

STRI newsletter

FEBRUARY 23, 1990

SMITHSONIAN TROPICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE, Apartado 2072, Balboa, Panamá

No. 8

SEMINARS

Tupper Center Auditorium

Tuesday, February 27, noon seminar speaker will be Rudi Drent, University of Groningen.

Energetics of foraging in the grey goose.

At 6:00 p.m. that evening, Robert Ricklefs, SI Regent's Fellow, will talk on--

A sampling of studies on demography, life-history evolution, community ecology, and biogeography.

Refreshments will be served in the conference hall above the auditorium. Everyone should enter through the main door to the conference hall; the auditorium doors will be locked. There will be a late boat at 8 p.m. for BCI residents.

Next week

At 6:30 p.m., Monday, March 5, Robert Netting, Indiana University, will talk on--

Kofyar cash-cropping: indigenous development on an African frontier

On Tuesday, March 6, we will have two noon seminars. At 11:30 a.m., Leo Buss from Yale University will speak on "Allorecognition genes control the units of selection in hydraetnid hydroids". At 1 p.m., Robert Netting will speak on "Smallholders: agricultural sustainability in cross cultural perspective".

REMINDER

The review meeting for SI Fellowships in Tropical Biology will be held on Wednesday, February 28, in the Tupper Meeting Room at 11:30 a.m. Please note change of time.

PEOPLE

Arrivals

- Roberta Rubinoff, Director, SI Office of Fellowships and Grants, February 22 - March 5, to participate in Review Meeting for SI Fellowships.
- Rick Steger and Bonita Benis, Oil Spill Project, February 23 - March 20, to continue work on stomatopods at Galeta Lab.
- Rudi Drent, University of Groningen, Holland, and son Hugo, February 24, to visit STRI facilities and consult with Henk Wolda.
- Mike Marshall, Oil Spill Project, February 25 - March 8, to continue work on seagrasses.
- Peter Glynn, University of Miami, with Mark Eaken, Joshua Feingold and Nancy Gassman, February 25, to go on RV Benjamin trip.
- Stephen Emlen and his wife Natalie Demong, Cornell University, February 25 - June 15, to study sexual selection and sex role reversal in the wattled jacana in Gamboa.
- Rita Jordan, Joan Zavala, Susan Weidman, SI Office of the Assistant Secretary for Research, and Rick Johnson, Special Assistant to the Treasurer, February 24 - March 2, to visit STRI and consult with administrative staff.
- Francisco Gomez-Dallmeier, Director, SI Man and the Biosphere Program, with Richard Rice and Margo Cable, February 28 - March 3, to visit STRI and work with Robin Foster.
- Paul Peterson, SI National Museum of Natural History, and Mary Jane West-Eberhard, STRI staff, February 26 - March 2, to participate in the Review Meeting for SI Fellowships.
- Robert Perkins, Director, SI Office of Procurement, and William Thomas, ODC Acting Deputy, February 26 - March 2, for bid opening of Ancon apartments.
- Mark Bush, February 26 - March 16, and Paul Colinvaux, March 1 - 10, both from Ohio State University, to continue field work with Dolores Piperno at El Valle.

Departures

- ◆ Eric Fischer, STRI Deputy Director, February 27 - March 7, to Washington, D.C. on official business.
- ◆ Stanley Rand, STRI scientist, March 2 - 11, on research trip to Ecuador.



On Thursday, March 1, STRI will host an informal ceremony at 4 p.m. at the Tupper Restaurant-Terrace in honor of Rita Jordan.

Rita is considered by many of us part of the STRI family. Her many years of support and understanding of STRI's mission have been invaluable, especially during difficult moments, such as her dedication during this past period of crisis and the days immediately after the December 20th military invasion of Panama. It has always been a good feeling to know that STRI will find Rita in the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Research, willing and efficiently handling and resolving a wide variety of problems for this bureau.

