Project Update: August 2014

We are near the end of the fieldwork of the research project. When the field phase has finished, we will have a total of seven samplings of dry season and seven samplings of rainy season in each study site (Acarigua y Turén, edo. Portuguesa). This means that we gave follow to two rice crops in each locality. During each field trip, we performed acoustic samplings, samplings of insects and captures of three species of insectivorous bats insectívoros (*Molossus molossus, Eptesicus diminutus* and *Eptesicus furinalis*) in their artificial shelters to obtain their feces and, also, we include fecal samples from other insectivorous species caught in the ecotone located near rice fields.

Scopes:

(1) With the support and mediation of Dr. Jesús Mavarez, we manage my condition as user in the Laboratoire d'Ecologie Alpine (Université Joseph Fourier, France) for the implementation of molecular analysis of the diet of species of aerial insectivorous bats. Also, we are requesting permission to export samples to France.

(2) Through the acoustic sampling, we have identified a total of 15 species of bats and 6 sonotipos belonging to the families: Molossidae, Mormoopidae, Vespertilionidae and Emballonuridae. Based on acoustic records obtained so far in this study, we can say that rice fields are important sites of supply for air insectivorous bats, as 14 species, 66% of the species identified by acoustic methods were recorded while performing food activities. Moreover, these species of bats could be contributing to the control of insect pests of rice, as the relative activity of these mammals increases in the stages of crop that are more vulnerable to attack of insects.

(3) We presented a poster ("Llamados de ecolocalización y observaciones generales de *Eptesicus diminutus* en tres arrozales de los Llanos occidentales de Venezuela") and an oral presentation ("Actividad de murciélagos insectívoros aéreos en arrozales de los Llanos occidentales de Venezuela") at the Primer Congreso Latinoamericano y del Caribe de Murciélagos (COLAM) recently made in Quito, Ecuador.

Left: Abandoned house with the roof inhabited by Molossus molossus and Eptesicus diminutus. Right: Caney inhabited by Molossus molossus, Eptesicus furinalis, Eptesicus diminutus and Lasiurus ega.

Left: Capture of Eptesicus diminutus outside their artificial shelter. Right: Molossus molossus while hiding in the caney.