STRI news 2003

Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, Panamá www.stri.org March 21, 2003

Tupper seminar

Tuesday, March 25, noon seminar speaker will be Richard Condit, STRI **Geographic ranges of tree species of the Panama Canal area**

Bambi seminar

Please check GroupWise and your bulletin boards for information on the next Bambi seminar on BCI.

Arrivals

Jonathan Myers, intern from the University of Florida, Mar 19 - Aug 15, to work with Kaoru Kitajima, on BCI and Metropolitan Natural Park.

Nancy Knowlton, STRI, Mar 22-30, to participate in the fellowship meetings.

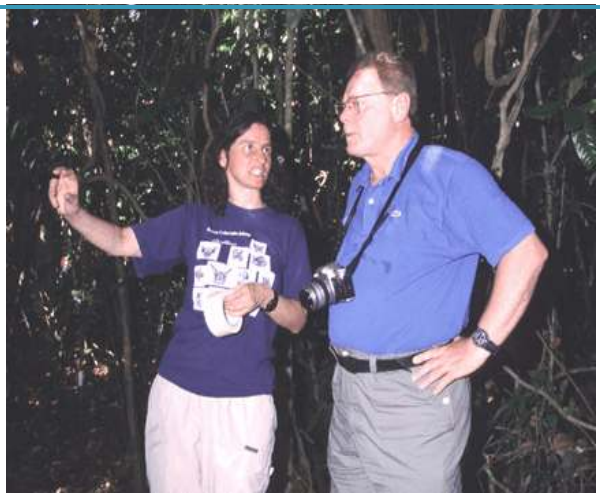
Members of a especial review committee Francisco Arias, INVEMAR, Colombia, Daniel Childers, Florida State University, David Clark, University of Missouri, and Robert Waide, University of New Mexico, Mar 23-27, to evaluate STRI's Environmental Science Program.

James Dalling, University of Illinois, Mar 24, to continue research projects, on BCI.

David Winkler, Cornell University, Mar 24, to study life history and organismal biology of mangrove swallows, on BCI.

Matthias Fehlow, Princeton University, Mar 24-29, to teach tropical biology course, on BCI.

Lucien Abernathy donates ¼ of his estate to STRI



Geologist Lucien Abernathy from Tennessee, visited Panama from Sunday, March 15 to Friday, March 22, to get acquainted with STRI research projects and educational programs, and visit our researchers at every one of our facilities. Abernathy will leave all his estate to the Smithsonian Institution, of which ¼ will be allocated to STRI. In the photo, staff scientist Elisabeth Kalko accompanies Abernathy in BCI's forest and explains advances in her bat research project.

El geólogo Lucien Abernathy, de Tennessee, visitó Panamá del domingo 15 de marzo al viernes 21, para familiarizarse con los proyectos de investigación de STRI y sus programas educativos, y visitar a nuestros científicos en todas nuestras instalaciones. Abernathy legará su fortuna al Smithsonian, de la cual ¼ será para STRI. En la foto, la investigadora Elisabeth Kalko acompaña a Abernathy en el bosque de Barro Colorado, y le explica los adelantos de su investigaciones sobre murciélagos.

Honey bees and tropical trees

STRI Molecular Evolution fellow Christopher Dick, Gabriela Etchelecu, STRI, and Frederic Austerlitz from France, published "Pollen dispersal of tropical trees (*Dinizia excelsa*: Fabaceae) by native insects and African honeybees in pristine and fragmented Amazonian rainforest" in the March issue of *Molecular Ecology*. The study was conducted at the BDFFP reserve system in Brazil. Tropical forests may be experiencing the greatest challenge to their ecological resilience since the Cretaceous/Tertiary boundary, about 65 million years ago, when a meteor decimated most tropical forests and disrupted important plant-insect interactions for several million years. The Amazon basin harbors half of the world's remaining lowland rainforests, but is experiencing the highest rates of deforestation (3-4 million ha/year). Rainforest fragmentation can drive locally rare plants to extinction through area sampling effects, secondary logging, and edge effects. However, in some cases, habitat disturbance seems to enhance pollinator activity and may even promote fecundity and gene flow. Few studies have attempted to pinpoint the ecological causes of high gene flow in disturbed habitats, but in this study, Dick and collaborators used a TWOGENER analysis to estimate pollen dispersal in fragmented and contiguous forest populations of the Amazonian tree *Dinizia excelsa*. This experimental system allowed the researchers to investigate the synergistic effects of habitat fragmentation and pollinator dynamics on pollen dispersal in these trees (.pdf available).

Invitation

Everybody is invited to a farewell party for Cristián Samper, on Friday, March 28, from 3-5pm at the Tupper Center Corotú Plaza.

Todos están invitados a una fiesta de despedida para Cristián Samper, el viernes 28 de marzo, de 3-5pm en la Plaza Corotú del Centro Tupper.

More arrivals

A. Stanley Rand, STRI, Mar 24-30, to attend the fellowship meetings.

Fernando Santos-Granero, Mar 25-29, to participate in the fellowships meetings.

