

STRI newsletter

MAY 11, 1990

SMITHSONIAN TROPICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE, Apartado 2072, Balboa, Panamá

No. 19

SEMINARS

Tupper Center Auditorium

Saturday, May 12, at 6 p.m., *special seminar* by Dr. Edward O. Wilson, Frank Baird Jr. Professor of Science, and Curator of Entomology at the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard University; a reception will follow.

The present status of global biodiversity.

Tuesday, May 15, noon seminar speaker will be Pierre Forget, Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle du Paris.

Ecology of Dipteryx panamensis on BCI: the importance of floristic and faunal interactions and annual variations at the community level.

Abstract

Bats, monkeys, rodents, peccaries, coatimundis and some other animals mostly rely upon *Dipteryx* fruits and seeds for food during the dry season, which is a period of scarcity on BCI. Depending on their respective behaviors, one may consider each consumer as disperser, commensal or predator. In the latter category, it appears that diurnal rodents such as agoutis and squirrels secondarily disperse seeds that have been dropped by bats in clumps or in isolation under the feeding-roost. Survival of scatterhoarded seeds is very low and may be influenced by year-to-year variation in production of *Dipteryx* fruits. Also, survival of germinated seed is likely to depend on foraging behavior of rodents and on alternative resources available at the level of the community.

Tuesday, at 6 p.m., Barbara Leyden, University of South Florida, will give a seminar on--

Late Pleistocene and Holocene environmental history of Central America.

Thursday, May 17, Paul Colinvaux, Ohio State University, will give a seminar at noon.

Environmental history and climatic change in the Amazon Basin and lowland tropics of the New World.

NEXT WEEK

Tuesday, May 22, noon seminar speakers will be Anne Meylan, Florida Marine Research Institute, and Peter Meylan, Eckerd College.

Studies of marine turtles in Bocas del Toro Province, 1979-1989.

Wednesday, May 23, David Steadman, The New York State Museum, will give a seminar at noon.

Late Quaternary extinction and biogeography of tropical island vertebrates: Galapagos vs Polynesia.

PEOPLE

Arrivals

- Ola Fincke, University of Oklahoma, May 12 - July 15, to do research on competition for treeholes among giant damselflies on BCI.
- Barbara Leyden, University of South Florida, May 13 - 16, to be interviewed for the paleoecologist position and to give a seminar.
- Lyn Loveless, College of Wooster, Ohio, May 14 - June 24, to do research on the seasonal and spatial variation in mating of *Tachigalia versicolor* (Leguminosae), a neotropical canopy tree on BCI.
- Federico Bolaños, University of Costa Rica, May 15 - July 31, to do research in Gamboa on why female Tungara frogs find complex calls more attractive than simple ones.
- Maritza Gutierrez, University of Costa Rica, May 15 - August 15, to work with R. Cooke at Naos doing analysis of archaeological fish bone samples from Guanacaste, Costa Rica.
- Paul Colinvaux, The Ohio State University, May 16 - May 18, to be interviewed for the paleoecology position and to give a seminar.

Departures

♦ May 14 - 19, Ira Rubinoff, STRI Director, and Elena Lombardo, Assistant Director for External Affairs, to Ecuador, to attend a scientific workshop and an environmental forum sponsored by CONOCO, and to meet with various officers of Ecuadorian institutions regarding cooperative programs.

♦ May 13 - 27, A. Arze and A. Hernández, to take training courses on security/protection and to observe gamewarden activities at other SI Bureaus.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Deadline

May 15 is the deadline for receipt by the STRI Education Office of applications for STRI short-term fellowships, Exxon fellowships and requests by scientists for Exxon assistants, for this quarter.

CENSUS DAY

DURING CENSUS DAY, SUNDAY, MAY 13, NO ONE MAY LEAVE THEIR PLACE OF RESIDENCE UNTIL THEY HAVE BEEN CENSUSED AND HAVE RECEIVED THEIR CORRESPONDING CARD. NON-PANAMANIAN AND VISITORS WILL ALSO BE CENSUSED.

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

From Procurement / Del Depto. de Compras

We are looking for the owner of two small hoses received from Pelagic Pressure Systems, perhaps to use with diving tanks. Contact: Gabriel Martinez at 62-3172.

Taking or borrowing daily newspapers from subscribers' mailboxes at Tivoli must be suspended immediately. Complaints have been received that newspapers are not available when subscribers go to pick them up. Your compliance with this request is much appreciated.

El departamento de compras solicita que a partir de la fecha se suspenda la práctica de retirar o llevarse prestado los periódicos de sus respectivos casilleros en Tivoli, para evitar las muy justificadas quejas de sus usuarios. Se agradece el cumplimiento con esta solicitud.

Tupper News

Beginning May 21, telephones at the Tupper/Tivoli complex will change. New numbers will be announced one more time in next week's newsletter. Be aware that Fax telephone numbers will not change. With the new telephone exchange, you will be able to access U.S. toll free numbers by dialing 109.

Assistants Available

Auric Thoele is interested in working as an assistant at STRI from January 10 through August 20, 1991. She is a biology and environmental studies' student at Bowdoin College. Ms. Thoele will participate in a comparative ecology program in Ecuador next semester and can pay her airfare from there to Panama. (72 Santa Marina St., San Francisco, CA 94110, 415-824-1923).

Susan E. Langland is interested in working with research on animal behavior as an assistant or in some academic or administrative position. Ms. Langland will receive a B.S. degree in psychology from Reed College in May 1990. Skills include basic biology laboratory techniques, observation of animal behavior, animal injections, stereotaxic use, animal care; desktop publishing on the Apple Macintosh and NeXT computers, statistical analysis; extensive writing experience, both technical and creative, editing skills. (3226 SE Hawthorne Blvd., Portland, Oregon 97214, 503-232-0222).

