

STRI newsletter

January 4, 1991

SMITHSONIAN TROPICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE - Apartado 2072, Balboa, Panama

No. 1

SEMINARS

Tupper Center Auditorium

Tuesday, January 8, noon seminar speaker will be Dr. Eugene W. Schupp, Estación Biológica Donana, Spain.

Seed dispersal of Prunus mahaleb in southern Spain: quantity and quality.

Abstract

I evaluated several assumptions inherent in theoretical and empirical work on the evolution of seed dispersal provided by individual dispersal agents visiting *Prunus mahaleb*. Birds species differed in the quantity of seeds dispersed and in the microhabitats in which they deposited seeds. Because these microhabitats differed in quality to *P. mahaleb*, bird species differed in the quality of dispersal provided. Contrary to expectations, however, quantity and quality were not correlated.

Next Week

Tuesday, Jan 15, noon seminar speaker will be Dr. Piet J. Den Boer, Agricultural University of Wageningen.

Estimating the survival time of populations.

Thursday, Jan 17, tentative noon seminar speaker will be Dr. Douglas Futuyma, State University of New York at Stony Brook.

Phylogeny and evolution of insect/plant associations: chrysomelids and composites.

PEOPLE

Arrivals

- Steve Paton & family, Jan 1, new Terrestrial Data Manager for the ESP Project.



The end of the decade of the nineteen-eighties was marked by a "Blue Moon" the night of December 31. "Blue Moon" means a second full moon in a month. Full Moons (or other phases) occur on average each 29.53 days or 12.3683 times per year; so months containing 2 full Moons occur on average every 2.72 years, or every 2 years plus 7, 8 9 or 10 months. About 1 year in 19 has 2 such months ••• El final de la década fue marcada por una segunda luna llena en el mes, la noche del 31 de diciembre. Las lunas llenas (y otras fases) ocurren cada 29.53 días o 12.3683 veces al año, de modo que cada 2.72 años o cada 2 años y 7, 8, 9 ó 10 meses se presenta una segunda luna llena en un mes. Uno de cada 19 años presenta este fenómeno dos veces.

Información cortesía de Neal G. Smith.

- Simon King, BBC, Jan 7, will be filming at BCI and the tower crane at the Parque Natural Metropolitano.
- Deedra McClearn, Cornell University, Jan 7 - 22, to work on Gigante Peninsula with assistants Janis Kohler and Karen Zick Reiss.

Departures

- Jan 3 - 7, Nicholas Smythe, Staff Scientist, to Tegucigalpa, Honduras, to attend the macaw workshops.

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

Federal Health Plans ••• Programas Federales de Salud

All pre-treaty and U.S. citizens who are STRI employees and subscribe to any of the Federal health programs (PALIC and Blue Cross/Blue Shield, particularly) are informed to look up an important announcement in the bulletin board at each facility, pertaining to the pre-authorization that is being required for all types of hospitalizations other than emergencies. This requirement applies to ALL Federal health programs.

Se avisa a todos los empleados pre-tratado y a los de nacionalidad norteamericana que suscriben a alguno de los programas de salud Federales (PALIC y Blue Cross /Blue Shield, principalmente), que en el tablero de anuncios de sus respectivos lugares de trabajo, se encuentra un importante aviso relacionado con el requisito de una certificación previa en todo tipo de hospitalización que no sea por urgencia. Este requisito aplica a TODOS los programas de salud Federales.

Reminder from the Director's Office

Regents Fellowship nominations are due at the STRI Director's Office by January 11, 1991. Please be sure to submit all 13 copies (12 for Washington, D.C. and 1 for office files). Thank you.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Regents' Publication Program Awards

Dr. Olga Linares is one of the two recipients of the 1991 Regents' Publications Program Awards. Dr. Linares, an anthropologist at the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, will prepare a book on the social and cultural consequences of an agrarian change among the Jola people of Lower Casamance, Senegal. The second recipient is Dr. Richard Fiske, a geologist in the Department of Mineral Sciences at the National Museum of Natural History, who will prepare a book synthesizing the wide range of observations and scientific investigations made at Kilauea, presently the most active volcano on earth.

