



1ST ALAGOAS' MEETING ON EVOLUTION
Grupo de Estudos Sobre Evolução Biológica
Project Report

2017

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The Study Group

Scientific literacy is of major importance on societies' development once it provides independence to the citizens and technological advancement. In Brazil, however, nearly half of the population have rudimentary scientific literacy, i.e., they have great difficulties in solving problems and interpreting scientific information. Scientific education is another great deficiency in Brazilian society and it ranks in the 59^a position among 65 countries, according to the international test of the Programme for International Student Assessment in 2013.

The Study Group on Evolutionary Biology (Grupo de Estudos Sobre Evolução Biológica – GESEB) was born in March 2015 as a result of a collective concern about scientific literacy in Brazil, especially in Alagoas state. A group of students noticed that the undergrads were initiating their studies in Biological Sciences without any notion of Evolutionary Biology and many of them were graduating without any significant improvement in their knowledge about this subject.

Since then, GESEB has been promoting collaborative learning, lectures, courses and events on Evolution. In one year we were able to gather students to talk about evolution in weekly meetings and promoted two courses for 1st year undergrad students of Biological Sciences, which helped more than 80 students to start their courses more prepared. We also promoted one Darwin Day seminar, when more than 50 people could learn more about evolution and extinction.

The 1st Alagoas' meeting on Evolution

Our major goal for 2016 was to promote the first local meeting about evolution (named “I Encontro Alagoano de Evolução”) in November 2016. With this event, we wanted to gather Evolution researchers of national and regional importance in Brazil, local education professionals and students, promoting exchange of experiences and knowledge on the theme.

Thanks to the grant awarded by the European Society of Evolutionary Biology, we could prepare an event with debates, lectures, short-term courses and poster presentations. In order to give special attention to public schools, we provided training for teachers about the main difficulties faced in the classroom when they need to teach evolution and suggested new methods. Additionally, secondary and high school students were able to participate in activities that elucidate evolutionary concepts.

The event took place in the local Natural History Museum, which made possible to the participants to visit the exhibitions about Alagoas' biodiversity. There was 25 hours of diverse discussions, three short-term courses, 11 lectures, one round-table, 18 posters and 95 participants from 10 different institutions. We also counted with six supporters that helped with gifts, electronic equipment, infrastructure, advertising and water supply.

With the great team work of only 17 people, this Meeting was an example of willpower, stating that it is possible to put up a quality event about an important subject, integrate people from different school education and contribute to the local quality of life.

Schedule

	Wednesday (09.11)	Thursday (10.11)	Friday (11.11)
08h00 - 09h00	Short-term Courses	Short-term Courses	Lecture VII
09h00 - 10h00			Lecture VIII
10h00 - 11h00	Opening Ceremony	Short-term Courses	Poster presentation
11h00 - 12h00	Lecture I		Lecture IX
12h00 - 13h30	Lunch		
13h30 - 14h30	Lecture II	Lecture V	Lecture X
14h30 - 15h30	Lecture III	Lecture VI	Lecture XI
15h30 - 16h00	Coffee Break		
16h00 - 17h00	Lecture IV	Round Table Discussion	Lecture XII

Lecture I: Evolution teaching and education for socio-political action: perspectives and confrontations in times of School Without Party (a law project) and “Don’t be afraid, resist”.

Lecturer: Claudia Sepulveda, PhD

Lecture II: Evolution and Conservation.

Lecturer: Richard Ladle, PhD

Lecture III: Prospection of virulence factors and pathogenicity determinants in fungal genomes.

Lecturer: Leonardo Broetto, PhD

Lecture IV: Unicorns, teletransport and evolution: phylogenetic niche conservatism.

Lecturer: Marcos Vinícius Carneiro Vital, PhD

Lecture V: Introduction to Phylogeography.

Lecturer: Rodolfo Leandro do Nascimento Silva, MSc

Lecture VI: Human Evolution and the History of Anthropic Impacts.

Lecturer: Robson Guimarães Santos, PhD

Round Table Discussion: Science Outreach.

Lecturers: Aline Ghilardi, PhD and Gracielle Higino, MSc

Moderator: Shirley Nascimento, BSc

Lecture VII: Evolution and Domestication: did humans domesticate or were domesticated themselves?

Lecturer: Mayana de Castro, BSc

Lecture VIII: Viruses and Evolution, a light approach.

Lecturer: Ithallo Sathio Bessoni Tanabe, BSc

Lecture IX: Genetics and Evolution

Lecturer: Moezio de Vasconcellos Costa Santos Filho, MSc

Lecture X: Diversity and Evolution of Insects

Lecturer: Maurício Lima, PhD

Lecture XI: Life: an unauthorized biography

Lecturer: Aline Ghilardi, PhD

Short-Term Courses**1. An introduction to the Biological Naturalism of John Searle**

Lecturer: Maxwell Moraes de Lima Filho, MSc

2. Creativity in Evolution Teaching

Lecturers: Cauay Vianna and Gabriela Kuwai

3. Evolution, what the heck is that?

Lecturers: Gracielle Higino and Lucas Serafim