



PANAMANIAN HOLIDAYS NEXT WEEK

Wednesday, November 3rd (Panamanian Independence Day) is an official holiday for STRI employees. Government offices and banks will remain closed on Nov. 3rd and 4th (Flag Day).

SEMINAR NEWS

The luncheon seminar at Ancon on Tuesday, November 2nd, will be given by CATHERINE CRAIG, from Cornell University, who will speak on her research supported by a Smithsonian predoctoral fellowship at STRI. The subject of her talk will be:

The dynamics of prey capture among five genera of orb-weaving spiders

ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES

Arriving this week:

GLORIA SULLIVAN CALDWELL, Smithsonian Postdoctoral Fellow from the University of California at Berkeley, to spend one year at STRI. She will be working on an experimental analysis of Ardeid color dimorphism at Galeta.

LANI WEST, Smithsonian Predoctoral Fellow from Oregon State University. Lani will be at Naos studying: "Prey selection by individual carnivorous snails, Thais melones, in the Pacific rocky intertidal habitat" for one year.

JACQUELINE BELWOOD, University of Florida, to begin her Smithsonian Predoctoral year at STRI. She will be at BCI studying "Katydid-eating bats: their probable impact on calling Orthoptera".

PATRICIA GUTIERREZ, Universidad Simón Bolívar, Caracas, Venezuela, on a three-month EXXON Assistantship to work with S. Garrity on "Adaptations of some Caribbean Reef-Rock Gastropods to Physical Stress" at Galeta.

Leaving this week:

On October 31, GENE MONTGOMERY will be leaving on official business to the Smithsonian Institution Press in Washington, D.C. He will be away for one week.

On November 4, MICHAEL ROBINSON will be leaving on a scientific expedition to Brunei, India and Nepal. In Brunei, Sabah (Borneo) and Nepal he will be looking at possible sites for comparative studies, and in India he will be consulting with colleagues regarding a possible Indian Environmental Monitoring Program. The trip is being funded by a grant from the Baird Foundation and with PL 480 Funds. He is expected back at STRI on December 8th.

"BEAUTIES OF THE CORAL REEF" OPENS MONDAY

The Smithsonian Institution travelling exhibition "Beauties of the Coral Reef" opens on November 1st at the Lobby of the ATLAPA Convention Center, on Avenida Balboa. It consists of 47 full-color photographs by the photographer of the Smithsonian's Museum of Natural History Kjell Sandved and 30 specimens from the museum's Department of Invertebrate Zoology, documenting the splendor and diversity of life in one of nature's richest ecosystems. The coral reef with its great variety of life forms is a world that few have seen and is brought closer to us by the photographs and objects in this exhibition. The exhibit which is being sponsored by STRI and the ATLAPA Convention Center will be inaugurated on Monday afternoon at 4:30 p.m. You are welcome to attend the inauguration and to visit this interesting exhibit (admission is free) which will run through November 18, Marine Sciences Symposium Day, sponsored by the Panamanian Sociedad de Ciencias Marinas, for high school science students throughout the Republic.

THE WORLD NATIONAL PARKS CONGRESS

I. Rubinoff

I attended the III World National Parks Congress in Bali, Indonesia from October 11-19. Various officials from IUCN, WWF (the sponsors of the Congress), UNEP, FAO and UNESCO pointed with pride to the extent of the increase in world coverage of national parks and protected areas since the previous Congress in 1972.

	1972	1982
No. of Protected Sites	1,580	2,307
Area	212 x 10 ⁶ ha	386 x 10 ⁶ ha

How much optimism these figures elicit depends rather on the geographical base of the individual conservationist. If you are stationed in Switzerland, the US or London it all sound very good indeed; but listening to the case studies by park managers, particularly from the developing world, puts those figures into another perspective. Poaching, increased squatters and pressure for additional agricultural land is affecting many of the protected sites throughout the world.

A principal theme of this Congress was "Parks for sustainable development". This is a nice sounding slogan, one which sounds cost effective ---the parks should pay for themselves. I found the use of these terms careless and based upon thin, if any, scientific models. The idea that the production of an area can be harvested on a sustainable basis seems to have developed from those African parks where tourism has been both profitable and an apparently non-destructive use of a natural area. This is not always the case; we heard a report

on Ambroseli National Park in Kenya where tourism is causing vegetation destruction and is affecting the behavior of cheetas. Another case example of "sustainable" use involved the periodic harvesting of an overproduction of elephants from a Park in Zimbabwe.

There is insufficient scientific data for extending these ideas to other areas. With the possible exception of long-term harvesting of trees with the use of elephants in Burma, we have almost no models of sustainable use from tropical moist forests. At this stage in our sophistication of tropical ecosystems "sustainable development" seems a premature and dangerous theme for the Congress to endorse. As an ideal for the future, yes; as a reality now ---no!

No one asked the question of why parks shouldn't be treated as zoos, museums, monuments or churches; supported by the surplus productivity of our civilization. Strict protection of natural areas for their benefits in protection of watersheds, as genetic reservoirs and for aesthetic values was mentioned by many, but usually more emphasis was placed in economic values of these areas.

Perhaps the most significant development of the meeting was the uniform high quality of the participants from the Third World Nations. They seemed competent, mindful of their responsibilities in protecting their national heritage and free of any paranoia that the developed world was trying to force alien values upon them.

The 1982 United Nations List of Natural Parks and Protected Areas was distributed at the meeting and the Barro Colorado Nature Monument was listed for the first time under Category I (Scientific Reserves/Strict Nature Reserves).

More printed matter was distributed at this Congress than at any other I have ever attended. I mailed 10 kilos of paper to Panama and hand carried several more. Many trees were sacrificed to save their relatives.



"Come on, come on, shape up! Let's have an antlike procession here!"

PROCUREMENT DELAYS AT STRI

In view of the need to process Blanket Purchase Orders at the beginning of each fiscal year, in addition to the work involved in processing the backlog of requests frozen at the end of last FY, scientists and support staff may encounter delays in obtaining supplies and materials requested. The procurement division staff is working overtime to deal with this backlog and will appreciate your patience and cooperation in allowing the maximum level of time on new requests.

ADVANCE PLANNING FOR A GOOD CAUSE

The Gamewardens of the BCNM are planning a Christmas Party for the 65 children of Las Pavas, a neighboring community on Gatun Lake. Donations of toys, clothing and food would be welcomed. If you are interested in donating any of the above for this event, please contact PEDRO ACOSTA at BCI.

THINKING AHEAD

Since there will be three 4-day work weeks during the month of November, persons who will be travelling during this month are asked to please make arrangements for exit permits and paz y salvos keeping this in mind. In addition to November 3rd, November 11 (Veteran's Day) and November 25 (Thanksgiving Day) will be official holidays for STRI employees.
