

STRI newsletter

April 24, 1992

SMITHSONIAN TROPICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE - Apartado 2072, Balboa, Panamá

No. 17

TUPPER CENTER SEMINARS

Tuesday, April 28, noon seminar speaker will be Steve Palumbi, Hopkins Marine Station.

Molecular approaches to the study of speciation and population structure

Next Week

Noon seminar speaker for Tuesday, May 5, will be Steve Palumbi, Hopkins Marine Station.

World-wide genetic diversity in endangered humpback whales

PEOPLE

Arrivals

- From the Smithsonian Institution, Jack Hall, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Administration, Tim Dirks, Assistant Director, Human Resources and Jim Douglas, Assistant General Counsel, Apr 26-May 1, to meet for STRI 2000 Commission.
- Steve Palumbi, senior scholar from Hopkins Marine Station, California, and his wife Mary Roberts, Apr 26-May 6, to visit STRI facilities and present seminars.
- Catherine Robb, Univ. of Connecticut, Apr 27-Dec 15, to study physiological constraints and reproductive strategies in neotropical anurans.
- Janna Ellingson, Univ. of Texas, Austin, May 1-Aug 15, to study the role of continuous variation in male coloration in intrasexual and intersexual selection.
- Robert Srygley, Univ. of Chicago, and Carla Penz, Univ. of Texas at Austin, May 1-Jun 15, to study mating behavior in owl butterflies, butterfly flight over Gatun Lake and systematics of Heliconiine butterflies.
- Calvin Snyder, American Museum of Natural History, New York, May 1-21, to work on the generic revision of the Dioptrinae.



Personnel from the STRI Security Office recently inspected the new STRI research station in the Province of Bocas del Toro. See details on page 2 ••• Personal de la Oficina de Seguridad del STRI inspeccionaron recientemente la nueva estación de STRI en la provincia de Bocas del Toro. Lea los detalles en página 2.

(Foto: Oficina de Seguridad)

Departures

- Vielka Chang-Yau, STRI chief librarian, Apr 30-May 11, to Washington D.C. on official business at the Smithsonian Institution Libraries.
- Celideth Mendoza, from the STRI Office of External Affairs, May 3-9, on official business to Washington D.C. to attend a training course.
- Anthony Coates, STRI deputy director, May 1-3, to Bogota, Colombia to consult with colleagues at the Univ. de los Andes.

Wedding Bells

Our congratulations to Alejandro Caballero, photographer, who will marry Yany Ortiz on Saturday, April 25th.

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

Infrastructure Project Requests

All requests for new projects should be submitted in writing to the STRI Facilities Manager, Carlos Tejada.

Projects that will be included in this procedure are all those not previously identified (i.e. neither in the STRI Master Development Plan nor in the R&R Five Year Plan) and which include repairs, restoration, renovation, alterations, modifications, code compliance, and/or new construction.

If assistance from the STRI Office of Design and Construction is required for either funding, design and/or execution of the project, this assistance will be requested by the Facilities Manager in coordination with the STRI Director.

New Bocas del Toro Field Station

STRI recently acquired a small house in Bocas del Toro to serve as a research station. The house, a two-story wooden structure on a cement base, with electricity and running water, will require some repairs before it is ready for use by STRI researchers and visitors. When repaired, the Visitor Services Office will announce procedures for reservations and fees for the new station.

The house is located on the waterfront on Colon (Bocas) Island, relatively close to the airport. Not more than a few meters away are the ANCON and INRENA-RE local offices, and personnel stationed there can prove helpful in providing information on the general area.

The island is very close by boat to the Bastimentos Marine Park and other pristine marine and terrestrial habitats.

Reminder ••• Para Recordar

Please do not use the Tupper parking spot reserved for the handicapped, even when the parking lot is full ••• *El estacionamiento para inválidos del Tupper debe respetarse, incluyendo los días cuando haya muchos carros.*

From STRI Mini-Bookstore

New Arrival: *Mammals of the Neotropics, The Southern Cone*, Vol. 2, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay. 1992. \$39.50.

Tupper News

The soda machine previously at Tivoli has been moved to the basement (level 100) floor at Tupper, around the corner from Luis Castillo's office. It is a new machine but still uses recyclable glass bottles.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Procurement Requests Assistance

Departamento de Compras Necesita Ayuda

In an effort to recycle old written material, Procurement is requesting help with tearing apart bound documents so paper plant will accept them. Come and help; its good therapy ••• *En un esfuerzo de reciclaje, el Depto. de Compras pide ayuda para desmenuar publicaciones viejas para que la compañía papelería acepte el papel. Ven y participa; es buena terapia.*

At Tupper Center

- Mon, Apr 27 STRI 2000 Meeting, Large Meeting Room, 9:30 am-5 pm.
 Tues, Apr 28 STRI 2000 Meeting, Small Meeting Room, 9:30 am-4:30 pm.
 Marine Issues Meeting, Large Meeting Room, 10:45 am.
 Behavior Discussion Group, Large Meeting Room, 5 pm.
 Wed, Apr 29 STRI 2000 Meeting, Small Meeting Room, 9:30 am-12.
Amigos de la Biblioteca Meeting, Small Meeting Room, 9 am.
 Thur, Apr 30 Fundacion NATURA Meeting, Large Meeting Room, 3 pm.

Seminario Indígena del PAFT en Panamá

El III Seminario-Taller Indígena tuvo lugar en el Centro Misional Jesús Obrero de Tolé, Chiriquí, del 22-25 abril. Estos talleres son organizados por el Plan de Acción Forestal (PAFT) en cada país, para permitir al sector indígena dar sus recomendaciones sobre el mismo. Jorge Ventocilla, de la Oficina de Educación, participa como representante de STRI.

Liga de Verano (Volleyball)

Calendario de Juegos:

Abril 24: Tupper vs ANCON; BCI vs Naos
 Mayo 1: Tupper vs Naos; BCI vs ANCON

Premio "Ecodesarrollo"

Al Premio Universidad Hispanoamericana de Santa María de la Rábida a la Conservación de la Naturaleza en Iberoamérica podrá aspirar cualquier individuo o grupo de individuos o instituciones que así lo deseen, con la única condición de ser iberoamericanos o estar localizados en Iberoamérica. Por Iberoamérica se entiende a todos los países de habla española o portuguesa de América y la Península Ibérica.

Los trabajos que se presenten deben ser completos, en el sentido que no serán admitidos aquellos que sean trabajos en desarrollo o avances parciales de proyectos inconclusos.

Los trabajos para optar por el Premio deben ser enviados a la Dirección de la Universidad de Santa María de La Rábida, La Rábida, 6. -21819 La Rábida-(Huelva) España. Y con una carta en la que se exprese la intención de optar al Premio, título del trabajo, nombre, apellidos, titulación del trabajo del autor o del jefe o director del equipo o institución que lo presenta. El tema debe ser ECOCODesarrollo.

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

STRI Library Assistant

Bibliotecario Asistente en STRI

The STRI Library needs a temporary assistant to work providing general help to librarians, returning books to shelves, and preparing documentation for inter-library loans. Preferably person should have knowledge of biology and bibliographic research; working knowledge of English. Position to last approximately two months. Contact Vielka Chang-Yau, STRI Libraryt ••• *La biblioteca del STRI necesita un asistente temporal para ofrecer ayuda en general a los bibliotecarios. Sus funciones serán las de colocar libros devueltos a las tablas y preparar documentación para préstamos inter-bibliotecarios. Se preferirá a una persona que tenga conocimientos en biología e investigación bibliográfica y tenga conocimientos de inglés de trabajo. El trabajo será por 2 meses aproximadamente. Consulte a Vielka Chang-Yau, en la biblioteca de STRI.*

OTS Education Coordinator

The Organization for Tropical Studies, a non-profit international consortium of universities and research institutions, seeks a full-time staff member to administer the organization's program of intensive field courses. The position is based at the US office of OTS at Duke University and will coordinate with staff in OTS's Central American office to implement courses and workshops taught in Costa Rica for US and Latin American students, professionals, and policy-makers. Academic background in biology, natural resources, agroecology or related fields is required; Ph.D. preferred; OTS course experience highly desirable. Bilingual communication skills are essential. Experience in administration and fund-raising is desirable. Applicants should send letter of interest, CV and names of four references to: Donald E. Stone, Executive Director, OTS, PO Box DM, Duke Station, Durham, NC 27706, USA (919-684-5774). Deadline 15 May 1992. Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.



Dr. Roberto Ibañez, shown here collecting data for his research on frog population, was involved in the recent discovery of three species in Panama.

(Foto: M.A. Guerra)

RESEARCH UPDATE

New records of herps for Panama

by Gretchen Sotomayor

They've been living in Panama but scientists didn't know it, or couldn't prove it—until recently. But findings by local herpetologists, those who study reptiles and amphibians, reveal the existence of four additional species, including treefrogs and a snake, in the Chiriqui Province of Panama.

