

Tupper seminar

Tue, Jun 15, noon seminar speaker will be Gregory Retallack, University of Oregon

The Proserpina principle: A role for life in paleoclimatic fluctuations of the past and future

Bambi seminar

Thu, Jun 17, Bambi seminar speaker will be Gregory Retallack, University of Oregon

Title to be announced

Arrivals

Michael Wasserman, University of Florida, Jun 13-29, to work with Katharine Milton, on BCI.

Phillip Hoos, University of California in Santa Cruz, Jun 14 - Jul 7, to conduct an investigation of invasion of Atlantic tarpon on the Pacific side of Panama, at Naos.

Lizzy Coley, University of Utah, Jun 14 - Jul 4, to continue with long term studies of herbivory and pathogen damage to tropical trees, on BCI.

David Kikuchi, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Jun 14 - Jul 30, to work with Jim Dalling, on BCI.

Jeanne Robertson, Cornell University, Jun 15 - Aug 10, to work on two projects: Why are some species narrowly distributed, to a specific habitat type, while others range broadly, restricted occupying a variety of habitat types?; and The distribution patterns of phenotypic and genetic diversity for a wide-ranging neotropical frog, in Gamboa, El Copé and Fortuna.



Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, Panamá

www.stri.org

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Getting it right: STRI's ICBG program is model to bioprojects in developing countries



In a news feature of *Nature* (June 10), *Nature's* US West Coast correspondent Rex Dalton draws the present situation of bioprospecting efforts carried out in Costa Rica, Panama and the Philippines. The article "Bioprospects less than golden" describes the circumstances for which the search for potentially valuable natural products has become difficult in some developing countries, and why pharmaceutical companies are reluctant to continue financing large bioprospecting projects. In 1992 the Convention on Biological Diversity was agreed at Rio de Janeiro as a framework to help the world's biological resources be used in a controlled and prudent way. Scientists, governments and commercial companies would work together in harmony... But bioprospecting still rises suspicion in officials of developing countries. On the other hand, the STRI's International Cooperative Biodiversity Groups (ICBG) experience in Panama is a success story. The project has evolved into a network of six laboratories employing ten senior scientists, nearly 60 technicians and training dozens of local students. Even though great drug discoveries and great royalties are still underway, the project—meticulous in transparency—have trained people, created jobs, and developed local awareness of biodiversity.

And while in the Philippines bioprospecting is difficult even to taxonomists, in Panama the ICBG project is identifying compounds to treat tropical diseases and building up capacity on the ground. The photo shows ICBG's Rafael Aizprúa and Nayda Flores, examining a fruit, on BCI

En un artículo de noticias de *Nature* (10 de junio), el corresponsal de *Nature* de la costa oeste de EU, Rex Dalton pinta la situación actual de los esfuerzos de bioprospección en Costa Rica, Panamá y las Filipinas. El artículo "Bioprospects less than golden" [Proyectos de bioprospección lejos de brillar] describe las circunstancias por las cuales la búsqueda de productos naturales potencialmente valiosos se ha tornado difícil en algunos países en desarrollo, y por qué las compañías farmacéuticas dudan en mantener financiamientos a proyectos a largo plazo. En 1992 la Convención de Diversidad Biológica se firmó en Rio de Janeiro como marco para ayudar a que los recursos biológicos del mundo se usaran de forma controlada y prudente. Científicos, gobiernos y compañías comerciales trabajarían juntos en armonía... Pero la bioprospección sigue levantando sospechas en los países en desarrollo. Por otro lado, la experiencia de los Grupos de Colaboración Internacional para la Biodiversidad (ICBG) de STRI es una historia exitosa. El proyecto ha evolucionado en una red de seis laboratorios que emplea a diez científicos "senior" y cerca de 60 técnicos, y que entrena a docenas de estudiantes locales. Aunque los grandes descubrimientos de medicamentos y las grandes ganancias aun están en proceso, el proyecto—meticulosamente transparente—ha entrenado personal, ha creado trabajos y ha desarrollado conciencia local sobre la biodiversidad. Y mientras la bioprospección en Filipinas es difícil aún para los taxónomos, en Panamá, el proyecto ICBG identifica compuestos para tratar enfermedades tropicales y construye una sólida plataforma de trabajo. La foto muestra a Rafael Aizprúa y Nayda Flores, examinando una fruta, en BCI.

