

## Tupper 4pm seminar

Tuesday, May 13, 4pm  
seminar speaker will be Peter C. Pollard, Griffith University  
**Closing the Global Carbon Cycle: Linking Terrestrial Plant Production with Aquatic Microbial Production of Carbon Dioxide**

## Bambi seminar

Thursday, May 15, Bambi seminar speaker will be Tom Kursar, University of Utah  
**Experimental studies of light, soil, drought, herbivores and pathogens as determinants of plant distributions across a rainfall gradient**

## Arrivals

Participants of the field course "Environmental Biology 2008" from Radford University, in Gamboa and Bocas.

Aaron McCright, Michigan State University, to study the ethnography of two biological field stations in the Republic of Panama, on BCI.

Erik Ragsdale, University of California, Riverside, and Natsumi Kanzaki, University of Florida, to study the entomophilic nematode diversity in tropical American rainforests, on BCI.

Robert Dudley, University of California, Berkeley, to study the ecophysiology of butterfly migrations in Central Panama, BCI

Fabienne Zeugin, ETH Zurich, to study the functional significance of tree diversity for nutrient dynamics in a tropical plantation, a subproject of the Sardinilla Experiment, at Sardinilla.



Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, Panamá

[www.stri.org](http://www.stri.org)

May 9, 2008

## Shark tagging agreement by STRI and UC

STRI acting director Eldredge Bermingham and Douglas Kelt, chair of the Department of Wildlife, Fish and Conservation Biology of the University of California, Davis (WFCB), signed a five-year agreement to study sharks and other large pelagic fishes, in the Caribbean and eastern Pacific Ocean off the coasts of Panama, using advanced electronic tagging technology.

STRI marine biologist Hector M. Guzman and Peter Klimley, adjunct associate professor and director of the Biotelemetry Laboratory at WFCB, will serve as research coordinators, and will review and approve specific proposals based on their merit and mutual interest.

The collaboration of STRI and WFCB to further studies of wildlife in the field and laboratory through the appropriate exchange of technical information, equipment and staff, may take the form of research aid, exchanges of staff and students for training and educational purposes, tagging and tracking animals for research and conservation purposes, and



diverse studies of sharks and other pelagic fishes.

El director encargado de STRI, Eldredge Bermingham y Douglas Kelt, director del Departamento de Vida Silvestre, Peces y Biología de la Conservación (WFCB, por sus siglas en inglés) de la Universidad de California en Davis, firmaron un acuerdo por cinco años para estudiar tiburones y otros peces pelágicos de gran tamaño, en el Caribe y el Océano Pacífico Oriental desde las costas panameñas, con tecnología avanzada de marcado y rastreo electrónico.

El biólogo marino de STRI, Héctor Guzmán y Peter Klimley, profesor asociado adjunto y director del

Laboratorio de Biotelemetría en WFCB, fungirán como coordinadores de investigación, y aprobarán y revisarán las propuestas específicas basadas en su mérito e interés mutuo para ambas instituciones.

La colaboración entre STRI y WFCB para avanzar estudios sobre la vida silvestre en el campo y en el laboratorio a través del intercambio de información técnica, equipo y personal, podrá darse en la forma de ayuda en investigaciones, intercambio de personal y estudiantes para la capacitación y propósitos educativos, el marcado y rastreo de los animales para la investigación y propósitos de conservación, y estudios diversos sobre tiburones y otros peces pelágicos (mar adentro).

## More arrivals

Tania Brenes, University of Utah, and Kaoru Kitajima and Vincent Medjibe, University of Florida, to conduct the project "Do differential responses to desiccation, herbivory and light determine the habitat specializations of rainforest trees along a rainfall gradient?" on BCI and PRORENA.

Karen Warkentin, Boston University, Stacey Summitt, Butler University and Michael McCoy, Boston University, to study the fear, death and life history switch points: cumulative effects of phenotypic plasticity and predation across three life stages, in Gamboa.

Venetia Briggs, Boston University, to study the multisensory communication in red-eyed treefrogs, *Agalychnis callidryas*, in Gamboa.

Peter Meylan, Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission, to continue research on the ecology and migrations of sea turtles of Bocas del Toro, at Bocas.

Volker Nehring, University of Copenhagen, to study the evolutionary ecology of fungus growing ants, in Gamboa.

Lars Hedin, Princeton University, to study nutrient augmentation, on BCI. Curran, Timothy J., Brown, Robyn L., Edwards, Emilee, Hopkins, Kristina, Kelley, Catherine, McCarthy, Elizabeth, Pounds, Erin, Solan, Renata, & Wolf, Jamie. 2008. "Plant functional traits explain interspecific differences in immediate cyclone damage to trees of an endangered rainforest community in north Queensland." *Austral Ecology* 33(4): 451-461.

