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ASSOCIATION FOR TROPICAL BIOLOGY AND CONSERVATION

ORGANIZATION FOR TROPICAL STUDIES

IN THIS ISSUE:

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Cross-Continental Comparative Studies in Tropical Ecology

By Richard B. Primack, President, ATBC, and Richard Corlett (primack@bu.edu)

Few areas of the world are as misunderstood as the tropics. The term itself is misused when scientists talk about "the tropics" as if they were one place, forgetting that "tropics" is a *plural* noun referring to diverse ecosystems. The major differences among the tropical biogeographical areas of the world defy the impression—reinforced by travel posters and mass media—that tropical rainforests everywhere are interchangeable masses of tall trees filled with birds, vines, monkeys, and insects. Scientists like Paul Richards (*The Tropical Rainforest*) and Tim Whitmore (*An Introduction to Tropical Rainforests*) inadvertently support this impression by describing unifying properties of rainforests worldwide. Emphasizing commonalities encourages readers to overlook the fact that each rainforest has unique plants, animals, climate, topography, and histories. It has also unintentionally discouraged research that makes comparisons between regions, promoting instead a tendency to fill gaps in the scientific under-

ATBC 2004 MEETING TO BE HELD IN MIAMI

The Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation will hold its annual meeting in Miami, Florida on **July 12-15, 2004.** The theme of the meeting will be "Geographic and Conceptual Frontiers of Tropical Biology." ATBC 2004 will be held at the James L. Knight International Center, in downtown Miami. The Knight Center is associated with the Hyatt Regency-Miami Hotel, which will be offering rooms at off-season summer rates.

Two universities, the University of Miami and Florida International University, will co-sponsor the 2004 meeting, along with other members of CETROB (the Center for Excellence in Tropical Biology).

Interested researchers are invited to submit abstracts for inclusion as contributed papers or posters. The deadline for abstracts is ***April 15, 2004.*** Registration for the meeting will open on ***February 15, 2004.*** Forms for registration and for abstract submission will be available on the meeting web site, at www.atbio.org/meetings.html.

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PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS (Continued from Page 1)

standing of one rainforest region by reference to studies in other regions. Conservation is hampered by such assumptions; though rainforest regions all need protection, action must target specific threats and adapt to ecological characteristics present in each region. Policies, tactics, and techniques that work in one region may prove ineffective—or disastrous—in another.

A brief examination of major animal and plant groups highlights the unique ecological features of each region and suggests opportunities for comparative studies and conservation.

Primates

Of all rainforest animal groups, the primates have been studied most intensively, with the results synthesized by John Fleagle in *Primate Adaptations and Evolution.* One of the obvious differences among primates in different regions is the range of body sizes. Africa has the widest range of sizes, from the largely insectivorous dwarf galagos ("bush babies"), weighing less than 100 g, to huge gorillas. American primate communities are dominated by relatively small, arboreal, insect- and fruit-eating monkeys. Primates in Asian rainforests, excepting the orangutan and several small species, have medium-sized adults in the 5-12 kg range. Differences in size range apparently stem from the types of food available, forest structure, and the type of competing species, particularly squirrels in the Old World and sloths in the New World.

Birds

Although there is a vast literature on bird ecology, there are few studies comparing bird communities on different continents. In one such pioneering attempt during the 1970s, ornithologist David L. Pearson examined birds at six locations: western Amazonia (Ecuador, Bolivia, and Peru), Borneo, New Guinea, and Gabon, Central Africa. He was only able to study one locality in each region for a few months of one year. Despite its limitations, Pearson's project provided valuable insights. Some differences were explained by the presence or absence of particular bird families. For example, at Amazonian sites, probing/pecking is a common technique employed by woodpeckers and woodcreepers, but this technique is less common in New Guinea where these birds are absent.

Further comparisons among bird communities would be extremely valuable. Modern tropical ecologists could expand Pearson's approach to include more sites over a longer time frame, could study competitors such as primates and squirrels, and might investigate human impacts on bird communities. However, we must understand that the bird communities we see today may not represent the original structure of the community, but might instead reflect species that are most adaptable to human activities.

