

Editorial

Our environment is being degraded at an alarming rate and steps ought to be undertaken to address this situation as an emergency. To this end it is our intention to highlight environmental matters as seen by some of our noted and knowledgeable environmentalists. We are, therefore, pleased to have as our first Guest Editor Dr. Julien Kenny, a former professor of zoology, an author on books and articles on the environment and an ex-senator whose role in the Senate was to highlight environmental matters.

In this issue of the Journal, we have introduced a new section called “Published Elsewhere”. Some of our local as well as overseas scientists conduct studies on our local flora and fauna and publish their results in international journals. In order to call our naturalists’ attention to these publications, we will publish Authors’ abstracts of these papers with full citation on those articles that we think might be of interest to our members.

Checklists of plants and animals are important aspects in studies on biodiversity. D. Adams and Y. Baksh-Comeau present a list of plants on the small island of Chacachacare. They noted 244 species of plants including three species which are recorded for the first time for the island.

David Bass continues his series of freshwater macroinvertebrates on various Caribbean islands. In this issue, he writes about the macroinvertebrates on Antigua where he collected 41 species, all of which are reported for the first time from that island.

Whiteflies are mainly tropical and attack certain species of plants, particularly citrus. V. F. Lopez and her colleagues conducted field and laboratory studies on three species of *Aleurodicus* and present their results in this issue.

Matthew Cock continues with his series on skipper butterflies of Trinidad and Tobago. This paper is Part 13 (Hesperiinae) of the

series where he discusses 11 genera and 22 species. In a previous Living World, Matthew Cock mentioned an unidentified saturniid larva which he has now identified and reported as *Automeris liberia*.

Jo-Anne Sewlal describes some defence mechanisms of the orb-weaving spider *Azilia vachoni*, while Victor Quesnel writes on the mating behavior of the skink *Mabuya nigropunctata*.

There are three Nature Notes: Charles Collins reports on the use of a nest site used for 40 years by Chestnut-collared Swifts. C. Starr writes about whirling behaviour in a Daddy-longlegs spider from Dominica and John Lum Young gives practical advice for handling the “Luminous Lizard”.

Bruce Cutler adds another spider family for Trinidad, Synotaxidae.

The third report of the Trinidad and Tobago Rare Bird Committee is written by Martyn Kenefick and lists 10 additional species to the Official List of Birds of Trinidad and Tobago. Aweeda Newaj-Fyzul and colleagues describe their attempts to re-float a Bryde’s whale stranded at La Brea, its death and subsequent autopsy.

In the new section, “Published Elsewhere,” there are three abstracts: One on the “Luminous Lizard” and two on butterflies.

Two book reviews are covered in this issue. One on “Butterfly Trails” by H. R. Roegner and reviewed by Matthew Cock tells of Roegner’s visit to Trinidad and elsewhere, while Christopher Starr reviewed “The Journals of the Trinidad Field Naturalists’ Club, 1892 – 1896” recently produced by the Club on two CDs.

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Cover Photograph

Opuntia wentiana, a member of the cactus family, is found growing on Chacachacare Island. It has not been recorded elsewhere on Trinidad or Tobago. The plant is spiny, erect 1-2 m and is much branched. Photo by Yasmin S. Baksh-Comeau.