

Editorial

Our Guest Editorial this year focuses on the latest global coral bleaching event declared earlier this year. Anjani Ganase explains how this event has already had a catastrophic impact on Tobago's coral reefs, and that the impacts on the ecosystem will be felt by Tobago's biodiversity, including its humans, for a long time to come. While the future of the world's coral reefs is bleak under even the most optimistic climate change scenarios, Anjani outlines some of the ways in which we, as a nation and as individuals, must act urgently to minimize the speed and extent of the devastation and the future environmental, social and economic impacts.

In addition to our guest Editorial, this year's issue of the journal is brim full of new discoveries and natural history observations, including five Research Papers, twelve Nature Notes and our regular Report of the TTBSDC.

As usual, the Lepidoptera are well-represented thanks to Matthew Cock continuing to document T&T's butterflies and moths and, importantly, supporting and encouraging the efforts of citizen science toward this end in good TTFNC style. In a novel departure from moths collected at lights, Rainer Deo and Matthew give an account of moths attracted to fruit baits.

Our other Research Papers include dispersal of Moriche Palm fruit within the Aripo Savannas by Linton Arneaud, Aidan Farrell and Michael Oatham, and an illustrated checklist of invertebrates collected from pools of water held in the leaf whorls of epiphytic bromeliads by Pierre Rogy *et al.*, which emphasizes the potential of these hidden ecosystems for addressing ecological questions.

Of our lepidopteran Nature Notes, three focus on documenting the life histories of *Lophocampa walkeri*, *Euclea cippus* and *Quadrus tetrastigma*, respectively. The other two focus on mating behaviour, with notes on *Theope* spp. butterflies mating at night and an inter-species mating of *Melanis* spp.

The other notes include a mixed bag of "firsts": an albino Lowland Paca, captured by a camera trap, is the first documented record for Trinidad; four species of tarantulas are recorded for the first time from Chacachacare; a first record of folivory in the bat *Artibeus planirostris trinitatis*; and the first record of a Great Egret Preying on a Greater Windward Skink.

The final three notes focus on animal behaviour, one explores plant selection by the leafcutter ant *Atta cephalotes*, one describes an active anti-predator behaviour observed in the land snail *Plekocheilus glaber* and the final note records nocturnal activity by three predominantly diurnal snake species in Trinidad.

This issue of Living World ends with the regular report of the Trinidad & Tobago Birds Status and Distribution Committee. This year there were no new bird records for T&T but the Committee has now adjudged that there is a self-sustaining feral population of Red and Green Macaws in Trinidad, and they have been added to the official checklist.

On an editorial note, the Living World committee have made a few changes to the journal style guidelines, including a modified reference & citation format, and the recommendation to include DOIs with hyperlinks in the reference list where available. We have also added instructions for citing iNaturalist observations in a standardized manner. These and more changes are already included on the 'Author Guidelines' page of the website. In 2023 we guided researchers in recognizing the sovereignty of genetic materials and local regulations. This includes gaining permission for collecting, deposition of voucher specimens in official collections, and communication with the forestry department to share findings. This year we build on this theme of transparency and accountability by encouraging our authors to publish their raw data either as supplementary files with their submission or, for more substantial datasets, on data-sharing platforms. This recommendation is in line with a shift towards open access datasets in the wider scientific publishing community over the last decade; Rogy *et al.*'s contribution to this issue sets an excellent example in this regard.

Finally, sincere thanks to all who have contributed to the 2024 issue of the journal, whether as authors, reviewers or editorial committee members. All have played a vital role in knowledge sharing and expanding our understanding and appreciation of the biodiversity of the region.

Amy Deacon, Graham White

Cover Photograph

Our cover photograph shows a Pinktoe Tarantula *Avicularia avicularia* selecting only the best natural history books for its hideout - including the TTFNC's trusty trail guide which is available for purchase via the club. Photo taken at Ajoupa Gardens by Amy Deacon.