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SEMINAR SERIES ENVIRONMENT & BIODIVERSITY

Guest Lecture

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Department of Evolutionary Biology

Host: Univ.-Prof. Jan Christian Habel




FROM SIMPLE FIELD OBSERVATIONS TO MODEL SPECIES - confessions of a taxon-oriented, curiosity-driven field biologist

An unexpected rapid phonotactic approach of a male *Allobates femoralis* started my curiosity-driven research on the bioacoustics of this poison frog species. Due to its stereotypic phonotactic response to playbacks of conspecific (Hödl, 1982) and a large variety of synthetic (Hödl, 1987) calls I introduced *A.femoralis* as a “handy fellow” to the herpetological and bioacoustic community at various scientific meetings. Rapidly this “handy fellow” became the main focus of my international research team forming a cohesive group out of a diverse collection of individual scientists. Important inputs from Adolfo Amézquita (evolutionary aspects), Peter Narins (robotics and sensory physiology), Albertina Lima and Pedro Ivo Simões (biogeography) Eva and Max Ringler (population biology) as well as Andrius Paukonis (cognition) clearly show that taxon-centered research can be a self-accelerating process. The valuable integration of various aspects led to more fruitful insights than would have been possible with a pure hypothesis-based approach, which sometimes may narrow the angle of view on a given research question. In 45 years of trying to understand a living organism in the field I have gained increasing confidence in my scientific approach to let organisms rather than prefixed hypotheses lead me to the important questions. And last but not least: Taxon-centered field research is simply scientific fun!

Friday, November 17, 2 PM
Grüner Hörsaal, NLW-Faculty



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