

STRI newsletter

FEBRUARY 16, 1990

SMITHSONIAN TROPICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE, Apartado 2072, Balboa, Panamá

No. 7

SEMINARS

Tupper Center Auditorium

Tuesday, February 20, noon seminar speaker will be Egbert Leigh, STRI staff scientist.

Genes, bees and evolution.

Next week

Tuesday, February 27, noon seminar speaker will be Rudi Drent, University of Groningen.

Energetics of foraging in the grey goose.

PEOPLE

Arrivals

- Steve Garrity, Oil Spill Project, February 15 - March 15, to continue work on gastropods on mangrove roots.
- Robert Ricklefs, University of Pennsylvania and a Smithsonian Regents Fellow, February 20 - March 9, to work with Eldredge Bermingham on mitochondrial DNA analysis. Dr. Ricklefs will be accompanied by his wife Kathryn.
- Guillermo Goldstein, University of California at Los Angeles, February 23 - March 5, to work on plant physiology studies on BCI.
- Emmett Duffy, SI National Museum of Natural History, February 22, to work with Nancy Knowlton on a study of the symbiotic shrimp *Synalpheus* (Caribbean species).
- Rick Steger and Bonita Benis, Oil Spill Project, February 25 - March 8, to continue work on reef flat stomatopods.

Departures

- ◆ Dave West, captain of the RV Benjamin, February 21 - 23, to Jacksonville, Florida, on official business.

From the Director

I am pleased to announce the promotion of Mrs. Elena Lombardo to the position of Assistant Director for External Affairs of the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute. Mrs. Lombardo will be responsible for the management of all agreements with the Republic of Panama and other countries where STRI maintains long-term research interests. In the Republic of Panama, her office will coordinate STRI activities with the Presidencia and Foreign Affairs Ministries and manage STRI's responsibilities as an International Mission, as custodian of the Barro Colorado Nature Monument under the terms of the Western Hemisphere Convention of 1940 on Nature Protection and Wildlife Preservation, and under the terms of the 1977 Panama Canal Treaties. Her office will be in charge of all protocol with our host country government.

The Office of the Assistant Director for External Affairs will coordinate the development of new cooperative agreements in other countries, as well as our participation and membership in international organizations related to our interests in research, education and conservation. Mrs. Lombardo will serve as STRI coordinator with the Smithsonian Office of International Activities and with the embassies of countries that have agreements with STRI.

Mrs. Lombardo began work at STRI in 1969. Her valuable experience, understanding of STRI's goals and objectives, and ability to articulate them ideally suits her to help steer our efforts to assist with the reconstruction of a democratic Panama.

Boda / Wedding Bells

Noris Almanza, asistente de Henk Wolda, se casó con Ramón Ríos el viernes, 9 de febrero.

Bebé / New Baby

Felicitaciones a Gabriel Martínez del Departamento de Compras y a su esposa Marlene del Carmen por su nuevo bebé, Gabriel Jr., quien nació el 5 de febrero con un peso de 5 lbs., 7.2 ozs.

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

From Procurement

All Requisitions must be channelled through each facility secretary. Requisitions are then submitted directly to the appropriate accounting officer for certification of funds available, •Luis Polanco for federal funds, •Rosa Zambrano for private funds. Planning your procurement needs will help avoid delays in processing your orders and your requests of payment. Requisitions **must** be sent as complete as possible to avoid delays and confusion; include prices, suggested suppliers, method of shipment. After requisitions are certified by the Accounting Dept., they are sent to Procurement for processing of purchases.

When Purchase Orders are issued by the Procurement Dept., an estimated delivery date is assigned and written in a calendar. Follow-up is given after two weeks for Air Mail orders and three weeks for Parcel Post orders. Requestors are informed of any problems with the purchase order via a notice or copy of the vendor's letter. Gabriel Martínez in Procurement is always willing to assist with further information.

Express Mail through the APO mail system is again available. This service is for U.S. mail only, and Procurement will accept express mail envelopes to go out that day until 2:30 p.m.

