



## PBIF News Briefs

April, 2008

Welcome to the second quarter 2008 newsletter for the Pacific Biodiversity Information Forum. This issue includes updates on the protected areas database and on organizations and events around the Pacific.

### Protected Areas Conference: Rota

The annual meeting of the Pacific Island Committee was held February 19-23 on Rota, CNMI. The Pacific Island Committee (PIC) is made up of the United States affiliated islands in the Pacific and includes: the Republic of Palau, the four states of the Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Marshall Islands, American Samoa, Hawaii, and the United States Forest Service's Institute of Pacific Island Forestry and the Pacific Southwest Region Five. For more information see <http://www.islandforestry.org/>

The Committee is to aid the Council of Western State Foresters (CWSF) and Western Forestry Leadership Coalition (WFLC) in developing informed and unified approaches, which represent natural resource issues and forestry managers' needs of the tropical forests of the United States affiliated Pacific Islands. The meeting provides opportunities for attendees to discuss their unique region's forestry issues. This year saw attendance by SPREP, who provided an update on the development of the Action Strategy for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas in the Pacific Islands Region 2008-2012 and the Revision of the Regional Invasive Species Strategy. In addition, PBIF presented plans for the first revision to the Pacific Protected Areas Database, which will begin with Hawaii, the Northwest Hawaiian Islands and Micronesia. PBIF plans to demonstrate a new version of the Pacific Protected Areas database, incorporating the revisions, at the next Pacific Island Roundtable Meeting in Suva in June of 2008.

### Pacific Protected Areas Database Search

About the Site • Search Page

The Pacific Protected Areas Database provides a list of known areas in the Pacific that have been designated as parks, conservations areas, or are managed for their biodiversity. The database includes descriptions, IUCN categories, and contact information for the managers of the areas.

Haleakala National Park -- USA



PPA database search results– Haleakala National Park map and photo

### Pacific Protected Areas Database

The on-line version of the Pacific Protected Areas database was unveiled at a side meeting to the 8<sup>th</sup> Pacific Islands Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas. A work in progress, the PPA database strives to document all protected areas (PAs) in the Pacific Islands region of Oceania (Micronesia, Melanesia and Polynesia). Since its initial development, more than 100 PAs have been added to the database (and a few removed) bringing the total number of records to just over 500. In late 2005, the database was turned over to the Pacific Island Roundtable for Nature Conservation and is currently hosted by the Pacific Biodiversity Information Forum. At the meeting, a strategy for updating

and maintaining the database was discussed and many attendees offered to participate in helping to improve the database in content, comprehensiveness and functionality. Since that time, PBIF staff have been working to address comments received at the meeting and continue the development of the database. A basic list and text query is available online at: <http://www.pbif.org/ppa/default.asp>. There are currently 42 fields covering a wide spectrum of information, including PA location, biophysical and social information, and management activities. Funding is being sought to review and update data from Micronesia as a first step to improving the comprehensiveness of the database. It is hoped that a follow up meeting can be held with those interested in the PPADB at the next Pacific Island Roundtable Meeting in Suva this June.

## Changes at PACINET

PACINET, the regional BioNET LOOP (Locally Organised and Operated Partnership) for the Pacific, has new leadership. Gilianne Brodie, who guided PACINET through its early years, has moved on to be a lecturer at the University of the South Pacific's School of Biological, Chemical, and Environmental Sciences. A new coordinator will join PACINET shortly.

Additionally, SOPAC, the Pacific Islands Applied Geosciences Commission, has joined the steering committee of PACINET. Their involvement will bring a valuable perspective to the planning and management of PACINET's projects.

## BioNET: research, taxonomy, and sharing benefits

BioNET co-organised a panel discussion at the 13<sup>th</sup> meeting of the scientific advisory body of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Thirty eight attendees participated in an informal discussion on the real and potential benefits of basic, non-commercial biodiversity research, specifically in the field of taxonomy. Panel members included representatives from Germany, Ghana, Mexico, Pacific Islands (BioNET-PACINET), Switzerland, Global Biodiversity Information Facility and the Consortium for the Barcode of Life. <http://www.bionet-intl.org>



Photographer: J. Maragos 2005

## SOPAC's new newsletter

SOPAC has recently published their first newsletter, *The Pacific Environmental and Natural Resource Economic News* (PENREN). The goal of the newsletter is to keep interested parties informed about the use of economics to support natural resource management.

To receive a copy, contact Allison Woodruff at [allison@sopac.org](mailto:allison@sopac.org)

## Darwin 200 Symposia

The International Union of Biological Sciences (IUBS) and UNESCO are convening a series of symposia in 2009 to commemorate the 200<sup>th</sup> birthday of Charles Darwin and celebrate the impacts that his revolutionary ideas had on modern scientific knowledge.

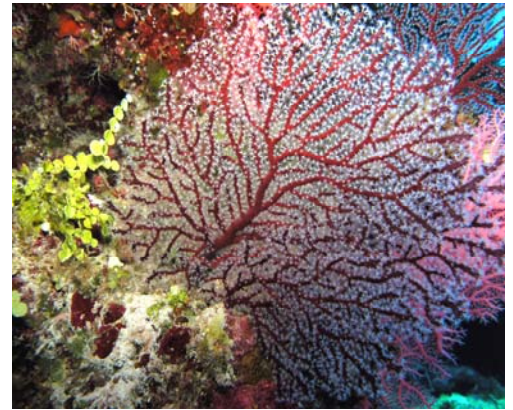
The symposia will be held on 5 different continents throughout 2009. The topics will include:

- Marine Genomics
- Biological Education
- Basic Issues in Evolution
- Long-term Biological Change
- Biodiversity and Biological Resources
- Human Evolution.

For further information, please contact: Dr. Giorgio Bernardi [bernardi@szn.it](mailto:bernardi@szn.it)

## Recent Publications

- GBIF Training Manual 1: "Digitisation of Natural History Collections Data" is now available online and for download. [http://www.gbif.org/GBIF\\_org/GBIF\\_Documents/trainingmanual1/](http://www.gbif.org/GBIF_org/GBIF_Documents/trainingmanual1/)
- The Guide to Best Practices for Generalising Sensitive Species Occurrence Data is now available in PDF. <http://www.gbif.org/News/NEWS1206991025>



Photographer: J. Maragos 2005

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## Upcoming Events

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- **May 19-30, 2008** 9<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP-9) Bonn, Germany.
- **May 22, 2008** International Day for Biological Diversity, multiple venues.
- **24-26 June 2008** The Pacific Island Roundtable will be convened in Suva, Fiji.
- **July 7-11, 2008** 11<sup>th</sup> International Coral Reef Symposium, Fort Lauderdale, Florida.
- **5-9 October 2008** International Scientific Conference: Tropical Rainforests and Agroforests under Global Change, Bali, Indonesia.
- **9-12 December 2008** World Biodiversity Congress, Chiang Mai, