

STRI newsletter

December 11, 1992

SMITHSONIAN TROPICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE - Apartado 2072, Balboa, Panamá

No. 50

TUPPER CENTER SEMINARS

Tuesday, Dec 15, noon seminar speaker will be Nick Smythe, STRI.

Implications of the Malleability of the Social Behavior of the Paca

Abstract

It is widely accepted that the social organization of a species is adaptively advantageous, and is a result of natural selection. But we have been able to manipulate the socialization process of captive-born pacas (*Agouti paca*; dasyproctid rodents) so that the first generation of young have a completely different social behaviour from wild pacas and, moreover, young subsequently born to those first generation animals persist in the artificial behavioural patterns without special training.

How can the second sentence of the previous paragraph be reconciled with the first? Does the phenomenon tell us anything about learning? About the success of the caviomorph rodents in the neotropics? About domestication? (Is there such a thing as a "process of domestication"?)

Evening Seminar

Tuesday, Dec 15, 5:30-7pm, evening seminar speaker will be Norman Duke, STRI.
Mangroves of Panama

Abstract

Arriving in Panama 4 years ago, I was struck by the wealth and richness of mangrove communities in this country. Since then I have qualified this view, and I wish to share some insights with you. My talk includes a description of Panama's mangroves, noting species diversity, plus some other interesting bits, including shooting down a few paradigms and re-assessing the general view of mangrove forests.

BAMBI

Thursday, Dec 17, at 7:45 pm, Bambi speaker will be James Nieh.

The recruitment of Melipona euphorba

For transportation arrangements call BCI.



On Mon, Dec 7, STRI and the community of Las Pavas held their traditional Christmas Party and the 6th grade graduation. "Bartola" was the highlight of the event. Other members of the STRI staff participated in the party sharing their enthusiasm and distributing presents to the children ••• El lunes 7 de diciembre, STRI y la comunidad de Las Pavas celebraron su fiesta tradicional de Navidad y graduación de los niños de 6to. grado. Durante el evento, "Bartola" fue nuevamente el éxito de la fiesta con sus magníficos números. Otros miembros del personal del STRI participaron en la celebración con su alegría y distribuyendo regalos a los niños.
(Foto: A. Montaner)

PEOPLE

Arrivals

- Jerome Howard, University of New Orleans, on Dec 14-Jan, 93, to work with Scott Armbruster in the chemical ecology of resins produced by *Dalechampia* (Euphorbiaceae), at Gamboa and BCI.
- Michael Lang, SI Diving Officer, on Dec 13-20, to follow up on STRI's Diving Program.

Departures

- Alan Smith to Miami, to Univ. of Miami and Princeton Univ. Dec. 15-31, on official business and to spend Christmas Holidays in Princeton.

Members of the STRI community who have not received/purchased their tickets for the STRI Christmas party, please contact Gloria Zelaya at Tivoli. We hope to see everyone at the Tupper Exhibit Hall. We will have a fun time full of surprises ••• A los miembros de la comunidad del STRI que no hayan adquirido aún sus boletos para la fiesta de Navidad, pueden comunicarse con Gloria Zelaya en Tivoli. Esperamos contar con la presencia de todos. Pasaremos un rato lleno de diversión con muchas sorpresas.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

At Tupper Center

- Dec 14-16 Workshop on Development and Conservation in Bocas del Toro, WCI and Bocas del Toro Conservation Groups, 8 am-5 pm, Exhibit Hall (Dec 14-15), Large and Small Meeting Rooms (Dec 16).
- Tue, Dec 15 Scientific Staff Meeting, 9 am-12 noon, Large Meeting Room.
- Wed, Dec 16 *Conversations at Smithsonian* for DoDDS' teachers, 3-5 pm, Exhibit Hall, speaker will be Cindy Martin, *Marine Biology Activities*.
- Dec 15-17 Laboratory Safety Course for STRI personnel, 8:45 am-4:30 pm, Auditorium.
- Fri, Dec 18 Christmas Party, 4 pm, Exhibit Hall.

Norman Duke Leaves Panama

Norman Duke came to STRI from Australia in 1989 to study mangrove forests as part of the Oil Spill project. Using sets of aerial photographs he and his staff determined the distribution and area of mangrove deforestation in Bahia Las Minas from both the 1986 refinery spill and a large tanker spill in 1968. Norm developed a technique for aging mangrove seedlings and shoots using counts of leaf scar nodes along stems, and showed that some seedlings survived oiling even though surrounding adults were killed. He also introduced the concept of a "seedling ban" of plants up to 2-3 years old that occur under canopies and pioneer the filling of lights gaps. In addition to studies of effects of oil spills, the structure and species composition of mangrove forests on both coasts of Panama were redescribed and some species distributions were expanded. Norm will be returning to Australia this month to continue his research on mangroves and complete publications of his findings. We look forward to continued collaboration and long-term monitoring by staff he has trained.

