

STRI newsletter

AUGUST 31, 1990

SMITHSONIAN TROPICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE - Apartado 2072, Balboa, Panama

No.35

SEMINARS

Tupper Center Auditorium

Tuesday, September 4, noon seminar speaker will be James Quinn, University of California at Davis.

Habitat fragmentation, species diversity and extinction.

Next Week

Tuesday, September 11, noon seminar speaker will be Manuel Guariguata, Yale University.

Landslide disturbance and forest regeneration in the Luquillo Mountains of Puerto Rico.

Same day at 6:30 p.m.: Seminar by Darryel Felder, University of Southwestern Lafayette.

Labor Day • Día del Trabajo

Monday, September 3 is an official holiday for STRI; the library will close on Saturday September 1st to join everybody's "long weekend".

El lunes 3, primer lunes de septiembre, es un día feriado para el STRI por conmemorarse el día del trabajo en los Estados Unidos; la biblioteca se mantendrá cerrada el día sábado 1 de septiembre para unirse al "fin de semana largo" de todos los empleados del Instituto.



Participantes en el Congreso Arqueológico sobre "Las Sociedades No-Imperiales en los Países Visitados por Cristóbal Colón durante sus Cuatro Viajes al Nuevo Mundo" con su anfitrión, Richard Cooke. (Foto: M.A. Guerra)

PEOPLE

Arrivals

- Shawn McCafferty, September 1, to take over his position as Senior Research Technician with Dr. E. Bermingham.
- Katharine Milton, University of California, Berkeley, Sep. 3-13, to study population dynamics of howler monkeys and spider monkeys on BCI.
- Michelle Smith, Short Term Fellow, Sep. 3-Nov. 30, to study communication and behavior patterns of Baird's tapir (*Tapirus bairdii*) on BCI.
- James Quinn, David Olsen, Linda Farley and Neal Taylor, September 3 - 24, to work on project to assess degree of host plants in mainland.
- Klaus Winter, Universität Würzburg, West Germany, Sep. 1-30, to work on physiologic and biochemical characteristics of tropical plants on BCI.

Departures

- Sep. 6 - 27, Ross Robertson on leave to Australia for 3 weeks.
- Aug. 30, Joe Wright, for a one-year sabbatical. His new address will be: Center for Tropical Conservation, Duke University, Durham, NC 27006
- Sep. 1, Jeremy Jackson and Nancy Knowlton, on a one-year sabbatical. Their address: Dept. of Zoology, Oxford University, South Parks Rd., Oxford, OX1 3PS.

SEPTEMBER 1990						
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UPCOMING EVENTS

Programa de Charlas para el Personal de INRENARE en sus oficinas en Paraíso

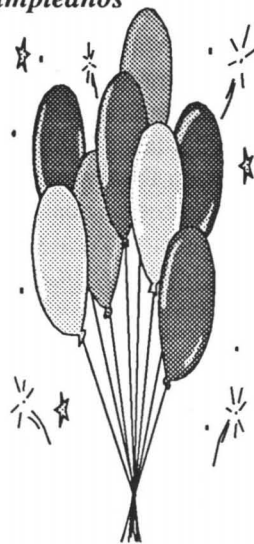
- 4 de septiembre, Edgar Muñoz de la Estación Científica Charles Darwin, Ecuador: Charla sobre Mamíferos Introducidos a las Islas Galápagos: Impacto y Alternativas de Control.
- 25 de septiembre, Zuleika Pinzón del Proyecto de Derrame de Petróleo del STRI: Presentación sobre los manglares en Panamá y su importancia, y una visita a los manglares de Diablo.

Scholarly Studies Program

October 1, deadline for submission of proposals for January review and funding to begin after April 1, 1991. Proposals should be in the Director's Office by September 26.

Birthdays in September • Cumpleaños

Audrey Smith	1
Eldredge Bermingham	2
Alejandro Caballero,	4
Ricardo Beteta	5
Jaime Sierra	5
Rubén López	7
Virgilio Sánchez	9
Nicolás Sugasti	10
Raúl Ríos	15
Luis Turner	14
William Eberhard	15
Maria Luz Calderón	25
Lastenio Guzmán	26
A. Stanley Rand	29
Mirna Fernández	30



THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

Seat Belt Use • Uso del cinturón de seguridad

The Smithsonian has long supported mandatory seat belt use in government vehicles. All STRI vehicles are equipped with seat belts for the driver and front seat passengers. New vehicles will also have them in the back seat. It is our policy that seat belts be worn by each occupant of a Smithsonian vehicle. Seat belts save lives. **Buckle Up!**

El Smithsonian ha apoyado por mucho tiempo el uso obligatorio del cinturón de seguridad en vehículos de su propiedad. Todos los autos del STRI están equipados con cinturones de seguridad para el conductor y el pasajero delantero. Los carros nuevos los tendrán así mismo en los asientos de atrás. Nuestra política ha sido que estos cinturones sean usados por todos los ocupantes de los vehículos del STRI. Los cinturones de seguridad salvan vidas. Por favor, ¡Uselos!



