

DIWPA News Letter

No. 12

Towards the IBOY-DIWPA 2001

Preamble by DIWPA Secretary

We have come very close to starting IBOY in the year 2001. I would like to communicate recent progress and make some announcements on IBOY-DIWPA. It is now time to activate local and international plans for the IBOY 2001. These are included in the timetable of activities suggested in this Newsletter. In particular, please note the dates of the workshop being organised for November 2000. Everyone concerned is really excited about the prospect of the first-ever activity of biodiversity observation using standardised methods. Your strongest support and utmost effort are required for the successful operation of the IBOY 2001.

Progress report and requests

1. 5th International Field Biology Course: Insects and Tropical Forests

The 5th DIWPA International Field Biology Course (IFBC) was held in north Queensland, Australia, in March 2000. This was used as one of the pilot studies for IBOY and attended by 19 students from 13 countries. The participants shared the experience of IBOY study in tropical rainforest, using the proposed methods of biodiversity observation for arthropods and others in forest

ecosystems. A more detailed report from Australia is presented elsewhere in this Newsletter.

2. Protocol Manual for IBOY and its testing in the pilot study

The following Protocol Manual Volumes (1st edition) have been distributed:

- 1) Mission for IBOY-DIWPA and Biodiversity Assessment
- 2) Forest Ecosystems

The following volumes are being edited at present:

- 3) Freshwater Ecosystems
- 4) Coastal Marine Ecosystems
- 5) Island Ecosystems (PABITRA)

Further comments and suggestions are invited on the published editions and drafts which are available from Asako Yamada <asako@ecology.kyoto-u.ac.jp>. Try the manual in your pilot study and submit the results for discussion at the workshop. It is important that the manual is tested on the ground so that necessary modifications can be made either locally or globally before the IBOY 2001. The deadline for the submission of comments and discussion material is set at 27 October for inclusion in the Workshop document. The drafting team will be asked to update the

Manual periodically up to and after the Workshop following the comments from members and as need arises from liaising between different ecosystems.

3. Funding

We have secured funding for the pre-IBOY Workshop, but as yet there is no international funding available for the operation of IBOY. Even if we succeed in obtaining support from international agencies, such funds will not be sufficient to meet the cost of the entire operation. Therefore we urge you to seek regional, national and individual grants to support your IBOY-DIWPA activities.

IBOY sites

To obtain a maximum return from the biodiversity assessment of IBOY-DIWPA careful consideration must be given to the selection and number of sites to be monitored. In order to attain the five stated goals of IBOY-DIWPA (see Protocol Manual Volume 1), both the coverage and depth are required for monitoring. Generally speaking, more sites are better than fewer sites for monitoring the biodiversity pattern along the environmental gradients or monitoring the impacts of climate change, while an in-depth study is required for understanding the relationship between biodiversity and ecosystem functioning or monitoring the environmental impacts of human activities. In either case sites should be selected strategically. The cost for each IBOY site may not be very high if the site is already used as an LTER or other research site.

There are two types of IBOY site: the core site is where comprehensive monitoring of biodiversity and associated environmental variables is planned for 2001, whereas the satellite site is used to make an inventory of target taxa using a particular method or simpler alternative methods described in the manual. The candidate sites are listed in DIWPA News Letter No. 10 (June 1999). We invite you to update this list and suggest additional sites for inventorying and monitoring.

The November Workshop

A workshop to be funded by the Japanese Government will be held in Kyoto on 16-18 November 2000 to complete the Manual and finalise core and satellite sites for IBOY-DIWPA 2001. The workshop will also discuss data and collection management, and collaboration of taxonomists in the project.

Finance is available for a limited number of delegates to whom invitation will be sent from the DIWPA Office. If you wish to be nominated for support or recommend support for any delegate please submit your nomination or recommendation, giving reasons for the support and, if possible, with the endorsement of a member of the Steering Committee, by 31 July.

