



Update from the field – Amazon

By Erika Berenguer

4 months after the fires burned half of our study areas I went back to some of our sites and found an open-air cemetery. Most of the trees were dead, burnt animal bodies were laying around and there was no regeneration to be seen. There was an eerie silence all around and a conspicuous lack of colour. This bleak scenario only highlighted the importance of the ECOFOR project.



Photos by Erika Berenguer

Update from the field – Atlantic Forest

By André Rochelle

In the Atlantic Forest, we are only one fragment from finishing the sampling. This last fragment is located in an area that is extremely difficult to access, but we are aiming at finishing it within the next couple of weeks.

One of the outstanding results of our research so far has been that we have collected a very rare *Passiflora*, classed as critically endangered, which we briefly introduced in the last issue of the newsletter. The first description of this species was based on only one individual, collected in Salesópolis, a city about 80 km from São Luiz do Paraitinga, in 1901 - so, more than 110 years ago!

It was then sent to the Berlin herbarium, but the original material was destroyed. The detection of this species is therefore an important contribution towards the study of the distribution patterns of its population.

Further details on the history and classification of this species are provided below by Luís Bernacci:



Photos by Gabriel Pavan Sabino



Photo by Luís Bernacci

"The description of Passiflora ischnoclada was based on the type collection. The only mentioned material was deposited in the Berlin-Dahlem herbarium (B) and was destroyed. The synonymization of P. ischnoclada under P. jilekii was proposed according to that description. Recently another material from the type collection was found in the SP herbarium and the species was collected again in the type locality. In this work the reestablishment of P. ischnoclada is proposed as well as the position of the species in the series Laurifoliae is discussed, and the description of the species is complemented with adding characters of the flowers and the immature fruit."

Member profile: Filipe França

"I am an ecologist interested in understanding the ecological impacts of land-use change in tropical forests. Specifically, my research focuses on the impacts of human activities such as selective logging and wildfires on biodiversity and ecological processes in the Amazon. Within the ECOFOR project, the focus of my research is on understanding the impacts of ENSO-induced fires on biodiversity and associated ecological processes across a gradient of forest modification in the Brazilian Amazon."



AFIRE: Assessing ENSO-induced Fire Impacts in tropical Rainforest Ecosystems

By Filipe França

The AFIRE project arises from the need to understand wildfire impacts in extreme ENSO-mediated dry years on tropical biodiversity and associated ecological processes. It has been funded by NERC (NE/P004512/1) for 18 months, starting in April 2016. AFIRE draws on unique and detailed pre-fire data from the ECOFOR project on carbon dynamics and plant functional traits and from the Sustainable Amazon Network on distribution of three distinct taxa (birds, dung beetles and plants) and secondary seed dispersal processes. The project is unique in that it studies 40 permanent plots (20 of them included in the ECOFOR) along an existing gradient of forest modification before the 2015-16 El Niño wildfires, allowing us to undertake the first rigorous evaluation of the effects of the fire across different forest disturbance classes. The project is lead by Jos Barlow, Erika Berenguer and Fernando Espírito-Santo and draws upon the expertise of Filipe França and many other project partners in Brazil, UK and the EU.

Publications and Upcoming Events

- **A destruição que ninguém vê.** Jos Barlow, Erika Berenguer, Joice Ferreira and Toby Gardner have published an article in the online magazine *Ciência Hoje* about the impacts of forest disturbances (in Portuguese):
http://www.cienciahoje.org.br/revista/materia/id/1046/n/a_destruicao_que_ninguem_ve
- **53rd ATBC, Montpellier, France. 19 – 23 June 2016**
<http://www.atbc2016.org/EN/events.php?IDManif=837&IDModule=71&IDRub=1239>
- **The Pyrenees workshop: traits and ecosystem function along tropical environmental gradients. 24 – 27 June 2016.** This meeting will be attended by several ECOFOR members from both Brazil and UK and will focus on discussion of traits campaigns from across the tropics.

Congratulations to everyone involved in the Biored project, lead by Oliver Phillips and Manuel Gloor. This project will follow up on the results of the ECOFOR and will include many current ECOFOR members. More news in the next issue of the newsletter!

- **Reminder: Fapesp report contributions.** A quick reminder to everyone who has been asked to send their contributions to the Fapesp report to do so by sending the information directly to Prof. Carlos Joly **by 15th of July 2016.**

Hard to believe that this is already the 10th issue of our newsletter!! I just wanted to let you know how much I enjoy reading all your contributions for each issue and that I really appreciate your help with the newsletters! Jolana j.hanusova@lancaster.ac.uk