

Dr. Lucía G. Lohmann
2009 Gifford Arboretum Annual Distinguished Lecturer;
Sponsored Mentor for SEEDS

Dr. Lucía G. Lohmann is an accomplished young biologist well-known for applying the latest advances in evolutionary biology (such as molecular phylogeny and geospatial analyses) to biodiversity conservation. Her studies focus on the Trumpet Creeper Family (Bignoniaceae), a highly diverse group of woody vines and trees that produce conspicuous displays of large yellow, purple or red trumpet- to bell-shaped flowers, known locally by the lovely Jacaranda's, Tabebuia's and yellow elders that flower here in spring and early summer. Though she received her doctorate as recently as 2003 (University of Missouri St. Louis), she is already a recognized leader, with an extensive record of publications (18 papers in peer-reviewed journals, 26 book chapters, 2 books) and speaking engagements (over 40 in a variety of scientific and public education venues). And she already has experience training (and inspiring) graduate students. Currently, Dr. Lohmann's primary position is at the University of São Paulo, Brazil, with additional accreditation as a graduate professor at three other Brazilian universities: Universidade Estadual de Campinas, Universidade Federal de Uberlândia, and Universidade Federal de Feira de Santana. Also a valued research associate at two botanical gardens (Missouri Botanical Garden and New York Botanical Garden), an elected member of the Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation Science Committee (2008-present), advisor for several funding agencies, and reviewer for leading scientific journals, she is a dynamic collaborator who is fluent in four languages.

In her own words, "I was born and raised in São Paulo (Brazil), spent almost 2 years in the Amazon and nearly 10 years in the US. I have also conducted extensive fieldwork throughout Latin America (Peru, Surinam, French Guiana, Costa Rica, and Colombia), and research at major European Herbaria (Paris, Kew, Geneva, Berlin, Munich, and Vienna). I earned my doctoral degree in ecology, evolution and systematics from the University of Missouri-St. Louis, USA. My primary research interest is to understand patterns of diversification in Neotropical lianas and apply this information for the establishment of conservation plans in the Tropics. I am currently working on the systematics, biogeography, ecology, and evolution of Bignonieae (Bignoniaceae), the most diverse group of lianas in the Neotropics. I adopt an integrative approach and integrate components of ecology, evolutionary biology, systematics, phylogenetics, molecular biology, conservation, and sustainable development in my research. I have used a broad-scale phylogenetic framework to explore evolutionary explanations for contemporary patterns of morphological diversity in this group. I am now exploring the broad patterns and respective underlying processes in more depth through analyses of smaller clades. My long-term goal is to use this liana group as a model to help evaluate patterns of geographic distribution and morphological diversity for lianas more generally. In addition, I also try to contribute for the integration between conservation biology and society through the incorporation of scientific knowledge into policy, public education and the identification of improved management strategies and conservation priorities."