the United Nations and flanked by the slogan "Stop Drug Abuse" opened up the world of prohibitionist postage. There was an 8¢ "Prevent Drug Abuse" stamp (1971) and an 18¢ "Alcoholism: You can beat it!" stamp (1981), both from the USPS. Additional anti-drug stamps



came from Brazil and Italy, with the star of the bunch hailing from Macedonia: a scarecrow made of pipes lashed to syringes. Flanked by poppy pods and wearing a capsule-filled bandolier, ghostly skull-shaped smoke clouds issue from one of his pipes, as the needle of his hypodermic hand pierces money dripping with blood. Additional pills lay scattered at his feet.

While other countries produce anti-drug stamps, the search for postage that did not portray psychoactive plants in a negative light was more compelling. As it turns out, there are more than one might expect. A nightshade, a showy passionflower, and a Peruvian tobacco stamp that I happily purchased were followed by another featuring a tobacco pouch. Then came a stamp from Dominica celebrating the introduction of coffee, three from the Republic of Togo focused on *Theobroma cacao* (chocolate), a couple of beautiful peyote stamps (one from Russia, one from Vietnam), and even a *Gymnopilus spectabilis* stamp from Cambodia. As it turns out, mushrooms are the mother lode for drug-stamp geeks; I harvested four *Amanita pantherina* and nine *A. muscaria*.

If Wasson, Why Not Hofmann?

Uncancelled “mint” stamps that end up in private collections are nearly pure profit for the issuing country, which gets the money without having to deliver



any mail. Since no obvious connection exists between Togo and R. Gordon Wasson, it’s possible that their decision to honor his mushroomic work stemmed in part from this monetary perspective. This sparked an idea: Along with their chocolate, cheese, watches, and knives, the Swiss are renowned for their savvy financial dealings. And really, who could be more deserving of having his image on a stamp than the man whose contributions so profoundly impacted the studies of neurochemistry, psychology, and spirituality, Switzerland’s national treasure (and Wasson’s colleague), Dr. Albert Hofmann. In the spring of 1843, one hundred years before Hofmann’s infamous bicycle ride—and following the United Kingdom’s lead—Switzerland became the second country in the world to produce postage

stamps. Diverting some stamps from my stash, I sent an old-fashioned letter to the Swiss Post, suggesting that they appropriately honor the good doctor by placing his picture on a stamp. In the arena of postal history, the Swiss have the chance to come in second again! And seeing Hofmann’s mug featured on small, perforated pieces of paper feels like an entirely appropriate tribute. ●

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2012 is Erowid's 17th year and we've realized it's time to update how we communicate what we do and why we do it. We are reminded that even Erowid members don't always know about the wide variety of projects we have going, so we are developing a print and digital prospectus that describes Erowid Center's goals, projects, successes, and funding needs. The following is excerpted from the working draft of this prospectus. We invite your feedback and suggestions.

The Challenge

Psychoactive drugs are everywhere. There are hundreds of plants, which, if eaten, smoked, snorted, or injected, will affect the mind—whether as a stimulant, depressant, or psychedelic. Thousands of chemicals will do the same. Used recreationally, therapeutically, spiritually, or to aid work, some are illegal and others are not. They include coffee, wine, tobacco, prescription pain medications, sleep aids, and antidepressants, as well as cannabis, LSD, and heroin. Psychoactives are in the kitchen, the hardware store, the greenhouse, home medicine cabinets, and fuel tanks across the country.

Humans have used psychoactive substances for as long as we have records, and some of the largest corporations in the world are actively developing new ones. Yet for the last century, the primary ideology driving global public policy has been that criminal prohibition and social censure can stop the use of psychoactive drugs outside of strictly defined and approved contexts.

But prohibition has failed. As of 2010, more than 22.6 million Americans had taken an illicit drug in the past month and the majority of adults had tried an illegal drug at least once. There is no magic bullet that will suddenly make these compounds disappear. If there were, the past century of ever-increasing penalties for possession and sale of

recreationally used drugs, along with massive anti-drug education campaigns, would have led to much lower levels of use. But they have not.

By framing this complex situation as a war and branding non-medical psychoactive use as pathological, the social policy of the last hundred years has polluted the information presented to the public. The educational system has been corrupted with lies and half-truths, resulting in a fundamental distrust of the drug information provided by institutional authority figures.

On many levels, society has failed to teach modern humans how to relate to psychoactives responsibly, treat them with respect and awareness, endeavor to minimize harms and maximize benefits, and integrate their use into a healthy, enjoyable, and productive life.

ON MANY LEVELS, SOCIETY HAS FAILED TO TEACH MODERN HUMANS HOW TO RELATE TO PSYCHOACTIVES RESPONSIBLY [...].

Our Vision

Erowid Center's mission is to develop and provide access to accurate information about psychoactives in order to educate, improve health, and encourage beneficial cultural reform.

Rather than relying solely on traditional resources to supply facts, the best information combines the knowledge of academic experts with that gathered directly from psychoactive drug users. A great deal of wisdom has been developed over the last fifty years about the best ways to integrate the use of psychoactives into a healthy life. This wisdom needs to be collected and widely disseminated. In a world filled with materials and technologies that affect the mind, adults need the robust education

and factual, pragmatic information necessary to help them take charge of their relationships with psychoactives and teach children how to do the same from an early age.

Erowid's philosophy is anchored in our belief that a foundation of trust is necessary for the long-term evolution of rational, fact-based education surrounding complex, controversial topics. Trust can only be earned after prioritizing integrity, privacy protections, and the open-source principal of transparency.

Our Successes

The result of Erowid Center's efforts is a hybrid library, publishing house, and anthropological research project, useful to both laymen and professionals. Physicians, toxicologists, educators, legislators, parents, youth—in short, anyone—can benefit from resources not corrupted by political ideology, but instead dedicated to providing reliable, accurate information.

Over the last 15 years, our flagship project, Erowid.org, has become a global information hub. We collect cutting-edge knowledge about psychoactives—from cannabis to psychedelics to prescription medications—then review, edit, and make the information available to the public. We gather novel data directly from individual psychoactive drug users. We also track and compile the latest research and legislation. We have tens of thousands of documents covering the history, science, and culture of these substances, forming one of the world's most trusted public resources regarding psychoactive drugs and how people use them.

Experience Reports

One of Erowid's most notable projects is our Experience Vaults, where we have compiled nearly 100,000 first-hand descriptions of the use of psychoactive drugs. Like medical case

reports, these stories serve individually to describe the effects people experience and, in aggregate, they form a vast database of analyzable data. In addition to being extremely popular with our visitors, this collection is utilized by Erowid Center to generate and validate information about dosage, effects, contraindications, and health issues related to specific psychoactives.

New Drug Tracking & Monitoring

The natural outcome of prohibition is an unending progression of newer, more potent, and less tested drugs. Vendors of these compounds may mislabel them or sell them via “stealth packaging”. In order to reduce the harms associated with the use of new drugs, Erowid tracks this chaotic, expanding field. We monitor the situation (through volunteers, forums, and medical professionals), analyze chemicals (through EcstasyData), coordinate between interested parties, and publish on the topic (on Erowid.org and in *Erowid Extracts*).

Surveys & Subject Recruitment

Erowid Center improves scientific and sociological information about psychoactives and those who use them by conducting surveys and by promoting participation in studies produced by academics, educational institutions, and related organizations. Erowid’s surveys gather data about health issues, use patterns, demographics, and the spread of newly developed drugs. This provides valuable insights into the use of these substances as well as direction for more formal research.

Researchers studying recreational drugs often face difficulty finding enough qualifying subjects. Because Erowid.org has nearly 100,000 unique visitors each day, we can help researchers connect with the specialized populations they seek. We collaborate with scientists to design respectful, credible studies that avoid judgmental drug war rhetoric. We direct respondents toward these ethical investigations and provide editing assistance for resulting academic articles.

EcstasyData

Our EcstasyData project commissions laboratory testing of ecstasy and other street drugs and publishes the results. Testing is performed at Erowid’s direction by a DEA-licensed lab in Sacramento, California. This is the only program in the United States with DEA permission to conduct anonymous testing. While several government agencies analyze pill contents, their data is not available for public use or review.

Individuals send samples to the lab anonymously, along with a co-payment. The lab then sends qualitative results to

IN ADDITION TO RESEARCHING, DISTILLING, AND PUBLISHING NEW DATA ABOUT PSYCHOACTIVE DRUGS, EROWID CENTER HOSTS AND PRESERVES THOUSANDS OF OLDER TEXTS IN OUR ONLINE AND PHYSICAL LIBRARIES.

Erowid, identifying chemicals found in the sample. We cover the rest of the cost and publish the results on the project’s website to inform harm reduction organizations, medical personnel, researchers, and users.

EcstasyData is co-sponsored by DanceSafe, which encourages tablet submissions and helps bring results to rave and nightclub communities. We publish data for around 300 tablets each year, and more than a million people view the results annually.

Archiving

In addition to researching, distilling, and publishing new data about psychoactive drugs, Erowid Center hosts and preserves thousands of older texts in our online and physical libraries. We work with authors, publishers, and historians to archive out-of-print, public domain, and orphaned content. Making such texts available promotes an understanding of the changing contexts surrounding the use of psychoactive drugs.

Even historical documents that contain inaccuracies are valuable: they record the state of knowledge at a specific period in time and substantiate the progress that has been made since. They also highlight recurring cycles in drug-related politics, legislation, and social viewpoints, as well as in use levels and types of use.

Generations Projects

Beginning in the late 1950s, a vastly increasing number of novel pharmaceuticals became available to researchers and the public. Many people studied and explored the impact of these compounds, seeking to identify beneficial and harmful effects, and attempting to direct society’s views on psychoactive drugs. As these pioneering individuals begin to wrap up their careers, Erowid Center partners with them and their families to catalog, scan, and preserve their knowledge and life work.

So far, we have archived nearly 10,000 documents from the valuable collections of Albert Hofmann (the chemist who first synthesized LSD in 1938), Myron Stolaroff (a researcher who administered psychedelics to subjects in the 1960s), and Alexander Shulgin (a chemist and pharmacologist who synthesized and explored hundreds of psychoactive chemicals during the 1960s through the 1990s).