## UK maintains support to Darwin Initiative

Richard Austen, British ambassador in Panama (center) presented a check to STRI acting director Eldredge Bermingham (right) and staff scientist Héctor M. Guzmán, to continue support to a Darwin Initiative project which has been ongoing since 2003.

The new funds will enable Guzmán and James Mair from Heriot-Watt University in Edinburgh, to carry out a new survey around Las Perlas Archipelago using sonar recordings of the seabed. These data will serve as a baseline and foundation for future research, and produce good seabed maps for planners to design appropriate management policies in this newly created "Special Management Zone" around Las Perlas.

The funds provided by the British Embassy will also cover the costs for the production of a poster with uniquely useful and educational material.



Richard Austen, embajador del Reino Unido en Panamá (centro) hizo entrega de un cheque al director encargado de STRI, Eldredge Bermingham (a la derecha) y al científico marino Héctor Guzmán, para continuar apoyando un proyecto de la Iniciativa Darwin, que empezó en 2003.

Los fondos nuevos permitirán a Guzmán y a James Mair, de la Universidad Heriot-Watt en Edinburgo, a llevar a cabo un estudio nuevo en los alrededores del Archipiélago de Las Perlas, usando grabaciones de sonar del lecho marino. Esta información servirá como base

y fundamento para investigaciones futuras, y para producir mapas detallados del lecho marino que permitirán a los planeadores diseñar medidas apropiadas de administración en la recién creada "Zona Especial de Manejo" en los alrededores de Las Perlas.

Los nuevos fondos suministrados por la Embajada Británica, también cubrirán los gastos para producir un afiche con material educativo de gran utilidad con información única.

## Foreign affairs visit to Galeta

STRI's Office External Affairs organized a visit to the Galeta Marine Laboratory last month with members of Panama's Foreign Affairs Ministry, including Protocol deputy director Diomedes Carles (left), and Michelle González, (in red) Privileges and Immunity officer. Their work handling STRI's documentation for International Mission issues is highly appreciated by the Institute. Celideth de León hosted the tour to Galeta, praised by the group for their already known Caribbean hospitality and food!

La Oficina de Asuntos Externos de STRI organizó una visita al Laboratorio Marino de Galeta el mes pasado, con miembros del Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de Panamá, incluyendo a Diomedes Carles (izquierda) subdirector de Protocolo y a Michelle González (en rojo), jefa de Privilegios e Inmunidades. Su trabajo, manejando los asuntos de



Misión Internacional de STRI es altamente apreciado por el Instituto. Celideth de León (centro) fue la anfitriona de la visita a Galeta, la cual fue alabada por el grupo por su ya conocida hospitalidad y comida caribeña.

## New publications

Diaz, Maria Cristina, Thacker, Robert W., Rutzler, Klaus, & Piantoni, Carla. 2007. "Two new haplosclerid sponges from Caribbean Panama with symbiotic filamentous cyanobacteria, and an overview of spongecyanobacteria associations." In Custódio, M.R., Lôbo-Hajdu, G., Hajdu, E., & Muricy, G. (Eds.) *Porifera research: Biodiversity, innovation and sustainability*, Serie Livros 28: 31-39. Rio de Janeiro: Museu Nacional.

Erwin, Patrick M., & Thacker, Robert W. 2007. "Incidence and identity of photosynthetic symbionts in Caribbean coral reef sponge assemblages." *Journal of the Marine Biological Association of the United Kingdom* 87(6): 1683–1692.

Gochfeld, Deborah J., Schloeder, Carmen, & Thacker, Robert W. 2007. "Sponge community structure and disease prevalence on coral reefs in Bocas del Toro, Panama." In Custódio, M.R., Lôbo-Hajdu, G., Hajdu, E., & Muricy, G. (Eds.) *Porifera Research: Biodiversity, Innovation and Sustainability*, Serie Livros Vol. 28: 335-343. Rio de Janeiro: Museu Nacional.

Heckadon Moreno, Stanley. 2008. "Puerto Armuelles en 1928." *"Épocas" Tercera Era* (Supplement to *El Panamá América*) 23(2): 1-2.

Laurance, William F., & Curran, Timothy J. 2008. "Impacts of wind disturbance on fragmented tropical forests: A review and synthesis." *Austral Ecology* 33(4): 399-408.

## Successful SAIL Meeting at STRI

The International Association of Marine Science Libraries and Information Centers-Southeast Affiliates (IAMSLIC/SAIL) held their annual meeting at STRI from April 14-16, at the Tupper Center.

IAMSLIC is an association of individuals and organizations interested in library and information science, especially as these are applied to the recording, retrieval and dissemination of knowledge and information in all aspects of aquatic and marine sciences and their allied disciplines. The association provides a forum for exchange and exploration of ideas and issues of mutual concern.