All friends of Rita are invited to join Dr. Ira Rubinoff on this occasion when we will toast for her continued success and good health.

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

Blue Cross / Blue Shield

If any employee needs to call Blue Cross-Blue Shield about claims or any other information, the number to call is (202) 646-9200.

From Tupper

Ice is available in the Chemistry Lab (Room 401) in the ice-maker machine.

Panama Driver's License

The Transit Authority, which handles drivers' licenses and drivers' permits, has been relocated to the intersection of Gaillard Highway and Frangipani Road, behind the Fruit and Vegetable Wholesale Market. •Their hours are 8 a.m.-12 and 1-4 p.m. •Licenses cost \$20 and you must take your passport, special or transient permit, other country driver's license, blood test (glycemia and blood type) and 2 photos. The blood tests can be done in any outside lab; 'Transito' no longer offers this service.

On Leave

Luis Turner, February 26 - March 2
Maria Morello, March 1 - 15

From the Credit Union

All Fax requests for withdrawals from AFCU accounts must include the member's signature and account number.

New Telephone Feature at Tupper

The Tupper telephone system has a direct dial feature when calling in as follows--

Dial 62-6540 and wait for a tone; then dial the extension you wish and it will connect you directly. This feature is especially useful before and after regular working hours. Also, if no one answers after four rings, the call will automatically be switched to the main switchboard.

Deadlines

Applications for grants from the Special Exhibition Fund are due in the SI Office of Assistant Secretary for Museums by February 28. For more information, contact the STRI Director's Office.

The deadline for submission of applications for the James E. Webb Fellowship Program to the SI Office of Fellowships and Grants is March 1. The Webb Fellowships are designed to promote excellence in management. Eligibility extends to staff of the Smithsonian Institution and to students enrolled in management degree programs in the United States at the time of application.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Help for STRI Persons Affected by Invasion /
Ayuda para Personal de STRI Afectado por la
Invasión**

We know of two persons at STRI that are homeless as a result of the past U.S. invasion. Donations are being collected to help them; please contact Vielka Vergel, Tupper Building.

Hemos sabido de dos personas en STRI que perdieron sus hogares a raíz de la reciente invasión. Se está recogiendo dinero para ayudarlos; si desea ayudar favor ponerse en contacto con Vielka Vergel, Edificio Tupper.

STRI Publications

- Robertson, R.D. 1989. Settlement and population dynamics of *Abudedefduf saxatilis* on patch reefs in Caribbean Panama. Proceedings of the 6th International Coral Reef Symposium, Australia, 1988, Vol. 2: 839-844.
- Sternberg, L.S.L., S.S. Mulkey and S.J. Wright. 1989. Oxygen isotope ratio stratification in a tropical moist forest. *Oecologia* 81: 51-56.

Assistants Available

Sandra Diamond-Tissue has a BS in wildlife ecology from McGill University, and is interested in working as an assistant or volunteer at STRI from May 1 - July 31, 1990. She worked as a marine biologist for the California Department of Fish and Game for five years, and currently as an associate wildlife biologist. Ms. Diamond is SCUBA certified and has knowledge of DBase, Lotus, SAS, Wordstar and other software. If interested, write 752 West 158th Street, Gardena, CA 90247, or call 213-532-1392.

Bill Leach is an undergraduate junior in Environmental Science at the University of California, Berkeley, who is seeking travel and fieldwork experience in tropical biology research or conservation. He will be available May 18-August 15, 1990. If necessary, he will pay his own airfare and room and board. References and transcript available from STRI Education Office. (2523 Ridge Road #207, Berkeley, CA 94709, (414) 649-9206.

Se Necesitan Voluntarios

El director del Parque Natural Metropolitano pide la colaboración de todos los empleados de STRI para que participen como voluntarios en un Día de Limpieza del parque que tendrá lugar el sábado, 3 de marzo. Para mayor información, consultar con Celideth Mendoza en Tivoli.