Plant Communities

Plants are the starting point for food chains. If plant communities differ in different rainforests localities, we might expect the animal communities to differ as well. Such variations exist both in forest structure and in plant species present, but are not well studied. Striking differences include the abundance and dominance of dipterocarp trees in Asian forests and prolific epiphytic bromeliad species in the Americas. Both plant groups profoundly affect animal communities in their respective rainforests. Because dipterocarps and other trees in the Asian forests flower only every 3 to 7 years, they create a flower and fruit-desert in which the density of animal life appears to be lower than rainforests elsewhere. The quality and abundance of dipterocarp timber contributes to intensive logging in Asian forests and subsequent forest decline. In contrast, bromeliads in New World forests seem to increase the amount of animal life in the canopy by providing a water source for animals to use without descending to the ground. African forests often have lower tree species richness in small plots, due to a tendency for a few tree species to be locally abundant.

A recent worldwide comparison of small forest plots by de Gouvenain and Silander in *Biotropica* demonstrated that dipterocarp forests of Southeast Asia are taller than rainforests elsewhere, followed by rainforests in South America and Africa, with much shorter forests in Madagascar. African rainforests contrast with rainforests elsewhere in their typically lower tree density. A network of much larger plots has been established at 17 sites across the tropics by the Center for Tropical Forest Science (CTFS) of the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute; these will soon provide valuable comparative data on forest dynamics among geographically widespread forest locations.

An Experimental Approach

Perhaps it is time for an experimental approach to forest ecology. The role of dipterocarps in Asian rainforest ecology could be studied by removing all dipterocarps from a site and observing the effects. This might be accomplished by removing the remaining dipterocarp trees from a selectively logged site and letting the residual non-dipterocarp trees dominate. Ideally, the resulting forest would be compared to a previously logged control forest from which a comparable number of non-dipterocarp trees had been removed.

Experimental approaches might similarly assist in understanding the role of bromeliads in Neotropical forest ecology. An obvious experiment would involve removing all bromeliads from a forest area and comparing its animal life and local microclimate with a nearby, unaltered control forest. Another method would be to plant large numbers of plastic, artificial bromeliads in the canopy of African or Asian rainforests to see how they affected the local animal communities and site conditions.

Accidental Experiments

"Accidental experiments" involving introduced, invasive plants and animals also represent opportunities for comparison. Honeybees—probably the most important pollinator in the Old World tropics—have been introduced into other tropical regions, altering insect communities and pollination relationships. Escaped honeybees, which spread from Brazil throughout South and Central America, visit the flowers of a quarter of the plant species at Barro Colorado Island in Panama. We need more such studies of the impact that these introduced honeybees are having on native pollinator communities and plant species in the Neotropics. Comparative studies of such invasive species in original and new localities would be highly instructive.

Conclusions

In addition to its unique mix of climate, soils, and topography, each rainforest community faces different types and levels of human threats. The forest regions of the Amazon, the Congo Basin, and New Guinea were protected until recently by their size, remoteness, and relatively low human populations. Great tracts of these forests will survive until at least the middle of this century, but their long-term future is doubtful due to pressure from logging and farming. Special threats include hunting in Africa, cattle ranching and road construction in the Amazon, and intensive logging and plantation agriculture in Asia. However, the situation is not hopeless. The majority of the rainforest biota still survives in protected areas and in sites that are too steep

too wet, or too infertile, as well as in logged forests, abandoned secondary forests, and woody regrowth along streams and fences. Cross-continental studies are needed to examine varying human impacts upon multiple taxonomic levels: for example, to what extent do parrots, small primates, squirrels, and marsupials in each rainforest overlap in their ecology and compete with or substitute for each other? And how do these species respond to human activities? Biologists must initiate comparative studies that highlight unique features of different areas to yield new insights and suggest conservation strategies tailored to particular regions.

ATBC MEETS IN MIAMI 12-15 JULY 2004

(continued from page 1)

A variety of scheduled symposia promise to make the Miami meetings an exciting event. Scheduled symposium topics include:

- Forest ecology and Conservation in the Guiana Shield: Future-thinking for a Forest Frontier
- Ecology of Tropical Streams
- Measuring Tropical Seed Dispersal Using Molecular Markers
- Interactions and Dynamics Between Primary and Secondary Seed Dispersers
- Frontiers in Tropical Ecosystem Disturbance Dynamics: Perspectives on Fire
- Island Bats: Ecology, Evolution and Conservation
- The Amazon: Biodiversity, Ecology, and Conservation

More details on registration, field trips, and submitting abstracts will be available on the meeting web site at www.atbio.org/meetings.html. Questions can also be directed to the organizers of the 2004 meeting. For more information, contact **Theodore H. Fleming,** Department of Biology, University of Miami, Coral Gables, FL 33124 (telephone: 305-284-6881; fax: 305-284-3039' email tfleming@fig.cox.miami.edu) or **David Lee,** Department of Biological Sciences, Florida International University, University Park, Miami, FL 33199 (telephone 305-348-3111; fax 305-348-1986; email: leed@fiu.edu.)

