

SEMINARS - ANCON CONFERENCE ROOM

No noon seminar scheduled for May 9 or May 16. If interested in giving a talk, contact S. Rand or V. Vergel at 62-2008 or 62-2009.

ARRIVING

May 10 - August 6, HOWARD LASKER and MARY ALICE COFFROTH, State University of New York, to continue work on the effects of vegetative propagation on abundance and distribution of benthic invertebrates in San Blas.

LIBRARY NEWS

ANGEL AGUIRRE has been appointed acting chief of the Smithsonian Institution Libraries branch at STRI, until a permanent chief librarian is appointed.

APPOINTMENT OF STRI DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

Director Ira Rubinoff is pleased to appoint EDGARDO MARAVI as the first Development Officer for the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute. Mr. Maravi trained as an agronomist at the Universidad Agraria in Tingo Maria, Peru. He has extensive experience with governmental and non-governmental agriculture, education and development organizations in Peru and the United States. Most recently Mr. Maravi served as Director, Major Donors Program for Oxfam America, Inc. in Boston, Massachusetts.

Mr. Maravi begins work later this month upon completion of his move from Boston. His office will be in the Arts and Industries Building of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. After orientation in Washington, he expects to spend several weeks in Panama becoming familiar with STRI's programs.

Mr. Maravi will coordinate STRI development plans with the SI Office of Membership and Development. In this climate of increased awareness about the world's tropics, these efforts will surely generate new support for STRI's research, education and conservation programs.

FROM PROCUREMENT

APO EXPRESS MAIL is a 2-day service to addresses within the U.S. Up to now, express mail was only accepted for certain zip codes (a list of them was posted on all bulletin boards). Starting this month, express mail can be used for all U.S. zip codes, but express mail to previously unaccepted zip codes will take an extra day to arrive.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

All STRI visitors, students and staff are advised that in order to facilitate access to the polls during the election scheduled for Sunday, May 7, travel between certain parts of the country may be limited. We recommend that routine field work and travel for recreational purposes be limited on this day. The use of STRI vehicles on Sunday, May 7, is only authorized with written permission from the Facilities Manager, Carlos Tejada, or from either Assistant Director, Donald Windsor or John Christy.

STRI has established an information network and efforts will be made to keep everyone informed of developments that might affect their movements or welfare. If you have specific questions, contact the person responsible for your program or one of the persons listed:

	Office	Home
Alvarado, Monica	62-3215	26-2927
Christy, John	28-4273	69-1131
De Alba, Georgina	62-2014	64-4573
	62-3416	
Fischer, Eric	62-3215	63-9454
Keller, Brian	28-4150	21-9413
Lombardo, Elena	62-3227	69-0267
Maggiori, Gloria	62-3049	26-0453
Motta, Leonor	62-3053	26-1182
Rubinoff, Ira	62-3215	26-3054
Smith, Audrey	62-3215	
Sucre, Carmen	62-3224	
Tejada, Carlos	52-2704	24-3337
Windsor, Donald	62-2008	56-6223
	62-2009	

VISIT FROM OTS PRESIDENT

GORDON ORIANS, president of the Organization for Tropical Studies, will be available to meet with interested scientists on Monday and Tuesday, May 22 and 23. If you wish to arrange a meeting, please contact the Director's Office.

REMINDER

The talk on STRI History and Activities for new employees will be held on Wednesday, May 10, at noon in the Ancon Conference Room.

NEW PUBLICATIONS BY STRI STAFF, FELLOWS AND RESEARCH ASSOCIATES

Becker, P., D.W. Erhard and A.P. Smith. 1989. Analysis of forest light environments. Part 1. Computerized estimation of solar radiation from hemispherical canopy photographs. *Agric. For. Meteorol.*, 44: 217-232.

Zeh, D.W. 1989. Sexual Selection: Testing the Alternatives, by J.W. Bradbury and M.B. Andersson. (Book review) *American Scientist* 77: 181-182.

