

TROPICAL NEWS

A biannual newsletter created by the Center for Tropical Ecology and Conservation

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Issue 1



The Center for Tropical Ecology and Conservation (CTEC) at Antioch New England Graduate School supports and promotes education and research in tropical biology, conservation, and the sustainable use of tropical ecosystems. We help people find creative, long-term solutions to the rapid loss of biodiversity in the tropics. Our organization is framed by three main areas of concentration: **RESEARCH, EDUCATION and STUDENT SUPPORT**. We are committed to helping create the next generation of environmental leaders who embrace the

CTEC Celebrates First Anniversary

In the spring of 2002, CTEC celebrated its first year anniversary. It has been a busy year, and we have made many great strides in laying the foundation for the organization. The highlight of the year was the symposium in October 2001 entitled "Local to Global: Tropical ecology from the New England region". Over fifty people attended the symposium with thirteen speakers and individuals working in many different tropical locations, all based in New England. Topics included the socioeconomic dimensions of tropical conservation, environmental education and protected area conservation, and ecological research and conservation in the tropics. Jennifer Wilhoit organized an art show of tropically inspired works. In the evening, Eleanor Briggs presented a slide presentation on her work in Cambodia creating a crane reserve. The symposium provided a great meeting-ground for tropical biologists in the New England region.

While the symposium connected people throughout New England, CTEC has been working hard to provide resources for students and members of the Antioch community interested in tropical studies. We are actively cultivating relationships with other tropical conservation organizations. Our grant and practicum/service project opportunities collections catalogue resources for students interested in integrating tropical ecology into their studies. Tropical field study trips and our speaker series also enhance the connections we are fostering with New England institutions and tropical communities. This summer ten Antioch students studied in Costa Rica with Beth Kaplin, PhD and Jon Atwood, PhD at the Monteverde Institute. In the future, we plan to host field study trips that integrate educators and individuals from the greater New England community.

Next Symposium Scheduled for Spring 2003

In Spring 2003, CTEC is hosting a symposium entitled "New England and the Tropics: Exploring Our Connections", in which we will create a collaborative meeting-ground for educators, researchers and members of the general public to promote awareness and explore inherent ties between New England and the tropics. The symposium will include speakers, poster presentations and workshops. Our goal is to find ways to inform those who might not be directly

involved in tropical conservation through education and inspiration, and to initiate collaborations among scientists, educators and the general public. The symposium will be planned by two new CTEC staff members, Jaime Contois and Jessana Palm. We welcome them to the CTEC staff! For more information on attending or presenting at the symposium, email Jaime Contois at jaime_contois@antiochne.edu or call (603) 357-3122 x238.

CTEC NEWS in RESEARCH, EDUCATION and STUDENT SUPPORT

CTEC Sponsors Trip for Educators to China

Michelle Boslun, a cultural/ecological trip leader for high school students, and Carla Bos-sard, an ecologist at Saint Mary's College of California are leading a two-week trip for teachers and educators to China. Both have a wealth of experience leading educational travel to Asia. The goal of this field study trip is to travel overseas and learn methods to incorporate cultural and ecological field study into curricula. There will be a one week classroom component to the course, to be held at ANE. This trip will be a pilot trip for future tropical excursions sponsored by CTEC.

CTEC is eager to integrate more field study trips into the organization. If you are interested in collaborating with CTEC, please contact Beth Kaplin at bkaplin@antiochne.edu or (603) 358-3122 x 238.

Beth Kaplin and Michelle Zjhra Receive Research Award

Beth Kaplin, PhD, founding director of CTEC and professor of Environmental Studies at Antioch New England Graduate School, and Michelle Zjhra, PhD, CTEC associate and Professor of biology at Keene State College, received a AAAS/NSF Women's International Science Collaboration Award to travel to Madagascar in January 2003 to meet Malagasy colleagues and initiate a research project on plant-animal interactions in tropical rain forest.

Look for updates on the work in Madagascar in the Stories from the Field section of our website, ctec.anei.org.