New Post Office Hours at the APO
From 10:00 a.m. through 1:00 p.m.
From 4:00 p.m. through 5:30 p.m.

Please purchase your stamps and have your express, certified or registered Mail ready for Procurement Department or in mailroom before 9:30 a.m.

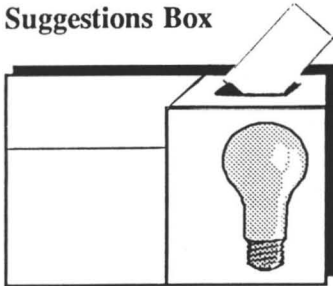
BCI Visits

All STRI non-BCI employees, fellows and visitors are reminded that visits to BCI must be pre-arranged through the Visitor Service Office. BCI employees, resident fellows and visitors must pre-arrange visits by guests. We request that everyone comply with this, as planning of meals, space in rooms, etc. depends on our knowledge, in advance, of expected persons.

Maintenance at Tupper Center

All requests for maintenance, repairs and other services other than routine cleaning should be channelled through Vielka Vergel. Appropriate forms are available in a box outside her office. Please do not make requests directly to the janitorial or maintenance crew, unless it is an emergency, since this makes it difficult for janitors to complete their assigned work.

Suggestions Box



A suggestion box has been placed in the Staff Lounge at the Tupper Center. Employees and visitors are encouraged to use it.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

"Electronic Mail" Course

From September 4 through September 7, 1990, Mignon Erixon-Stanford, Computer Specialist from the Information Support Services Division, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, will be conducting "Electronic Mail" courses at STRI. This 4 hours course is recommended for the scientific staff, research assistants and administrative personnel.

All interested persons must call Carmen Sucre in the Personnel Office as soon as possible to sign up. Groups will be limited to 8-10 persons per group. There will be morning sessions (8 a.m. to 12 noon) and afternoon sessions (1 p.m. to 4 p.m.)



Missing

From Tupper Reading Room, black Panasonic cassette player used for aerobics classes. If found please contact Nereida Hernández.

Se Alquila con Opción a Compra

Chalet en Altos del Romeral, 3 recámaras, la principal con vestier, 2 baños, sala, comedor, cocina con adición para lavandería, garaje para dos carros, cuarto de empleada. Toda la casa está cercada con hierro. Alquiler \$350. 2 meses de depósito. Interesados favor ponerse en contacto con Celideth de Mendoza, tel. 27-6014, ext. 222 en Tívoli.

FROM OTHER SOURCES

Update on Neal Smith's Work

(Courtesy of N. Smith)

In 1987, a major pharmaceutical company published the total synthesis of a new drug which they hoped would be useful in the treatment of *Diabetes mellitus*. The drug consisted of a molecule of glucose attached to a molecule of a novel alkaloid. It was designed to reduce the activity of enzymes in the gut, glucosidases which liberate free glucose in the final stages of carbohydrate digestion. This would alleviate the rapid rise in the blood glucose that normally follows a meal, which diabetics cannot tolerate. Although many hundreds of alkaloids are known to occur in nature, the alkaloid part of this drug was a structure new to science. However, last year it was isolated at Kew as a free compound from the tropical liana *Omphalea diandra*: the larval food plant of the moth *Urania*. The free alkaloid, was also found to inhibit glucosidases, and therefore has potential as a pharmaceutical against obesity, cancer and AIDS. Its value to the plant is to render it less digestible to grazing herbivores. Nature may have selected this chemical as an effective aid to survival more than 50 million years ago. Its discovery adds to the growing number of examples of what plants can offer in the search of new and safer drugs and pesticides.

"Back-to-School" Art Supplies... Watch out

Before buying your kids art supplies for school, read the labels carefully! Many common solvent, epoxy-based products like rubber cement, "super-glues" should **not** be used by children... use white glue, school paste instead... use talc-free, premixed clays instead of clay powder. Water-based markers, inks, paints are best, although "non-toxic" solvent-based markers are available.

Definition of "non-toxic" won't be standardized by feds until Nov. 1990, so **now** look for products that conform to ASTM Standard D-4236 and/or carry seal of **Art and Craft Materials Institute**... contact them for list at 715 Boylston St., Boston, MA 02116 or call 617-266-6800.