BOOK REVIEW

Coral Reef Fishes: Indo-Pacific and Caribbean. Revised edition. Ewald Lieske and Robert Myers. 2002. Princeton Pocket Guides, Princeton University Press. 400 pp. IBN 0-691-08995-7

By Erika V. Iyengar, Biology Dept, Muhlenberg College, Shankweiler Hall, 2400 Chew St., Allentown, PA 18104.

While not exactly "pocket-sized" (at 400 pages) this field guide is about as small as it could be and still include the vast number of fish species that it covers (> 2000 species). This book is aimed at vacationers, naturalists, and scientists who want to identify fish in coral reef regions of the world at depths of < 60 m. The book itself is almost two books: the first section covers fish in the Indo-Pacific (1,700 species), while the second section covers Caribbean fish (350 species). Before the individual species are considered, the authors include a brief overview (20 pages) of relevant marine ecology topics, such as zoogeography, zonation, feeding and reproductive habits, physiology and conservation.

The book also includes brief summaries about the ecology of each species and family of fish. At the beginning of each new family there is a paragraph elucidating its major morphological, ecological and economic characteristics . Each right-hand page is a color plate containing illustrations of each species. On the facing page the individual species are identified by common and scientific name and there is a short paragraph discussing the range, ecological habitats, and distinguishing characteristics of that particular species. The authors include an amazing amount of relevant information in a few short sentences.

Although there are no photographic illustrations, the drawings are accurate and the colors vivid. Size estimates of fish are given in metric units. For many of the illustrations, key diagnostic characters are indicated using a thin pointer line. Usually the trait indicated is clear, but unfortunately there is no verbal mention in the species description as to the identity of the diagnostic character. Juveniles and variations of the fish are often illustrated where appropriate, but sometimes either just a male or a male and immature are illustrated. In the latter case, illustration of the immature may represent the female, but this is unclear (many fish have discrete markings as juveniles, females and males). The reader needs to be familiar with the families of fishes, as the book is organized by family with no set of "shape outlines" in the beginning of the text to act as a guide.

The list of abbreviations at the beginning of the book was very short and did not include many of the abbreviations used in the book. Many of the site locations in the ranges were abbreviated (i.e., GBR, NSW). These are probably not a problem for people familiar with the area, but may be confusing for people visiting for the first time or considering a trip. More importantly, there is no map indicating the sites mentioned, a serious detraction when trying to interpret species ranges.

Overall, this book is very useful for the sheer quantity of fish species that it covers, the accurate pictorial representations of the fish and the brief but interesting and appropriate information on the ecology of the species. For as many species as are figured, the book is reasonably priced (< $25). The typical skin or SCUBA diver will be able to identify almost any fish on the reef using this book and also will know at least a few interesting facts about the life history of the fish in question.

Volunteer participation: a solution to a tropical paradox?

Saritha Visvalingam and Craig Turner (ct@coralcay.org)
Coral Cay Conservation, The Tower, 125 High Street, Colliers Wood, London, SW19 2JG, UK

Tropical conservation offers a paradox. Conservation strategies are often challenged by the occurrence of many ecologically bio-diverse yet threatened areas in economically impoverished parts of the world. Coral Cay Conservation (CCC – a non-profit organization) has pioneered a 'participatory model' using the resources offered by self-funding volunteers to support coral reef and tropical forest conservation work in sites worldwide.

Since its establishment in 1986, CCC has realized the importance of combining conservation of the tropical environment with the provision of resources and opportunities to help alleviate poverty and maintain livelihoods. CCC achieves these goals by recruiting volunteers who work with qualified staff and host country conservation organizations and stakeholders on coral reef and rainforest conservation projects around the world. Projects are therefore run to help protect threatened ecosystems, such as coral reefs and tropical forests, while providing alternative sources of revenue and sustenance for the dependent local communities. This is achieved through scientific research that is used to develop decision support tools (e.g. GIS-based habitat maps). Management recommendations are then devised and implemented collaboratively by working closely with the local communities.