The Wisdom Cycle

Erowid Center is initiating a new project to record the reflections of older psychoactive users through oral histories and targeted surveys. We hope to gather the thoughts and wisdom of those who first had access to psychedelic drugs: about their lifetime use, how to integrate use (or abstinence) into a healthy life, and how to transmit this knowledge to younger generations. We will also gather data about issues specific to older users, such as heart health and interactions with prescription medications.

As an independent non-profit, we work on behalf of the public without being compromised by commercial or political pressures. Your feedback helps determine Erowid Center’s future direction. ●

Charting the Relatively Unknown

A Study of Four

CATHINONES



by Fridjof Waleenstedt with Knut Bbjornstrand

SOME TIME AGO, I read a trip report in which the author made negative remarks about Ritalin (methylphenidate), indicating that he had nothing but uncomfortable experiences leaving him feeling jittery, sick, and cracked out. “Fair enough,” I thought, “Ritalin is not for everyone.” But later in the report, he casually mentioned that his typical dose was 100 mg! “Well,” I thought, “perhaps if he simply lowered the dose, the drug would have provided the effects that he was hoping for.”

People have countless reasons for taking psychoactive drugs, and experimentation with these compounds is frequently carried out in a casual manner. The young man described above might have been told that “a dose” of Ritalin was 100 mg, and he might have seen his friends routinely take that amount. It might not have even occurred to him that people can have varying degrees of sensitivity to any given compound. Experience reports often reveal a lack of foresight by their authors, with respect to their gaining an overall understanding of a compound’s effects through experimentation with various doses and settings. Perhaps it is this tendency toward casual use, more than anything else, which underlies bad experiences and misadventure.

Ultimately I came around to reflecting on my own drug use patterns. As a longstanding teary-eyed fan of Sasha Shulgin and his life’s work, my consumption of psychoactive drugs has been inspired by a sense of curiosity, discovery, and intrigue.

The very term “research chemical” evokes a feeling of delight and wonder, and could not be more apt. Like some people, I’ve made it a sort of hobby to carry out a sustained research program of my own. Why? Because that’s where one is likely to find the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. Not just a single pot, but potentially many pots... and vessels, chests, and loot bags! An intentional, deliberate approach toward understanding a psychoactive drug, whether it sprouts from the ground or arrives in the mailbox from a lab in China, allows one to fine-tune one’s range of experiences, dramatically reducing bad trips and enhancing benefits.

When I stumbled upon an online vendor that carried a selection of cathinones about which there was little available information, I saw these as a perfect subject for my studies, and decided to do a comparative assessment of four different chemicals. Hoping to increase the value of my data, I engaged a knowledgeable associate to join me in my quest. The following documents our journeys.

The Substances

- **4-methylmethcathinone** (4-MMC, mephedrone, m-cat)
- **Ethylcathinone** (e-cat, ethcathinone)
- **4-fluoromethcathinone** (4-FMC, flephedrone)
- **4-methylethcathinone** (4-MEC)

SUBSTITUTED CATHINONES

Cathinone is a chemical found in the khat plant (*Catha edulis*). It has the same base structure as amphetamine with an oxygen atom added to the side chain. “Substituted cathinones” are variants of cathinone where changes are made to the molecule by removing one atom or functional group and replacing it with another. A number of substituted cathinones have become available on the research chemical market in the last decade. Almost all are euphoric stimulants.

Methods

Each substance was taken both orally and via insufflation multiple times over a period of a few months in a variety of settings. Experiments with insufflation generally included a “low” dose (5–15 mg), a “moderate” dose (~30 mg), and a “high” dose (~50 mg), and often included repeated doses over a few hours, never exceeding 100 mg in total. Oral doses included a “moderate” dose (100–150 mg), and a “high” dose (250–300 mg). For high dose experiments, we started with an initial dose of 100 mg, with successive 50 mg boosters every 45 minutes until we felt the true “high dose” nature of the drug was understood, (with all of these dose level terms being used somewhat loosely).

Fridjof Waleenstedt’s Story

The substituted cathinones have a special place in my heart. These wonderful chemicals can serve so many purposes, from providing energy at the end of a long day, to lending compassion when I need to go inward, to sending tingles up and down my spine when I’m making love. Perhaps their only downfall, and this is relatively minor, is a short duration of action, which makes it a bit difficult to maintain a significant plateau without frequent re-dosing. Although all four of the substances used in these trials are closely related chemically, I found their effect profiles to be distinct. I would only consider two of the four worthy of further exploration.

4-Methylmethcathinone (4-MMC)

Although 4-MMC was not the best at anything, it was very good at everything, and it’s this versatility that made it so great: it’s an effective stimulant, empathogen, euphoriant, and social elixir, and it causes few negative side effects during comedown. I could name substances that outperform 4-MMC in each of these categories, but I’ve yet to try any substance that performs as well across the board.

Insufflating this material is nasty. It burns like hell and the dry mouth it causes would make the hardiest of desert lizards cringe. Although doses in the 10–20 mg range provided a nice energy boost for a hike in the park or cleaning the house, there was a mild, underlying body load that offset the benefits, and I always felt a bit too confused to do anything requiring mental acuity. 30–50 mg doses seemed to have more merit, lending an empathic euphoria to social occasions and lovemaking, although one really has to be a bit of a trooper (or a nut) to snort that much 4-MMC up their nose at once. I certainly don’t recommend it.

Orally, 4-MMC provided the underlying foundation for many great parties. I found my sweet zone at 100 mg, followed every 45 minutes with another 50 mg (up to a total dose of 300 mg). It felt a little bit like MDMA or methylone without the rolling eyes and all the gushy fawning and blabbering. The stimulation is significant however, and the resulting tachycardia was nothing that could be or should be ignored. I found that 300 mg over the course of an evening made sleep impossible without pharmaceutical intervention, as I was unable to ignore my heart beating at 100 BPM well after returning to baseline.

While 4-MMC hasn’t risen to fame as a therapeutic powerhouse in the way that MDMA has, I found it to be quite respectable as a therapeutic tool. I had many deep and healing conversations on this substance, and in some ways it provides a bit more clarity than MDMA. I found it to be an excellent follow-up to MDMA when staying awake into the wee hours, for example, while watching the sun rise over the playa at Burning Man and still having the energy to socialize over morning tea.



Vial of Ethylcathinone
Photo by John Cocktoasten

Ethylcathinone (Ethcathinone)

Of all four substances, this one was the clear winner when used in moderate insufflated doses (20–35 mg). It not only ran away with the cake, but the pastries, the table, and the tablecloth, too. Whether the activity included office work, therapy, strolling through a museum, making love, or preparing a fine meal, ethcathinone provided a subtle energy and empathogenic clarity to everything; and although it doesn’t last long (45–60 minutes), I only needed to snort another small amount to bring back the subtle glow. When it wore off, it disappeared with nary a trace.

Larger oral doses resulted in the same glorious effects. I’d find myself falling in love with everyone and everything all over again. Although I wouldn’t suggest it is likely to open the doors as widely as MDMA, it had a clarity and sense of calm unmatched by MDMA or 4-MMC. During an extended stroll down a mountain road in a snowfall on 280 mg (100+50+50+80), the conversation flowed like honey and everything felt magical and safe. Its potential use as a therapeutic tool became crystal clear; and after a few trials, I thought I might have found the holy grail. Alas, not so. Every light source has a shadow.

Whether oral or insufflated, that shadow arose when the doses got larger. After a moderate oral dose of 150 mg, I was left feeling pretty sketched-out. The comedown was surprisingly nasty given the mild, pleasing experience. At 280 mg the comedown was even harder, stripping me of the energy to do anything. After four hours I lay couch-locked: mouth dry, jaw clenched, and shaking, with a hollow feeling in my gut. But provided the dose is kept low, ethcathinone holds a spot on my list of favorites, with lovemaking and therapeutic conversations my preferred activities.

4-Fluoromethcathinone (4-FMC)

Forced at gunpoint to describe this substance using four words, I'd call it "the cocaine of cathinones". But that really gives 4-FMC a bit too much credit. It doesn't have the wonderful, self-image-inflating quality of cocaine, nor does it provide any significant feelings of euphoria. While 4-fluoromethcathinone is reasonably useful as a stimulant at various dosages, there are well-studied pharmaceuticals that perform much better. 4-FMC always left me with a sort of "so what?" feeling and no urge whatsoever to take my experiments further; indeed, it was mundane in all the same ways that 4-MMC was not. So despite not having any specific negative marks against it, without any notable positive effects, and with an unknown safety profile, it just didn't seem worth exploring further.

That said, I did enter a pumpkin-carving contest while on 250 mg of this substance, and fared quite well. It's hard to say whether my pumpkin would have turned out any less fantastic had I not taken 4-FMC. I suppose there is always next Halloween.

4-Methylethcathinone (4-MEC)

4-MEC was no better than 4-FMC in revealing any useful or enjoyable effects. However, the substance did have one strange yet notable quality. For insufflated doses of 30 mg or more, or oral doses of 100 mg or more, the come-up manifested with a rather intense rush. So much of a rush, in fact, that at times I had a momentary feeling of panic, wondering if I had overdosed. But this feeling would always pass quickly and leave next to nothing in its wake.

Oddly enough, re-dosing had barely any effect. For example, in the high dose oral experiment, I took 100 mg and had one of these uncomfortable, rushy onsets while cutting out small cardboard Santa Clauses for a Christmas art project. As previously planned, I reluctantly took my booster at 45 minutes in, fearing what might happen. But in the end, I felt almost no change. The second and third boosters seemed to have no effect at all. So I abandoned the experiment 50 mg early (total dose 250 mg), because I actually felt close to baseline and saw no point in taking the experiment further.

Other than the rushy coming-up period, the effects could be succinctly characterized as a mild stimulation and body load, a fullness in the eyeballs, and a vague feeling that my head was floating about three inches higher than it should have been.

