

# STRI newsletter

August 30, 1991

SMITHSONIAN TROPICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE - Apartado 2072, Balboa, Panama

No. 35

## TUPPER CENTER SEMINARS

Tuesday, September 3, noon seminar speaker will be Kristina Ovaska, University of British Columbia.

### *Competition and Territoriality among Western Plethodontid Salamanders*

#### Abstract

Competition and predation are important in structuring communities of plethodontid salamanders in eastern North America. In contrast, little information exists on western plethodontids, separated from their eastern counterparts for approximately 40 million years. I examined agonistic behavior and spacing of three sympatric western *Plethodon* (*P. dunni*, *P. vandykei* and *P. vehiculum*) in enclosures. Resident *P. dunni* were equally aggressive towards conspecific and congeneric salamanders introduced to their cages. However, they were evenly spaced under cover objects only when paired with conspecific individual and when given a diet that allowed weight gains. In contrast *P. vehiculum* and *P. vandykei* showed little aggression and random spacing. Preliminary results from a field study indicate that *P. dunni* and *P. vehiculum* occupy similar microhabitats along moist stream banks in Washington, but that *P. vehiculum* also inhabits drier sites away from streams. *Plethodon dunni* may exclude *P. vehiculum* and other salamanders from favorable moist sites that harbor abundant prey through its territorial behavior.

Traducción simultánea disponible.

### Next Week

No noon seminar scheduled for Tuesday, September 10.

### Upcoming Events

SEPTEMBER 1991						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

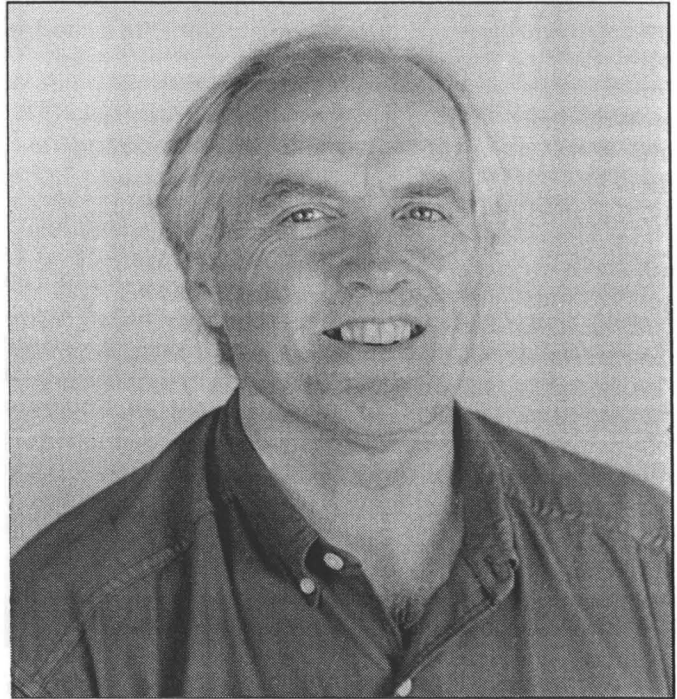
Sep 2, Labor Day is a STRI Holiday

Sep 9, Deadline for receipt of proposals for Seidell Endowment Fund in STRI Director's Office. If you need guidelines, call Audrey Smith.

Sep 16, Deadline for proposals to SI Women's Committee in STRI Director's Office.

Sep 20, Deadline for receipt of proposals for Scholarly Studies Program in STRI Director's Office.

Sep 23-27, Ross Simons and Maria Ballantyne to visit STRI.



(Photo: C.C. Hansen)

### From the Director ••• Mensaje del Director

I am pleased to welcome to STRI Anthony Coates and his wife Janet, who arrive in Panama on Sep 3. Dr. Coates will assume the position of deputy director at STRI, vacated a year ago by Eric Fischer.

Coates brings extensive experience to STRI in academic and scientific administration. Most recently he served as associate vice president for academic affairs and research at George Washington in Washington, D.C. He holds two doctorates, one from the University of London, England, and another from the University of Caen, in Calvados, France. Since 1976 he has worked as professor of geology at George Washington University. Prior to that time he spent time as a visiting professor at the Musée National d'Histoire Naturelle in Paris, France, at Oxford University and at the University of London. Coates is a familiar face at the Naos Marine Laboratory, where he has worked as a visiting scientist since 1985. His current research interests include the geology of tropical America and the evolutionary history of corals and coral reefs.

