

Preface

Over the past eight years the ZooBot (Austrian Zoological and Botanical Society) and the Association of the Tropical Station La Gamba have cooperated in organizing workshops on the research carried out at the rainforest field station of La Gamba in southern Costa Rica – the rainforest of the Austrians (“Regenwald der Österreicher”). This year we present a special issue of the ACTA dedicated to the broad range of science carried out in this area.

The field station, situated at the immediate fringe of a virgin lowland forest, the Piedras Blancas National Park, is ideally suited for studying pristine tropical rainforest ecosystems and their adjacent cultural landscapes. Starting in 1993, the station has developed from simple beginnings under the governance of the University of Vienna, and has increased its research capacities and laboratory facilities. In 2015, a small farmhouse called Finca Alexis was bought and can also be used as a base camp to do research at the transition zone between the lowland forests of the Golfo Dulce region and the mountain forests of the adjacent Fila Cal. The research facilities have attracted scientists from Austria and many international institutions to carry out field work in the La Gamba area, and also provide an excellent base from which to conduct student excursions and courses. The field station is well linked with the universities of Costa Rica as well as international research institutions on tropical ecology.

Besides providing immediate access to various tropical ecosystems, both terrestrial and aquatic, the station is ideally suited for studying applied aspects: a main focus is research related to reforestation programs of former agricultural areas. A further scope of the station is the function of migration corridors connecting isolated conservation areas in the region.

This volume demonstrates the high potential of the field station La Gamba for carrying out both basic and applied tropical research, and highlights the wide range of studies initiated during the last decade. They range from research on physiographic conditions, flora and fauna, the fascinating biotic interactions that are characteristic of tropical rainforest ecosystems, as well as applied aspects of reforestation programs and the function of migration corridors.

We hope that the publication is a stimulation for further utilization of the field Station La Gamba and for further research work on tropical biology and ecology.

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ZOBODAT - www.zobodat.at

Zoologisch-Botanische Datenbank/Zoological-Botanical Database

Digitale Literatur/Digital Literature

Zeitschrift/Journal: [Verhandlungen der Zoologisch-Botanischen Gesellschaft in Wien.](#)
[Frueher: Verh.des Zoologisch-Botanischen Vereins in Wien. seit 2014 "Acta ZooBot Austria"](#)

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