Animal Ambassadors: Leveraging Library Pets to Reach Out to Patrons
(Or, Think Outside the Doghouse)

... Dogs for Animal- or Pet-Assisted Therapy are becoming more common ...

... But we have COCKROACHES!

Why animals?
• People like live animals
• Interactions with animals can reduce stress
• They add interest and an extra dimension to the library

Our Madagascar hissing cockroaches are:
• Perfect for starting conversations with patrons and engaging them
• Very slow and docile; relatively easy to keep
• Excellent parents (well, the moms are—see photo to right)
• Educational — faculty even bring students
• A great way to raise the library’s profile across the institution!

Dorothy Barr
Ernst Mayr Library — Museum of Comparative Zoology
Harvard University, Cambridge MA USA
dbarr@oeb.harvard.edu