•••

Me complace darle la bienvenida al STRI a Anthony Coates y a su esposa Janet, quienes llegarán a Panamá el 3 de septiembre. El Dr. Coates ocupará la posición de Subdirector del STRI, vacante desde hace un año por la renuncia de Eric Fischer.

El Dr. Coates trae consigo vasta experiencia en administración científica y académica. Últimamente ocupó el cargo de Vice-Presidente para Asuntos Académicos y de Investigación en la Universidad de George Washington en Washington D.C. Coates cuenta con dos doctorados: uno de la Universidad de Londres en Inglaterra y otro de la Universidad de Caen en Calvados, Francia. Desde 1976 ha trabajado como profesor de geología en la Universidad de George Washington. Antes de ello fungió durante algún tiempo como profesor visitante en el Museo Nacional de Historia Natural en París, Francia, en la Universidad de Oxford y en la Universidad de Londres. El Dr. Coates es un investigador conocido en el Laboratorio Marino de Naos, donde ha trabajado como científico visitante desde 1985. Sus intereses de investigación en el presente incluyen la geología de la América tropical y la historia evolutiva de corales y arrecifes coralinos.

## PEOPLE

### Arrivals

- Ann Oliver, Duke University Marine Laboratory, short-term fellow, Sep 1-Oct 31, to work on hormonal control of social and reproductive status in simultaneous hermaphrodites of the genus *Serranus* at San Blas.
- Sally Levings, Sep 1-7, to work in Oil Spill Project.
- Russell Greenberg, National Zoological Park, Sep 1-24, to work on population dynamics of some understory birds on BCI.
- Antony Coates, deputy director and wife Janet, Sep 3, to take up post at STRI.
- Jeff Brawn, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University Sept 4-8, to work on Oil Spill Project.
- Gloria Batista, University of California, Berkeley, Sep 8-Nov 8, to do a feasibility study of *Gracilaria* spp. farming in the Bahia Las Minas Region. Also coming to act as a consultant will be Dr. Carol Langhause for three weeks.

### Departures

- Elena Lombardo, Office of External Affairs, Sep 1-30, to Washington, D.C. on official business and some vacation time.
- Gloria Maggiori, Visitor Services Office, Sep 1-8, to Washington, D.C. on official business.
- Henk Wolda, STRI Scientist, Sep 6-17, to Moscow, Idaho, and Hattiesburg, MI, to consult with colleagues at the University of Idaho and University of South Mississippi.

## THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

### Mesa Redonda en STRI

El jueves 5 de septiembre se llevará a cabo una mesa redonda sobre el tema "Agricultura Sostenible: una Perspectiva Norte Sur" dentro del marco de la VI Asamblea General de REDCA. La mesa redonda se ha programado para iniciar a las 8:30 am hasta las 6 pm en el auditorio del Centro Tupper, y se contará con la presencia de panelistas de América del Norte, América del Sur y de Europa.

### Proposals for the Women's Committee

Proposals for SI Women's Committee are due in the Office of the Director no later than Sep 16. They are due in Washington on Sep 23. Guidelines were distributed to all staff on Jun 20. Contact the Office of the Director for further information.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Congratulations

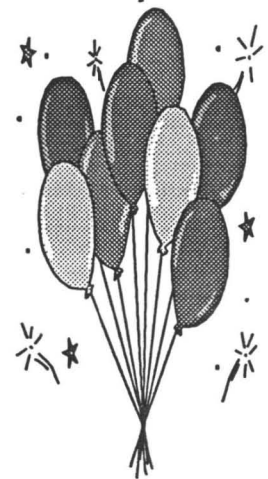
To Héctor Guzmán, Oil Spill researcher, who received an Overseas Research Student Award to complete doctoral studies in biology at the University of Newcastle, England.

### Best Paper Award

At the joint meetings of the Society for the Study of Evolution, Society of Systematic Biologists, and American Society of Naturalists in Hawaii, Peng Chai and Robert Srygley received the Presidential Award from the American Society of Naturalists for the best papers in The American Naturalists during 1990. Robert Srygley was a STRI short-term fellow and is a familiar face on BCI.

### September STRI Birthdays ••• Cumpleaños

Marco Díaz	1
Audrey Smith	1
Eldredge Bermingham	2
Alejandro Caballero	4
Ricardo Beteta	5
Jaime Sierra	5
Ruben López	7
Virgilio Sánchez	9
Carlos Tejada	9
Nicolas Sugasti	10
Luis Turner	14
William Eberhard	15
María Luz Calderón	25
Lastenio Guzmán	28
Stanley Rand	29
Mirna Fernández	30



### Audubon Field Trip

A planned overnight Audubon field trip for sometime in Sep to the province of Coclé will include a trip to El Copé and a trip to the Aguadulce Salt Flats in search of migrating shorebirds. Contact Norita Scott, 52-6193 if interested.

