

## Tupper seminar

Tuesday, January 13, noon seminar speaker will be Ran Nathan, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel

**Dorothy's dilemma and the unification of plant population: how far is the end of the rainbow?**

## Bambi seminar

Thursday, January 15, Bambi seminar speaker will be Joe Holtum, James Cooke University, Australia

**CAM in tropical epiphytes: why have a little bit?**

## Conservation forum

A conservation forum will be held on Tuesday, January 13 at 2pm at the Tupper auditorium. The meeting aims to produce a list of the topics and lecturers for the upcoming course "STRI's Environmental Decision Makers" Anyone interested in environmental conservation in Panama is welcome to attend.

## Arrivals

Michael Hellberg, Ron Eyton and Michael Taylor, Louisiana State University, Jan 10-17, to study the divergence of gamete recognition proteins across the Isthmus of Panama, on Bocas del Toro.



Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, Panamá

[www.stri.org](http://www.stri.org) January 9, 2004

## Summer time at Culebra!

Copa Airlines invited 90 children from deprived backgrounds to a day at STRI's Marine Exhibition Center in Culebra, last month. Led by our nature guides, they explored animal life at the beach, the turtle and fish ponds and looked for animals along the new dry tropical forest trail.

Then "Pilli", Copa's fairy godmother made her appearance at Culebra's auditorium and took them to Tocumen International Airport where they boarded a jet for their first ever airplane flight. Culebra nature guides David Olivarren, Leisy Puertas and Marco Pitty led the children in this discovery path.

STRI has organized four Summer Workshops for children 8-12 year old for Thu, Jan 15, Fri, Jan 16, Tue, Jan 20 and Wed, Jan 21, from 8am - 12m. The cost is \$15 (includes materials and certificate). Call 212-8793 and 212-8794 for a reservation. Registration is limited.



Copa Airlines invitó a 90 niños de áreas marginadas a un día en el Centro de Exhibiciones Marinas en Punta Culebra, el mes pasado. Junto con nuestros guías naturalistas, exploraron la vida animal en la playa, los estanques para peces y tortugas y buscaron animales a lo largo del nuevo sendero de bosque tropical. "Pilli", hada madrina de Copa, hizo su aparición en el auditorio de Culebra y se llevó a los niños al Aeropuerto Internacional de Tocumen, donde abordarían un jet para su primer viaje en avión. Los guías naturalistas de Culebra, David Olivarren, Leisy Puertas y Marco Pitty acompañaron a los niños en esta jornada de descubrimientos. STRI ha organizado cuatro talleres de verano para niños de 8-12 años los días jueves y viernes 15-16 de enero y martes y miércoles 20 a 21 de enero. El costo es de \$15 (incluye materiales y certificado). Llame al 212-8793 y 212-8794 para hacer su reservación. Los cupos son limitados.

# TALLERES DE VERANO

en el Centro de Exhibiciones Marinas de Punta Culebra

### ¿QUÉ OFRECEMOS?

Convivir con la naturaleza, despertar los sentidos, compartir con amigos y disfrutar el maravilloso mundo de algunos de los habitantes de Punta Culebra.

### ¿QUIÉNES PUEDEN PARTICIPAR?

Niños y Niñas de 8 a 12 años

### FECHAS DE LOS TALLERES:

Jueves 15 de enero  
Viernes 16 de enero  
Martes 20 de enero  
Miércoles 21 de enero

### ¿EN QUÉ HORARIO?

de 8:00 AM a 12:00 mediodía.

### ¿CUÁL ES EL COSTO POR TALLER?

B/. 15.00 (incluye materiales, certificado)

Reservaciones:  
212-8793 y 212-8794  
Cupos limitados



Smithsonian  
Institution





## More arrivals

Petra Tschakert, McGill University, to work in the carbon sequestration project, at Sardinilla.

Eric Kulmala, Jan 11-24, to work with Jacalyn Giacolone, on BCI.

Liza Comita, University of Georgia, Jan 11 - Jul, to work with Steve Hubbell, on BCI.

Andy Jones, University of Georgia, Jan 11, to study the theoretical and empirical studies of seed and pollen dispersal, on BCI.

Adam Smith, University of Georgia, Jan 12 - Mar 28, to work with Bill Wcislo, on BCI

Meaghan Murphy, NEO fellow from McGill University, Jan 12 - Dec 30, to study soil respiration and species diversity in Panama, at Tupper

Ian Walsh, San Francisco State University, Jan 12 - May 15, to study signal evolution and speciation in bearded manakin (*Manacus* spp.), in Gamboa.

Ola Fincke, University of Oklahoma, Jan 13-20 to work on a pilot data on damselflies for future research, on BCI.

Douglas Woodham, Vanderbilt University, Jan 13-20, to study the dynamic interactions of microbes and peptides in amphibian skin, at El Copé.

Stefan Schnitzer, University of Minnesota, Jan 14-24, to study the ecology of lianas and their role in forest regeneration, on BCI and Gigante.

Forrest Brem, Southern Illinois University, Jan 14-24, to visit sites for future research.

Charlotte Jander, intern from Sweden, Jan 14 - Jul 31, to work with Allen Herre, on BCI.

## New biologist

Cam Hernandez Pereira, native from Kuna Yala and STRI-Elektra fellow, presented a copy of his bachelor's thesis to OCAPP director Stanley Heckadon. Hernandez conducted his research at the Galeta Marine Laboratory on the Caribbean, with funds provided by the Elektra Noreste Fellowship Program in Marine Sciences. His thesis, that

received the highest grades from the University of Panama, is a study on post-larvae recruitment index of *Panulirus argus*, a Caribbean lobster which populations have decreased in recent years. This lobster has commercial and nutritious value for the Kuna peoples in San Blas.

