



BES Tropical Ecology Group

Upcoming Events!

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BESTEG News

TEG Early Career Researcher Meeting 26-28 April: Abstract Submission and Registration, now OPEN!

Registration is now open for the 5th ECRM in Newcastle University, 26-28 April 2011. PhD students and post-docs can present their work in a relaxed, informal environment. Senior researchers are also encouraged to attend.

Key-note speakers: Professor [Georgina Mace](#), Professor [Nick Polunin](#), and Dr [Toby Gardner](#).

Please check [here](#) for abstract details and registration form.

BES Annual Symposium: Forests & Global Change 28-30 March

An international conference of temperate and tropical forest ecologists, providing an opportunity to integrate perspectives on the changing nature of forests across biomes. The conference will address emerging themes in forest ecology based on new data from spatially dispersed permanent plot networks, fully mapped stands and satellite imagery. As well as plenary sessions featuring keynote speakers there will be opportunities for contributed talks and posters. **Abstract submission is now closed.** (See link to the left).

BES Annual Symposium: TEG Mixer - Ed Yong!

[Ed Yong](#) will be speaking at the TEG/FEG Mixer event on Tuesday 29th March. Ed is an award-winning British science writer. His work has appeared in *New Scientist*, the *Times*, *WIRED*, the *Guardian*, *Nature*, the *Daily Telegraph*, the *Economist* and more. His 'Not Exactly Rocket Science' blog is his attempt to talk about the awe-inspiring, beautiful and quirky world of science to as many people as possible. All TEG, FEG and conference delegates are welcome. 29 March, 18.00 @ Caius College.

PhD: Quantifying and understanding tropical peatland spatial distribution and carbon storage in Central Africa

Supervisors: Dr Simon Lewis, Dr Ian Lawson, Prof Andy Baird (University of Leeds), Dr Susan Page (University of Leicester)

Start date: 1 October 2011

Deadline for applications: 31 March 2011

Largely anecdotal evidence suggests that sub-Saharan Africa may contain large areas of peatlands, several times the extent of those in the UK, with peat thickness reports of 30-60 m in the Congo Basin. If correct, this indicates that these areas, on a per area basis, are some of the world's densest carbon stores. Discovering and quantifying the carbon stored in such peatlands, and the environmental controls on their extent and distribution, is therefore critical to (1) improving our understanding of carbon cycling in Africa, the least well-understood continent from this perspective, (2) modelling future climate change impacts and (3) managing this resource. In addition, the description of previously unknown and/or unquantified peat deposits may provide direct benefits for Central African governments and local people in the form of access to payments to reduce carbon emissions from land-use change. This has the potential to have a clear societal impact in terms of alleviating poverty in one of the world's most income-poor regions.

Therefore the project will describe, map and quantify the peatlands and their carbon storage across the Republic of Congo. The project has been developed with the CASE partner Wildlife Conservation Society-Congo, the largest conservation NGO in Congo, who monitor and co-manage, with the Congolese government, 2.8 million ha of forest and wetland habitat in Congo, which is likely to include major peat deposits (storing 2.4 Pg C by one recent estimate). The project enables possibly policy-framing research - as belowground carbon stores are currently not considered in most discussions of payments for ecosystem services - that ordinarily WCS-Congo would not have the expertise to undertake alone.

The student will

1. utilise remote sensing products and local on-the-ground knowledge to identify the most likely areas of peat accumulation
2. visit some of these in the field to discover how much peat exists and characterise the overlying vegetation
3. combine remotely sensed and field data to calculate the carbon stored in the visited sites
4. utilise this data to prediction the local geographic conditions and environmental relationships that favour peat genesis and accumulation to then estimate the locations and total carbon stored in WCS-managed areas across

Congo.

The successful candidate will have some combination of a background in soil science, ecology, or earth observation, speak some French and will be motivated to pursue a career in research or conservation. They we also be enthusiastic about extensive fieldwork in remote and challenging locations.

WCS-Congo will provide support including office space and other facilities in Congo-Brazzaville. Additionally they will provide access to field sites, assistance in the assessment of remote sensing data, training in expedition management and execution, and will expose the student to practical science-based conservation management in Central Africa. The UK-based supervisors and WCS-Congo will ensure that the project outputs include not only world-class science but also have specific management relevance.