Seminario Sobre Gestión Ambiental

INRENARE con el auspicio de la UICN realizará el "Seminario-Taller para Responsables de las Gestiones de Campo en Manejo de la Vida Silvestre del INRENARE, los días 14 al 18 de diciembre en el Parque Municipal Summit. Participará personal del STRI los días 17 y 18, exponiendo sobre técnicas de investigación, proceso de manejo de datos y de métodos usados en el desarrollo de Programas de Educación Ambiental.

New National Park

During the last week, Panama's National Assembly passed the law creating the country's newest national park: Camino de Cruces National Park. It covers 4,000 hectares of tropical forest of the former Canal Zone, and most of it located within the former U.S. bases of Albrook and Clayton. The new park, together with the Metropolitan Nature Park, the Soberanía National Park and the Barro Colorado Nature Monument guarantees that all of the forest on the east bank of the Canal are now legally protected and constitute an extraordinary and unique contiguous belt of tropical forest from Pacific to the Caribbean. STRI is pleased to have hosted the work groups that discussed and prepared the project prior to its presentation to the National Assembly.

From Visitor and Security Office

De la Oficina de Visitantes y de Seguridad

As in previous years, we will be receiving donations of toys for the children who live in the communities near Parque Nacional Soberanía. These donations can be sent to Maria Morello, Visitor Services Office, Tupper, or the Security Office at Tivoli. Your generosity will make this Christmas much happier in many Panamanian homes

••• *Como en años anteriores, se estarán recibiendo donaciones de juguetes para los niños de las comunidades de las áreas aledañas al Parque Nacional Soberanía. Sus donaciones pueden ser entregadas a María Morello, Oficina de Visitantes, Tupper, o en la Oficina de Seguridad en Tivoli. Su generosidad hará felices a muchos hogares panameños durante estas Navidades.*

Volunteer Available

Vijay H. Aswani, visiting Panama for two or three months, is interested in volunteering to be part of a research activity at STRI. A Ph.D. in biochemistry, he also has skills in writing, teaching and computing. To have a copy of his CV, contact the Office of Education.

Campamento de Verano Bonanza

Un campamento ecológico de verano para niños de 10-13 años, en el bosque protegido de pinos más grande de Panamá a las orillas de la pintoresca Laguna de la Yeguada, se llevará a cabo en tres diferentes períodos: del 9-23 de enero, del 6-20 de febrero y del 6-20 de marzo. La actividad incluye educación ambiental, primeros auxilios, supervivencia, armar campamentos, lectura de mapas, orientación con brújula, etc. Para mayor información e inscripciones, favor de llamar a Juan Antonio De la Guardia, al 69-3423 (oficina) o al 27-2597 (residencia).

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

Evolutionary Biologist

The Department of Biology, University of Carolina at Chapel Hill seeks an outstanding biologist studying evolutionary mechanisms. The appointment to enhance our programs in ecology, behavior, evolution and systematics can be made at any level. Appointment will be available July 1, 1993. Outstanding scientists with at least two years of postdoctoral experience should send a curriculum vitae, a description of research interests, selected publications, and four letters of recommendation to: Evolutionary Biology Search, Department of Biology, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, N.C. 27599-3280. Priority will be given to applications received by January 8, 1993.

Ecologist

The Department of Biological Sciences, University of Maryland, is looking for an outstanding ecologist for a tenure track position at the assistant professor level beginning in the fall of 1993. We seek an individual who will interact with current faculty in related areas such as invertebrate sensory physiology, food and host plant selection by insects, lepidopteran evolution, aquatic ecology, and population genetics of stress tolerance. We are particularly interested in candidate with expertise in the behavioral ecology of invertebrates physiology ecology, or animal plant interactions. Postdoctoral experience is highly desirable. The candidate will establish strong and independent research program, and will contribute to teaching in undergraduate and graduate courses in ecology. To apply, please send CV, statement of research interest, reprints of recent publications, and the names, addresses, and telephone number of at least three references to: Dr. Thomas W. Cronin, Chair, Search Committee, Department of Biological Sciences, UMBC, Baltimore Maryland 21228-5398.