Volunteers sample butterflies in a Coral Cay project site.

Collaborative research with national institutions of the host countries has been integral in providing the necessary data and technical support for effective and sustainable natural resource management. It was this concept that was fundamental in the formation of CCC, derived from a joint universities expedition that visited Belize in 1986-87 and 1989 to assess the impacts of tourism on the ecology of the Belize barrier reef. CCC initially only focussed on marine resource assessment and conservation, and current projects benefit from many years of experience in Central America and Southeast Asia. More recently, CCC has expanded into tropical forest conservation through their work in the Philippines. This came from an increasing recognition that coastal ecosystems are not isolated, and up-stream land-based activities (which typically relate to the loss of forests in the tropics) can negatively impact a coral reef environment.

Currently, CCC operates projects in Fiji, Honduras, Malaysia, Mexico and the Philippines. These and other countries are not solely responsible for the exploitation of their natural resources, yet they often lack the appropriate resources to obtain baseline information and implement sustainable management initiatives. The participatory model means that CCC can provide the technical support to assess the status of coral reefs and tropical forests. This is achieved by using trained volunteers that work with qualified staff and host country conservation organisations, utilizing a variety of skills and techniques to perform natural resource assessments for specific terrestrial and/or marine environments. The use of self-funding volunteers recruited through the UK-based office

implement long-term research, capacity building and community conservation independent of the host country's economy status, and with no direct cost to the partner organizations or communities involved.

The CCC approach has proved highly successful, with the establishment of several reserves worldwide, including a significant contribution towards the formation of the Belize Barrier Reef World Heritage Site and eight protected area designations in Belize and the Philippines. CCC also has an ongoing commitment to the development and management of resource conservation programs by local stakeholders, which is epitomised by the formation of the University College of Belize Marine Research Centre. The association with the CCC Trust (a registered charity) has also funded several conservation scholarship schemes for local students and counterparts, and supported alternative livelihood projects in all of the host countries.

At a time when global funds for conservation are stretched to the limit, the use of volunteer participants within the CCC framework has obvious advantages. The projects are funded and have a willing workforce all year round. Project partners and stakeholders benefit from the outputs of the work, and the volunteers obtain experience in many dimensions. A wider benefit is information exchange. In the UK and abroad, CCC has helped to raise further awareness of conservation and development issues by producing educational resources, events and displays for schools, museums and aquariums. All publications are made freely available, often strengthening links with governmental and non-governmental organizations, lending greater support to individual projects.

CCC provides one model for how tropical conservation and community development can mutually thrive. The ultimate goal within any project region is to strengthen human resources and the institutional capacity nationally. This allows the host country to acquire, assimilate and synthesize data from tropical forests and coastal zones for environmental monitoring, education and applied biodiversity management independently of external organizations. The web page, at www.coralcay.org, provides further information about the projects of CCC.

INFORMATION SOUGHT

Harald Beck is working on a review paper on seed dispersal and predation by peccaries throughout the Neotropics. He is interested in literature citations or original (unpublished) field observations of these phenomena. If you have information to share, please contact: Harald Beck, Dept of Biology, University of Miami, PO Box 249118, Coral Gables, FL 33124 www.bio.miami.edu/beck/ 305-284-6425

WEBSITES OF INTEREST

http://mobot.mobot.org/W3T/Search/nwgc.html
The Catalogue of New World Grasses (CNWG) is a database which will provide nomenclatural, taxonomic, and distributional information for grasses throughout the western hemisphere. The catalogue allows users to search by scientific name, and provides links to a variety of other useful sites for grass research.

http://www.rbgkew.org.uk/data/cbdbotanists.html
This site, accessible through the Royal Botanic Gardens site at Kew, provides pdf documents in English, French and Spanish to introduce and train botanists for effective implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity, which was signed at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. The site provides a "presentation packet" including slides and speaker's notes, as well as the text of the CBD and the Bonn Guidelines. Material can be ordered in hardcopy or downloaded from the site.

http://explore.cornell.edu/scene.cfm?scene=Beetle%20Science
This site, based at Cornell University, is a fascinating introduction to the biology, both basic and applied, of beetles. It offers rotatable views of three beetles, as well as an assessment of the contributions of beetles to world-wide biodiversity. It chronicles the efforts to control the invasive Asian Longhorned Beetle in the US, and provides a wealth of great beetle information.