The student will benefit from five supervisors, three at Leeds, specialising in African carbon dynamics (Lewis), peat ecology (Lawson, Baird), African landscape management (CASE Partner Telfer), and tropical peatlands (Page, University of Leicester), who collectively are the authors of over 150 papers, including seven in *Science/Nature*. The project provides an excellent package of student training, incorporating elements of field, laboratory and modelling work, enabling the development of a broad suite of technical skills in addition to practical conservation management experience in Central Africa. The interdisciplinary nature of this project will provide the student with skills that will be of great value to their future scientific career.

Eligibility and How to Apply These awards are open to UK citizens or students having a "relevant connection with the UK" as outlined in the NERC student handbook <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/funding/application/studentships/>. It covers UK/EU fees for 3/3.5 years and an annual tax free maintenance stipend of approx €14,590 pa. The project will start on 1st October 2011 and applications should be submitted to the School by 31st March 2011. Shortlisted applicants will be invited to interview mid April. Please submit a PhD application as outlined on our website <http://www.geog.leeds.ac.uk/study/phd/apply.html>. When completing the online application form, applicants should note that they do not need to complete a research proposal but should instead submit a supporting statement either on the application form under section L or as a separate document <http://www.geog.leeds.ac.uk/study/phd/topics.html>

" For application enquiries, please contact Jacqui Manton (Research Postgraduate Administrator, School of Geography, University of Leeds) j.manton@leeds.ac.uk " For project related enquiries, please contact Dr Simon Lewis (s.l.lewis@leeds.ac.uk)

Position: Team leader for biometrics study in the peat forest of Brunei Darussalam

We invite applicants for a position supervising forest census work in Southeast Asian peat forest. The goal is to set up a long-term forest plot to study the population dynamics of *Shorea albida* and the carbon balance of tropical a peat forest. The position will require intensive field work. Responsibilities will include topographic surveys, tagging and dendrometer banding of trees, and preparation of botanical specimens. Candidates with a background in forest census work, tropical botany and field experience are preferred. Malay or Indonesian language skills will be helpful. The one-year position is based in Brunei and funded by the Singapore-MIT Alliance for Research and Technology.

This task is part of a larger project on carbon cycling in tropical peat forest. The position offers the opportunity to work with an international team of scientists who are characterizing carbon fluxes, biogeochemistry and hydrology at the same site.

If interested, please contact Alex Cobb (alex.cobb@smart.mit.edu).

Resident Professor for the Undergraduate Semester Abroad Program

The Organization for Tropical Studies (OTS) is seeking applicants for the position of Resident Professor with the OTS-Duke University Undergraduate Semester Abroad Program in Costa Rica. This is a field-based program designed to provide undergraduate students with outstanding training in tropical ecology, field research, environmental science and policy, and Spanish language and culture. Successful applicants will work closely with the Education Director, Deputy Director and other Resident Professors in design and implementation, and will be responsible for team teaching field-based courses in tropical ecology, field research and environmental science and policy, including the supervision of student independent research projects. The position is based in Costa Rica, and requires extensive in-country travel.

Qualifications

- Ph.D. in biology, ecology, conservation biology, environmental sciences or a related field.
- Professional research experience in the tropics.
- A strong interest in and disposition for team teaching and interdisciplinary collaboration.
- Experience in field-based education, group learning and interactive, experiential teaching techniques.
- Excellent communication skills.

- Bilingual (Spanish/English).
- Highly organized with ability to multi-task.
- Ability to work a flexible schedule.
- Exemplifies OTS's core values.