More arrivals

Robert Thacker, University of Alabama at Birmingham, Jun 15-30, to study molecular systematics and biogeography of keratose sponges, at Bocas.

Gregory Gilbert, University of California in Santa Cruz, Jun 15 - Aug 1, to study the phylogenetic structure of plant pathogen host ranges, in Gamboa.

Heather Briggs, intern from Nevada, Jun 15 - Sep 15, to work with David Roubik, at Tupper.

Sharon Gill and Elizabeth Alfson, Princeton University, Jun 15 - Jul 12, to work with Sharon Gill, in Gamboa.

Elizabeth Whiteman, University of East Anglia, Jun 15 - Jul 3, to study sex and speciation in marine fishes, at Bocas del Toro.

Kerry McPhail, University of Miami, Jun 15, to work with Anthony Coates, at Bocas.

Ingrid Parket, University of California in Santa Cruz, Jun 15 - Aug 1, to study the geographic origin and recruitment patterns in *Chrysophyllum*, on BCI and Gamboa.

Katherine Milton, University of California at Berkeley, Jun 16 - Jul 10, to continue with howler monkey research projects, on BCI.

Elizabeth Whiteman, University of East Anglia, England, Jun 16 - Jul 3, to study the sex and speciation in marine fishes, at Bocas.

Kim Hoke, University of Texas at Austin, Jun 17 - Jul 17, to study the mechanisms of mate recognition in frogs, in Gamboa.



Official group photo of the participants of the Soils and Hydrology Workshop, held at STRI from May 30 - Jun 8 on BCI. Toma oficial de los participantes del Taller sobre Suelos e Hidrología que se llevó a cabo en STRI del 30 de mayo al 8 de junio en BCI.

Congratulations!

To Bill Wcislo and Donna Conlon

for the birth of their twin boys Alex (right) and Lucas (left),

on Saturday, June 5. They weighed about 4 and 4 ½ pounds each. All mother and children are fine.



For rent

Furnished house in Santa Cruz, Gamboa. Two bedrooms, office, bathroom, lounge with dining area, kitchen (with utensils and crockery), and utility room with washing machine. Hot water. \$375 per month or \$100 per week. Includes electricity, water, telephone, weekly cleaning, gardening and maintenance.

Interested call Emma Sayer at 660-0590 or sayere@bci.stri.edu

Photo of a coral snake (*Micrurus nigrocinctus*) recently taken by Tania Brenes near the CTFS plot on BCI. Do not disturb!



More arrivals

Kathleen Lynch, University of Texas at Austin, Jun 17 - Jul 20, to study the role of steroid hormones in modulating central auditory areas of the Túngara frog, in Gamboa.

New publications

Dalton, Rex. "Bioprospects less than golden." 2004. *Nature* 429 (June 10): 598-600.

Degen, Bernd, and Roubik, David W. 2004. "Effects of animal pollination on pollen dispersal, selfing, and effective population size of tropical trees: A simulation study." *Biotropica* 136(2): 165-179.

Eberhard, Jessica R., and Bermingham, Eldredge. 2004. "Phylogeny and biogeography of the *Amazona ochrocephala* (Aves: Psittacidae) complex." *The Auk* 121(2): 318-332.

Emlen, Stephen T., and Wrege, Peter H. 2004. "Size dimorphism, intrasexual competition, and sexual selection in wattled jacana (*Jacana jacana*), a sex-role-reversed shorebird in Panama." *The Auk* 121(2): 391-403.

Fedy, Bradley C., and Stutchbury, Bridget J. M. 2004. "Territory switching and floating in white-bellied antbird (*Myrmeciza longipes*): a resident tropical passerine in Panama." *The Auk* 121(2): 486-496.

Kweskin, M.P. 2004. "Jiggling in the fungus-growing ant *Cyphomyrmex costatus*: a response to collembolan garden invaders?" *Insectes Sociaux* 51(2): 158-162.