Position Available for Neotropical Field Biologist

The Center for Neotropical Biological Diversity at the University of Kansas anticipates a position for a Field Site Coordinator (FSC) for a Neotropical Biodiversity Program in Amazonian Peru. This program involved integrated sampling (including collection and preparation) of terrestrial vertebrates, selected group of insects (principally ants and lepidopterans), and woody plants by US and Latin American personnel. Data will be collected in a prescribed manner in quadrant systems and computerized. The FSC will spend 5-6 months/year in the field, help organize the field program, coordinate the field surveys, and participate in the publication of results. Funds have been requested to initiate the field program in June 1991, for three years, during which time each of the three field sites will be sampled twice for periods of two months each. With additional funding the program will be expanded in future years to include

other Neotropical regions.

Applicants must have an advanced degree(s) in an appropriate field, research interests in systematics or field biology, demonstrated expertise with Neotropical terrestrial vertebrates (preferred) or other appropriate groups of organisms, field experience in Latin America, experience coordinating teams of biologists in field studies (preferred), computer literacy (preferred), and a proficiency in English and Spanish. It is anticipated that the position will be effective for three years beginning 1 March 1991 or as soon as possible after that date. The anticipated salary is \$25,000 - \$29,000/year, plus good fringe benefits and all expenses in the field. Send letter describing qualifications, CV, copies of publications, and 3 letters of recommendation to:

Dr. William E. Duellman
Center for Neotropical Biological Diversity
Dyche Hall
University of Kansas
Lawrence, Kansas 66045-2454
Phone: (913)-864-3342 Fax: (913)-864-5335

An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.

Assistants Available

Alistair Sarre and Judith Mary Graham are interested in working as volunteers with researchers at STRI. Mr. Sarre has a BS in Forestry from the Australian National University. He worked in 1990 as a tutor at the University of Canberra, teaching basic principles of biology and demonstrating laboratory techniques. Mr. Sarre worked as a Forester with Alcoa of Australia and among his duties were management planning and environmental research. He also has a PADI Open Water Diver certificate.

Judith Mary Graham has a BS from the University of Sydney, Australia. Her work experience includes ranger duties with A.C.T. Parks & Conservation Service at Namadgi National Park and experience as a field assistant in Dorre Island measuring and tagging animals, mapping, etc.

They will be available from April to August 1991. If interested write:

32 Castlereagh Crescent
Macquarie ACT 2614
Australia
Tel: AUS 06 2512805



New T-Shirts at STRI Mini-Bookstore ••• Nuevas camisetas en la Mini-Librería del STRI

T-Shirts from Parque Natural Metropolitano are available at STRI Mini-Bookstore for \$7. as a support to the park ••• *El STRI está apoyando la venta de camisetas del Parque Natural Metropolitano, las que pueden ser adquiridas en nuestra Mini-Librería a un costo de \$7.*

FROM OTHER SOURCES

Ancient Traditions Benefit from Eagle Repository Smithsonian News Service

For North American Indians practicing traditional religious ceremonies, the National Eagle Repository is a valuable resource.

When U.S. wildlife agents in the field come across dead bald and golden eagles they send the carcasses to the repository, part of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Wildlife Forensics Laboratory located in Ashland, Oregon.