Anticipated Start Date: August 1, 2011

Application deadline: June 1, 2011

Additional information available at <<http://www.ots.ac.cr/Jobs>>

To apply: Submit résumé or CV with cover letter, statement of teaching philosophy and research interests, a list of references and salary expectation to the Education Director to rechum@ots.ac.cr

FREE conservation biology textbook

Oxford University Press is offering a free conservation biology textbook edited by Navjot Sodhi and Paul Ehrlich. You can download a copy here: <http://www.conbio.org/publications/consbioforall/>

Summer Study Abroad in Madagascar - May 26 to July 6, 2011

Since 1995, Stony Brook's study abroad program in Madagascar has provided students from across the country with the opportunity to study the biodiversity and culture of this exotic tropical island. Students spend part of their trip living and studying in the rainforest at Ranomafana National Park, sharing the research and training center (Centre ValBio) with scientists and staff conducting cutting-edge biodiversity research. Shorter stays in other parts of the country will introduce students to the wide variety of cultures, environments, and biodiversity that is Madagascar.

The Stony Brook study abroad program in Madagascar provides an unparalleled experience for students wishing to explore parts of the world virtually unknown to most North Americans. Courses are taught in English by Ph.D.-level research scientists from the US, Madagascar and Europe, and will prepare students for the final part of the course - an independent research project, designed and executed by each student. Field-based courses prepare students to tackle the tough questions posed by the complexity of tropical ecosystems and the looming threat of global climate change. Hands-on fieldwork teaches the methods of tropical field biology. Students who complete this program should be well prepared for advanced studies in tropical biology.

The Stony Brook study abroad program in Madagascar is organized through Stony Brook University's Institute for the Conservation of Tropical Environments

(ICTE) <<http://icte.bio.sunysb.edu/index.html>> in collaboration with SBU's International Programs Office <<http://www.sunysb.edu/studyabroad/>> .

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- * First-hand experience with tropical conservation issues
- * Living and learning near the rainforest close to endangered and endemic species: lemurs, chameleons, tropical birds.
- * Field-based laboratory courses taught in the rainforest
- * Sharing Centre ValBio facilities with scientists actively involved in research
- * Designing, conducting, and presenting an independent research project
- * Access to small villages around Ranomafana National Park for cultural experiences
- * Live closely with Malagasy people and develop friendships that last beyond the program
- * All on-site housing, meals, and transportation arranged and included in program fee
- * Excursions to other parts of Madagascar, including the capital city Antananarivo, the dry spiny forest, beaches and coral reefs, and Isalo National Park (the 'Grand Canyon' of Madagascar)
- * Instructions and guidance in English by experienced American, Malagasy and European faculty
- * Resident Coordinator remains with group throughout the entire program to provide academic and personal assistance
- * Fully accredited by the State University of New York, with credit equivalency accepted by most U.S. colleges and universities
- * No language requirement, but some knowledge of French (or Malagasy!) is helpful

Eligibility

Students from an accredited U.S. college or university may apply for the Stony Brook Study Abroad program in Madagascar. The program is open to seniors and juniors who have taken coursework in biology or anthropology and are in good/excellent academic standing. Students should consider their health and physical condition since many of the footpaths in Ranomafana National Park are steep and sometimes muddy.

Program Director

Professor Patricia C. Wright http://icte.bio.sunysb.edu/index_files/Page408.htm has worked in Madagascar since 1986 when her discovery of a new species of lemur, the golden bamboo lemur (*Haplemur aureus*), led to the establishment of Ranomafana National Park in Madagascar. Dr. Wright has worked to protect and conserve the flora and fauna of the park as well as to promote rural development, education, and health services for villagers living around the park. Dr. Wright is Chairperson of the Consortium for Research and Training in Madagascar which oversees the Centre ValBio Research Station and is the Executive Director for the Institute for the Conservation of Tropical Environments (ICTE) at Stony Brook University. As the program director, Dr. Wright has the right and responsibility to ensure that students abide by the program's rules and regulations. She also teaches classes and assists students academically whenever possi-

ble. The Resident Coordinator also teaches students and assists them academically and personally.

More info: http://www.stonybrook.edu/studyabroad/shorts_madagascar.html

Become a member of ICAN!

We are offering you this opportunity to become a member of the International Canopy Network. ICAN works hard to ensure the connectivity of canopy researchers and provide members with many professional benefits. Your ICAN membership dues cover the cost of printing, mailing and other office activities for a one-year period. ICAN is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization and dues are fully tax-deductible.