CTEC Students Take Part in Conservation Biology Evaluation Project

A team of graduate students overseen by Beth Kaplin, PhD are working on a project administered by the Center for Biodiversity and Conservation at the American Museum of Natural History, the State University of New York's College of Environmental Science and Forestry and the University of Maine to evaluate teaching modules created by conservation biologists. The team will evaluate conservation biology training modules that could be used by undergraduate instructors in diverse settings.

The goal of the project is to integrate these modules into undergraduate and graduate programs both in the US and overseas in order to promote active learning techniques, integrate multi-disciplinary and global perspectives in biology curricula and create a network of conservation biology instructors who can then share experiences and teaching techniques with one another.

CTEC Receives Book Donation

John Friede, an Antioch New England Graduate School Environmental Studies alumni with World Vision Inc., donated a collection of books to CTEC for the development of a library. The topics catalogued in this collection include tropical ecology, conservation, anthropology and sustainable development.

In the next month we will be creating a lending library for these titles that will be housed in the Environmental Studies department for use by the Antioch New England community. A catalogue of the titles will also be inventoried on our website, ctec.anei.org. Please contact Kate McKenney at kate_mckenney@antiochne.edu for a full cata-

NEWS FROM THE FIELD

We currently have ANE ES Graduate Students working in 8 countries including Madagascar, Uganda, Rwanda, Costa Rica, and Mexico, on topics related to tropical ecology and conservation. Jessica Ganas and Rick Newman, two ES graduate students, report below on the work they are doing. We are

Jessica Ganas in Uganda

For the past year I lived in an afro-montane rain-forest, studying the feeding ecology and ranging patterns of three mountain gorilla groups in the Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, Uganda. On a daily basis, my assistants and I track gorilla trails, stopping at their nests to collect GPS points and dung. We measured the distance between two consecutive night nests to investigate daily path length and record what the gorillas have been eating. In addition, I collected data for an ongoing phenology study, completing fifty 200-meter vegetation transects in order to determine the spatial and temporal availability of gorilla food. Sounds easy enough? Not so. Bwindi is rugged terrain encompassed by thick vegetation earning its rightful name "Bwindi Impenetrable". Flat terrain was rare and more often than not I was climbing a steep slope with a 20 pound pack, tripping over hidden vines and getting cuts from thorny vegetation. Despite all that, it was one of the most incredible years of my life.

creating an active network of Antioch community members working in the tropics. If you have stories from the field to share, please email Kate McKenney at this address: kate_mckenney@antiochne.edu.

Rick Newman in Puerto Rico

I spent the 2002 summer working as Field Coordinator for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Caribbean National Wildlife Refuge Complex carrying out a mist netting/bird banding project in Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands. It has been a unique opportunity to visit some beautiful and remote places and work with rare endemic bird species. The sites have ranged from the isolated uninhabited 360-acre rocky island of Desecheo to the dry forests of the Puerto Rican mainland. I have been coordinating with local refuge staff and training volunteers on each island to assist in collecting data on the passerine bird species located within the refuge complex. So far we have banded about 20 species, including: Puerto Rican Todys, Antillean crested Hummingbirds, and Puerto Rican Emeralds. I enjoyed the work tremendously and looked forward to the challenges each new day and new island presented.

Want to Become a Part of CTEC?

- ◆ Drag CTEC's FirstClass icon to your desktop and stay on top of tropical news, events, grant opportunities, and job openings
- ◆ Help CTEC choose invited speakers, seminar topics, symposia directions, and get your name on our website by becoming a CTEC Graduate Student Associate or a CTEC Affiliate at **NO COST!**
- ◆ Contact Beth Kaplin for more information, bkaplin@antiochne.edu or (603) 357-3122 x238,
- ◆ Get on our mailing list for special CTEC events; contact Kate McKenney at kate_mckenney@antiochne.edu.



Don't forget to visit our new website at ctec.anei.org for more information and upcoming events!

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