

## **Project Update: January 2012**

During the last winter (rainy) season, the main access road to the study site was severely damaged and it prevented us to visit the reserve. It was an unexpected event, as in 2010 Colombia suffered a severe rainy season and no one anticipated a second one. We had to change our plans for field work, and re-scheduled the final field trips for February and April 2012.

- This project has provided updated basic information on carnivores, plus other little-known mammals, from Colombian tropical dry forests. I am using these data to develop my graduate research on the ecological dynamics of medium-sized mammals from this endangered ecosystem.
- Partial information of this project including videos recording with camera traps has been share with general public and fellows interested in mammals, through the web page of the Mammalogy research group of Universidad de Antioquia ([www.mastozoologiaudea.com](http://www.mastozoologiaudea.com)).
- The information achieved with this project, in regard to the presence and dynamic of carnivores in the reserve, is useful to justify the importance of conservation planning and recovering activities in the area where the Reserve is located. This collaborative work and its results serve as a successful example of basic research for sustainable development in other areas of the Caribbean region.

All of the project team are Colombian students that use this opportunity to improve their skill on mammalogy techniques and conservation. At least two of these students plan to use field data to develop their own research projects. At the reserve, we use every opportunity to explain local people and visitors about the importance of mammals in this unique environment.

At this point we plan to finish this first phase and then we plan to continue studying interactions between species and the different habitat present in this ecosystem due to the land use history.

In September 2011, we presented partial results of this project at the first Colombian Mammalogy Congress. These presentations helped us to show our research to other groups, and as a result we are exploring possible collaborations in the near future. We made a public presentation of some preliminary results at a local university, and have a discussion session after that.

In November 2012 we plan to bring at least one oral presentation to the Second Latin-American Mammalogy Congress (Buenos Aires) to show the final results of this work.

Some of the videos captured with camera traps will be shared in the web page of the Mammalogy research group of Universidad de Antioquia ([www.mastozoologiaudea.com](http://www.mastozoologiaudea.com)). The main results of this project will be available as a draft report or field-guide at the Reserva Natural Sanguaré, where other researchers and environmental authorities can access to it.

The project has not been finished because of logistic problems with the winter (rainy) season that damaged the main access roads to the study site; at the same time, some problems associated to the schedule of participants made it impossible to complete a field season during the second half of 2011. Three field trips were scheduled for that year, with a final season in January 2012; at this moment, our plan is to have the remaining field trips on February and April 2012.

The most important step is finishing the project and to produce a first article that can be available to the scientific community, plus a draft report for the visitors of the Reserva Natural Sanguare and the local environmental authorities in the Caribbean region.

The next step is to formally submit this information to local authorities, to enforce a strategy to work with other land owners and to support the conservation of natural communities while the local people keep a sustainable use of the resources they need (habitat, food).

Finally, we aim to continue studying the community dynamic during the next recovery stages of the Reserve. It might take several years to identify the patterns associated to weather changes, but this would be the next goal to achieve.