The benefits you receive include:

- * Our quarterly newsletter
- * The membership directory
- * Professional meetings and symposia
- * Collaboration with distinguished peers
- * Access to databases on canopy research and education

You may now subscribe to ICAN online at <http://www.canopystore.org/>

Neotropical Herpetology course in Panama

June 15-July 10 2011

COURSE LOCATION: Bocas del Toro Biological Station, Boca del Drago, Isla Colon, Republic of Panama. The biological station is located on a beach facing the Caribbean Sea. Coral reef and seagrass ecosystems lie out in front of the station and lowland tropical rain forests lie directly behind. This juxtaposition of the two most biologically diverse ecosystems provides tremendous opportunities for education and research. See: <http://www.itec-edu.org/index.html> for details.

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Peter N. Lahanas, Institute for Tropical Ecology and Conservation, 2911 NW 40th PL, Gainesville, FL 32605, 352-367-9128, email: lahanas@itec-edu.org, web: <http://www.itec-edu.org/herpetology2.html>, Specialty: Neotropical herpetology, forest ecology, animal behavior, biogeography, molecular genetics of sea turtles.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course will emphasize the ecology, behavior, biogeography and systematics of the amazingly diverse Neotropical herpetofauna. The material covered is equivalent to a university upper-level course in herpetology. The course is divided into three parts. During the first few days students will become familiar with the many ecosystems found in our area and

with the trail systems during "orientation" walks. The bulk of the first 10 days will be spent learning field techniques and carrying out various group projects or exercises (see below). Midway through the course the entire station community takes a 3-day field trip to cloud forests of Boquete (see details below). On returning to the field station, students work on their individual research projects and continue to receive lectures or other activities in the evening.

More info: <http://www.itec-edu.org>

Nouragues Research Grants Program 2011

The present Call for Proposals is aimed at fostering research projects at the Nouragues Station. Graduate students, post-doctoral researchers, and established scientists may apply. Submitted proposals will be evaluated by a Science Advisory Board based on their excellence, the quality of expected publications, and the feasibility of the project. Funding will not exceed 10,000 euros in total, and funds will be awarded for the year 2011. Reapplications will be evaluated based on the achievements of the previous years. Grant recipients will be expected to provide a scientific and financial report one month after the end of the fieldwork and no later than February 1st, 2012. Grants will cover all expenses by the participants, including airflight costs, housing in Cayenne, and transportation to the Nouragues Station. Laboratory analyses, and equipment are eligible for funding in the 2011 competition, but they should not exceed 50% of the total funding.

Applicants should provide (English or French):

—A curriculum vitae of the PI (1 page maximum), including the current research program, and a list of significant recent publications

— A list of the project participants, with details about their contribution to the project

—A statement of proposed research, not to exceed 1500 words (3 pages of text), including the scientific context and research question addressed, the work to be accomplished in the field and its relevance to the research questions, the envisioned outcome of this work (publications, reports).

The proposal should make it clear that the funded research will be carried out at the Nouragues station. — A detailed budget. For further details, please consult the Nouragues website (<http://www.nouragues.cnrs.fr>).

Deadline for application: March 2nd, 2011 Results of the selection process: April 4th, 2011

Applications should be sent as a single PDF file to Jerome Chave, only by email (jchave@cnrs-dir.fr). Incomplete applications will not be considered. Requests for further

information should be directed to chave@cict.fr

Conservation Scientist/ Rapid Inventories Manager, The Field Museum, Chicago

The Rapid Inventories (RI) Manager oversees the rapid inventory program, helps recruit and train Rapid Inventory scientists and the long-term director, and helps orchestrate the link between rapid inventories and follow-up conservation action. Within Environment, Culture, and Conservation (ECCo), a science division at The Field Museum, the RI Manager collaborates closely with EC-CoSs program directors and Sr. VP, and other scientists and communicators. Internationally, the RI Manager works closely with our Latin American collaborators, from conservation and community-based organizations to local, regional, and national governments.