From Smithsonian Staff Bulletin

STRI LIBRARY NEW BOOK LIST



Bird blow flies (*Protophthora*) in North America (Diptera: Calliphoridae), with notes on the Palearctic species (CW Sabrosky et al., 1989) QL537.C24S23 1989X STRI.

The Birds of Papua New Guinea: including the Bismarck Archipelago and Bougainville (BJ Coates, 1985) QL694.P25C65 1985 v.2 STRI.

Carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases: climatic and associated impacts (R. Fantechi & A. Ghazi, eds., 1989) QC981.8.C5C367 1989X STRI.

Chitin (RAA Muzzarelli, 1977) QD321.M93 1977X STRI.

Completing the food chain: strategies for combating hunger and malnutrition: papers and proceedings of a colloquium organized by the Smithsonian Institution. HD9000.5.C627 1989X STRI.

Egyptian birds; for the most part seen in the Nile Valley (C. Whympere, 1909) QL692.W6X STRI.

La Etnología: temas y tendencias: I Coloquio Paul Kirchhoff. GN302. E84 1988 STRI.

Gale directory of publications (DP Boyden, ed., 1989) Ref Z6951.A51 1989 ed v.1 & 2 STRI.

Life history and ecology of the slider turtle (JW Gibbons, 1989) QL666.C547G53 1990X STRI.

Molecular biology of development: Proceedings of a CETUS-UCLA Symposium held April 1-7, 1984, in Steamboat Springs, Colorado. QH491.M64 1984X STRI.

Molecular mechanisms in secretion: Proceedings of the Alfred Benzon Symposium 25 held at the premises of the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters. Copenhagen 21-25 June 1987 (Alfred Benzon Symposium, 25th, 1987 (Copenhagen, Denmark), 1988) QP190.A392 1987 STRI.

The Motor cortex (H. Asanuma, 1989) QP383.15.A83 1989X STRI.

Phycology (RE Lee, 1980) QK566.L44X STRI.

Priority toxic pollutants (M. Sitting, ed., 1980) RA1193.P74X STRI.

Selected papers in phycology (JR Rosowski & BC Parker, eds., 1971) QK566.S44s 1971 STRI.

Selected papers in phycology II (JR Rosowski & BC Parker, eds., 1982) QK566.S44 1982X STRI.

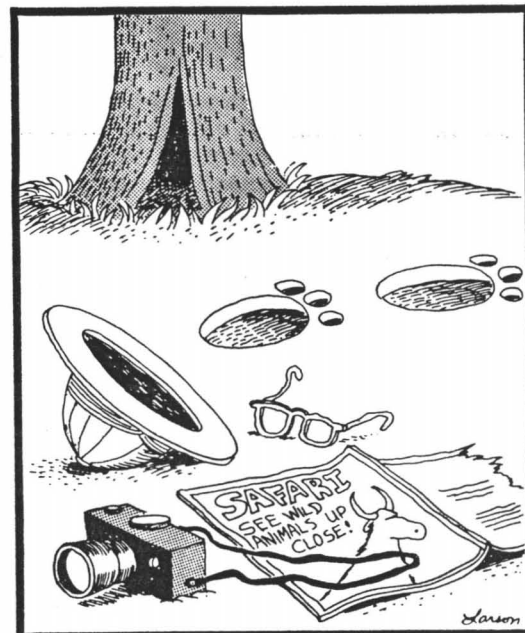
The Spectrochemical analysis of soils, plants and related materials (RL Mitchell, 1964) S593.M68 1956 STRI.

Tropical renaissance: North American artists exploring Latin America, 1839-1879 (KE Manthorne, 1989) N8214.5.U6M3 1989X STRI.

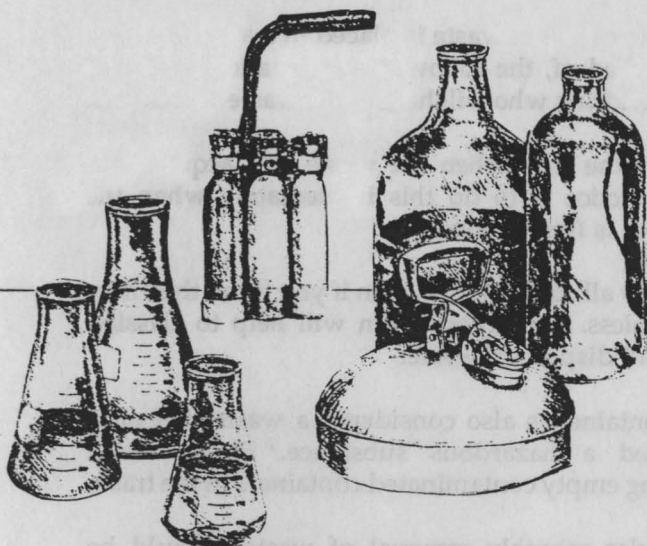
Vertebrate endocrinology: fundamentals and biomedical implications (PKT Pang et al., eds., 1989) QP187.V564 1986X v.3 STRI.