FELLOWSHIPS AND OPPORTUNITIES

CTFS Research Grants Program

STRI's Center for Tropical Forest Science is currently accepting proposals for the fourth cycle of their Research Grants Program. This grants program is intended to provide opportunities for researchers to utilize existing Forest Dynamics Plots and to conduct research with scientists associated with these plots. The CTFS network of FDPs includes 17 sites in 13 countries. All researchers are encouraged to apply - from graduate students to senior scientists - for projects three months to three years in length. Research proposals can be field-oriented, laboratory-based, herbarium-based, or analytical. The next deadline is February 27, 2004. As in previous cycles, a total of approximately $100,000 will be awarded. For more information regarding the CTFS Grants Program contact CTFS via email: mmassa@stridc.si.edu or visit www.ctfs.si.edu.

The Christensen Fund Graduate Fellowship Program in Plant Conservation

The International Center for Tropical Ecology (ICTE) at the University of Missouri-St. Louis offers fully funded fellowships to students from tropical America, Africa, Madagascar, Asia, Malesia and the Pacific Islands with strong leadership and research potential in applied plant conservation. These fellowships are available to individuals with applied plant conservation experience and strong academic credentials for studies leading to a M.S. or Ph.D. degree. The fellowships will provide recruitment and repatriation airfares, stipend, tuition fee waiver and the opportunity to apply for competitive research funds.

Application review, for admission in the following August, will begin on December 1, 2003 but complete applications received before January 15, 2004 will be considered. Application forms can be obtained from the ICTE's web page at http://icte.umsl.edu/Application.html, the Office of International Student Services (http://www.umsl.edu/~intelstu/), by email from iss@umsl.edu, or by writing to: Executive Director, International Center for Tropical Ecology, University of Missouri-St. Louis, 8001 Natural Bridge Road, St. Louis, MO 63121-4499, USA. Completed applications should be returned to Office of International Student Services 304 SSB, University of Missouri-St. Louis, 8001 Natural Bridge Road, St. Louis MO 63121 with a copy of all materials sent to the Executive Director, International Center for Tropical Ecology.

BOOK REVIEW

Ecología y Conservación de Bosques Neotropicales, edited by M. R. Guariguata and G. H. Kattan. 2002. Libro Universitario Regional, Cartago, Costa Rica. 692 pp. (Text in Spanish)

Review by T. Mitchell Aide and Miguel Acevedo, PO Box 23360, Department of Biology, University of Puerto Rico, San Juan, Puerto Rico 00931-3360

English is the main language of science, but there are hundreds of scientists and thousands of students who study ecology and who have a limited knowledge of English. To address this problem, these editors have produced an excellent book in Spanish on a diversity of topics in ecology. The book is not a textbook, but is more along the line of an expanded series of reviews, in the style of Annual Review of Ecology and Systematics, that focuses on neotropical ecology. This book will not replace a basic ecology text in an undergraduate course, but it will be an excellent book for advanced undergraduate and graduate courses. In addition, the book will be useful for a much broader audience; including professors, researchers, and managers.

The main content of the book is presented in 24 chapters within 6 sections. The first section, **neotropical forest: past and present**, includes five chapters that discuss the importance of scale and history (climatic and anthropogenic) and how these factors have influenced the present day distribution and composition of neotropical forest. The second section, **interaction between abiotic factors and vegetation,** includes four chapters that review the importance of light, water, nutrients, and soil. These chapters not only review the major concepts and literature, but also provide information on appropriate methods.
The third section, builds on the previous section by describing the **ecophysiological responses** of plants to variation in of light, water, and nutrients. **Population and community dynamics** is the theme of the fourth section. This section includes a chapter on the genetic structure of tree communities, a case study on mammal population regulation, a review of seed ecology, a chapter on forest dynamics and tree diversity, and a detailed review of phenological studies, methods, and analyses. The fifth section, on **plant-animal interactions,** includes chapters on: interaction between microorganisms and plants, covering topics from fungal and microbial structure to their complicated interactions with plants, herbivory and plant defense, pollination, and frugivory. The last section, titled **ecological effects of contemporary human influence**, includes a chapter on fragmentation and the patterns and mechanisms of species extinction, a detailed review of secondary succession, and a chapter on the basic theory

We highly recommend the book, but the title, "Ecología y conservación de bosques neotropicales", is misleading. One could argue that the majority of chapters and references are limited to moist and wet tropical forest and there are many other neotropical forest types, but more importantly, we were surprised by the limited treatment of *conservation*. The editors did not even use the word "conservation" in the introduction, and although some chapters mention how human activities impact other aspects of forest ecology, this is not a book on conservation. Even so, in Latin America, there is a great need for a synthesis of ecological studies of the region in Spanish. The editors have accomplished this, and that is enough to justify buying a copy.

