



## ***Ecuador: Comparative Ecology and Conservation FALL 2009***

### ***REQUIRED READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS***

The required readings are assigned by your Academic Directors and should be completed **prior** to the program. As copies are available in Ecuador, you do not need to purchase your own as you don't need to bring them with you, Please read the following two books:

Kricher, John C., et al. *A Neotropical Companion*. Revised ed. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999. – Excellent information, great as an introduction to the natural history of the neotropics.

Weiner, Jonathan. *The Beak of the Finch*. New York: Vintage Books, 1995. – A stimulating, readable book on research in Galapagos

### ***RECOMMENDED READINGS***

This list of selected materials is intended to help you engage in independent, pre-program study relevant to your SIT program. More than any other recommendation made by previous students, advance reading has been most strongly suggested as the best way to enhance your on-site learning experience. You are encouraged to select readings that offer general background knowledge for your program, as well as information of specific interest to you.

Some of these titles may be out of print, out of stock, or otherwise unavailable. You can try to locate them at your local library, through the inter-library loan system or through a used bookstore. Items marked with an asterisk (\*) are very difficult to find and may only be available through inter-library loan or once you arrive in country. There are many locations on the internet through which you can place book orders or conduct searches for titles that are not easily obtainable.

### **Recommended Readings – Some Favorites**

Henry Nicholls. *Lonesome George*. New York: Macmillan, 2006.

George, Susan. *Another World is Possible if...* New York: Verso, 2004 A must read for all concerned about global justice – explains the issues and ideas for the movement.

Wilson, E.O. *The Future of Life*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2002. Good for a natural history and sciences refresher.

Royte, Elizabeth. *The Tapir's Morning Bath*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2001. A pleasurable narrative about tropical rain forest research and researchers on BCI.

### **Recommendations for students with limited or no experience with ecology field methods**

Brower, James E. Jerrold Zar, and Carl Von Ende. *Field and Laboratory Methods for General Ecology*. 4P<sup>th</sup> ed., Boston : WCB McGraw-Hill, 1998. (Clear, basic text on general ecology methods. Very useful for assignments and ISP.)

Ambrose, H. W & Ambrose K. P. *A Handbook of Biological Investigation*. Fifth edition Hunter Textbooks Inc. Winston-Salem. 1995.

*A Short Guide to Writing about Biology*. Third Edition. Wesley Longman Inc, New York.

### **Other Recommended Readings**

Darwin, Charles. *On the Origin of Species*. Various editions. Classic, useful in many aspects as a basis on which to ground further study.

Jared, Diamond., *Collapse, how societies chose to fail or succeed*. Viking Penguin Ed., 2005-2006.

Redford, Kent & J. Mansour. *Traditional Peoples and Biodiversity Conservation in Large Tropical Landscapes*. The Nature Conservancy; America Verde Publ., 1996.

Forsyth, Adrian and Ken Miyata. *Tropical Nature: Life and Death in the Rain Forests of Central and South America*. New York: Charles Scribners Sons, 1984. An entertaining introduction to the tropical ecosystem.

Hilty, Steven. *Birds of Tropical America: A Watcher's Introduction to Behavior, Breeding, and Diversity*. Shelburne, Vermont: Chapters Publishing Ltd., 1994. An excellent and very readable introduction to the birds of the tropics.

Holldobler, Bert and Edward O. Wilson. *Journey to the Ants: A Story of Scientific Exploration*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995. Myrmecology and scientific lore.

Jackson, M.J. *Galápagos Islands*. Calgary, Alberta, Canada: Calgary University Press, 1993. Very useful on Galápagos excursion, covers it all.

- Kimerling, Judith. *Amazon Crude*. Natural Resources Defense Council, 1991. Best resource on environmental consequences of Ecuador's petroleum industry.
- Leigh, Egbert Giles. *Tropical Forest Ecology: A view from Barro Colorado Island*. Oxford University Press, 1999. A long-term perspective on the ecology of a well known forest
- MacArthur, R.H. and E.O. Wilson. *The Theory of Island Biogeography*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1967. Technical scientific work.
- Margoluis, Richard and Nick Salafsky. *Measures of Success: Designing, Managing, and Monitoring Conservation and Development Projects*. Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 1998. A "how to" methods guide for project design, implementation and evaluation.
- Martinez-Alier, Juan and Klaus Schlupman. *Ecological Economics: Energy, Environment, and Society*. Barcelona, Spain: Icaria. 1994. Great analysis of ecological economy, social and political ecology issues. [out of print, try inter-library loan]
- Quammen, David. *The Song of the Dodo: Island Biogeography in an Age of Extinctions*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997. A good read on evolution and natural history.
- Reaka-Kudla, MJ, Wilson, Don E., Wilson EOU\_UBiodiversity II: *Understanding and Protecting Our Biological Resources*. Washington, DC: Joseph Henry Press, 1996. An update to Wilson's Biodiversity 1989 with greater focus on certain taxa.
- Rudel, Thomas K. and Bruce Horowitz. *Tropical Deforestation: Small Farmers and Land Clearing in the Ecuadorian Amazon*. New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1993. Examines the perspectives and actions of local actors in clearing forests in Ecuador.
- Sims Feldstein, Hilary and Janice Jiggins eds. *Tools for the Field. Methodologies Handbook for Gender Analysis in Agriculture*. West Hartford, CT: Kumarian Press, 1994. Great review on gender analysis methods that could also be applied in understanding how humans approach and use natural resources and environment.
- Ubidia, Abdón. *Wolves' Dream*. Pittsburgh: Latin American Literary Review Press, 1996. An entertaining fictional novel set in modern Quito. Prestigious book in Ecuador.