Congratulations to Wilbert Forde, Everardo Curney, Marcel Epailly and Arturo Cargill, who during the past three years of crisis have performed exceptionally well carrying on their duties as messengers despite demonstrations, student riots, etc. As a token of appreciation for their efforts, STRI awarded these employees with well-deserved certificates and cash awards.

Telephone extensions with the general Tupper telephone numbers are as follows:

Mercedes Arroyo	233
Roberto Borrell	253
Mirna Fernández	364
Gabriel Martínez	362
Alicia Salas	229
Luis Turner	363.

Procurement also has a direct line-- 62-3109.

Holiday / Día Feriado

February 19 is Washington's birthday and a STRI holiday.

Photos for Inauguration

The following is information for scientists and other staff who will be working on posters or other graphic material for the Tupper Grand Opening--

⇒ The sooner your photo requests are in the better. Last minute requests may not get done.

⇒ All B&W printing will be done at the new Photo Lab in the Tupper Building. Unless other problems are encountered, the lab should finally be up to full capability on Monday, February 19.

⇒ Two places for color prints from color negatives or slides are recommended. •Locally Foto Enoch, located on Via Porras, does very good custom color printing and their prices are reasonable. They require a week to do a job. •C. Hansen believes better quality prints from color slides are available from Laser Color of West Palm Beach, Fla. Good but a bit expensive; their cheapest print prices are for Digital LaserChrome Prints (8 x 10s cost \$12.50 and 11 x 14s cost \$14.95). Rush jobs cost double. Expect jobs to take two to three weeks because of delivery time. The Photo Dept. has envelopes for this lab.

⇒ For more information contact Marcos Guerra. Carl Hansen will be away for two weeks on assignment.

Tupper News

■ Seminar speakers should request audiovisual equipment they will need in advance. It is also advisable to arrive an hour before the seminar if you are unfamiliar with the controls for the blackboard, screen, and behind-the-scenes projectors. Raineldo Urriola, Tupper Coordinator, will show you how they work if contacted beforehand.

■ The parking area across from the Procurement Dept. has one space for disabled persons. Please be warned that you **should not** use this space unless you are disabled.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A Sincere Thank You / Muchas Gracias

The STRI administration would like to express its gratitude to Vielka Vergel her two assistants, Ana María Ford and Agapito González, for the excellent work they performed coordinating the move to the new Tupper Center and the installation of old and new equipment. The cooperation and good will of all staff who moved into the new Tupper Building and others who participated with the arrival and installation of the new furniture is also appreciated.

La administración de STRI desea agradecer por este medio la excelente labor de coordinación en la mudanza al nuevo Centro Tupper desempeñada por Vielka Vergel y sus asistentes, Ana María Ford y Agapito González. También agradecemos la colaboración y buena voluntad del personal que se mudó al nuevo Centro Tupper, y la participación de todos aquellos que ayudaron con la instalación del nuevo mobiliario.



Good News on the Tupper Telephone System

STRI is working closely with INTEL to change from the 62 telephone exchange to a modern one - 27. This will allow a much better connection between our 'state of the art' system installed by Simplex and the INTEL system. The 62 exchange is a very old one and we are encountering certain problems with it. The change will probably not take place for one or two months. •If you have problems with your extension, report them to the receptionist, América Staff. •If you have any comments about this change, you may speak with Leonor Motta or Vielka Vergel.

Programa 'Lo Que Estamos Haciendo'

El programa de charlas para empleados del Instituto continúa este mes con una presentación por el Dr. Richard Cooke, el viernes 23 de febrero a las 3:30 p.m. Los invitados deben confirmar su asistencia lo más pronto posible.