### Job Available

The Department of Psychology, Univ. of Wisconsin-Madison, anticipates making faculty appointments beginning Aug 1992 in some areas. One of these is in Biological Psychology, as an Assistant Professor. Candidates working on any aspect of the biological bases of behavior will be considered.

A *curriculum vitae* plus three letters of evaluation and selected reprints should be sent to the Search Committee, Biological Psychology, Department of Psychology, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1202 West Johnson Street, Madison, WI 53706. The University of Wisconsin-Madison is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. To ensure consideration, applications should be received by Nov 1, 1991.

### STRI NEW PUBLICATIONS

Adler, Gregory and Seamon, Joshua. 1991.

Distribution and abundance of a tropical rodent, the spiny rat, on islands in Panama. *Journal of Tropical Ecology* 7: 349-360.

Leigh, Jr., Ebgert Giles. 1991. "Genes, bees and ecosystems: the evolution of a common interest among individuals." *Trends in Ecology and Evolution* 6(8): 257-262.

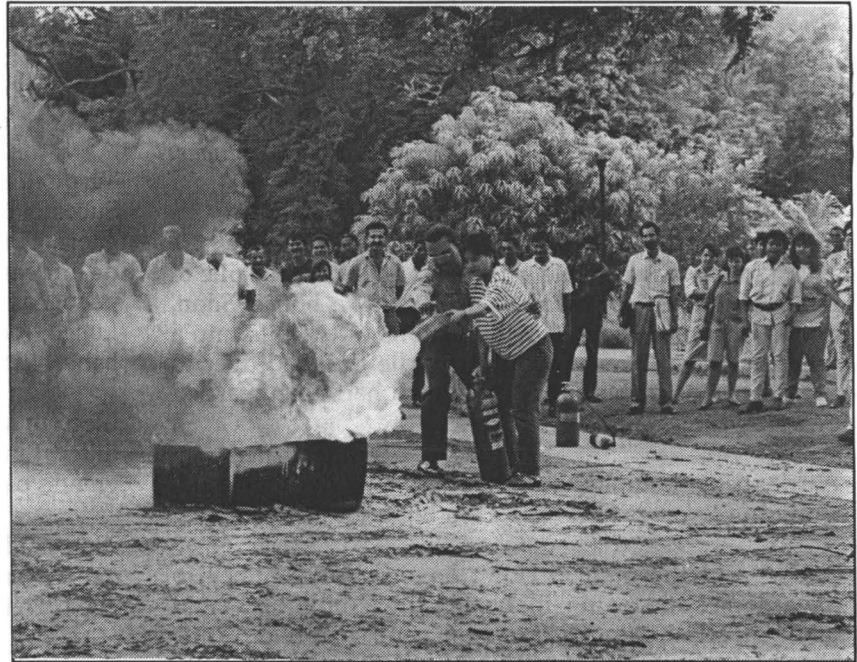
Poinar, Jr., George O. and Herre, Edward A. 1991. "Speciation and adaptive radiation in the fig wasp nematode, *Parasitodiplogaster* (Diplogasteridae: Rhabditida) in Panama." *Revue Nématologie* 14(3): 361-374.

Winter, Klaus and Königer, Martina. 1991. "Dry matter production and photosynthetic capacity in *Gossypium hirsutum* L. under conditions of slightly suboptimum leaf temperatures and high levels of irradiance." *Oecologia* 87: 190-197.

### ENTRENAMIENTO

#### Curso de la Organización para Estudios Tropicales

La Organización de Estudios Tropicales anuncia el curso Ecología de Poblaciones, el



Mr. Urango, from the Balboa Fire Department, instructs Naos secretary, Argelis Guevara, during an exercise in the use of fire extinguishers on Aug 16. This was the first seminar on fire prevention and the use of fire control equipment for STRI employees held at the Tupper Center ••• El Sr. Urango, del Departamento de Bomberos de Balboa, instruye a Argelis Guevara, secretaria de Naos, en el uso de extintores de incendio el 16 de agosto pasado. Es la primera vez que se da un curso de prevención de incendios y uso de equipo de control para empleados de STRI en el Centro Tupper.