Knut Bbjornstrand's Story

I was excited when Fridjof first asked me to participate in this study. The prospect of repeatedly getting high with an academic justification sounded like a great idea. However, my impressions slowly changed as the experiments progressed. What I thought would be a lot of fun actually turned out to be grueling, laborious work: carefully documenting all of my experiences, managing the bodily discomforts that sometimes occurred, enduring the intensity of the crash-outs that often followed these sessions, and, finally, being told to capture the essence of it all in 1,500 words or less! Okay, I admit there was a bit of fun, too. But at one point in the study I remember thinking, "After this is all over, I'm going to need a good long period of sobriety." Indeed, I did just that.

In the end, I learned a lot about these cathinones and the many fun, not-so-fun, and not-fun-but-worthy uses for them. I'm glad that I participated, but I wouldn't want to repeat the experience.

4-Methylmethcathinone (4-MMC)

4-MMC might better be dubbed the King of Cathinones! For me this was the substance with the least body load and the most significant empathogenic, euphoric, and stimulating effects, making it the perfect party companion (among other things). Of the four sampled, this cathinone was most suited to dancing and socializing late into the night, something I often enjoy doing. At the higher end, the 100 mg starter dose with 50 mg boosters every 45 minutes (up to 300 mg over the course of the night) kept me sufficiently elevated. Whereas if I wanted to get to sleep at a decent hour, a single 175 mg dose was more appropriate; this dose produced strong and pleasant effects, but dropped off soon enough to have me back down to baseline in three to four hours.

As for insufflating 4-MMC, I found low doses of 3–10 mg to be great for a little boost in just about any setting. However, an insufflated dose of 15–20 mg could result in me feeling a bit queasy if done by itself, so it is not the substance I'd turn to for "getting shit done". On the other hand, 15–20 mg insufflated booster doses taken after the peak of a larger oral dose were a perfectly comfortable addition to keep me going just a little bit longer when I was having a good time and not ready to go home.

Despite the qualities that lent themselves so well to long, loud parties, I was also surprised at the therapeutic potential of this one. I had some really meaningful conversations on 4-MMC, and it was easy to talk about personal issues. This aspect, coupled with the euphoric stimulation, makes 4-MMC a powerful ally.

Ethylcathinone (Ethcathinone)

Like Fridjof, I found ethcathinone to be useful in moderate insufflated doses of 20–30 mg. For one of the trials I used repeated insufflated doses of 20 mg every hour or two for sightseeing in an unfamiliar city. It provided energy for the many museums I visited, as well as a late-night visit to the theater. Upon returning to the hotel, I don't think I would have been able to muster up the energy for lovemaking without it, and to that end it served me well. I've also used these low doses to assist with writing, administrative drudgery, and household chores, finding them to be beneficial in sharpening concentration and providing energy and motivation.



Larger oral doses, between 150 and 250 mg, gave rise to ebullience—an upbeat, warm, fuzzy feeling about my life, my friends, family, and co-workers. I felt nostalgic in a nice way, remembering wonderful childhood experiences with my brother. Although I longed for the closeness we shared before we were separated by distance, I also gained insight into communications and relationship dynamics with people at my work, and I gained a better understanding and appreciation for some of them. This turned out to be very rewarding, so I feel that this substance has strong therapeutic/empathic qualities and potential.

Also like Fridjof, oral doses of 150–250 mg brought on a bit of a rough come-down, with the “crack factor” being directly related to the dosage. Hence, I wasn’t interested in taking more than 250 mg. If I were to do it again, I would likely stick to taking 100–150 mg orally, or using low insufflated doses for myriad situations in which I might require a boost of energy, empathy, and concentration. Overall I would describe ethcathinone as a light, yet versatile, empathogen/stimulant.

4-Fluoromethcathinone (4-FMC)

4-FMC turned out to be a valuable tool for increasing energy, motivation, and, to some degree, concentration. These benefits manifested during the pumpkin-carving contest that Fridjof mentioned; although I didn’t win, I was pretty impressed with my results. 4-FMC didn’t really have any other remarkable qualities.

For general stimulation, insufflated doses of 30–50 mg and oral doses of 100–200 mg seemed to work best. Some useful settings for taking 4-FMC included mundane chores and house cleaning, maintaining my awareness at a late-night dinner party where too much food and drink were consumed and I felt sleepy, and hiking in a botanical garden where I hoped to learn and memorize a few new names of exotic plant species. There was relatively little body load or “crack out” afterwards, which I suppose might make it more enticing and easy to overuse for some, but I didn’t feel any compulsive urges to redose.

Further study of this rare chemical could turn out to be worthwhile. However, I don’t feel that 4-FMC had any pronounced advantages over better-known and more thoroughly researched stimulants, such as cocaine or methylphenidate (aside from the convenience of being able to buy it online without a prescription, which is a dubious advantage).

4-Methylethcathinone (4-MEC)

Of the four cathinones that I studied, this was the most difficult and the least rewarding. Similar to Fridjof’s experience, I found the come-up to be overly rushy, the peak effect short-lived, and the tailspin crash pretty rough. The experience could be likened to the thrill of skydiving: intense for a minute and over with all at once, leaving one with nothing but a sick stomach from the fall and a smaller bank account.

Strangely, boosters seemed to do very little. It was as if I developed an immediate tolerance to the drug’s actions. I also experienced greater body load on this one, mainly in the form of nausea, heartburn, and heart palpitations; so it’s safe to say I won’t be knocking anyone over in an attempt to get more of this stuff.

The first oral 100 mg dose went reasonably well, so

I thought that it would become more interesting at higher doses. But I was wrong. I simply got more of the pukey feelings. I found myself gagging with my eyes watering on the comedown, although I never actually vomited. There was also some pronounced appetite suppression. So while the 100 mg oral dose worked well for conversation as I was entertaining dinner guests, it wasn’t a great choice for enjoying the food I’d just made. The higher oral dose produced some nystagmus and might have been fun for a thirty-minute dance party, but that kind of payoff wouldn’t be worth the price of admission.

Unfortunately (or perhaps fortunately), I couldn’t perform the insufflated dose trials of this substance. Near the end of the 3–4 month period that these experiments took place, I developed some ongoing low-grade sinusitis, so I decided it was in my best interest to swear off insufflating anything for a good long time. Although I do think that the previous experiments played a role in my poor state of health, it is hard to say if they were the sole cause, as there were a lot of nasty colds, flus, and upper respiratory infections at my workplace around that time.

ABOVE ALL WE SHOULD REPEATEDLY REMIND OURSELVES THAT SUCH PURSUITS SHOULD NEVER BE CONSIDERED “SAFE”.

Summary

It’s important to point out that none of the substances used in these experiments were verified for identity or purity. The best the authors can say is that the effects we experienced were consistent with the limited available data obtained elsewhere. So consistent, in fact, that we have no reason to suspect that these materials were anything other than what they were sold as. Nevertheless, readers should keep in mind the possibility of mislabeling or impurities.

When all was said and done, we were left wondering, once again, what motivates individuals to do this kind of research. We recognize the inherent risks of these activities on many levels. Is the drive to consume novel chemicals similar to the drive that leads folks to jump off a bridge with an oversized elastic band tied around their ankles? Perhaps, but given that the potential dangers of bungee jumping are well-understood, usually mitigated, and the results are quite predictable (most of the time), we suspected that the drive to explore new psychoactives might be a bit more abstract.

We ended up agreeing that we feel a kind of calling from a deep place within our own consciousness. Some might say it is a calling from the soul, or from our daemons, but clearly we are not alone. There are many people around the world who voluntarily perform such research on themselves. In doing so, we expose ourselves to a wide range of experiences, both positive and negative. Some will be transformative, and some even transcendent. Above all we should repeatedly remind ourselves that such pursuits should never be considered “safe”. However, we can study as much as possible before consuming something new, remain vigilant, measure doses carefully, and seek out the safest paths possible. ●

THREE WEEKS OF PLANT GEEKERY

by Fire Erowid & Earth Erowid

An Australia Travelogue

Fire and Earth were invited to be keynote speakers for the December 2011 Entheogenesis Australis (EGA) conference near Melbourne. They took the opportunity to travel, meet entheo-colleagues, and indulge their photo geekery.

Arrival and Acclimation

As we'd been warned, the flight to Australia was long and tiring. Despite resetting our internal sleep clocks prior to embarking, we were dazed when we arrived in Melbourne at midday. After the obligatory nervous pass through customs (Who wants to explain a box full of papers and books about psychoactive drugs to a customs official?), we looked around for our contact.

The EGA organizers had arranged for someone to pick us up at the airport, provide us with a place to stay before

the conference, and give us a ride to the venue. Scanning the baggage claim area, a gentleman in a purple, mushroom-embroidered jacket stood out as the most likely candidate. Bingo!

We introduced ourselves to our host, Michael Bock, and set off on the jet-lagged traveler's friend: a forced-march tour of local sights intended to keep us awake until the clocks on this side of the planet said it was time for sleep.

As we drove towards downtown Melbourne we also started our lessons in the local dialect. We found it surprisingly difficult to parse the Australian accent. Not only is pronunciation different, but so are inflection and cadence. A lot of uniquely Australian words add to the confusion: "moszzy" (mosquito), "sparky" (electrician), "ute" [yoot] (pickup truck), "chook" (chicken), "rellie" (relative), etc.

Our first stop was Fitzroy, a bohemian district

northeast of the CBD (Central Business District, Australian for "downtown"), decorated with distinctive, whimsical and funky murals. We visited Polyester Books, a well-stocked counterculture bookstore with a great section on psychoactives. Next was Happy High Herbs, a widely known chain that sells herbs explicitly for their stimulant, relaxant, aphrodisiac, or psychedelic effects. We spent some time looking at their array of products, from smokables containing unspecified cannabinoid receptor agonists to party drugs labeled as containing octopamine, a stimulant related to epinephrine that occurs naturally in plants and invertebrates (and that can also be synthesized). The proprietors of both Happy High Herbs and Polyester Books said they would be sending representatives to EGA.

After strolling by bondage shops and organic grocery stores, we headed home for dinner where we met Michael's partner and their son and got a tour of his extensive library of literature about psychoactives and ethnobotany.

The jet lag treatment continued with a hike in Dandenong Ranges National Park. Friendly flocks of cockatiels and parrots happily landed and hopped



Earth & Fire with Parrots



Amanita muscaria Mural in Fitzroy



Crapman Sign



Food Vendors at EGA



Outdoor Art Display at EGA

along our shoulders, arms, and heads as we offered up seedy snacks.

