

STRI news '98

Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute • P.O. Box 2072, Balboa, Panamá • Tel 227-6022 • Fax 232-5978

AT THE TUPPER CENTER

Global Cacao Conference

From 31st March to 3rd April, 80 distinguished experts will gather in Panama to analyze the global situation of cacao growing and the environment. The event, called "First International Workshop on Sustainable Cacao Growing", will analyze the state of know-how on this important tropical plant and its future role in improving the livelihood of small farmers and preserving biodiversity in tropical forests.

These discussions will involve biologists, zoologists, ecologists, agronomists, economists and anthropologists as well as representatives of the major chocolate corporations.

The event is organized by three branches of the Smithsonian Institution: The Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, the Migratory Bird Center and the Institute for Conservation Biology. The generosity of the Mars Corporation has provided the opportunity to assemble, in Panama, such a distinguished list of participants.

There are six million hectares of cacao in the world located in the tropical countries of Latin America, Africa, Asia and Oceania. A major share of cacao production is supplied by small farmers who planted in association with subsistence crops and under the shade of large trees that provide refuge for many species of wildlife.

In Panama, cacao growing concentrates in the wet Caribbean coastline: Colón, San Blas, and Bocas del Toro. To provide the international experts an opportunity to meet first hand with local cacao growers, the organizers have programmed a field trip to the Almirante-Changuinola sector of the Bocas del Toro province.

For STRI, the arrangements have been made by Lisa Barnett, Monica Alvarado, Stanley Heckadon and Allen Herre.

Stanley Heckadon-Moreno



STRI's David Roubik gives a presentation during the Interactions Symposium held at the Tupper Center on Wednesday, March 18. The meetings covered different aspects of ecology, genetics, physiology, chemistry, behavior, history, culture and evolution ••• David Roubik, de STRI da una presentación durante el Congreso de Interacciones que se llevó a cabo en el Centro Tupper el miércoles 18 de marzo. Las reuniones cubrieron temas sobre ecología, genética, fisiología, química, conducta, historia, cultura y evolución. (Foto: M.A. Guerra)

Expertos Analizarán en Panamá Situación Mundial del Cacao

Del 31 de marzo al 3 de abril se reunirán en Panamá 80 connotados expertos internacionales para analizar la situación mundial del cultivo del cacao y el medio ambiente. El evento, titulado "Primer Seminario Taller Internacional sobre el Cultivo Sostenible del Cacao", analizará el estado del conocimiento científico sobre esta importante planta tropical y el papel que en el futuro puede jugar para mejorar las condiciones de los pequeños agricultores y en conservar la biodiversidad de los bosques tropicales. Participarán en estas discusiones biólogos, zoólogos, ecólogos, agrónomos, antropólogos, economistas y representantes de las grandes corporaciones chocolateras. El evento es organizado por tres organismos del Instituto Smithsonian: el Instituto Smithsonian de Investigaciones Tropicales, con sede en Panamá, el Centro para las Aves Migratorias y el Instituto para la Conservación Biológica. El poder reunir en Panamá a tantos connotados especialistas ha sido posible gracias al patrocinio de la gigantesca corporación Mars.

Existen a nivel mundial 6 millones de hectáreas bajo cacao, ubicadas en los países tropicales de América, África, Asia y Oceanía. Buena parte de la producción proviene de pequeñas fincas donde el cacao se siembra asociado con

cultivos que dan refugio a muchas especies de vida silvestre. En Panamá, el cultivo del cacao se concentra en la zona costera de la vertiente húmeda del Atlántico: San Blas, Colón, Veraguas y Bocas del Toro.

Para que los expertos internacionales conozcan de primera mano la situación de los pequeños productores de cacao de Panamá, los organizadores han programado una gira de campo a fincas cacaoteras del sector Almirante-Changuinola en la provincia de Bocas del Toro.

Por STRI, los arreglos se han llevado a cabo por Lisa Barnett, Mónica Alvarado, Stanley Heckadon y Allen Herre. Stanley Heckadon-Moreno

BAMBI SEMINAR

Thursday, April 2, Bambi seminar speaker will be Heather Heying, University of Michigan

Sexual Selection and Habitat Use in Madagascar Poison Frogs, with Comparisons to Neotropical Poison Dart Frogs

Transportation and dinner reservations are essential. Please call BCI at 272-2124, or E-mail: Bambi

PEOPLE

- Eighty participants from 22 countries, to attend the First Sustainable Cacao Workshop, Mar 29 - Apr 2, at Tupper.
- Melvin Tyree, University of Vermont, Mar 29 - Apr 26, to continue research in the evolution and structure of terrestrial ecosystems, and the integration of canopy and hydraulic architecture in *Psychotria* species along light and moisture gradients, on BCI.
- James Hamrick, University of Georgia, Mar 29 - Apr 4, to study the comparative population genetics of two tropical tree species from BCI, Panama and Palo Verde, Costa Rica, on a Mellon Research Enhancement Award, at BCI and the OTS.
- David Taylor, University of Michigan, Mar 31 - Apr 4, to conduct a taxonomic revision of the genus *Chione* (Rubiaceae), at Tupper.
- In-Ho Choi, Yonsei University, Korea, Mar 31 - Apr 27, to study the defensive responses of anuran amphibians against predation: variation in defense mechanisms and its ecological significance, on BCI.
- Mary Alice Coffroth, Denis Goulet and Calin Duke, University of Buffalo, Apr 2-28, to study the ontogeny and dynamics of cnidarian-algal symbiosis, in San Blas.
- Robert Percy, Mellon senior fellow from the University of California, to conduct integrative studies of photo-

synthesis and whole plant performance in the understorey, on BCI.

Departures

- Anthony Coates, Mar 29-31, to Miami, FL, on official business.
- Ira Rubinoff, April 3-13, to Washington D.C., on official business at SI.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

STRI March Birthdays

Nelson Hernández	1
Diomedes Abrego	1
Axel Calderón	2
Neal G. Smith	3
Mercedes Denis	3
Dolores Piperno	7
Gabriel Martínez	9
Marcela Paz	10
Efrain Domínguez	12
Vielka Rodríguez	12
América Staff	14
Ismael González	23
Marcos Guerra	27



Internship for Central American Biologists

The Villamette National Forest's Neotropical Migratory Bird Program will again host a Mexican or Central American biologist during the summer of 1998. This year Villamette would like to link the Forest's internship program with a work experience through the Institute for Bird Populations in Ft. Reyes, California. Between May and August, the selected intern would participate in the Monitoring Avian Productivity program and be part of a two-person team operating mistnetting stations on the Villamette National Forest. Requirements: 2 years college in a natural resources or biology curriculum or comparable work experience; a good ability to read and speak English and a strong interest in integrated natural resource management. For more information, please contact Stanley Heckadon, STRI.

IFARHU Ofrece Beca Internacional

Biotecnología en Plantas y Microorganismos en la A cultura: Israel, Rehovot. 7 semanas de duración. Idioma del curso: inglés. Fecha de cierre del concurso: 13 de mayo de 1998. Requisitos: título en biología. Mayor información en la Oficina de Educación #330.