Now, how do you get a copy of this excellent book? Good question... Although it is listed on *Amazon.com* the status is "not available". The book is not listed on the homepage of the publisher, and we were unable to contact the publisher using the e-mail address and telephone on their web page. It is a shame that the information and ideas presented by a stellar group of tropical ecologists is virtually inaccessible. We encourage the editors to consider a second edition with a more international publisher. Minor changes that could improve the book include: a thorough editing of grammar, changing the running titles to reflect the title and authors of each chapter rather than the title of the book and the editor's names, and giving the editors more credit than simply calling them "compiladores".

We hope others will follow the lead of Guariguata and Kattan by producing and translating more scientific information into Spanish. How many more students would have been impacted if books like Costa Rican Natural History (D. H. Janzen) or A Field Guide to Woody Plants of Northwest South America (A. H. Gentry) had been translated into Spanish? If we want our science to have an impact, one of many approaches is to translate the ideas and concepts into a language (e.g. English vs. Spanish or technical vs. non-technical) that is accessible to the users. Given that software has greatly reduced the costs of translation, we hope that more publishers will consider publishing in Spanish.

El inglés es el idioma principal de la ciencia, pero hay cientos de científicos y miles de estudiantes que estudian ecología y tienen un conocimiento limitado del inglés. Con el propósito de resolver este problema, los editores han producido un excelente libro en español sobre una diversidad de temas en ecología. El libro, no es un libro de texto, sino que sigue la línea de un "Annual Review of Ecology and Systematics" enfocándose en ecología neotropical. Este libro no substituirá un texto de ecología básica en un curso subgraduado, sino que será un excelente libro para un curso subgraduado avanzado y para cursos graduados. Además, el libro será útil para una audiencia mucho más amplia que incluye profesores, investigadores y manejadores.

El contenido del libro se presenta en 24 capítulos dentro de 6 secciones. La primera sección, **el bosque neotropical: pasado y presente**, incluye cinco capítulos en los cuales se discute la importancia de la escala y de la historia (climática y antropogénica) y cómo estos factores han influenciado la distribución y la composición del bosque neotropical. La segunda sección, **interacción entre los factores abióticos y la vegetación**, incluye cuatro capítulos que discuten la importancia de la luz, el agua, los nutrientes y el suelo. Estos capítulos no solo discuten los conceptos y la literatura disponible, sino que también proveen información sobre métodos apropiados. La tercera sección, amplía los conceptos de la sección anterior describiendo **las respuestas ecofisiológicas** de las plantas a la variación de luz, agua y nutrientes. La **dinámica de poblaciones y comunidades** es el tema de la cuarta sección. Esta sección incluye un capítulo sobre la estructura genética de comunidades de árboles, otra sobre factores que regulan poblaciones de mamíferos, una revisión sobre la ecología de semillas, un capítulo sobre la dinámica y diversidad del bosque y una revisión detallada

de estudios, métodos y análisis fenológicos. La quinta sección, **interacciones planta animal,** incluye capítulos sobre la interacción entre microorganismos y las plantas, cubriendo temas desde la estructura de hongos y microorganismos hasta sus complejas interacciones con plantas, herbivoría y defensa de las plantas, polinización, y frugivoría. La última sección, titulada, **efectos ecológicos de la influencia humana contemporánea**, incluye un capítulo sobre fragmentación y los patrones y mecanismos de extinción de especies, una revisión detallada sobre sucesión secundaria y un capítulo sobre la teoría y uso básico de teledetección.

Recomendamos el libro sin ninguna reserva, pero el título, "Ecología y conservación de bosques neotropicales" no es apropiado. Se podría argumentar que la mayoría de los capítulos y referencias están limitados al bosque tropical húmedo y lluvioso, y existen muchos más tipos de bosques en el neotrópico, pero lo que es más importante, estamos sorprendidos por el trato escaso del concepto de *conservación*. Los editores no utilizan la palabra "conservación" ni tan siquiera en la introducción y aunque algunos capítulos mencionan cómo las actividades humanas causan impacto en otros aspectos de la ecología del bosque, esto no lo convierte en un libro sobre conservación. En América Latina, existe una gran necesidad de sintetizar los estudios ecológicos de la región en español, y los editores lo han logrado, lo que justifica la compra del libro.