Specific Responsibilities: 1. Rapid Inventories: - Assemble inventory teams (invite scientists to participate in the biological and social inventory) - Coordinate, plan, and manage inventories with logistics coordinator and appropriate ECCo directors, beginning before the inventory and continuing throughout the time in the field, preliminary presentations of results, writing of the final report, coordinating of the final presentation, and hand-over to follow-up action team in ECCo or in the field. - Oversee budget for each inventory - Participate as one of the scientists in the inventory (either social or biological)

2. Follow-up Action - In coordination with ECCo directors and scientists, find ways to continue to improve the transition from the field portion of the inventory to implementation of the key conservation and management recommendations. - Collaborate in follow-up meetings and partnerships with institutions involved in the inventory, and build relationships with other institutions and organizations that participate in the meetings and action after the inventory. - Contribute to follow-up strategies in close collaboration with ECCo directors and scientists, including development of other technical documents that support the creation or management of a protected area - Work with Web team to post inventory as soon as possible - Work with database coordinator to update RI databases and have useful information readily available on line - Contribute creatively to our on-line tools and database resources

3. At the Field Museum - Work closely with ECCo team to provide smooth transition from rapid inventory to follow-up action - In coordination with others, recruit rapid inventory scientist(s) and train them in rapid inventory procedures and management - In coordination with others, write grant proposals as needed to fund inventories - Write summaries of inventory findings to popular audiences - Help prepare presentations to Board of Trustees

Qualifications: Phd. in conservation-related field, tropical scientist (biologist, ecologist, anthropologist) with more than 5 years direct work experience with conservation issues in Latin America; superb written and spoken Spanish and English skills; excellent leadership and coordination abilities; exceptional communication skills.

Critical Skills: The successful candidate will be a strategic thinker and expert team builder with strong leadership skills; ease and agility in diverse social situations; facility working with local scientists and heads of institutions; superb listening and consensus-building skills; and deep commitment to conservation.

Apply for job here: <http://www.bfound.net/detail.aspx?jobId=94534&CoId=45&rq=2>

PhD: graduate assistantship in tropical forest ecology

Graduate Research Assistantship in Tropical Forest Ecology in the School of Forest Resources and Conservation at the University of Florida. The M.S. or Ph.D. research assistantship begins in August 2011.

I am seeking a highly motivated, quantitatively skilled graduate student to work on tropical forest ecology. I study landscape patterns of species distribution, carbon cycling and forest structure/dynamics using a combination of modeling, remote sensing and field data. I am looking for a graduate student who is interested in one or more of these areas. My website <http://www.sfrc.ufl.edu/faculty/Bohlman/index.html> provides more details on the types of projects in which I am involved.

Qualifications: A bachelors or masters degree in biology, ecology, environmental science and demonstrated interest and competence/experience in ecology, modeling or GIS/remote sensing. Please email a resume

and a letter stating your interests, background, qualifications and long-term goals to Dr. Stephanie Bohlman (sbohlman@ufl.edu).

The assistantship will include an annual stipend, tuition and fees.

Bird banding training courses in the Amazon

Learn or further develop your mist-netting, bird banding, bird handling, bird ageing and Neotropical bird identification skills in one of the most exuberantly natural surroundings on Earth.

The Asociacion Fauna Forever (AFF, <http://faunaforever.org>) and Center for Ornithology and Biodiversity (COR-BIDI, <http://corbidi.org>), two Peruvian not-for-profit conservation organisations, are proud to announce the next set of Bird Ringing Forever courses (BRF, <http://birdringingforever.org>) to be held in June and November in the rainforests of Tambopata, Amazonian Peru.

Course 1: 3rd - 11th Jun 2011 Course 2: 16th - 24th Nov 2011 Course fee: US\$1,000 per person

A limited number of scholarships, offering reductions of 20-75% course fee, are available to promising candidates from around the world. To apply, please send us (along with your application form) a cover letter explaining your interest in the scholarships, a copy of your Curriculum Vitae, and the name of two people we can contact for a professional reference, to: apply@birdringingforever.org

Volunteer opportunities on the Bird Team of the Fauna Forever Tambopata project are also available around the above dates, allowing time to put into practise the banding skills learnt (see <http://www.faunaforever.org/fft/volunteer.html>).