

Project Update: March 2010

In our first official trip in November 2009 we collected 15 plant samples as well as nine brocket pellet groups (five in primary forest, three in secondary forest and one in a jarillal plot). In January 2010, I went to Mendoza to learn how to use the microhistological technique that will be used to create the reference guide material of the plants found in the study area and to determine the diet of the brocket deer. We are working fast analyzing each part of the plant material collected (leaf, seed, branch, flower) in order to make our guide as complete as possible. I just got back from our second trip and it has been a rough couple of months for the brockets. After an almost 11-month dry season (unheard of!) at least 10 brockets were found dead by the park rangers in Chancaní Reserve. This dry season has made it difficult to collect plant material and faeces. Still, we collected more plant samples as well as 10 brocket pellet groups (seven in primary forest, two in silvo-pastoral plots and one in a jarillal plot). We also ran into a few slippery friends while walking thru the plots. This week I am off to Brazil for a frugivory and seed dispersal course (IV Curso iberoamericano de Frugivoria e Dispersão de Sementes) where I hope to gain more knowledge on how to successfully analyze and determine diet with the samples collected. After that, it's time to submerge myself in the lab and analyze all the pellet groups collected.