One of the things we were looking forward to was the opportunity to see the psychoactive *Acacia* native to Australia. That first night, we became acquainted with the prevalence of both *Acacia* and *Eucalyptus* (called “Eucalypts” or “Gums”) and how many different species and varieties there are of each.

As we blearily walked in the dark, foreign woods, surrounded by the noise of exotic birds, and following a psychedelically embroidered near-stranger, we felt far from home.

Our jaunt through the forest turned into a bit of a trek as we were caught by the approaching nightfall. At one point we turned our tiny LED flashlight on the first of many marsupials we would encounter during our trip, a brush-tailed possum staring at us from a small tree. As we blearily walked in the dark, foreign woods, surrounded by the noise of exotic birds, and following a psychedelically embroidered near-stranger, we felt far from home.

The next day we headed to Healesville Sanctuary, a wildlife conservation park, where we learned that, aside from the bipedal descendants of criminals, almost

everything mammalian in Australia has a pouch. From inch-long mice to seven-foot-tall megafauna, the island continent is populated by marsupials. The Sanctuary is one of the best zoos we’ve ever visited: part public menagerie and part eco-research project. It also pressed home the point that, despite its odd familiarity, we were in a foreign land. From a large group of schoolchildren

interacting with “Crampman” (a superhero promoting recycled toilet paper), to a koala carcass dissected and autopsied in front of families in a matter-of-fact fashion, cultural dissimilarities

were confusingly interwoven with people and places nearly indistinguishable from their US counterparts.

Entheogenesis Australis

The EGA conference was held on a beautiful piece of property in the Strathbogie Ranges, about two hours northeast of Melbourne. Michael drove us there via a scenic route through the mountains where we stopped in a small park to lunch under enormous trees, with brilliant crimson rosella parrots joining us at the picnic table.

The topography, flora, grounds, decorations, and people at EGA all felt

surprisingly similar to those found at a comparable event in Northern California. From the beginning we were welcomed and treated like long-lost family members by pretty much everyone we met. People went out of their way to introduce us to others and we were awash in compliments about Erowid’s usefulness. We made new friends and finally met old Internet allies whom we had known online for 10–15 years but had never been in the same physical space with. Despite being 8,000 miles from home, we were also pleased to run into a dozen familiar faces from around the world.

Big mown fields served as campgrounds for attendees while speakers were housed in two-person rooms and bunkrooms in large lodge buildings. One lawn was set up as the food area with six eateries serving out of quirky tents and a psychedelic bus.

A short walk away, one could stroll down a grassy path past vendor tents where visitors browsed herbs, labware, books, clothing, and art. Scattered nearby were a number of domes, one set up as a visually immersive chill space, a couple for smaller presentations and workshops, and a main dome where larger talks were held.

More than 50 speakers presented on topics ranging from political rants to drug recommendations to academic pharmacology lectures, with many talks focused on botany. An introduction to identifying the flora of the area, including



Workshop at Small Dome

Acacia species, was led by David Cameron, a senior botanist working for the state of Victoria. In one workshop, participants learned how to use thin layer chromatography to identify DMT and other tryptamines in plant material. Another demonstrated how to make smoking blends, like changa.

In perhaps the most amusing workshop, Torsten Wiedemann of Shaman Australis set up a complete distillation rig out of glassware that was offered for sale. He demonstrated distilling plant oils and then made potable absinthe for workshop attendees, all in a little over two hours. Keeper Trout, a friend from California, was the other keynote act. He delivered his cactus-related downloads with charisma and quirkiness, exemplifying his data-centric maxim: "More than you need to know?"

The overall caliber and diversity of presentations were impressive.

Though there were more than 400 attendees, the conference drew a select crowd of knowledgeable and engaged participants. It was the kind of event where sitting down with virtually anyone would result in an interesting

conversation about psychoactives, the subculture, chemistry, or plants.

The organizers made producing an event of this complexity look easy, with a few extra touches that highlighted their experience. One notable feature in the main dome was the inclusion of three screens on which presentations were displayed.

Those in the back could read the slides!

Mount Buffalo Excursion

After a group buffet lunch on the last day, we packed our bags, hopped in the car with Michael, and headed further northeast to Mount Buffalo.

Buffalo sawtooth wattle (*Acacia phlebophylla*) is a shrubby tree between 6 and 15 feet tall. It is renowned as a source of DMT and grows naturally only high up Australia's Mount Buffalo. We had read about the Buffalo wattle for years, and were thrilled when we discovered that we would be able to visit its habitat.

While in the car, we passed through an area near Myrtleford that was a major tobacco (*Nicotiana tabacum*) agricultural center until anti-smoking regulations crushed the market in 2006. Government incentives largely transitioned the

fields to vineyards, but the area is still dotted with distinctive tobacco drying sheds. We stopped along the road to photograph some sheds and were greeted by a landowner, who explained that after ceasing tobacco production and replanting with grape vines, the price of grapes declined so sharply that the cost of harvesting was greater than the possible revenue from selling the crop. So she had let her cows loose in the vineyard to graze. She inquired as to whether we would like to buy her now-seriously-devalued property. We politely declined and said our goodbyes.

As we continued towards Mount Buffalo, Michael, an expert in Australian ethnobotany, pointed out that much of the grass growing along the highway was *Phalaris aquatica*, a DMT-containing grass that we'd never had a chance to photograph. We pulled over again to tromp through the highway margins, getting great photos of ripe seed heads.

A few miles later, Michael stopped the car and gestured toward a giant field overgrown with *Phragmites australis*, a DMT-containing reed. When Earth tried to pull one of the hardy leaves off to photograph it more closely, the sharp-edged blade of grass cut deeply into his hand, resulting in this trip's first Erowid blood spilled in the name of photo geekery.

At the edge of Mount Buffalo National Park, the terrain changes from open rolling hills to rocky, forested mountain. As our car climbed upwards, we eventually reached a sort of invisible



Phalaris aquatica



A Row of Tobacco Drying Sheds

line in elevation where *A. phlebophylla* starts growing. We pulled over and got our first look at the famed Buffalo wattle. A few individual shrubs grew along the roadside, with many more growing in the rocky soil a short distance up the slope.

Many of the shrubs at this spot had concerningly large galls on them from a fungal infection that has been damaging this unique species. The population has also been threatened by overharvesting. However, in recent years, DMT hunters have learned that the leaves of some *Acacia* species, including *A. phlebophylla*, contain enough of the alkaloid that usable products can be made from leaves rather than root or stem bark, saving the bush from unneeded destruction.

Chasing the fading sunlight further up the mountain, we reached a spot where the road was lined on both sides with more Buffalo wattle. As a mnemonic aid for the hundreds of new flora we were seeing for the first time, Earth made a habit of nibbling tiny bits of various native plants throughout the trip. This brings out a plant's aroma and provides a quick sense of whether it is full of high-note terpenes, bitter alkaloids, drying tannins, or oily resins. When he took the smallest taste of the fresh *A. phlebophylla* seedpod he relearned that such exploration can have downsides. Just breaking the skin of the fresh pod with his teeth released a chemical that instantly burned his lips and tongue. Traces that reached his throat left a burned spot that lasted a day. As we gleefully took advantage of this singular opportunity to shoot way too many high-resolution photos, the sunset shifted from yellow to red, and we finally admitted it was time to stop photographing the Buffalo wattle.

Our return trip to Melbourne was more exciting than strictly necessary. First was the sighting of a small wallaby and then an echidna ("spiny anteater") that trundled across the road ahead of us in the dying light; we paused yet again for photos. Then a stop at an amazing city park in Benalla where a 3D "ceramic mural" flows organically up and down stairs, through tunnels, along benches, columns, and curves, surrounding a small amphitheater in surreal Gaudi-esque style. Handmade tiles, many created by

the local community, turn the space into a work of art. Around 1 AM, on our way back to Melbourne, we had three separate encounters with large eastern grey kangaroos that chose to jump into the road directly in front of our car. All hopped away from the experiences, but they, we, and the car were shaken and worse for the wear.

Sydney

After one more photo orgy at a botanical garden near Melbourne, we flew north to Sydney where we met up with futurist, and longtime friend, Mark Pesce. Though it's too expensive to casually visit from the US, Sydney turned out to be one of our new favorite cities: an English-speaking, hip, and modern metropolis standing as a western gateway to Southeast Asia.

We spent two afternoons in Sydney walking the grounds of the Royal Botanic Gardens, finding the medicinal, psychoactive, and culinary plants that are always present in such spaces. We spotted *Brugmansia*, *Myristica insipida* (Australian nutmeg), *Nicotiana tabacum* (cultivated tobacco), *Coffea arabica* (coffee), *Iochroma cyaneum* (violet churcu), *Dracaena draco* (of dragon's blood incense fame), *Brunfelsia pauciflora*, *Ephedra altissima*, *Artemisia absinthium*, and many more.

In an amusing side trip, we took one evening to visit an absinthe bar. We had been to such bars before, one in Switzerland, another in San Francisco. We also have a friend who is a notorious absinthe artisan, so we're always up for a tasting. The rituals surrounding absinthe make drinking the beverage a memorable experience. But in this case, a quirky steward seemed determined to ruin our evening. After four of us selected the absinthes we would start with, small portions of the straight spirits were poured into our glasses. The ritual is to use an iced water fountain to drip water over a sugar cube into the glass, triggering the milky "louche" effect and diluting the spirit to a palatable concentration.

As we discussed the differing colors and smells of the four brands, we each



Acacia phlebophylla Phyllode (Leaf)



Gall on *Acacia phlebophylla*

attempted to sip the pure absinthe prior to adding water, to get a sense of the full flavor. We were immediately stopped short, our hands angrily smacked down by the aggressive waiter who told us we were not allowed to drink the absinthe straight. Despite explanations that we simply wanted to have a small taste, he insisted vehemently that it was not allowed, actually grabbing our glasses to stop us. He treated us as though we

had made reservations to pay \$15 per glass and be literally *locked in* to this richly decorated retro salon in order to slam a few shots of high-proof, anisey alcohol with the intent of getting as drunk as possible. It was uncomfortable and off-putting, thus we recommend avoiding the authoritarian snobs at the Absinthe Salon in Sydney.

