

Project Update: October 2015

Goal 1. To monitor the breeding activity of an amphibian assemblage in Sierra del Rosario National Park using Automatic Recording Units and Environmental Data Loggers.

Activities related to Goal 1:

1. We obtained the legal permits to access and perform scientific activities within Sierra del Rosario Protected Area, in coordination with the director of the Protected Area.
2. We carried out one field trip to Sierra del Rosario Protected Area in order to explain in detail our goals to the director and to plan the future working schedule. Our project had a very good acceptance by the staffs of the Protected Area.
3. Three field trips to Sierra del Rosario National Park were carried out. As a result, two Automatic Recording Units were deployed in the locality as well as environmental Data Loggers (measuring temperature, humidity and light intensity). Thus, we have been continuously recording the breeding activity of amphibians for 5 months so far, and we accumulated more than 360 hours of sampling.
4. We started the analysis of the data collected: a) analysis of the dial patterns of the breeding activity for each species and b) analysis of the influence of environmental factor on the breeding activity for each species.
5. Three students of the Faculty of Biology of Havana University have been participating in this project. They have joined the expeditions and they presented some results in the Faculty of Biology.
6. One local specialist at the protected area has been participating in the project, helping in the fieldwork. This has been an opportunity to train him in the identification of local amphibian species. Another local specialist is expected to join field work soon.
7. We are now planning to present preliminary results in a scientific event next month.
8. We recorded a total 36 individuals of six species of amphibians. These recordings are a key factor for the analysis of the recordings obtained with the Automatic Recording Units.

Goal 2. To develop educational activities, and to make educational materials in order to rise awareness about the value of amphibians.

1. We have been taking pictures of local species of amphibians which will be used to:
 - a) Make a tabloid that will allow the identification of local species.
 - b) Make a poster highlighting specific results of our project (e.g. the local species diversity and their calling phenology) as well as the general importance of amphibians in their habitats.
2. We started the coordination with one local school to develop educational activities with children. These activities will be carried out with the participation of local staff of the protected area who specialize in environmental education activities.
3. We started the coordination to give a talk to the local staff of the protected area about the local species diversity and the general importance of amphibians. We will explain also our advances in this project and our long-term vision.

