

Since the "Flora and Fauna of Coiba National Park (Panama)" was published, back in 1997, by me as both editor and researcher, I always kept a real interest in the studies of this region. I focused on two primary goals: get more acquainted to the Coiba biodiversity, and also try to create a biological field station on the Island for these studies to be approached with the necessary reliability at an international scale.

In February 2000, in the midst of all the uncertainties caused by these efforts, I received a puzzling message. It was written by somebody unknown to me, Jean Pigozzi. He was unfamiliar to the world of professional scientific research, but was sensitive enough to grasp the value of this region, and, most importantly, the need of this kind of investigations. He explained his desire to create a biological station on the Canales de Tierra Island, in the Bahia Honda area.

From that point on, things unraveled quickly. I visited the place in his company, evaluated the importance of an inventory and we discussed plans for the future, among which was assuming charge of a pilot study about the local fauna and flora. The project was eventually approved in Madrid, June 2000, during a visit to the Royal Botanic Garden (CSIC), by Jean Pigozzi himself along with his partner Daniel Wolf. One year later, an agreement was signed by both the company the two had created, Bahia Honda LDC, and the Spanish "Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas" (CSIC), which allowed this last institution to sign on Dra. Alicia Ibáñez.

The study meant to approach the different groups (plants and animals) of interest for potential visitors and future scientific researchers. On the land, the objects of investigation were plants *sensu lato* (lichens, bryophytes and vascular plants), some invertebrates (butterflies, spiders and scorpions) and all the vertebrates (amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals). But unfortunately, we were forced to leave the marine research for another occasion, against the will of the people to whom this task had been assigned, Dr. Antonio Laborda (Leon, Spain) and Arturo Dominici (Panama). This delay was caused by a lack of minimal security measures, since proper diving equipment was unavailable on the island at the time.

For a different reason, the study of other groups such as the fresh water fauna, Coleopters, dipters, etc. was ruled out of question.

When forming the team, we were overjoyed to find colleagues willing to work with remarkable interest and generosity. Fieldwork started when the infrastructure was still incipient. Their good will and enthusiasm made up for the lack of facilities, which were finished by the time the research had concluded.

Our hope is that the start-up of the aforementioned biological station (*Liquid Jungle Lab*) will allow to continue with the basic studies of inventorying the flora and fauna which is a top priority in tropical regions. Notwithstanding, we understand that this chance is a mere first step to learn about the biodiversity of the place, to superficially understand the complex relations between the different species that share a spot in this area.

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