Heading North

After a few days in the city, we set off with Pesce, driving north on the next leg of our tour. We'd traveled with him several times before, and once again he was a fantastic traveling companion. Earth and I love car trips because they provide long periods for conversations to build, meander, and come back around, and Mark is a fantastic conversationalist; well read, opinionated, playfully pushy, and yet a great listener. He recommended the longer, but more interesting inland route and we jumped at the chance to spend a couple of days on the road with him.

After getting off the freeway, with its police cameras and robotic traffic ticketing systems, we took the highway west into rolling hills. Towns architecturally reminiscent of Iowa in countryside more like California each had at least two pubs, a lawn bowling club, and a Chinese restaurant (often *in* the bowling club).

Happy High Uki

When we reached the Northern Rivers area of New South Wales, about ten hours north of Sydney, we stopped at the Sphinx Rock Café and joined up with Darklight, a friend we first met at Mind States Jamaica. We were fortunate to have her as our guide in the area. She made it possible to cram our week full of botanical- and psychoactive-related fun and made sure we'd never forget our visit.

At the Sphinx Rock we also met new friends. We were introduced to Ray and Liz Thorpe of Happy High Herbs. After lunch, a quick tour of their home demonstrated how creative and energetic the Thorpes are, from their mushroom-domed master bedroom, to visionary hand-made decor, custom cat mazes, zoo-like animal collection, and botanic gardens. When the local gang heard we were coming to town, the Thorpes generously offered to let us stay at their Old Convent Guesthouse in Uki [yoo-kai]. The guesthouse is part of an airy, high-ceilinged, Colonial-style convent from the 1920s. The beautiful building overlooking a small river became our home base for the next week.

On our first day there we discovered how lucky we were with sighting native Australian animals. We caught a few glimpses of a platypus swimming in the river, something we're told most residents never see because these duck-billed, egg-laying, venomous oddities of the mammal world are so uncommon. And while that was the rarest animal we encountered, we were also lucky to see a koala and its joey chilling in a tree next to a convenience store.

The defining animal experience in Uki, however, was watching the staggeringly large colony of flying foxes living in the trees in town. The distinctive smell of bat urine hung heavily in the air

near the bridge and each night at dusk, the sky filled for more than 30 minutes with thousands of impressively noisy bats with three-foot wingspans, heading off to find fruit.

Happy High Herbs coordinates more than 40 shops around the world from their office and small warehouse in Uki. We had the opportunity to meet their crew, who mix activism, enthusiasm, and commercialism in their bid to make

We received invitations to visit homes, labs, gardens, fields, and parks where we photographed hundreds of psychoactive plants.

psychoactive plant products more widely available. While some people at EGA were critical of HHH for overhyping herbal preparations and selling party drug replacements with questionable contents, everyone agreed that Ray Thorpe and HHH have been key boundary-pushing elements in the psychedelic politics of Australia for more than a decade. We found their staff friendly, knowledgeable, dedicated, and clear about the effects of their products.

Photo Geeks Gone Wild

In the Northern Rivers area around Uki, our photography took a serious turn for the absurd. We received invitations to visit homes, labs, gardens, fields, and parks where we photographed hundreds of different psychoactive plants.

As we drove around, we kept catching glimpses of large white mushrooms growing in fields along the road. While we were too far away and moving too quickly to make positive identification, they looked like *Psilocybe cubensis*. It turns out we had arrived just in time for the annual psilocybin explosion. One afternoon, we got permission to traipse around a field peppered with hundreds of untouched *P. cubensis* growing on and around the cow pies. Locals told us that despite being potent, they were so plentiful that the contraband fungi have essentially no commercial value and most go unpicked.



Fire and Mark peruse fried diner offerings.

Changa in Australia

With hundreds of native species of *Acacia*, the discovery that several contain DMT in their bark and leaves (as opposed to only in root bark) has recently made smokable DMT a signature part of the Australian subculture. “Changa” (pronounced chāng-uh) is a term coined in Australia for the combination of DMT and an MAOI, deposited on an herbal smoking blend. These blends include a variety of herbs, and may contain 5-MeO-DMT or plants with other mild psychoactive properties. During our trip, we saw changa joints passed around and were offered changa, to try or buy, numerous times.

Compared to pure DMT, the slightly less abrupt onset and comedown curve of changa, combined with its milder smoke, apparently changes to whom and under what circumstances the fractal-crystalline visuals and psychedelic cognitive effects are interesting.

One person told us that changa use is prevalent even among young people who are not otherwise inclined towards psychedelics but who smoke it while watching movies or playing video games. They describe that, “It makes the movies pop!” Another person mentioned that use has increased among the equivalent of American “trailer park” culture in Australia.

“While changa may lack the razor sharpness of pure DMT, it nicely enhances the experience in a profound way that permits one to really go deep. Not so much by making the DMT stronger, but rather by producing richer and more robust effects.”
— Justin Case, Austin, Texas

Botany Tour

We spent one day botanizing around Nimbin, the hippie-subculture capital of eastern Australia, accompanied by the team of Mulga, Erik, and Des, three well-informed and good-humored Aussies. The surrounding temperate and sub-tropical rainforests are near enough to the ocean to have a constantly high level of moisture and humidity. The area is lushly overgrown jungle, interspersed with pastures, and ringed by timeworn mountains.

The five of us started off meandering around the amazing private gardens of a quiet entheobotanist. As he led the way, pointing out the psychoactive flora he’d cultivated, Fire lagged behind, trying to get usable photos of each and every plant. Our guides exhibited extraordinary patience, waiting while we took pictures, especially as this wasn’t even supposed to be part of our day-long botany field trip.

Land Leeches!

Perhaps the main thing that kept us moving was the plague of land leeches (*Gnatbobdellida libbata*). We were familiar with blood-sucking leeches that live in rivers, ponds, and lakes, but we’d never encountered fast-moving, *ground* leeches, which sport suckers on both ends! It was a

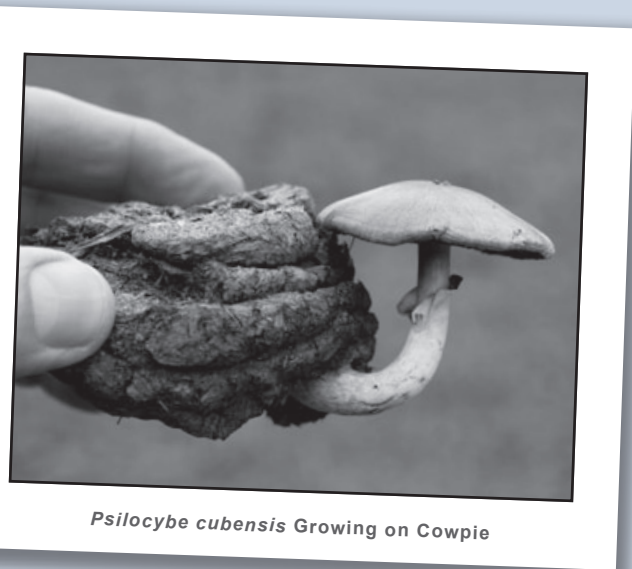


Tabernanthe iboga Fruit

bumper year for these pests and we constantly had to dance around and yank them off our shoes, socks, and legs. When we stood still, dozens would approach rapidly from all directions, like an army of assault worms. They not only attack from the ground, but also drop from trees, and can pass quickly through loosely woven clothing or socks, latching on in seconds. Learning the technique for grabbing a leech (roll it into a ball so it doesn’t have time to grab on, then fling it away) was perhaps the most creepily memorable experience of our hikes in the area. They are the bloody bane of botanists in the Northern Rivers because they inject an anticlotting agent as they bite, which keeps the wound bleeding. Apparently folks who grow up with them find them a mild nuisance instead of a shudder-inducing nightmare.

Nimbin Town

We stopped in Nimbin for a bite to eat and to pick up thick bamboo socks to make the leeches climb further up our legs before they could feed. Nimbin is a key counterculture center in Australia. Following the Aquarius Festival, a hippie gathering that brought thousands of non-conformist folks to this farming town in 1973, Nimbin became a focal point for alternative



Psilocybe cubensis Growing on Cowpie

communities, psychedelics, and cannabis culture.

The stores in town range from upscale organic, to hippie chic, to adorably confused stoner stylings. One of the required stops was the Hemp Embassy, a non-profit pro-cannabis political hub and hemp products store. Another was the locally legendary Hemp Museum, a maze of a building packed with counterculture imagery and marijuana memorabilia: a 1960s VW microbus, drug-related newspaper stories glued to the walls, hand-painted artwork, kitschy rabble-rousing insights, and trippy murals.

When police installed cameras on the street outside the museum, cannabis dealing moved into its twisty interior until repeated police raids pushed dealers towards more covert methods. We were only offered cannabis a couple of times while walking through town, about the same as a stroll along Upper Haight in San Francisco.

Nightcap

After Nimbin, we were led through the rainforested slopes of Nightcap National Park. The heavy summer rains had left each leaf and rock glistening

or dripping. Moss and fungi covered everything. We began on a peak and spent a couple of hours walking the muddy paths downhill. Our botanists regaled us with tales of the flora, from the enormous blackbutt (*Eucalyptus pilularis*) and nightcap wattle (*Acacia orites*) to impressively old grass trees (*Xanthorrhoea* spp.).

After a stop at a picturesque 100-meter waterfall, Mulga brought us to a site with large stands of flowering *Acacia obtusifolia*, a species that thrives on forest edges, in damp, sunny spots, and along cliffs. The leaves of *A. obtusifolia*, as with Buffalo wattle, contain DMT in high enough concentrations that they can be used in the preparation of changa. Mulga demonstrated that one can take a twig, ignite it, put out the flame, and detect the distinctive indole smell of DMT in the smoke. Wandering through the hills of northern New South Wales, as with the southern countryside near Melbourne, we were struck by the number of viable DMT sources. DMT is everywhere... at least in Australia.

Despite the horde of land leeches, this was one of the most amazing days of our trip, with the perfect combination of intellectual conversation, photography, and mad-dash forest botanizing.

