

Project Update: February 2013

The fieldwork at the Tabaconas-Namballe National Sanctuary (TNNS) began on February 4th 2013 with an effective period of 23 days in field, lead by Juan C. Cusi, Victor J. Vargas and Francis I. Vargas. The sampling stations were five sites: Chichilapa Biological Station (2273 m), around “La Victoria” lake (3226 m), “Corazón de San Miguel” lake (3273 m), “El Sauce” zone (1854 m) and “El Chaupe” zone (2550 m). In this first phase of the project, we recorded 13 amphibians and three reptiles that increased by six the number of recorded species in this area. Among these species, we have recorded by first time into TNNS: one glass frog *Centrolene* sp., one salamander *Bolitoglossa* sp., one caecilian *Caecilia* sp. and one gymnophthalmid lizard *Cercosaura vertebralis* (range extension into TNNS), which were registered on moss, leaf litter, tree trunks and rocks. Park rangers and volunteers supported us in the fieldwork, they learnt about capture techniques, data collection and field identification. The cutaneous tissue samples (swabs) of amphibians are being analysed at the Laboratory of the PhD Vance Vredenburg (San Francisco State University) for detecting the incidence of the chytrid fungus. Now, we are planning our return to the area in August 2013 for a period of 20 days, focusing our surveys in northern part of TNNS. Also, we will start the meetings and talks with local authorities with aim of planning the education programme future. Finally, in the following days we are going to launching a BlogSpot about our project, where we will upload photos, remarks and progress of our research.



Panoramic view of the Corazón de San Miguel Lake, within the system “Lagunas Arreviatadas”. ©Juan C. Cusi



Panoramic view of the Chichilapa Stream, showing the montane forests upcoming to the Biological Station. ©Victor J. Vargas.