STRI Publications

- Cubit, J.D., H.M. Caffey, R.C. Thompson and D.M. Windsor. 1989. Meteorology and hydrography of a shoaling reef flat on the Caribbean coast of Panama. *Coral Reefs* 8: 59-66.
- Piperno, D.R. 1989. The occurrence of phytoliths in the reproductive structures of selected tropical angiosperms and their significance in tropical paleoecology, paleoethnobotany and systematics. *Review of Palaeobotany and Palynology* 61: 147-173.
- Piperno, D.R., M.B. Bush and P.A. Colinvaux. 1990. Paleoenvironments and human occupation in late-Glacial Panama. *Quaternary Research* 33: 108-116.

Illustrator Available

Alberto León, Universidad de Costa Rica, has three years experience as a scientific illustrator. He has done most of the illustrations for William Bussing's book on fishes, and currently works on the International Union for the Conservation of Nature's newsletter for the regional office in Costa Rica. Mr. Leon is offering his services to the STRI staff; he is willing to come to Panama or can work out of Costa Rica. If interested, call Hector Guzmán, Oil Spill Project, 28-0354.

Aerobics Anyone?

Are you looking for a great way to stay in shape and get rid of stress? A group of STRI employees is organizing co-ed exercise classes to be held at the Tupper Center during the week. A tentative schedule would include noon classes 3 days a week and after-work classes 2 days a week. There would be a small fee; STRI is providing the space and facilities. If interested, contact Audrey Smith, Director's Office.

The Do's and Don'ts of 'Interesting' Slides

(taken from *Publish* magazine)

In this era of "information overload", the challenge is to create an effective presentation that grabs people's attention, keeps them interested, and communicates your message clearly, concisely and memorably.

Consider your audience

Before designing your slide it's a good idea to plan for your presentation by considering your audience. If the chances are good that they are unfamiliar with your subject matter, use clear, easy-to-understand language in your slides and in your talk. Sophisticated audiences, on the other hand, can absorb more information and can understand technical terms.

Set Your Agenda

When you introduce the talk, visually present an agenda with a headline that states your conclusion. The agenda slide serves as an overview of the major themes of your presentation and the relationships among them.

As you develop your argument, use a visual to summarize each major point leading to your conclusion. Use information graphics to present evidence. Repeat the agenda visual at the end while you give your conclusions.

Do not use complicated terms or sluggish text

Use simple, lively language. As in all good technical writing, avoid the passive voice and eliminate extraneous words. Don't just list topics; use a complete sentence in your headline to state a relationship, then make sure each list item contains both a verb and a noun. Use forceful nouns and verbs. For maximum involvement, always address your audience in the second person: "You will find..."

Use a simple, consistent layout

Employ the same background for all visuals. A dark background color with light text is best; graded background color adds drama, but patterns can be confusing. Put the headline at the top of each visual, and use a line space to separate it from the list items or graph.

Tell your audience what you want them to believe

Near the end of your talk, tell your audience explicitly what it is that you want them to do—accept your conclusion, fund your project, etc. If you have designed legible slides and put together an interesting presentation, your audience will take your message away with them and relate it to others. In the long run, a good slide presentation can impress those who were present; a great one can impress even those who were not.

Effective visuals support your presentation.



Good design means fast comprehension



Good organization aids recall



Good presentations get action

DON'T

Try not to make your text slides too difficult for your audience to read

- ✓ Remember that text slides should provide support for your presentation, not a substitute for your talk.
- ✓ Passive voice should be avoided at all costs. It sounds "flat" and uninteresting, and makes your audience's attention wander.
- ✓ SERIF TYPEFACES LIKE THIS ONE ARE BEST FOR SMALL PRINT, BUT PUTTING EVERYTHING IN CAPITALS MAKES IT HARD TO READ.
- ✓ Generally, whenever you try to crowd too much information onto a slide, it ends up detracting from the intelligibility of your message. So please, if possible, be brief.

DO

Make your text slides easy to read

- ✓ One idea per slide
- ✓ No more than 7 items
- ✓ Up to 6 words per line
- ✓ Mixed upper and lower case
- ✓ Simple, clean typefaces
- ✓ Big enough to read easily