Positions Available

The Smithsonian Institution has an interdisciplinary position open at the National Museum of Natural History (NMNH) which may be filled by a biologist, ecologist, zoologist, entomologist or botanist. The position serves as the scientific director of the Museum's Neotropical Biodiversity Program in Peru, Bolivia and Brazil. Duties include planning, directing and administering program activities, personal research, representing NMNH in the field of biodiversity nationally and internationally, interacting with government and scientists in host countries, directing training programs in biodiversity, and others. This position is a GM-14/15. Applicants should submit an application for Federal Employment (SF-171) with a SI-662, a curriculum vitae, description of research and career goals and a list of publications, and arrange for three reference letters to be sent directly to the address below, all by **March 1**. Send to Smithsonian Institution, Office of Personnel Administration, Branch 1, P.O. Box 23762, Washington, D.C. 20026-3762 or call 202-287-3100 ext. 215 (refer to announcement # 90-1015).

Applications are being accepted for GS-9 position as General Biologist with the federal government to provide technical advice, consultation and direction related to conservation and management of the natural resources of Vandenberg Air Force Base, California. Duties include coordination and management of cooperative agreement with Nature Conservancy, and will involve rare plant research and implementation of management plans for sensitive plant and animal species. Contact Allan Naydol, Chief, Natural Resources and Comprehensive Planning at (805) 866-9687.

From the Personnel Office

---There is no better way to take the irk out of work than to put enthusiasm into it.

• Boredom on the job

A great many people these days complain that their work is boring. The tendency is to blame the job for lack of challenge. What usually makes work drudgery, however, is one's attitude--not the work itself.

No task need be boring, for the simple reason that every job contains within it a hidden challenge. That challenge is: How can it be done better?

Could anything be more boring than sweeping floors? Murray Spangler, a department store janitor in Canton, Ohio, wasn't bored, even though the dust made him wheeze and cough. Many men would have given up and quit. Instead, Spangler set out to find a better way to clean floors. "Why not eliminate the broom," he wondered, "maybe something that would suck up dust...?"

Spangler's question led to a crude but workable vaccum cleaner, which he induced an old friend in the leather business to finance. The friend's name was H. W. Hoover.

Remember, none are so old as those who have outlived enthusiasm.

If you keep your face to the sunshine you cannot see the shadow.



A Little Enthusiasm Makes Any Job Easier!

De la Oficina de Personal

---No hay mejor manera de quitarle lo fastidioso a un trabajo que ponerle un poco de entusiasmo.

• Aburrimiento en el trabajo

Mucha gente actualmente se queja de que su trabajo es aburrido. Existe la tendencia a echarle la culpa al trabajo por no ofrecer suficientes retos. Sin embargo, lo que hace al trabajo fastidioso es la actitud de la gente--no el trabajo en sí.

Ninguna tarea debería ser aburrida, por la sencilla razón de que cada trabajo contiene dentro de sí un oculto desafío. El desafío es: Cómo puedo hacerlo mejor?

Podría haber algo más aburrido que barrer pisos? Murray Spangler, aseoador en una tienda de departamentos en Canton, Ohio, no se aburría, a pesar de que el polvo lo hacía estornudar y toser. Muchos hombres hubiesen podido renunciar e irse. En vez de eso, Spangler se propuso encontrar una mejor manera de limpiar los pisos. "Porqué no eliminar la escoba," se preguntaba, "y quizás usar algo que absorba el polvo...?"

El interrogante de Spangler resultó en una aspiradora tosca, pero práctica, financiada por un viejo amigo de el que trabajaba en él negocio de cueros. El nombre de su amigo: H. W. Hoover.

Recuerden, nadie es tan viejo como aquel que ha perdido el entusiasmo.

Si mantienes la cara mirando al sol no podras ver la sombra.



Un Poco de Entusiasmo Facilita Cualquier Trabajo!