Ahora, ¿cómo consigo una copia de este excelente libro? Buena pregunta ... aunque está listado en *Amazon.com* su estatus es de "no disponible". El libro no está listado en la página de internet de la casa editora y el número de teléfono y la dirección de correo electrónico de la casa editora parecen estar fuera de servicio. Es desafortunado que la información y las ideas presentadas por un grupo reconocido de ecólogos tropicales sea virtualmente inaccesibles. Nosotros recomendamos a los editores considerar una segunda edición con una casa editora de mayor difusión internacional. Algunos cambios pequeños que podrían mejorar el libro incluyen mejor edición de la gramática, cambiar los títulos de las páginas para que reflejen el autor y el tema de cada capítulo y no los editores. Además sería recomendable dar más crédito a los editores que simplemente llamarlos "compiladores".

Esperamos que otros sigan el ejemplo de Guariguata y Kattan produciendo y traduciendo más información científica al español. ¿Cuántos estudiantes más pudieron haber sido impactados si libros como "Costa Rica Natural History" (D. H. Janzen) o "A Field Guide to Woody Plants of Northwest South America" (A. H. Gentry) hubiesen sido traducidos al español? Si queremos que nuestra ciencia tenga impacto, uno de muchos acercamientos es el de traducir las ideas y conceptos a idiomas (e.g. inglés vs. español o técnico vs. no técnico) que sean accesibles a sus usuarios. Dado que programas de computadora han reducido considerablemente los costos de traducción, esperamos que más casas editoras consideren publicar en español.

UPCOMING MEETINGS 2004

7th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD-COP7). 9-20 February 2004, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Information at www.biodiv.org/meeting/aspx?

Apimondia Conference on Tropical Beekeeping: Research and Development for Pollination and Conservation. 22–25 February 2004 San José - Costa-Rica

Indigenous Knowledge and Bioprospecting, 21-24 April, 2004. Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia. Website: http://laurel.ocs.mq.edu.au/%7Ecjone005/index_conference.htm

International Orchid Conservation Conference, 17-21 May, 2004. Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, Sarasota, Florida. Information at: http://www.selby.org/iocc/index.htm

Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation Annual Meeting, July 12-15, 2004. Organized by the University of Miami, Florida International University, and CETROB. Miami, Florida. Information at www.atbio.org/meetings/

MEETINGS CALENDAR

9th Congress of the International Society of Ethnobiology (ISE) 13-19 June, 2004. University of Kent, Canterbury, UK. http://www.kent.ac.uk/anthropology/ice2004/index.html

International Association of Vegetation Science, July 18-23, 2004,Kailua-Kona, Hawaii Island, Hawaii, USA. The theme is "Landscape Change and Ecosystem Disturbance: Islands and Continents." Information is available at http://www.iavs.org/hawaii.htm or from the organizers at iavs2004@hawaii.edu

7th Intecol International Wetlands Conference, 25-30 July, 2004. Utrecht, Netherlands. See information at http://www.bio.uu.nl/intecol/index2.php

2nd Tropical Montane Cloud Forest Symposium, 27 July – 1 August, 2004. Waimea, Hawaii. The theme is "Mountains in the Mist: Science for Conserving and Managing Tropical Montane Cloud Forests." Contact: Lawrence Hamilton, tel/fax 802-425-6509 or druid@ggmavt.net .

Society for Conservation Biology Annual Meeting, July 29-August 2, 2004, at Columbia University. The theme is "Conservation in an Urbanizing World." Website, http://www.conbio.org/2004

89th Annual Meeting of the Ecological Society of America, August 2004, Portland, Oregon. Information can be found at: http://www.esa.org/portland/

3rd IUCN World Conservation Congress, 17-25 November 2004, Bangkok, Thailand. The theme will be "People and Nature: Making the Difference." Information is available at the IUCN website at www.iucn.org. The conference brochure can be found as a pdf file at http://www.iucn.org/about/wcc/wcc.pdf

2005

Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation, Annual Meeting, July 23-29, 2005. Uberlandia, Minas Gerais, Brazil.

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