



Nature's jottings

Newsletter of the Natural History Society of Jamaica March 2012

Compiled by Klaus W. Wolf, Electron Microscopy Unit, UWI, Mona



Forthcoming Event



- **Annual General Meeting of the Natural History Society of Jamaica**

DATE: Saturday, March 17, 2011

TIME: REGISTRATION 9.30pm
 BUSINESS MEETING: 10.00a.m.

VENUE: Biology Lecture Theatre, UWI (parking available at the Department of Life Sciences, Botany Section)

GUEST SPEAKER: Dr. Judith Mendes (Coral Reef Ecologist, Lecturer at the Department of Life Sciences, UWI, Mona)

In Hot Water



Life and Death on Coral Reefs

A seminar by:

Dr. Judith Mendes
Lecturer in Coral Reef Ecology
Department of Life Sciences
University of the West Indies

“In Hot Water: Life and Death on Coral Reefs”

The speaker, a scuba diver since age 17, has spent almost 30 years diving on and studying Caribbean coral reefs. Her research interests have progressed from simply monitoring change on coral reefs to understanding the biology of corals, from the physiology of skeletal formation and reproduction, to investigating effective methods for reef restoration. Of her change in research direction she says “I just could not continue to document the death of reefs without trying to do something about it”.

Recognizing that this is not a job for one person, or even a small group, and that reefs are too important a resource for the Caribbean to lose, she has spearheaded a project to improve coral reef education throughout the Caribbean. As co-ordinator of the European Union-funded Coral Reef Education and Training Initiative (CREATive), which is developing unified undergraduate curricula and teaching materials at five Caribbean higher education institutions in the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Jamaica and Trinidad.



Reports about past Events



- **Jamaican Forest Encounters, Seminar by Shanti Persaud and Stuart Reeves, Thursday Feb. 16, 6.00 p.m.**

PHOTOS AND TEXT BY KLAUS W. WOLF

Close to 20 persons attended a slide show of images taken throughout Jamaican forests by Mrs. Shanti Persaud and Mr. Stuart Reeves. The beauty of and the problems in what remains densely forested areas in Jamaican were described in a series of slides taken by the two photographers.





The Presenters, Mrs. Shanti Persaud and Mr. Stuart Reeves (standing left), during the discussion

- **Annual Get Together of the Natural History Society of Jamaica at the “Attic” (Stony Hill, Courtesy of Mrs. Samere Tansley) on Jan 22, 2012**

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY KLAUS W. WOLF

Members and Friends of the Natural History Society met in the “Attic” (Stony Hill), the residence of Acting President Mrs. Samere Tansley. The guests had a short walk and enjoyed lunch while exchanging ideas.





Sightings



- **VISITS OF BLUE SWALLOWTAILS AT GUAVA RIDGE**

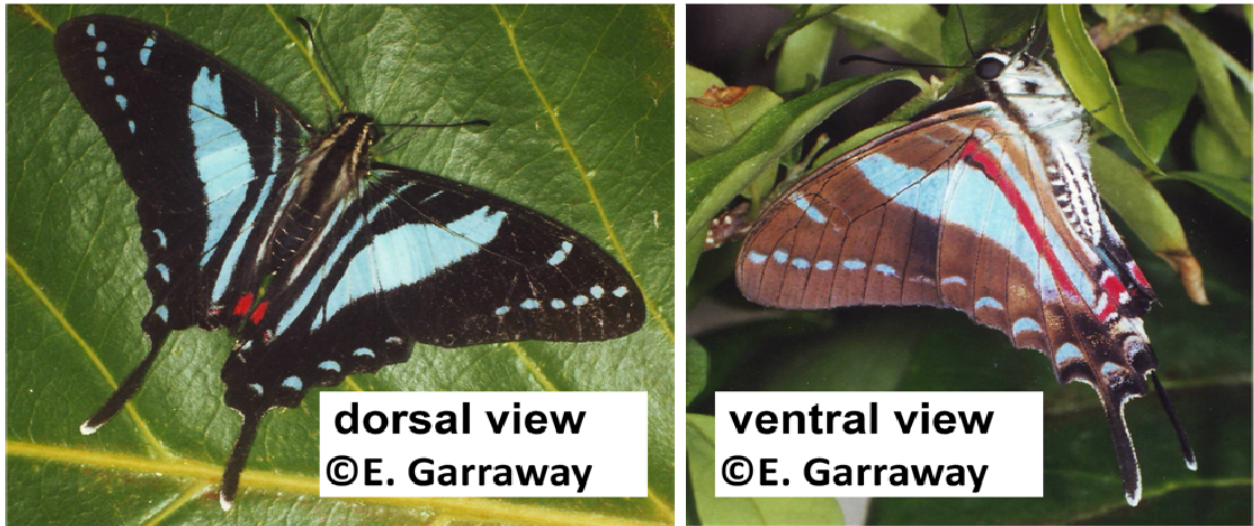
REPORT BY JILL BYLES AND PHOTOS BY ERIC GARRAWAY

The Blue Swallowtail Butterfly (*Eurytides marcellinus*) is the NHSJ logo, and recently I have seen it in a garden at Guava Ridge, St. Andrew. The first sighting was September 16, 2011 at 8.30a.m. It was on the blue flowering shrub, *Clerodendron ugandensis*, where it hovered for sometime in bright sun, although there had been frequent showers in the previous days.

The second was on a flowering and fruiting Mulberry tree at 9.00a.m. on October 22, 2011. It was fairly bright at the time although there had been rain the day before and showers through October.

This is not the first time I've seen a Blue swallowtail here. One hovered over a coffee tree in April a few years ago, also after showers. Guava Ridge is not far

from Roselle/Rozelle, St. Thomas, a known breeding site of the Blue Swallowtail.



Development and ecology of the Blue Swallowtail Butterfly have been thoroughly studied by Drs. E. Garraway (who provided the images inserted above), A.J.A Bailey, T. Farr and J. Woodley. For details see:

Bailey, A.J.A. (1994) The Blue Swallowtail and other butterflies in Rozelle. Jamaica Naturalist Vol. 4, p 7-9.

Garraway, E., A.J.A. Bailey, T. Farr and J. Woodley (1993) Studies on the Jamaican kite swallowtail *Eurytides (Protesilaus) marcellinus* (Lepidoptera: Papilionidae). Tropical Lepidoptera Vol. 4, 151-154.

- **SIGHTING OF A BOA IN BEVERLY HILLS (KINGSTON)**

REPORT BY JILL BYLES

A boa, about 11 inches long and depicted below, was seen on a veranda in Beverly Hills, Kingston, St. Andrew in November 2011. The image was forwarded to Dr. Byron Wilson - resident herpetologist at the Department of Life Science, University of the West Indies, Mona – who identified it as a “dwarf boa” (genus: *Tropidophis*).

According to wikipedia

<https://xchg3.uwimona.edu.jm/owa/redir.aspx?C=77f5522fadfc4e55990f1af92ffbd29e&URL=http%3a%2f%2fen.wikipedia.org%2fwiki%2fList%2fof%2ftropidophiid%2fspecies%20and%20subspecies>

there are 3 subspecies of *Tropidophis* in Jamaica:

- *Tropidophis haetianus jamaicensis*, Southern Jamaican Dwarf Boa
- *Tropidophis haetianus stejnegeri*, Northern Jamaican Eyespot Dwarf Boa
- *Tropidophis haetianus stullae*, Portland Ridge Dwarf Boa

This boa was found in Beverly Hills (Kingston). Against this background it might be *Tropidophis haetianus jamaicensis*, the Southern Jamaican Dwarf Boa.