Vogel, Joseph Henry. *Genes For Sale: Privatization as a Conservation Policy*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994. An interesting and thought provoking solution to the loss of biodiversity.

Vogel, Joseph Henry, ed. *The Biodiversity Cartel*. Newest solution oriented work by one of our program lecturers. Available on the web:  
<http://www.thebiodiversitycartel.com>

Wilson, E.O. *The Diversity of Life*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1999. Clear, concise overview of biodiversity. A “must read” book.

Wunder, Sven. *The Economics of Deforestation: The Example of Ecuador*. New York: St. Martin’s Press, Inc. 2000. Ecuador specific book focusing on deforestation and forest degradation –rich in detail and well organized.

### **Field Guides**

Some of the below field guides are available in Ecuador for specific groups such as: lizards of Ecuadorian Amazon, bird & butterfly, paramo plants, but they are few and of variable quality. Depending on the strength of your interest and background, you are recommended to bring with you any of the following:

DeVries, Philip. *The Butterflies of Costa Rica and Their Natural History*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997. Useful. Many species also occur in Ecuador.

Emmons, Louise H. *Neotropical Rainforest Mammals: A Field Guide*. Chicago: University of Chicago, 1997. Best available mammal guide.

Fjeldså, Jon. *Birds of Relic Forests in the High Andes*. Svendborg, Denmark: Apollo Books, 1990. Excellent field guide to Andean Birds.

Gentry, Alwyn H. *A Field Guide to the Families and Genera of Woody Plants of Northwest South America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996. The best botany book available.

Penny, Norman D. and Arias, Jorge R. *Insects of an Amazon Forest*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1982. Of major interest to entomologists and entomology students.

Ridgely, Robert S. and Paul J. Greenfield. *The Birds of Ecuador Field Guide*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2001. Best bird field guide – new excellent resource. Serious birders should also get the companion volume on status, distribution and taxonomy.

## ***INTERNET RESOURCES***

### **News and Current Events**

Expreso en línea: <http://www.diario-expreso.com>

One of Ecuador's daily newspapers, with full-text available on line.

El Comercio: <http://www.elcomercio.com>

Another daily newspaper with well-organized archives of past stories.

Gestion Economía y Sociedad: <http://www.gestion.dinedicaciones.com>

Periodical on economy and society

Intag Newspaper: <http://www.intagnewspaper.org>

Independent paper serving the Intag region

### **General Country Information**

Ecuador CIA Factbook: <http://www.odci.gov/publications/factbook/geos/ec.html>

Published by the CIA, this is a compendium of statistics and commentary on the country along with a basic map of the territory.

Library of Congress Ecuador Country Study:

<http://memory.loc.gov/frd/cs/ectoc/html>

Text from the Library of Congress' country-specific study.

Lonely Planet—Destination Ecuador: [www.lonelyplanet.com/dest/sam/ecu.htm](http://www.lonelyplanet.com/dest/sam/ecu.htm)

From one of the more thorough travel guides to the country, this site offers highlights from the information found in the hard copy of their guide.

### **Sites on Specific Topics**

Amazon Interactive: [www.eduweb.com/amazon.html](http://www.eduweb.com/amazon.html)

This site allows visitors to explore the Ecuadorian Amazon through online activities, aimed at high school students, but still informative.

Amazon Alliance for Indigenous and Traditional Peoples of the Amazon Basin:

[www.aazoncoalition.org](http://www.aazoncoalition.org) - Provides information about communities in the Amazon.

DECOIN: <http://www.decoin.org>

Defense y Conservacion Ecologica de Intag

Envirolink: <http://www.envirolink.org>

Web portal with up-to-date environmental news, links to environmental organizations, government resources, environmental activism and related issues.

International Rivers Network: [www.irn.org](http://www.irn.org)  
Support for local communities working to protect their rivers and watersheds.

Rainforest Action Network: [www.ran.org](http://www.ran.org)  
General information about rainforest conservation and activist campaigns.

Sustainable International Travel: <http://www.sustainableinternationaltravel.org>  
Helping travelers and travel providers protect the cultures and environments they visit.

### **Search Engines and Website Compilations**

IGC Development Internet Resource Collection: [www.igc.org/igc/gateway](http://www.igc.org/igc/gateway)  
Links to development organizations around the world.  
Latin America on the Net— Ecuador: [www.latinworld.co/sur/ecuador](http://www.latinworld.co/sur/ecuador)  
A compilation of business, cultural, and news resources for Ecuador

Ecuador LANIC: <http://lanic.utexas.edu/la/ecuador>  
A list of country-specific links compiled by the University of Texas' Latin American Network Information Center, organized by theme.

### ***TEACHING STYLES***

Please be advised that teaching styles differ around the world, so be prepared to be flexible and adapt to different local ways of teaching. In some local teaching styles, readings are required as background material for lectures and discussions, though they may not be covered directly in class in the way they often are in U.S. undergraduate courses. Often in other countries, students are expected to raise questions about the readings during the discussion period, rather than the lecturer reviewing them.

In Ecuador you will find that teaching styles vary greatly as you will learn from a wide variety of local contacts in addition to your Academic Directors. Professionals and academics typically are far more traditional and formal in their lecture style compared with the U.S. Campesinos, community members and local guides on the other hand often use a circular, fluid and indirect method of teaching. One of the strengths of the Ecuador: Comparative Ecology and Conservation program is indeed that students are exposed to many different people/teachers thus gaining a wide diversity of perspectives and insights.