To be a little more specific, two types of treefrogs, *Hyla angustilineata* and *Hyla fimbriembra*, the lizard of the species *Anolis biscutiger* and the snake *Clelia scytalina* were recently discovered in the Chiriqui. Dr. Roberto Ibañez, affiliated with STRI and ANCON, was involved in recording the existence of all of these species except for *Anolis biscutiger*, which was submitted by Panamanian biologist Fernando Arosemena, of ANCON. Ibañez worked with members of Círculo Herpetológico de Panamá (CHP), a conservation group dedicated to the study of amphibians and reptiles of Panama. CHP has led species collection expeditions since 1980, Ibañez said.

Though these newfound species do occur in other countries, namely Costa Rica, their existence in Panama could not be proved until specimens were sighted. Of the four newly recorded species, some appear to be more common in Panama than others.

For example, herpetologists have only collected one specimen of Fringe-limbed Tree Frog, *Hyla fimbriembra*, while several specimens of *Hyla angustilineata* were discovered in the western mountains of Chiriqui, Ibañez said. And the existence of the less common *Clelia scytalina*, a large, black snake that feeds on poisonous snakes, in

Panama was actually recorded some time ago, but the species had been misidentified and confused with another, more common snake of the same genus, according to Ibáñez. Professor Frank Solís, from the CHP, noticed the error while examining specimens at the Museo de Vertebrados, University of Panama.

Scientists expect to continue finding new species in Panama because there has not been a thorough sampling of the country's flora and fauna, Ibáñez said. Some species, such as those living in the relatively unexplored tropical forest canopy, are difficult to access and might only be discovered when a specimen descends lower than usual, he said. Also, it is not unusual for scientists to stumble upon unrecorded or new species in some parts of Panama, sometimes without realizing it.

Currently, Ibáñez and others are working on the description of four new species of *Anolis* lizards from western Panama, and another species that is known to exist in the Fortuna region.

"I believe it is important to know what species we have in our country, because that will help in the conservation effort of species," he said.

For Ibáñez, recording and describing new species is a sidetrack of his long term monitoring of amphibian populations in Panama. Through his research, Ibáñez is currently tracking changes in frog populations through different seasons and years, with a goal to determine whether the populations are experiencing a decline, he said. Data is collected biweekly at four lowland study sites transecting Panama from the Pacific to the Atlantic, and two mid-elevation sites in the Cerro Jefe-Cerro Azul area in Panama's central region. Though the study is in its second year, Ibáñez hopes to extend the study for another three years.*

CONGRESSES

III International Congress of Ethnobiology

General theme: Culture and Nature —Directions in Conservation of Diversity
Organized by: International Society for



Martina Königer, postdoctoral fellow with Klaus Winter, works with a newly installed High-Performance-Liquid-Chromatography-System in the Plant Physiology Laboratory of the Tupper Center. The instrument will allow for the separation, identification and quantification of carotenoid-pigments in leaf extracts of rainforest plants ••• Martina Königer, becaria posdoctoral asociada con Klaus Winter, trabaja en el sistema HPLC recién instalado en el Centro Tupper. Este instrumento permitirá la separación, identificación y cuantificación de los pigmentos carotenoides en los extractos de las hojas de las plantas de bosque húmedo.
(Foto: M.A. Guerra)

Ethnobiology and Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México
Dates: November 10-14, 1992. Place: Oaxtepec, Morelos, México
Organizing Committee, III International Congress of Ethnobiology,
Apartado Postal 21-585, Coyoacán 04000, D.F., México

IV Congreso Nacional y I Iberoamericano de Etología

El primer Congreso Iberoamericano de Etología se desarrollará durante mañana y tarde en las instalaciones de la Facultad de Veterinaria de la Universidad de Extremadura en Cáceres, del 28 de septiembre al 2 de octubre de 1992. Entre los conferenciantes previstos se encuentran Carlos Bernstein, Marcelo Cassini, Alex Kacelnik y otros. Para mayor información escribir a la Secretaría del IV Congreso Nacional y I Iberoamericano de ETOLOGIA, Catedra de Biología, Facultad de Veterinaria. Universidad de Extremadura 10071 - Cáceres (España).

From: 365 Ways to Save our Planet • Page-a-Day Calendar •

When kids take part in arts and crafts, encourage them to think about the environment. Tell them why it's smart to use beeswax crayons, waterbase paints, and recycled paper, egg cartons and other throw-away items. In no time, they'll be green right up to their elbows.