Cam Hernández Pereira, nativo de Kuna Yala y becario STRI-Elektra, hizo entrega de una copia de su tesis de licenciatura a Stanley Heckadon-Moreno, director de OCAPP en STRI. Hernández llevó a cabo las investigaciones para su tesis en el Laboratorio Marino de Galeta, con fondos suministrados por el Programa de Becas Elektra para Ciencias Marinas. Su tesis, que fue aprobada por la Universidad de Panamá con las más altas calificaciones, es un estudio del índice de reclutamiento de post-larvae de *Panulirus argus*, una langosta caribeña cuyas poblaciones han disminuido en los últimos años. Esta langosta tiene valores comerciales y nutritivos para las poblaciones de Kunas en San Blas.



## Unsung heroes nominations

The Smithsonian Community Committee announced that nominations for the Unsung Heroes Awards are now being accepted. The biannual Unsung Heroes program honors 25 outstanding SI employees whose unrecognized contributions to SI made the Smithsonian a better place to work and visit. Nominated by their co-workers and chosen by an in-house selection committee, winners are honored at a ceremony and reception, receive a special pin, and have their names inscribed on a plaque displayed at SI. Any Smithsonian employee may be nominated by any other Smithsonian employee. Previous winners are not eligible for consideration, although nominees not selected in previous years may be re-nominated. Nomination forms are available on PRISM (under the News Flash section) and at all SI Security offices. The information may also be submitted on a plain piece of paper. The nominator provides the requested information and sends the signed and dated statement to: Unsung Hero Award Committee; A&I 2101, MRC 425; Fax (202)786-2528. Nominations must be received by February 20, 2004. For further information on this message contact Chandra Heilman, Ombudsman, 202-357-3261, or [HeilmanC@si.edu](mailto:HeilmanC@si.edu).

## More arrivals

Corinne Richards, University of Michigan, Jan 14 - Mar 7, to analyze population structure and dynamics of the Panamanian golden frog, at El Valle.

Alaine Whinnett, University College, London, Jan 14 - Apr 18, to conduct a genetic appraisal of a suture zone, at Naos.

Jamie Voyles, University of Colorado, to visit STRI sites for future research.

Tim Billo, University of Washington, Jan 15 - Feb 15, to study the vocal variation and function in a Suboscine hybrid zone with shifted clines, in Gamboa.

Oliver Behr and Mirjam Knornschild, University of Erlangen, Germany, to study social calls of *Saccolaryx bilineata*, on BCI.

Ghislain Rompre, Université Laval, Canada, Jan 16 - Aug 1, to study bird species loss in an endangered landscape: The Panama Canal.

Meshage Hunte, Drexel University, Jan 16-27, to study the response of tropical stream ecosystem structure and function to amphibian extinctions, in Fortuna and El Copé.

## Departures

Amalia Herrera, Jan 10-27, to Concepción, Chile, to attend the International Bryozoology Association meetings, followed by a short vacation.

Ira Rubinoff, Jan 12-14, to San José, Costa Rica, to meet with Gleen Tupper and SI undersecretary David L. Evans.

# Our genomic future



**John Craig Venter, Ph.D.**

# *Nuestro futuro y la ciencia genómica*

STRI is pleased to invite you to the seminar “Our genomic future” by J. Craig Venter, at the Tupper Center Auditorium, on Thursday, January 15, 3:30pm. Venter is president and chairman of three non-profit organizations: the Center for the Advancement of Genomics, the Institute for Biological Energy Alternatives (IBEA), and the J. Craig Venter Science Foundation.

Venter has played a leading and vital role in sequencing and analyzing the human genome. This work has produced not only a once unimaginable body of knowledge, but also an intriguing array of questions for further inquiry and discovery. His accomplishments in decoding the genetic sequences of other organisms, particularly the fruit fly and mouse, have also provided important scientific insights, including a new understanding of the genetic relationship between species as well as human evolution. He has published more than 220 research articles and is among the most frequently cited scientists in biology and medicine.

J. Craig Venter plans a lively discussion in which he takes his audience through a brief history of the young but burgeoning field of genomics. He highlights the events leading up to the historic sequencing of the human genome and some of the interesting and surprising findings from this work.

Simultaneous translation will be available. For more information please call STRI at 212-8000, ext. 0.

STRI se complace en invitarlo al seminario “Nuestro futuro y la ciencia genómica” por J. Craig Venter, el jueves 15 de enero a las 3:30pm. en el Auditorio del Centro Tupper. Venter es presidente de tres organizaciones sin fines de lucro: el Centro para el Avance del Estudio del Genoma, el Instituto para Alternativas de Energía Biológica y la Fundación para las Ciencias J. Craig Venter.

Venter ha jugado un papel vital de liderazgo en la secuenciación y análisis del genoma humano. Este trabajo ha producido no sólo un inimaginable compendio de conocimiento, sino también una gama de cuestionamientos por resolver y descubrir. Sus logros en la decodificación de las secuencias genéticas de otros organismos, en particular la mosca de frutas y el ratón, también han ofrecido información científica importante, incluyendo la comprensión de las relaciones genéticas entre especies, así como en evolución humana. Ha publicado más de 220 artículos científicos y aparece entre los científicos más citados en biología y medicina.

J. Craig Venter planea una discusión viva, conduciendo a su audiencia a través de una breve historia del joven y creciente campo de la ciencia genómica. Hará énfasis en los eventos que llevaron a la histórica secuenciación del genoma humano y a algunos de los descubrimientos más interesantes y sorprendentes que resultaron de este trabajo.

Contaremos con traducción simultánea. Para mayor información llamar al 212-8000, ext 0.