Organized by STRI branch chief librarian, Vielka Chang-Yau, the SAIL meeting this year was a total success. Countless e-mails thanking for the organization of the event, the field trips to Barro Colorado Island and the Panama Canal were sent to "Vicky" after the meeting by the SAIL members.

"I wanted to thank you and all of your friends and colleagues for planning one of the most unique and enjoyable conferences I've attended in many years. I was impressed not only by the dedication of all to the work of the Smithsonian in Panama, but also with the camaraderie that was so much in evidence" wrote Stephanie Haas, from the University of Florida Digital Library Center.

La Asociación Internacional de Bibliotecas de Ciencias Marinas y Centros de Información-Afiliados del Sureste (IAMSLIC/ SAIL, por sus siglas en inglés) celebraron su reunión anual en STRI del 14 al 16 de abril, en el Centro Tupper.



## More publications

Lugo, A.E. 2008. "Visible and invisible effects of hurricanes on forest ecosystems: an international review." *Austral Ecology* 33(4): 368-398.

Thacker, Robert W., Diaz, Maria Cristina, Rutzler, Klaus, Erwin, Patrick M., Kimble, Steven J.A., Pierce, Melissa J., & Dillard, Sandra L. 2007. "Phylogenetic relationships among the filamentous cyanobacterial symbionts of Caribbean sponges and a comparison of photosynthetic production between sponges hosting filamentous and unicellular cyanobacteria." In Custódio, M.R., Lôbo-Hajdu, G., Hajdu, E., & Muricy, G. (Eds.) *Porifera research: Biodiversity, innovation and sustainability*, Serie Livros 28: 621-626. Rio de Janeiro: Museu Nacional.

Toth, Eva, & Bauer, Raymond T. 2007. "Gonopore sexing technique allows determination of sex ratios and helper composition in eusocial shrimps." *Marine Biology* 151(5): 1875–1886.

## STRI in the news

"Smithsonian scientist receives 2008 Medal for Excellence in Tropical Botany" by First Science News: May 7.

"Food and fuel follies. (Commentary)" by Ed Feulner. 2008. The Washington Times: May 8.

"The xbox360 we believe" by XBOX 360. 2008. May 8. <http://fullxbox360.blogspot.com/2008/05/xbox360-we-believe.html>



# Ecosystem Services in the Panama Canal Watershed: Agua Salud Project

Story: taken from:

HSBC's liN2\*

Edited by B King and  
ML Calderon

Photo: MA Guerra

The tropical rainforests cover less than 7% of the Earth's land surface, but harbor more than half of all species on Earth. Regrettably, tropical habitats are disappearing rapidly.

The Panama Canal Watershed is a vital landscape and strategic asset for global trade. Although unappreciated, tolls paid by ships using the Panama Canal represent a payment for environmental services.

In partnership with HSBC, STRI's Center for Tropical Forest Science will conduct the first, large-scale experiment in the tropics aimed at quantifying the environmental services (water, carbon and wildlife) provided by tropical forests, using the Panama Canal Watershed. To that aim, STRI acquired the Agua Salud site in the Panama Canal Watershed.

Forested and deforested catchments will be used as controls to address questions as:

- How do landscapes treatments and management approaches affect ecosystem services such as carbon storage, water quality and quantity, and biodiversity?

• Can "proactive" treatments be designed to optimize forest production along with ecosystem services during reforestation?

• Do different treatments and landscape management approaches influence groundwater storage, which is thought to be critical to reservoir recharge from the Panama Canal during the dry season and *El Niño* events?

\* Investing  
in Nature Two

los servicios ambientales (agua, carbono y vida silvestre) que proporcionan los bosques tropical utilizando la Cuenca del Canal de Panamá. Con ese objetivo en mente, STRI adquirió el sitio de Agua Salud, que se encuentra dentro de la Cuenca.

Los depósitos de agua con bosque y deforestados se usarán como controles para responder preguntas como:

¿Cómo se afectan los servicios que brindan los ecosistemas como el depósito de carbono, la calidad y cantidad de agua y la biodiversidad debido a los manejos administrativos y el uso de los paisajes naturales?

La Cuenca del Canal de Panamá es un paisaje vital y un punto estratégico para el comercio global. A pesar de que no se percibe como tal, el peaje que pagan los barcos al usar el Canal de Panamá representa un pago por los servicios del ecosistema durante la reforestación?

¿Podrán los diferentes manejos y tratamientos administrativos influenciar los depósitos de agua bajo la tierra que se piensa son críticos para recargar las reservas de agua del Canal de Panamá durante la estación seca y los eventos de *El Niño*?