CONGRESOS

V Congreso Científico Agropecuario

La Facultad de Ciencias Agropecuarias de Chiriquí invita cordialmente al V Congreso Científico Agropecuario que se llevará a cabo los días 14 y 15 de enero de 1993. Dicho evento se desarrollará en las instalaciones ubicadas en el corregimiento de Chiriquí. El objetivo primordial de esta actividad es la presentación y difusión de los trabajos de investigación agropecuaria de



Julio Polo, Construction Inspector, ODC, supervises the connection of the new underwater electrical cable by PCC personnel at the Frijoles electrical sub-station. The installation of this new cable by the Office of Design and Construction at STRI replaces a 20-year-old cable that provided electrical power to BCI ••• Julio Polo, inspector de construcción de ODC, supervisó la conexión de un nuevo cable de electricidad bajo el agua, por miembros de la Comisión del Canal en la sub-estación eléctrica de Frijoles. La instalación de este cable por la Oficina de Diseño y Construcción en STRI, substituye un cable instalado hace aproximadamente 20 años, que suministraba electricidad a Barro Colorado.

(Foto: A. Montaner)

carácter nacional. Para presentar trabajos a dicho Congreso se requiere enviar la hoja de inscripción y el resumen a más tardar el 18 de diciembre. Para mayores detalles favor llamar a la Oficina de Educación.



El viernes 4 de diciembre, el equipo de fútbol de STRI ganó el campeonato de liga interna de la Dirección de Dragado de "Machine Shop" por un gol a cero.

(Foto: A. Montaner)

III Encuentro en Pro de la Recuperación de la Bahía de Panamá

El día 15 de diciembre a las 3pm en el Salón Boquete del Centro de Convenciones Atlapa se llevará a cabo el encuentro "Medio Ambiente, Desarrollo, Educación y Bahía Saneada para el Año 2000." La mesa principal estará integrada por los Ministros de Salud, de Educación, el Presidente de la Comisión de Ambiente y Desarrollo de la Asamblea Legislativa, la Alcaldesa, y miembros del BID, CAPAC, CIASMA, DAAN, PANALDIS y UNESCO. Para asistir llamar a la Fundación Shinmatsu (Pino Nuevo) al teléfono 64-0909 o telefax 64-4839.

STRI NEW PUBLICATION

Pérez, Rolando A. 1992. Estudio Florístico Preliminar de Algunos Arboles y Otras Plantas en el Sendero de Interpretación del Parque Nacional Altos de Campana. Thesis, Universidad de Panamá, Facultad de Ciencias Naturales y Exactas.



Los habitantes del Centro Tupper estaremos recibiendo contribuciones para poner un arbolito de Navidad en el salón de recepción del centro. Su colaboración puede ser en dinero (para comprar el arbolito) o en ghirlandas, lágrimas, piel de ángel, bolitas de colores o la Estrella de Belén u otro objeto para la cima del pino. Muchas gracias.

ICBP/IUCN RED DATA BOOK

Threatened Birds of the Americas, October, 1992

For the first time in the history of the Red Data Books, this volume will be published in two languages (a Spanish edition is being sponsored by Quinto Centenario-Spanish Government). The English version is now available from Smithsonian Institution Press, Department 900, Blue Ridge Summit, PA 17294-0900, USA. Tel: 800 782-4612 and (717) 794-2148. This volume, part 2 of the third edition (part 1, "Threatened Birds of Africa and related islands" was published in 1985), is an authoritative source which thoroughly covers 327 species in 1150 pages. It is a vital resource in determining the most appropriate courses of action for the conservation of the species under review. Therefore, like all Red Data Books, this one is a call for action to be taken by different countries, international agencies, national institutions (private and governmental), bird lovers, in sum, people who care about our environment, about our future; this book merits wide dissemination. Each species entry is equivalent to a scientific review paper, yet does not merely repeat information gathered from published sources but analyses, reorganizes and, through the incorporation of new data from museums and correspondents, extends it. Where two or more threatened species occur together the authors have clearly pointed the fact, thereby indicating where and how to save the maximum number of species with the minimum input of finances (this quality is further complemented by information from ICBP's Biodiversity Project).

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

Borax (like vinegar) is a mild but effective disinfectant. In place of harsher chemicals, try using half a cup of borax in five gallons of warm water as the soak solution in your diaper pail. Borax controls the smell, and testimonials indicate no problem with diaper rash.