SI CREDIT UNION NEWS / NOTICIAS DE LA COOPERATIVA DE AHORRO Y CREDITO DEL SMITHSONIAN

A partir del 1 de mayo, la Cooperativa de Ahorro y Crédito de la Institución Smithsonian se fusionará con la Cooperativa de Ahorro y Crédito de Agricultura (AFCU). Esta unión permitirá brindar inmediatamente nuevos servicios, tales como tarjetas de crédito Mastercard. La oficina en el Smithsonian permanecerá abierta como una sucursal de la AFCU para la conveniencia de los empleados del Smithsonian. Los préstamos existentes permanecerán bajo las mismas condiciones; préstamos nuevos se regirán bajo la política de préstamo del AFCU. Miembros de la Cooperativa del Smithsonian recibirán información adicional en el lapso de 2-3 semanas. Los interesados pueden escribir o llamar al 357-2983.

Effective May 1, SI Employees Federal Credit Union merged with Agriculture Federal Credit Union (AFCU). The merger provides new services such as share drafts (checking accounts), Master cards, ATM access, first and second trusts and expanded hours. Current SI Credit Union office will remain open as a branch office of the AFCU to ensure continued convenience for Smithsonian employees. All existing loans will remain the same; new loans will be written under AFCU loan policy. SICU members will receive letters within 2-3 weeks with additional information. SI employees can write or call 357-2983.

FROM NORMAN C. DUKE, OIL SPILL PROJECT

**New World Mangroves- First Impressions**

Since my arrival a few months ago, I have been struck by some remarkable similarities between mangrove forests here and tropical Australasia - my former haunt.

These forests felt like familiar territory. This was largely due to the common tree genera, *Rhizophora* and *Avicennia*, but it was also associated with the comparable appearance of leaves, trunks and buttresses of New World *Pelliciera* with Old World *Bruguiera*, two otherwise very different plants! *Pelliciera* is quite new to me, but fits in well with my expectations of morphological diversity in mangrove species (e.g., root structures for breathing and support, including pneumatophores, buttresses, and aerial and prop roots).

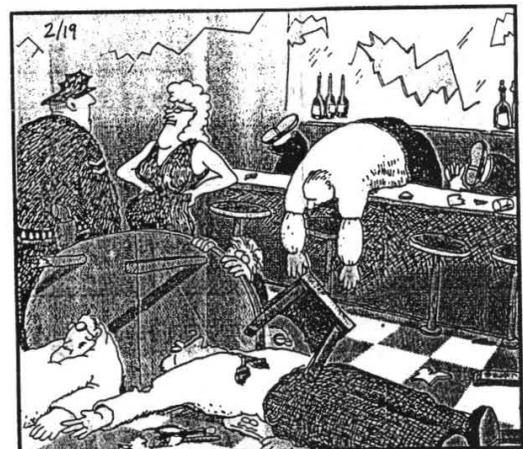
These 'expectations' are based on a greater diversity found in the Old World region where there are between 20 and 30 plant families with mangrove representatives, as compared to the four in this region, centred about Panama. Each Old World species is often associated with a particular position along an estuarine-environmental gradient, whether it be intertidal, upriver or climatic. In answer to my 'expectations' during local excursions, I would sometimes imagine that certain Old World species would do very well in this, or that location. However, the reality of a new but familiar finding still came as a surprise.

**An Exotic Mangrove in Panama?**

Perhaps you have heard something about a new mangrove for Panama. Well, it is true! It is a trunkless palm with up to 10 metre fronds called *Nypa fruticans*, better-known from the Old World region (Tomlinson, 1986. The Botany of Mangroves, Cambridge University Press). It commonly occurs there in protected, brackish, estuarine locations, and is distributed widely from Ceylon, the Ganges Delta, Burma, and the Malay Peninsula through Indonesia to New Guinea, northern Australia and the Solomon Island, and northward to the Philippines and Ryukyu Islands. In Panama I have found it in only one location, alongside a main road near the busy sea port of Colon. To my knowledge, there are no other reports of its occurrence in the New World. At the Colon site there are at least five to ten mature trees with fruit, and many seedlings ranging along at least half a kilometre of a small tidal channel.

The question is how did it get here, establishing this sole Atlantic site? Someone reading this report may hopefully shed some light on this.

It appears to have been introduced, judging by the site and a bias in the population toward younger immature plants. But you never know! As it so happens, it occurred hereabouts in the Paleocene, only to become extinct in the drier climatic conditions which followed. Or did it? Is Colon a mangrove refuge? What do you think, exotic or not? If you are interested, call me, or come on over to my office and see the evidence. The fruits are really something.



"So then this little sailor dude whips out a can of spinach, this crazy music starts playin', and ... well, just look at this place."