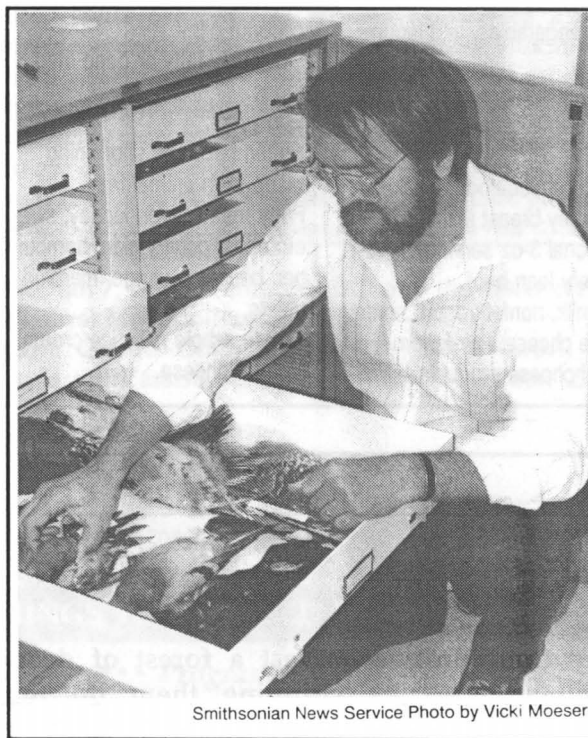
"Many of the birds are killed by electrocution, collision with some sort of vehicle or by natural causes" says James Kniffen, who oversees the distribution of the birds to American Indians for the use in sacred practices. "We typically get requests for an entire eagle. All the parts are used, from feathers to talons, for everything from ceremonial fans to headdresses."

The eagle is widely revered among native peoples, says Rayna Green, director of the American Indian program at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History. "In many tribes, only those people who have distinguished themselves in some way are allowed to handle or wear eagle feathers".

The requests for the eagles and their parts are filled on a first-come, first-served basis. The Bureau of Indian Affairs must certify that the person making the request is an enrolled member of a recognized tribe.

It has been illegal to hunt bald eagles in the U.S. since 1940, when Congress passed the Bald Eagle Protection Act. The bird is considered endangered in most of the country; its status is threatened in five states. Golden eagles are not endangered but are covered under the act because of their similarity to the bald eagles.

The program works well, Kniffen says, by eliminating the illegal slaughter of the birds while allowing American Indians to practice their centuries-old traditions.



Smithsonian News Service Photo by Vicki Moeser

Dr. Stephen Busack, pictured here, and other scientists at the Wildlife Forensics Lab are developing a collection of animals that will help them identify evidence in cases involving crimes among wildlife.

patient notes

Cholesterol

I You probably know that cholesterol is a type of fat found in the blood and that too much of it greatly increases the risk of heart attack or stroke. Obviously, then, it is important to know how much cholesterol is in your blood and to keep it low or, if it is too high, to lower it.

Almost everyone knows how important is to cut down on foods that contain cholesterol, but many people do not know that even if you don't eat anything containing cholesterol, your body manufactures it whenever you eat saturated fat. Therefore, it is extremely important that you cut down on both.

Choose

High-fiber cereals and whole-grain, low fat breads.
Fruits, vegetables, and legumes.
Egg whites and egg substitutes.
Soft diet margarine, canola oil, and olive oil.
Broiled fish, seafood, chicken and turkey breast (skinless), occasional 3-oz serving of "select" very lean beef.
Skim milk, nonfat yogurt, nonfat cottage cheese, low-fat processed cheese products.

Avoid

Pastries, snack foods, and candies made with palm or coconut oil.
Obviously fatty or deep-fried foods.
Egg yolks.
Butter, lard, and shortening made from animal fat.
Fatty meats, liver, kidney, sweetbreads, poultry skin, hamburger, bacon, sausage, marbled meats.
Cream, whole milk, ice cream, high-fat cheese.

Saturated fat is present in animal fats and also in palm oil and coconut oil, which are widely used in bakery goods, snack foods, and candies. To avoid these, read food labels carefully.

If your cholesterol level is high, you will want to limit the amount of cholesterol you consume each day to 200 to 300 milligrams and saturated fat to a certain number of grams - probably between 10 and 28. Books and pamphlets are available that can help you choose the right foods to do this. At the bottom of the page is a general guide for adults.

It is also important to not smoke, to lose weight if you need to, and to exercise regularly. If a low-cholesterol, low-saturated-fat diet and exercise do not lower your cholesterol sufficiently, medications may also be needed.



Avoid foods loaded with saturated fats.

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From: 365 ways to save our planet
• *Page-a-day calendar*

Many communities harvest a forest of dead Christmas trees by chipping them up for wonderfully fragrant mulch. Residents can take the chips home for their gardens. If your town doesn't sponsor a program like this, ask a tree surgeon or land-scaper with a chipper.

