

Project Update: April 2014

Project main goals:

Goal I. Provide ecological information and determine current threats of freshwater fish in western Cuba

Activities related to goal I, completed so far:

1. Three field trips were done to the proposed areas in the project: one to Sierra del Rosario Reserve Biosphere, one to Cienaga de Zapata National Park and one to Los Indios Ecological Reserve.
2. Fish collection of alien species was made in each area which includes both mountains and lowland rivers.
3. Samples of stomach content of piscivorous alien species belonging to different sampled localities were preserved in alcohol 75% for further analysis.
4. We identified any evident threats to the native fish populations and recorded water parameters like pH, salinity, temperature, conductivity, etc.
5. Living individuals and their habitats was photographed *in situ* too.

Goal II. Improve a training programme in rural communities for conservation both fish and their habitats.

Activities related to goal II, completed so far:

1. All native fish species collected in each area were photographed to form the photo gallery which will be used to create educative materials in the next months.
2. Initial meetings with the technical staff in each locality were done in order to plan logistical requirements to carry out educational activities.

Other activities (carried out thanks to the project)

- Some collected fish were including in the collection of freshwater fish of the Ecology and Systematic Institute. These samples can use by other researchers for future studies.



Left: MSc. Rodet Rodriguez Silva (the project leader) using a nylon minnow seine to catch native freshwater fish in a mountain stream at Sierra del Rosario Reserve Biosphere. Right: MSc. Rodet

Rodriguez Silva (the project leader) using hand nets to catch native freshwater fish in a mountain stream at Sierra del Rosario Reserve Biosphere.



Two endemic freshwater fish from Cuba. To the left you can see *Gambusia punctata* and to the right appear *Rivulus cylindraceus* a threatened fish species in western Cuba by predation of alien species



In this picture is a natural building where educational activities will be carrying out on next months.