

Tropical biodiversity

The tropics have the highest species diversity on Earth, and about 100,000 species of flowering plants and 3,650 species of birds occur in the Neotropics. We know less about the organisms in the tropics than in other regions, and owing to the accelerating exploitation of tropical ecosystems the need to increase our knowledge of the tropical biota is highly important. The aim of this PhD course is to give an understanding of tropical biodiversity, with emphasis on flowering plants and birds, and the features of common tropical vegetation types and habitats.

The course consists of an introductory part with lectures and exercises, and a field part in Ecuador. This country has been chosen as model area since most tropical ecosystem types are present there, and since we have a long-standing experience of field work in Ecuador, not least in connection with the Flora of Ecuador project. The field studies will give a deeper knowledge of the biodiversity within different ecosystems, practical experience of field work, and training in plant and bird identification.

This course is co-arranged by the Life Science programme at University of Gothenburg and ForBio – Research School in Biosystematics. The course is aimed at PhD students at Swedish and Norwegian universities, and priority will be given to students having research projects related to biodiversity. Participation requires ForBio membership, which is free (see <http://www.forbio.uio.no/membership/>).

Credits: 7 HEC (recommended)

Application: Apply by sending an e-mail to Roger Eriksson (roger.eriksson@bioenv.gu.se) before 15 June 2012. The application should include a short CV, a short description of your research project, and a short explanation of how you would benefit from this course. The number of participants is limited to 10.

Preliminary schedule:

2–9 October 2012 (theory)

Day 1: Course introduction; Introduction to the tropics and tropical biodiversity

Day 2: Tropical ecosystems

Day 3–4 and day 7 (morning): Tropical angiosperms (including identification exercises)

Day 7 (afternoon) and day 8: Tropical birds (including identification exercises)

10–25 October 2012 (field studies)

Day 1: Departure to Ecuador from Landvetter Airport (morning); arrival in Guayaquil (afternoon)

Day 2: Capeira Scientific Station (dry forest)

Day 3: Along the Guayaquil–Puerto del Morro road (savanna, semi-desert, mangrove)

Day 4: Manglares Churute Ecological Reserve (mangrove, premontane forests)

Day 5: Along the Gualaceo–Limón road (montane rain forest, cloud forest)

Day 6: El Cajas National Park (páramo)

Day 7: Quito

Day 8–12: Yasuní National Park (lowland rain forest)

Day 13–14: Río Guajalito Reserve (montane rain forest, cloud forest)

Day 15: Quito sightseeing (morning); departure to Sweden from Quito Airport (afternoon)

Day 16: Arrival in Göteborg (afternoon)

Teachers: Alexandre Antonelli, Roger Eriksson, Urban Olsson, and Claes Persson (University of Gothenburg); other external teachers and Ecuadorian biologists

Time and place: 2–25 October 2012 at the Botany building, Dept of Biological and Environmental Sciences, University of Gothenburg, Carl Skottsbergs Gata 22B, Göteborg, Sweden (theory), and Ecuador (field studies)

Costs: Free travel to and accommodations in Göteborg (for students not living in Göteborg); free travel to Ecuador; free travels, accommodations, and park fees in Ecuador; vaccinations, food, and personal expenses are paid by the students

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