Flora of Marquesas Islands Debuts on Web

An isolated group of 12 volcanic hot spot islands in the southeastern Pacific Ocean, the Marquesas Islands are one of five archipelagos of French Polynesia. A number of botanical explorations to the Marquesas Islands have been undertaken since the late 1700s, but none have resulted in a comprehensive treatment of the flora. As a response to this deficiency, Warren L. Wagner of the Smithsonian Institution and David H. Lorence of the National Tropical Botanical Garden initiated the Flora of the Marquesas Islands project. One result of the project is the release of the new Web site, “Flora of the Marquesas Islands” <http://rathbun.si.edu/botany/pacificislandbiodiversity/marquesasflora/index.htm>.

The topography of the Marquesas Islands is extremely rugged and beautiful, and the collection of images on the Web site attests to that fact. The rugged topography has produced varied habitats on the larger islands ranging from dry on the leeward sides to mesic valleys and cloud-covered summits. The searchable image gallery offers over 800 photographs of plants from these varied habitats.

Plans are underway to increase the scope of the Pacific Flora Web site to encompass other island groups. A flora of the Hawaiian Islands is currently available at <http://rathbun.si.edu/botany/pacificislandbiodiversity/hawaiianflora/>. The Flora of the Marquesas Islands is the second module of what will be six over the next three years to cover the vascular plants of the Oceanic Pacific (Hawaiian Islands to Micronesia, to Fiji, to Easter Island).

Data are maintained by Wagner, Lorence, and Denise Mix. Jessica Braun prepared photographic images of plant taxa for web presentation and helped maintain the image database, with additional help from Julia Mirabella and Philip Garcia. Royce Oliver, Michael Sisson, Sara Hodapp and Robynn Shannon processed specimens and contributed to initial database development and maintenance. Tim Flynn and Melany Chapin, of the National Tropical Botanical Garden, developed and maintain the NTBG database which has been incorporated with the Smithsonian database.

Courses

The director and staff of the Smithsonian Institution’s Monitoring and Assessment of Biodiversity Program (SI/MAB) are pleased to announce the international biodiversity conservation curriculum for 2003. The two complementary courses that form this year’s curriculum offer a complete and essential program for conservation biologists, ecologists, resource managers and environmental leaders.

Biodiversity Assessment and Monitoring for Adaptive
Management
30 April - 2 June 2003

This intensive five-week SI/MAB course is a must for resource managers, ecologists, biologists, environmental educators and consultants. It is led by more than 40 internationally recognized instructors and speakers. The course is divided into eight modules, the first of which provides a framework for biodiversity assessment and monitoring, strengthened by a basic background in Geographical Information Systems and statistics. Six modules follow on assessment and monitoring of vegetation, aquatic systems, arthropods, amphibians and reptiles, birds, and mammals. The final module integrates the preceding seven and focuses on developing site-based multi-taxa monitoring for adaptive management.

The Smithsonian Environmental Leadership Course
7 - 19 September 2003

Strong leadership skills are essential for effective conservation. The communication skills and strategies of exceptional leaders are taught in this course in a friendly learning environment. The Smithsonian Environmental Leadership course includes the exploration of topics such as Foundation Skills for the Environmental Leader, Negotiation and Conflict Resolution Strategies, Creating Compelling Futures, and Impactful Environmental Communication. The learning structure of the course is composed of demonstrations, background information, and personal and group exercises. Speakers and numerous case-specific examples are presented.

For more information, visit the SI/MAB Web site at <http://www.si.edu/simab> or contact Geri Philpott, Education and Training Coordinator, Smithsonian Institution, MAB Program, PO Box 37012, Attn: MRC 705, Washington, D.C. 20013-7012; Tel: 202-357-4793; Fax 202-786-2557; E-mail: gphilpott@ic.si.edu.

Current Literature


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