Lab Botany

During our trip we had the opportunity to visit Darklight's plant tissue-culture facility, where she researches the propagation and conservation of entheogenic, medicinal, and endangered plant species. We spent an afternoon hanging out with feral Australian botanists and researchers, discussing *in vitro* growing methods, drinking wine, and photographing tiny sprouts and cells in jars.

Shaman Australis Nursery

We've known Torsten online for over a decade, but hadn't met the founder of Shaman Australis (SA) before this trip. We arrived late one afternoon for a tour of Wandjina Gardens (where SA grows its seeds, herbs, and live plants) and we were immediately enraptured by the density and variety of the collection.

The property is located on the lower slopes of a largely undeveloped mountainside in northern New South Wales, a few miles northwest of Byron Bay. The Gardens host a commercial operation, consisting of thousands of potted and in-ground plants, from tiny seedlings to full grown trees. A dozen eclectic structures, including greenhouses, shade buildings, shipping containers, humidity tents, and seedling nurseries, cover several acres.

The site is a stunning, world-class working



Acacia obtusifolia Flower



Wandjina Gardens Greenhouses



Peyote Grafted on *Pereskopsis*

ethnobotanical collection specializing in psychoactive and medicinal plants. Through expert trial and error, they have learned to grow everything from the culinary *Capsicum* (pepper) species, gourmet spicy Greek oregano, and *Hierochloe odorata* (bison grass, a source of the vanilla-like coumarin), to *Brunfelsia americana*, *Heimia salicifolia*, *Passiflora incarnata*, *Tabernanthe iboga*, *Voacanga africana*, *Lophophora williamsii*, *Banisteriopsis caapi*, *Psychotria viridis*, *Arundo donax*,

Happy High Herbs, but has none of the rainbow-hippie subcultural flavor and instead has a pharmacy aesthetic. Koda sells pure isolates and chemicals where allowed by law, but their edgiest offerings are labware and glassware: everything from beakers to distillation apparatus. The Koda team scrupulously follows the law, requiring glassware purchasers to supply identification, but this shop is pushing boundaries and doing it with a sober, scientific flair.

After dinner one night, as the sun was setting, Torsten led us on a speed-walk tour of the psychoactive plants growing on the beach at Brunswick Heads near Byron

Bay. We had a flash with us so we got some good identification shots, but when it started to drizzle, the less photo-obsessed of our team lost patience with our single-minded attempt to digitize every plant with ethnobotanical significance. We got shots of *Canavalia maritima*, *Ipomoea pes-caprae*, and *Acacia sophorae*, before the weather and darkness forced us back to socializing. What became clear, as Torsten rattled off a continuous stream of details about each plant, was that he is both an entheo-geek provocateur as well as one of the world's top experts in psychoactive plants.

Through the Looking Glass

Our visit to eastern Australia was a strange mix of familiar and alien. The terrain and culture near Melbourne were so much like Northern California that, as long as no one was speaking, it felt like home. Unlike California, Australia stood out as an island nation in this ultra-connected world, with restrictive border controls and interstate quarantines (putatively designed to protect the indigenous flora and fauna) that exemplify an underlying authoritarian governmental philosophy that is on the rise around the world.

The spirit of exploration and psychoactive inquiry is incredibly strong in Australia, powered by some of the most intelligent, inquisitive, and well-educated drug geeks in the world. Forced by circumstance to “grow local”, they are digging in and making use of the plant and chemical allies in their environment and building the knowledge base for the next generation.

It was an amazing treat to get to spend most of our time with knowledgeable botany dorks. We were in heaven. During our three-week trip, we took nearly 6,000 photos, filling 63 GB of drive space. This treasure trove of photos will serve us well over the next year as we illustrate articles and add to Erowid's vaults. Thanks to everyone who went out of their way to welcome us and introduce us to the botany and local psychedelic culture. ●

DMT is everywhere... at least in Australia.

Phalaris arundinacea, and full-grown *Anadenanthera colubrina* trees. From flowering specimens, to seeds, down to petri dishes for experimental germination practices, we spent more than six hours over two days giddily racing behind Torsten as he showed us just the fraction of plants he thought we'd be most interested in photographing.

Byron Bay Area

Torsten and his partner Daniel not only run Wandjina Gardens, but are also part owners in a new retail business called Koda Phytorium, which has a storefront in Byron Bay selling herbs, teas, extracts, cosmetics, books, and other plant-medicine related items. Koda has some overlap in products with



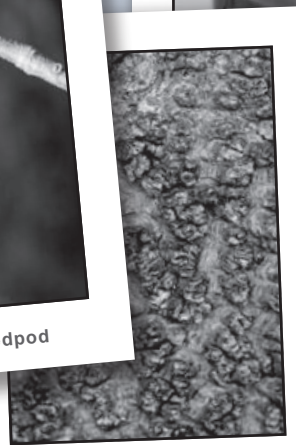
Potted *Delosperma cooperi*



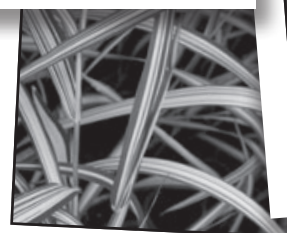
A. colubrina Seedpod



williamsii Growing in Agar



Anadenanthera colubrina Bark



Phalaris arundinacea



Tabernaemontana corymbosa

plasma

by Radium

and smooth metal

an experience with

3-MeO-PCP

I'm currently studying towards second year chemistry and have always had a great interest in dissociative substances. I first tried ketamine roughly four years ago and have developed a moderate usage habit since (around 2–4 grams per month). I have extensive experience with ketamine, nitrous, and methoxetamine, and I've had three experiences with 4-MeO-PCP. In my opinion, I find that nothing has compared—in magnitude of incredible experiences—to ketamine. Chemicals such as methoxetamine and 4-MeO-PCP are just easily-available but not-so-good replacements. Don't get me wrong, I've had great experiences with methoxetamine and 4-MeO-PCP; but I still feel there is something glaring missing from those experiences.

With the acquisition of 50 mg 3-MeO-PCP from a highly trusted source, I had hoped that I would be able to find a little gem within the chaos of the current research chemicals market. After some major derping about on the postal system's part, I received the package and opened it to find a small bag of pure white, fine powder. This trip report was written as I experienced the effects.

Weight: 125 lb / 55 kg

Time: 7:55 pm

Route of Administration:

Sublingual, held for a few minutes then washed down with water.

Dosage: Initial trial: 10 mg, with a 25 mg booster, then a 15 mg booster to finish.

Mindset: Excellent mood, anticipating trying this substance, albeit a little tired from a long day in college. Nothing to do tomorrow apart from spending time relaxing at home.

T+0:00:

10 mg is weighed accurately by difference and placed under the tongue for two minutes. Powder sticks to everything, so care is taken not to spill it. The amount of powder is miniscule! My last meal was just over seven hours ago.

T+0:10:

Possible first alerts—feeling slightly wobbly. Could be a placebo or quick first effects from sublingual route. Walking to the station to go see a showing of Persian music with my mum.

T+0:20:

Feeling some body warmth and there's a slight feeling of unreality to the train journey. Music sounds mildly enhanced, and I've got a smile on my face! The main effects haven't seemed to have materialised at this point. From what I've read, it may be an hour or longer until it fully kicks in. Not sure if this substance has cross-tolerance with any other dissociative (my main concerns would be cross-tolerance with methoxetamine and ketamine, but I haven't used a dissociative in a couple of weeks).

T+0:45:

Definite increase in effects, everything feels slowed down; time feels dilated, typing on my phone seems to take an age to complete a sentence. Reading has become difficult on the tube and walking to the next platform is slightly wobbly and off-balance. Walking along a flat, airport-style conveyor belt in Waterloo Station is great fun! There's a building sense of wonder in everything around me and things look... odd, but not threatening. Very excited, I've still got a smile on my face.

T+0:53:

Effects continue to increase. Being packed onto a rush hour train was disorientating but highly amusing! I kept getting the urge to laugh out loud. This is unlike ketamine, which makes me feel extremely awkward and alien in public—especially on brightly lit trains. Not entirely sure how

“Just got into the theatre to see the music, feeling excellent! Conversation is flowing freely and mood is greatly improved.”

much more the trip is going to develop, but I'm about to meet my mum so we shall see how conversation holds up. Skin is feeling slightly tingly and depth perception is certainly on the blink. Going up in the lift was a bizarre experience.

T+1:12:

Just got into the theatre to see the music, feeling excellent! Conversation is flowing freely and mood is greatly improved. A slight sense of motion is noticed but nothing overpowering; a perfect dose for being in public and communicating with others. I have noticed some muscle twitching and cramping, but nothing major. There's a subtle sensation of shifting/motion and the occasional visual flicker.

T+2:45:

Just got out of one of the most incredible musical performances I've ever seen. It sounded fantastic and the atmosphere was electric. The musicians seemed to have an almost telepathic communica-

tion and the way they interacted was very special. The effects of the drug plateaued a couple of songs into the performance, and getting out I realise that I am still off-balance and my speech is slightly impaired. If anything, it seemed the music enhanced the drug! No other effects materialise. I'll stop here, and it's highly likely that I will redose with a higher amount when I get home to continue the experiment.

T+5:20 (23:15 pm):

I've just arrived home and am about to redose this highly interesting compound to better explore its effects. In a more stable environment, I believe I will be able to investigate better.

25 mg was weighed accurately by difference and placed under the tongue for four minutes. The dose was then washed down with water. The chemical taste is more noticeable and is very (but not overpoweringly) burnt/bitter. I had a meal about an hour ago, just before 10:00 PM, so my stomach is fairly full.

T+5:35:

A sudden sharpening of the vision announces the beginning. Something has definitely changed but I can't define what. Still have a slight bitter taste in the mouth from the sublingual dose. I believe I'm in for a ride. Some nausea present but nothing unmanageable; it may have something to do with the fact I ate so recently.

T+6:05:

Thirty minutes later, and I still feel on the cusp of something big. It's somewhat

“Oh wait, I suddenly realise I am pretty gone. Typing and expressing myself has become difficult. There's a definite buzz to this...”

frustrating, but I am going to wait at least an hour before even considering taking the rest.