Hans Gehrig, STRI postdoctoral fellow, Mar 25, to continue research project on *Clusia*, at Tupper.

Elizabeth Losos and Marie Mass, CTFS, Mar 25-28, to participate in the CTFS Research Grant review and the fellowship meetings.

Lisa Barnett, STRI, Mar 27-30, to attend the fellowship meetings.

Birgit Greiner, University of Lund, Sweden, Mar 27 - Apr 5, to study visual processing in nocturnal bees and wasps, on BCI.

New babies!

Congratulations to Luis and Elsa Moreno, for the birth of their daughter Ingrid Rachel, on Thursday, March 20. She weighed 7.12lb and measured 57cm.

To Carlos and Jeissa Espinosa in Fortuna, for the birth of their daughter Isis Saray, on Thursday, March 20, in David. She weighed 6lb.

New publications

Galvez, David, and Pearcy, Robert W. 2003. "Petiole twisting in the crowns of *Psychotria limonensis*: implications for light interception and daily carbon gain." *Oecologia* 135(1): 22-29.

Hely Cortez leaves STRI

After 23 years of working for STRI, Hely Cortez, payroll technician at the Accounting Department, leaves STRI on April 4, to accept the position of financial assistant with the Agency for International Development (AID) in Panama. Since 1980, Cortez has worked in Procurement, Travel, and in several positions in Accounting. When she started working with STRI's payroll in 1988, the staff accounted to 90 persons. Today, with two systems, US federal and Panamanian, we add up to 350 employees. According to associate director Georgina de Alba, Hely was instrumental during the transition period, when STRI adopted the Panamanian labor code. Cortez has a master's degree in Business Administration and International Marketing and is presently studying at distance for a new degree with the Association for Financial Counseling and Planning Education in Ohio. "My personal growth and all the important accomplishments in my life have always been associated with STRI" says Hely. We wish her the best with this new challenge.

Después de 23 años con STRI, Hely Cortez, especialista en planillas en el Departamento de Contabilidad, deja a STRI para aceptar una posición como asistente financiera en la A.I.D. en Panamá. Desde 1980 Cortez ha trabajado en la Oficina de Compras, Viajes y varias posiciones en Contabilidad. Cuando empezó con la planilla en 1988, el personal de STRI era de 90 personas. Hoy, con dos sistemas, el federal de Estados Unidos y el panameño, somos 350 empleados. De acuerdo a la directora asociada Georgina de Alba, Hely fué clave durante el período de la transición, cuando STRI adoptó el código de trabajo panameño. Cortez tiene una maestría en Administración de Empresas y Mercadeo Internacional y está estudiando a distancia para optar por una nueva certificación con Association for Financial Counseling and Planning Education en Ohio. "Mi crecimiento personal y todos los logros importantes de mi vida siempre han estado asociados a STRI" comenta Hely. Le deseamos lo mejor en esta nueva etapa de su carrera.

Congratulations!

To Norma Cedeño and Rivieth De Liones, for obtaining their bachelor´s degrees in biology with the thesis: "Evaluación de seis especies arbóreas nativas en tres sitios establecidos por la Autoridad del Canal de Panamá" [Evaluation of six native tree species in three sites established by the Panama Canal Authority] as part of CTFS's project for reforestation with native species (PRORENA)

To Nurys Palacios, who also obtained her biology degree with the thesis "Estudio de banco de semillas en el borde entre el bosque húmedo tropical del Parque Nacional Soberanía y las áreas invadidas por paja blanca" [Study of seed bank at the edge between Soberanía National Park and surrounded areas invaded with Vietnamese grass.] The research for this thesis was also done with PRORENA.

More publications

Laurance, Susan G., Laurance, William F., and Lovejoy, Thomas E. 2003. "Bandages for wounded landscapes: Faunal corridors and their role in wildlife conservation in the Americas." In A., Bradshaw. G. and Marquet, P.A. (Eds.), *How landscapes change: Human disturbance and ecosystem fragmentation in the Americas*, 313-325. Berlin: Springer.

Odegaard, Frode. 2003. "Taxonomic composition and host specificity of phytophagous beetles in a dry forest in Panama." In Basset, Y., Novotny, V. Miller, S.E., and Kitching, R.L. (Eds.), *Arthropods of tropical forests: Spatio-temporal dynamics and resurce use in the canopy*: 220-236. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Roubik, David W., Sakai, Shoko, and Gattesco, Francesco. 2003. "Canopy flowers and certainty: Loose niches revisited." In Basset, Y., Novotny, V., Miller, S.E., and Kitching, R.L. (Eds.), *Arthropods of tropical forests: Spatio-temporal dynamics and resurce use in the canopy*: 360-368. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Zotz, Gerhard, and Mikona, C. 2003. "Photosynthetic induction and leaf carbon gain in the tropical understory epiphyte, *Aspasia principissa*." *Annals of Botany* 91: 353-359.

Zotz, Gerhard, Schultz, S., and Rottenberger, S. 2003. "Are tropical lowlands a marginal habitat for macrolichens? Evidence from a field study with *Parmotrema endosulphureum* in Panama." *Flora* 197(1): 71-77.