Steering Committee

The Steering Committee of DIWPA was formed in 1996 to represent the regions within DIWPA in the planning stage of IBOY. The Chairperson (Professor Hiroya Kawanabe) requests all members of the Steering Committee to contact him describing the role the member may play on this or a new replacement Committee of DIWPA. Some members are no longer active in DIWPA while activities in new regions may require a new member on the Committee. Also, we would like to establish a Working Group for IBOY implementation, which consists of the scientists who are actually taking responsibilities for the organisation and operation of the local activities of IBOY. We invite all DIWPA members to recommend the right persons to the Working Group. We would like to invite key scientists recommended and willing to serve on the Working Group to attend the workshop in November.

Schedule for 2001

July 31: Completing the first edition of IBOY

Manual

Sep. 30: Completing the listing up of the IBOY sites and key scientists

Sep. 30: Completion of the second edition of IBOY Manual to release to DIWPA members

for

collecting their comments

Nov. 16-18: Workshop for IBOY-DIWPA

Dec. 31: Completion of the final edition of IBOY Manual

Jan. 2001: Release the final edition of IBOY Manual, Start IBOY

***Research, Learning and Fun at Cape Tribulation
Field Biology Course in Queensland***

**Roger Kitching
Rainforest CRC, Australia**

First it rained, then it rained some more, and then the sun appeared - and through it all nineteen students from thirteen countries laboured for three weeks to learn fundamental techniques of rainforest biodiversity survey. The 5th International Field Biology Course: Insects and Tropical Forests was held in March 8-31, 2000, at Cape Tribulation, among the lowland rainforests of tropical Australia adjacent to the site of the new Australian canopy crane. The Rainforest CRC based in Cairns acted as host and provided logistic support.

Many students came from East and South East Asia (Japan, Russia, China, Thailand, Vietnam, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Sri Lanka) with a particularly large contingent from Japan. They were joined by others from Australia, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, and Surinam. Of course many of these 'students' were senior scientists in their own rights and the group formed an impressive concentration of expertise, all sharing an enthusiasm for rainforests and arthropods.

The course was taught largely by Professor Roger Kitching of Griffith University in Brisbane with contributions from Professors Stork and Pearson from James Cook University. Guest lecturers from visiting Japanese faculty included

contributions by Professors Nakamura (Kanazawa), Takeda (Kyoto), Toda (Hokkaido) and Associate Professor Yumoto (Kyoto). Other visiting faculty and students presented accounts of their own researches. The practical organisation, technical and tutorial support for the course was provided by Mr Guy Vickerman, Ms Melinda Laidlaw, Ms Karen Hurley, Ms Gill Carr and Mr Peter Wolf. Specialist segments of the course were presented by Professor Kitching (Lepidoptera) as well as visiting lecturers Mr Andrew Small (trees), Dr David Hancock (Diptera), Mr Simon Grove (Coleoptera), Mr Nikjo Bluethgen (Ants) and Mr Denis Rodgers (Collembola).

The subject matter of the conference covered both the theoretical and practical aspects of surveying the arthropod fauna and tree flora of rainforest presenting most of the methods proposed for use during IBOY. The practical part of the course involved carrying out an intensive survey of one-hectare of forest adjacent to the Canopy Crane site - cyclone - damaged recently but still diverse - plus a less intensive survey of two nearby quarter-hectare plots. The results form an important link in the network of data-base assembled at base-line plots from south-east Queensland to northern Borneo (Kitching group). Students and

staff also made excursions to the upland region of the Atherton Tablelands where they visited the CSIRO Tropical Forest Laboratory, and to the Barrier Reef.

The course was funded by grants from the Crawford Fund, Australia, and from DIWPA through Center for Ecological Research, Kyoto University, which also sponsored participants from north. Some students were sponsored by other agencies and the rest joined the course privately. The Cooperative Research Centre for Tropical

Rainforest and Ecology through its Griffith University and James Cook University nodes provided the services of the principal teachers.

The Course ended after three weeks of close living, learning, and enjoying ourselves. As well as the scientific and technical outcomes of the course we have forged a new network, mostly of younger workers within DIWPA which promises great things for the study of biodiversity within the Asia-Pacific Region.

----- **DIWPA OFFICE** -----

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