T+6:20:

Effects seem to be increasing slowly but steadily; there's a definite warp in perception, but it's very colourful and sharp. Everything seems to have taken on a slight motion and I'm suddenly finding things fascinating! There's a noticeable wobble in my walk, and I feel a warmth (or a numbness?) at my forehead and

extremities. The token dissociative “static hiss” is present now, and its volume seems to be increasing. Nothing major yet, but I am getting extremely impatient and I am considering dosing the rest (~15 mg) to kick it up a notch.

T+6:35:

Lost my patience and I took the last 15 mg of the 50 mg I have. Hopefully I'll really see this compound shine now. The last 15 mg was administered sublingually and held for five minutes this time, before washing down with water.

T+6:45:

Currently feels like a low-dose methoxetamine trip, but much much sharper. Objects appear very well defined and there seems to be a building euphoria. I can make out the individual cracks in my skin as I am typing! Quite unlike any dissociative I have done before. Considering the amount I have taken this seems like a light trip so far, but I'm expecting (hoping) for more. Very slow to build, but that may have something to do with the full stomach issue mentioned earlier.

T+7:00:

I'm in a nice place right now, feeling warm and woozy, but I'm still somewhat disappointed with the lack of major effects. Hopefully the effects will increase, but I'm unsure to what degree. Feeling very tingly and there's a slight pressure on my temples. Nothing groundbreaking...

T+7:10:

Everything is simultaneously wavy but sharp, unsure if effects are still increasing or not?! This drug has a “high definition” feel about it—very crisp, clear. It seems like I've reached the peak effects, and judging by the fact I can still type properly, I think I have reached a plateau. Exciting effects, but not enough material to explore this properly. Not to be disappointed, I

believe 3-MeO-PCP has great potential and will conduct another experiment next weekend.

T+7:30:

Oh wait, I suddenly realise I am pretty gone. Typing and expressing myself has become difficult. There's a definite buzz to this, but I'm having fun trying to capture it in words. I'm alternating between attempting to write and watching video walkthroughs of the game Tombi! OooOoo. There's a very nice pressure on my head and I've got

great energy! Should I try to make some music maybe?

T+7:45:

Music production greatly hindered. I'm getting the same feelings coming down from this material as I do from methoxetamine, but it's a much smoother ride. It feels friendlier.

T+8:50:

Still coming down, still feel great. Very bubbly. I have to say, I doubted it. Nice stuff.

The Morning After:

In retrospect, this is a very special compound. It has all the basics there for an essential dissociative, but it also has a real sparkle on the side. It definitely whizzes past methoxetamine and certainly 4-MeO-PCP. I'm putting this compound right up there at the top, along with ketamine and MDMA. There's a high-definition feel to its effects and I find there's a very interdimensional aspect to the dissociation. More metallic-feeling than ketamine, certainly; this substance radiates the feeling of smooth metal and plasma.

The come-up period was long, around 1.5 hours in these experiments (although the full stomach may have had a part to play in that), and the plateau lasted around 60–90 minutes, if I remember correctly.

Sleeping was fairly difficult afterwards, but not in any way uncomfortable. Diphenhydramine (25 mg) was taken to help nudge me in the direction of sleep, which still didn't come for a couple of hours after my last entry. I then experienced some of the most intense and bizarre dreams I've ever had, many of which involved fire, being on fire, dreaming I was a pastry in an oven, etc. These were not frightening but extremely intense—very vivid and colourful, something that I think was greatly potentiated by the diphenhydramine taken before I went to bed.

I can't wait to experiment with this compound again in a different environment. There's so much potential here, and this experience has given me a great deal to think about.

Physically, I do not feel it put a huge pressure on my system, although my heart rate was increased for the duration of the trip and has not completely returned to normal the day after. I advise caution for anyone who is going to indulge in 3-MeO-PCP, as it is a little-researched compound. I hope this report has helped map out some new territory. Be safe. ●

The Distillation

The Distillation includes updates, statistics, and information that we hope will offer insight into the ongoing site additions, traffic, and projects currently underway at Erowid.

Summary

General Content Pages	16,579
Archived Site Pages	4,677
Experience Reports	22,345
References	8,111
Ask Erowid	595
The Erowid Review	289
Content Images	5,572
Visionary Art	2,021
Total	60,189

Erowid Files on Server	176,608
Erowid Disk Footprint	60.4 GB

Erowid Monthly Subscribers	18,435
Twitter Followers	2,858
Current Members	1,446
Daily Visitors	90,584

Content Details

General Content Pages	16,579
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Number of Substances Vaults	335
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Most Popular Substance Vaults (with Change)

MDMA (↔); LSD (↑); DMT (↑); Cannabis (↔); Mushrooms (↓); Cocaine (↔); Methamphetamine (↑); Ketamine (↑); 2C-B (↑); Morning Glory (↑); Oxycodone (↑); Salvia divinorum (↓); Ayahuasca (↑); DXM (↔); Kratom (↑); Datura (↔); Amanitas (↓); Heroin (↓); 5-MeO-DMT (↔); Cacti (↑); Opiates (↔); Amphetamines (↔); Nitrous (↑)

Most Accessed Documents

Humor: Water FAQ; Cannabis Cookie Recipes; Guidelines for Saying No to Police Searches; Meditation: It's Not What You Think; Drug Testing Basics

Botanical Gardens

Many cities have botanical gardens, which are usually a cross between a park and a professionally curated plant museum. They offer great opportunities to see and photograph psychoactive plants. Below are photos from some of the botanical gardens around the world that we have had the opportunity to visit.



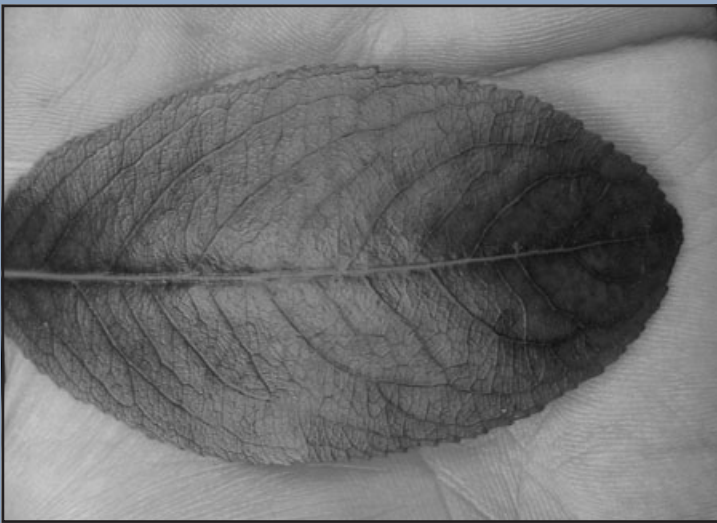
Papaver somniferum Flowers
Green Bay Botanical Garden—Green Bay, WI



Datura innoxia
Denver Botanic Gardens—Denver, CO



Bruggmansia aurea 'culebra'
Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew—London, UK



Catha edulis Leaf
US Botanic Garden—Washington, DC



Psychotria viridis
Royal Botanic Gardens—Sydney, Australia

Experience Reports

Published Reports	22,345
Published in Last 6 Mo.	459
Fully Triaged Reports	36,496
Partially Triaged Reports	996
Un-triaged Reports	13,189
Rejected Reports	22,502
Viewed Each Day	145,686
Substances Included	517
Active Triagers/Reviewers	43

Watching the Metrics

Tools for tracking website traffic have become common over the past few years. Some are designed to analyze data from the past, while others estimate current status, or predict future trends. While it's best not to sink too much time into such commercial oracles, it's occasionally interesting to take a look at where we stand.

According to Alexa, which collects information about the browsing habits of its toolbar users, about 45% of visitors to Erowid view a single page and then move on. These are most often people using a discovery engine like StumbleUpon or those who get an Erowid page in search engine results. In fact, from analysis of our own logs, we know that we get 50,000 page views a day directly via Google and Bing. And more than 8,500 times a day someone runs a search on the word "Erowid", alone or in combination with other terms, and follows a link to Erowid.org.

Both Alexa and Quantcast (another company that measures web audiences) report that our visitors are somewhat more likely to be male than female and are weighted more heavily towards those 18–24 than the average Internet user.

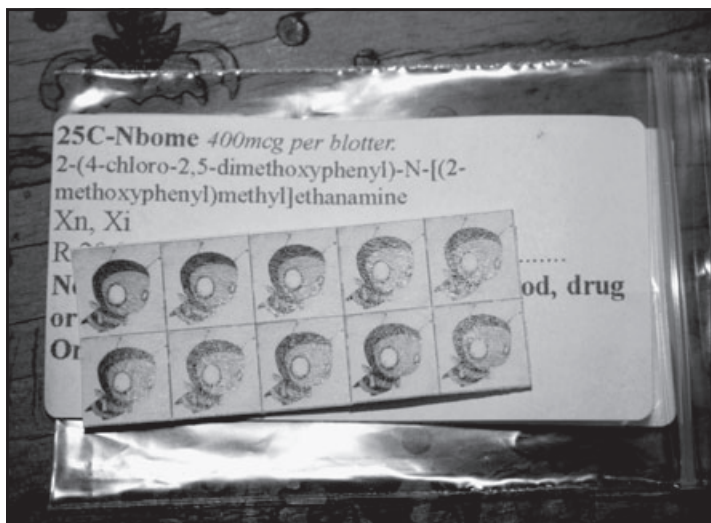
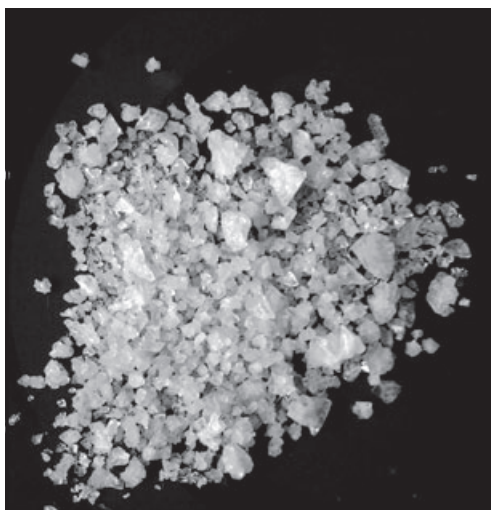
We only began maintaining a Twitter feed in 2011. Since then, our Twitter audience has been increasing slowly, with 2,845 current followers. We see an average of about 20 links to (or mentions of) Erowid on Twitter each day.