Michael W. Sherman is interested in working as an assistant at STRI. Mr. Sherman has B.A. degrees in biology and environmental studies from the University of California at Santa Cruz. He has experience in marine and ornithological research, bird censusing, capturing and banding techniques, vegetative sampling techniques. Computer skills include word processing, data management and analysis. Conversational Spanish. (20073 Edinburg Drive, Saratoga, CA 95070, 408-867-7856).

Christophe E. Gimmler is interested in working as an assistant at STRI during the 1990 northern summer months. Mr. Gimmler is an undergraduate student from the University of Virginia, studying biology, ecology and chemistry. He is a certified SCUBA diver. (#434 Watson House, Station #2, Charlottesville, VA 22904, 804-971-8818).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BCI Journal Club

The BCI Journal Club will meet Thursday, May 17, at 7:30 p.m. A launch will leave Gamboa at 5:35 p.m. and return from the island at 9:00 p.m. Paper to be discussed: The pollination ecology of co-occurring geographically restricted and widespread species of *Astragalus* (Fabaceae). Biol. Conserv. 39, 179-193.

Fellowships Opportunities

•The Department of Biology at the University of Southwestern Louisiana has available *two Board of Regents Doctoral Fellowships* to begin in August 1990. Each fellow will receive a renewable stipend of \$15,000/yr, plus complete waiver of tuition and fees. Both fellowships may be used for studies in animal behavior. For information and application materials, write: Dr. Robert Jaeger, Dept. of Biology, U. of Southwestern, Lafayette, LA 70504-2451. Applications for minorities are particularly encouraged.

•The University of South Florida announces Doctoral and M.A. programs focusing on the practice and applications of anthropology. Contact: Anthropology, University of South Florida, 4202 E. Fowler Ave., Tampa, Fla. 33620-8100.

Internships

The Pacific Whale Foundation selects a limited number of individuals each year to participate in their marine field studies, through their Internship Program. As a PWF Intern you will work side-by-side with their full time research staff, receiving training in all aspects of marine field research. Students frequently receive academic credit for PWF Internships. Cost: Two-week internships are \$1395; four-weeks are \$2495. The 1990 Internship Program includes: HUMPBACK WHALE ECOLOGY-Hawaii, December through April; EAST AUSTRALIA HUMPBACK WHALES, June through November; TROPICAL CORAL REEF DYNAMICS-Hawaii, June through September. Contact: Pacific Whale Foundation, 101 N. Kihei Road, Suite 25, Kihei, HI 96753-8833.

Congresses/Symposia

♦II Congress on Marine Sciences, and the 23rd. Meeting of the Association of Marine Laboratories of the Caribbean, 18-22 Jun, International Conference Center, La Habana, Cuba. Contact: Organizing Committee, 2nd. Congress on Marine Sciences, 1ra. #18406 entre 184 y 186, Playa Havana, Cuba, Tel. 21-0342 or 21-0306.

♦4th International Symposium on Genetics in Aquaculture, 29 Apr - 3 May, 1991 in Wuhan, China. Official Language: English. Contact: Prof. Wu Chingjiang, Institute of Hydrobiology, The Chinese Academy of Sciences, Wuhan 430072, P.R. China. Tel. 813481-374.

♦IV Neotropical Ornithology Congress, 24-30 Nov, 1991, in Quito, Ecuador. Contact: Nancy Hilgert de Benavides, Organization Committee, IV Neotropical Ornithology Congress, Casilla 9068 S-7, Quito, Ecuador.

Feeling Stressed Out?

Aerobic Exercise Classes will begin at STRI on Monday, May 14, in the Tupper Conference Room, next to the Exhibit Hall. Two classes will be available: from 4:45 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. and from 5:30 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Ms. Anabella Sousa is the instructor. Mats will be provided by STRI. Each class can have as many as 20 participants, and there will be a sign-up book at the entrance. The monthly cost will be \$12.00; your payments should be made the first 5 days of each month with the cashier at Tivoli. If you have any further questions, please contact Audrey Smith, Director's Office.

Humor



STRI Volunteers 1990

Volunteers at STRI are contributing significantly to the work carried out by certain departments. This year the STRI Office of Education and Conservation has had three volunteers. *Jenny Arrocha*, a freshman accounting student at the University of Panama, has been assisting with all aspects of secretarial work; during the hectic 3 weeks surrounding the Tupper and BCI inaugurations, Ms. Arrocha helped out on BCI. *Vanessa Carrera*, a senior highschool student, worked during her 'summer' vacation on an environmental database, and assisted with general secretarial work. A computer systems engineering student from the Technological University, *Rubén Vega*, has been working for the last 10 months on a fellows' database. Their assistance has been invaluable in carrying out important projects.



Office of Education and Conservation volunteers, from left to right: Vanessa Carrera, Rubén Vega and Jenny Arrocha. (Photo by C. Hansen)



STRI Library volunteers, from left to right: Corina Hinkle, Donald March and Clarita Arias de Wright. (Photo by C. Hansen)

Volunteers are very important in library work. The STRI Library currently receives 300-400 journals monthly. *Corina Hinkle* (since 1984) and *Clarita Arias de Wright* (since 1982) work on the Panama Bibliography and check all new journals for information on STRI and/or Panama. Since 1988, *Donald March* has been organizing the STRI Photographic Collection, at the Ancon Building. In a private ceremony in January (see photo on left), Ms. Hinkle and Ms. Wright received volunteer service pins and Mr. March a service certificate in recognition of their work.