(Foto: A. Caballero)

cual expondrá al alumno a la teoría y práctica del estudio de las poblaciones de plantas y animales bajo condiciones naturales. El curso es del 9 de enero al 28 de febrero de 1992. El curso se ofrece a individuos que por su iniciativa demuestren ser potenciales generadores de cambio en su desempeño profesional. Se requiere el grado de bachiller universitario en Biología, Ecología, Agronomía o disciplina afín. La solicitud de inscripción debe ser recibida en la OTS, Costa Rica antes del 10 de septiembre de 1991. A partir del 1ro de octubre se notificará a los escogidos. Aquellos que logren financiamiento quedan confirmados en el curso. El costo total es de \$3,260. Para mayor información llame a la Oficina de Educación de STRI o escriba a la Organización de Estudios Tropicales, Ecología de Poblaciones, Apartado 676-2050 San Pedro Montes de Oca, San José, Costa Rica.

#### Se Vende

Moto Honda "scooter" elite 150 cc, nueva, poco uso, \$1,800. Interesados favor llamar a Héctor Guzmán de día 28-4150 y de noche 64-3891.

#### Last Minute News

The Corotú Restaurant at Tupper Center will reopen on Tuesday Sep 3 under a new concessionaire.

## From the Personnel Office ••• *De la Oficina de Personal*

*Some people think in terms of problems  
and some in terms of solutions.*

### You can do it!

There once was a terrible storm and an enormous pile of mud and rocks was washed up against a house. Soon, a man began to shovel small portions of the pile into a wheelbarrow. Then he would trundle the load over to the other side of his property, which had been washed away by the rain.

A friend came along, watched for a while, then said, "Jim, don't you realize that's too big a job for you?"

"Well," said the man, "I don't have enough money to have somebody come in here with a bulldozer, and while I'll admit it looks like to big a job for me, I'm not ready to admit that I can't do it without giving it a try."

Here was a man who didn't waste time worrying about the size of a job or his incapacity to finish it. He went ahead and started it. That's the first thing any of us should do if we want to whittle any job down to our size.

Writer Charles Swindoll has some good advice for all of us when we find ourselves facing a task that seems unmountable.

Don't focus on the whole enchilada, he suggests, take the job in bite-size chunks. Even the most courageous can be overwhelmed by looking at what has to be done in its entirety.

If you're running in a 26-mile marathon, remember that every mile is run one step at a time. If you are writing a book, do it one page at a time. If you're trying to master a new language, try it one word at a time. There are 365 days in the average year. Divide any project by 365 and you'll find that no job is all that intimidating.

All it take is discipline —daily discipline, not annual discipline.

*Skill to do comes from doing.*  
Anonymous

*Algunas personas piensan en los problemas;  
otras, en las soluciones.*

### Tu puedes hacerlo!

Sucedió una vez que hubo una gran tormenta y una enorme cantidad de lodo y piedras se acumuló al costado de una casa. Al poco tiempo, un hombre comenzó a palear pequeñas porciones del montón apilado en una carretilla. Luego, rodaba la carga al otro lado de su propiedad que había sido arrasada por la lluvia.

Llegó un amigo, quien lo observó por un rato, y luego le dijo: "¿Jim, no te das cuenta que es un trabajo demasiado grande para ti?"

"Bueno," dijo el hombre, "yo no tengo suficiente dinero para que venga alguien con una excavadora, y aunque admito que pareciera ser un trabajo muy grande para mí, tampoco voy a admitir que no lo puedo hacer sin siquiera tratar."

He aquí un hombre que no perdió tiempo en preocuparse por la magnitud de un trabajo o su incapacidad para terminarlo. Simplemente comenzó a hacerlo. Esta es la primera cosa que cualquiera de nosotros debe hacer si deseamos ubicar cualquier trabajo a nuestra medida.

El escritor Charles Swindoll nos da un buen consejo cuando nos enfrentemos a una tarea que pareciera ser insuperable.

No enfoques toda la enchilada, sugiere; ataca el trabajo a mordiscos. Hasta los más valerosos pueden sentirse sobrecogidos si miran la totalidad de lo que tienen que hacer.

Si vas a correr el maratón de 26 millas, recuerda que cada milla se corre un paso a la vez. Si estás escribiendo un libro, hazlo una página a la vez. Si estás tratando de dominar un idioma, hazlo una palabra a la vez. El año promedio tiene 365 días. Divide cualquier proyecto en 365 y verás que ninguna tarea es tan amenazadora como parecía.

Todo lo que se necesita es disciplina —disciplina diaria, no anual.

*La habilidad para hacer se adquiere haciendo.*  
Anónimo