Guidestar is a group that promotes transparency and provides information to the public about non-profit organizations. It tracks the revenue and expenses of non-profits and provides ratings (one to five stars) based on individual reviews. This is an important site, as contributors use it to determine the value and trustworthiness of an organization. Erowid Center currently has a five-star rating, but only 19 reviews. **We invite our supporters to visit Guidestar.org and submit a review of Erowid.**

Image Vaults

Published Images	7,593	New in Last 6 Mo.	64
Image Vaults	299	Submitted Each Day	1.2
Viewed Per Day	25,650	Awaiting Processing	12,074

MDA HCl, Photo by Nootropic



2C-C-NBOMe on Blotter, Anonymous Photographer

Erowid Reusable Grocery Bag

A new gift is available at our \$30 membership level. The bright green and black Erowid grocery bag is an inexpensive reusable bag with the Erowid Center name and logo front and center. It has an open main compartment, a small pocket with Velcro closure, and grey over-the-shoulder straps. Made of lightweight recyclable 80 GSM non-woven polypropylene, it measures 17.7" (w) x 13.8" (h) x 5.7" (d) and the straps are 30" long.

For those who prefer a heavier-duty bag, we will be adding a higher quality, natural-fiber bag to our gift selection later this year.



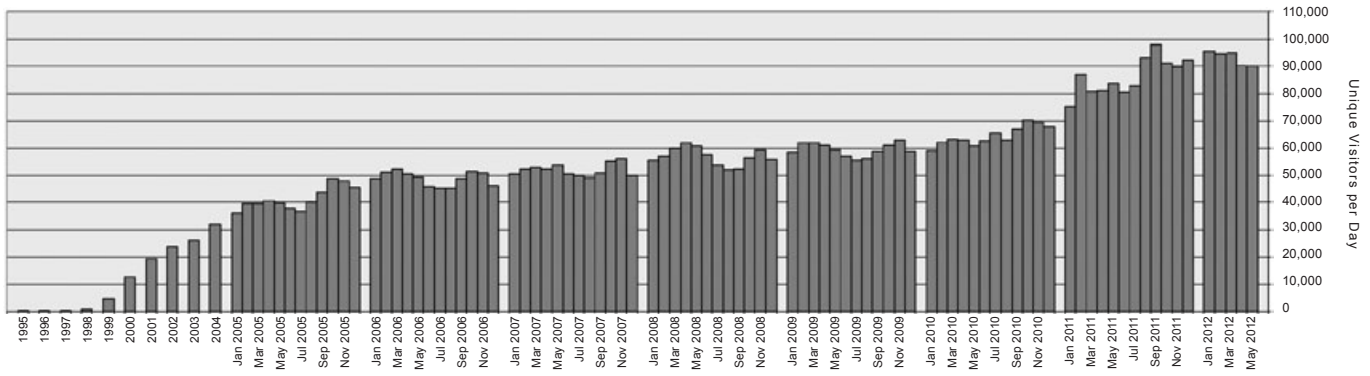
The Erowid Review

Published Reviews	289
Published in Last 6 Mo.	12
Viewed Each Day	1,970



Argyreia nervosa Seeds, Photo by Caktalfraktal

Daily Erowid Visitors (1995–2012)



Erowid Mobile Apps

As people increasingly access information via mobile devices, Erowid needs to be more accessible for those users. In May 2012, we released our first mobile application, an Android app. Still a work in progress, it lists all substances and displays a summary description and photo for each, with links that connect to the live site in a browser.

The development process raises questions about what an Erowid mobile app should encompass. We must choose what to include in a 20–30 MB app versus what will require loading at run time. The entire site can not practically fit on current mobile devices, but any data not included in the app would need to be downloaded over potentially slow cell networks.

Our theory is that people want basics like dosage and effects descriptions available offline, as well as a selection of experience reports and images, while other information and articles can require Internet connectivity. We hope to have an iPhone app as well as updates to the Android app available in the next few months.

Membership	
Current Members	1,446
Recently Expired Members (1–6 mo.)	338
Older Expired Members (>6 mo.)	5,571
Members in the United States	1005 (69%)
Members in Other Countries	441 (31%)
Countries with Members	41
Top Contributor Countries	
USA (990); Canada (77); Australia (71); UK (70); Netherlands (28); Germany (26); Switzerland (14); France (14); Norway (13); Finland (13); Sweden (13); New Zealand (8); Spain (8); Belgium (7); Denmark (7); Israel (6); Brazil (6); Italy (6); Japan (4); Austria (4)	

Erowid Statistics				
DAILY	Visitors	90,584	File Hits	3,952,170
	Transfer	30.32 GB	Page Hits	379,860
BY MONTH		Avg Daily Visitors	Avg Daily Page Hits	Avg Daily File Hits
	Apr 2012	89,570	372,931	4,096,955
	Mar 2012	95,495	386,162	4,325,494
	Feb 2012	95,681	401,201	4,415,490
	Jan 2012	96,466	397,194	4,287,487
	Dec 2011	92,584	382,516	3,973,527
BY YEAR	2011	86,237	387,683	3,977,250
	2009	59,483	384,788	3,682,793
	2007	51,979	409,501	3,559,761
	2005	41,412	402,567	2,544,202
	2003	25,999	347,012	1,421,800
	2001	19,138	206,418	885,099
	1999	4,608	36,867	140,093

EcstasyData Statistics				
2012	Daily Visitors	2,704	Daily Page Hits	11,142
	Results	113	Daily File Hits	435,638
BY YEAR	Results Published In		Testing Results (1996–2012)	
	2011	298	Total Results Posted	2,398
	2010	183	MDMA Only	(31%) 734
	2007–2009	274	MDMA + Something	(20%) 476
	2004–2006	314	No MDMA	(49%) 1188
	2001–2003	781	– Nothing	136
	1996–2000	435	– Unidentified	122



VERBATIM

“There are no foolish questions, and no man becomes a fool until he has stopped asking questions.”

— Charles P. Steinmetz (1865–1923)

“People learn something every day, and a lot of times it’s that what they learned the day before was wrong.”

— William E. Vaughan (1915–1977)

“Rank beliefs not according to their plausibility but by the harm they may cause.”

— Nassim N. Taleb (b. 1960)

“Every now and then a man’s mind is stretched by a new idea or sensation, and never shrinks back to its former dimensions.”

— Oliver Wendell Holmes (1809–1894)

“Anyone who acquires more than the usual amount of knowledge concerning a subject is bound to leave it as his contribution to the knowledge of the world.”

— Liberty Hyde Bailey (1858–1954)

“Hope is definitely not the same thing as optimism. It is not the conviction that something will turn out well, but the certainty that something makes sense, regardless of how it turns out.”

— Václav Havel (1936–2011)

“Both optimists and pessimists contribute to our society. The optimist invents the airplane and the pessimist the parachute.”

— Gladys B. Stern (1890–1973)

“Be around the people you want to be like, because you will be like the people you are around.”

— Sean Reichle (b. 1979)

“I used to be scared of uncertainty; now I get a high out of it.”

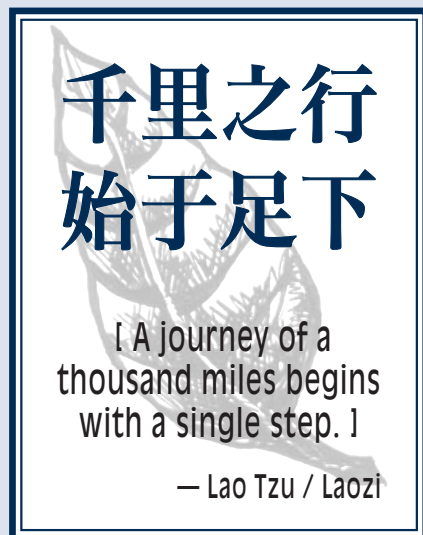
— Jensen Ackles (b. 1978)

“The only thing that makes life possible is permanent, intolerable uncertainty; not knowing what comes next.”

— Ursula K. LeGuin (b. 1929)

“To my mind, the greatest reward and luxury of travel is to be able to experience everyday things as if for the first time, to be in a position in which almost nothing is so familiar that it can be taken for granted.”

— Bill Bryson (b. 1951)



“Traveling is a brutality. It forces you to trust strangers and to lose sight of all that familiar comfort of home and friends. You are constantly off balance. Nothing is yours except the essential things—air, sleep, dreams, the sea, the sky—all things tending towards the eternal or what we imagine of it.”

— Cesare Pavese (1908–1950)

“We live in a wonderful world that is full of beauty, charm and adventure. There is no end to the adventures we can have if only we seek them with our eyes open.”

— Jawaharlal Nehru (1889–1964)

“All that is gold does not glitter, Not all those who wander are lost;”

— Bilbo Baggins (b. T.A. 2890)

“The world is a great book, of which they that never stir from home read only a page.”

— Augustine of Hippo (354–430)

“Though we travel the world over to find the beautiful, we must carry it with us, or we find it not.”

— Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882)

“What is lovely never dies, but passes into other loveliness, star-dust, or sea-foam, flower or winged air.”

— Thomas Bailey Aldrich (1836–1907)

“If your contribution has been vital there will always be somebody to pick up where you left off, and that will be your claim to immortality.”

— Walter Gropius (1883–1969)

“Millions saw the apple fall, but Newton was the one who asked why.”

— Bernard Baruch (1870–1965)

“An understanding of the natural world and what’s in it is a source of not only a great curiosity but great fulfillment.”

— David Attenborough (b. 1926)

“Creativity is the state of consciousness in which you enter into the treasury of your innermost being and bring the beauty into manifestation.”

— Torkom Saraydarian (1917–1997)

“If the words ‘life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness’ don’t include the right to experiment with your own consciousness, then the Declaration of Independence isn’t worth the hemp it was written on.”

— Terence McKenna (1946–2000)