Vertical File item

Our changing planet: The FY 1991 U.S. Global Change Research Program (Office of Science and Technology Policy Federal Coordinating Council for Science, Engineering, and Technology. Committee on Earth Sciences, 1989).



USE OF CHEMICALS AT STRI



Since the use of chemicals at STRI has increased, the following general guidelines were developed in accordance with Smithsonian safety regulations.

■ Anyone planning to use chemicals should contact the scientific coordinator at their facility to discuss the guidelines for chemical use (see on back).

■ Appropriate waste disposal methods should be discussed before chemicals are used. Researchers should give all chemical wastes (including killing jars) to the coordinator with the following information: appropriate hazard warning, accumulation date, name of chemical, and the name and address of the researcher. The scientific coordinators will handle the disposal of all chemical wastes.

■ No chemical should be spilled or poured into the drain system of the buildings or on the ground around the facility.

■ All chemicals should be correctly and clearly labeled. Post warning signs when unusual hazards, such as flammable materials, toxicity and health hazards, or other special problems exist.

■ All chemicals must be kept in a safe place and kept away from persons unfamiliar with their use.

■ Flammable chemicals must be stored in the safety cabinets located at each facility or laboratory.

■ Incompatible chemicals must not be placed together. They should always be handled, stored, and packed so that they do not accidentally come into contact with one other (clorox and ammonia; acids and bases; cyanide and acid). A list of incompatible chemicals can be found inside of chemical storage cabinets or can be obtained from the coordinators.

■ Contamination of food, drink, and smoking materials is a potential route for exposing people to toxic substances. Food should be stored, handled, and consumed in an area free of hazardous substances.

■ Glassware or utensils that have been used for laboratory operations should never be used to prepare or consume food or beverages. Dishes for food should not be used for lab and chemical use.

■ Laboratory refrigerators and ice chests should not be used for food storage; separate equipment are dedicated to each use and are prominently labeled.

■ Spilled chemicals should be cleaned up and properly disposed of immediately. A list of chemicals (MSDS) and their spill or leak procedure can be found inside chemical storage cabinets or is available from the coordinators.

■ At the conclusion of a research project, chemicals should be shipped to researchers' home institution, disposed of correctly, or donated to the STRI stockroom. Never store hazardous chemicals in unmarked, general storage areas.

■ Toxic or hazardous materials will be not accepted for mailing via U.S. Postal System only via air freight, i.e. azocarmine, beta-aniline, phosphotungstic acid. Other chemicals are perishable and must be shipped via ocean freight, and some cannot be exported. Check with the STRI Procurement Department about these regulations.

Procedures to handle chemical waste

For procedures on chemical waste disposal, please contact the scientific coordinator at your facility: Raineldo Urriola (Tupper, Tivoli and Ancon), Ricardo Thompson (Galeta), Nelida Gomez (BCI) and Reinaldo Tapia (San Blas). They have copies of guidelines on how to handle chemicals.

What is a chemical waste?

Any chemical that poses a hazard to the environment and to the health of animals and humans and thus requires proper disposal. This includes a wide variety of substances such as radioactive materials, general use chemicals, pesticides, fungicides, paints, degreasers, cleaners, etc.

The best way to handle chemical waste is to avoid generating it.

Alternatives

When purchasing chemicals, please be sure you know and understand its disposal method. There may be other chemicals that are just as good but are less harmful to the environment or to human health. At each facility you can obtain information from the chemicals Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS). In case the substance is not listed, information can be obtained from the SI Safety Office in Washington.

Buy the amount you need. Bulk quantities may become a waste.

Once the chemical waste is placed in a container to be disposed of, the following information will help the individuals who will handle the waste-containers:

- Write the date when the waste was acquired. A good practice is to do this immediately when the container is first opened.
- Specify all components, even if you think they may be harmless. This information will help to classify, store and dispose of waste.
- A container is also considered a waste if it once contained a hazardous substance. Please avoid throwing empty contaminated containers in the trash.
- Regular monthly removal of wastes should be scheduled. If you produce large amounts of waste a more frequent pick-up schedule should be planned.

Remember that these practices will help STRI employees work more efficiently and, more importantly, to work safely. *Mother Nature* also thanks you.

For additional information contact:

Carlos Tejada
Facilities Manager
STRI

If your work involves handling chemicals, please keep this information handy.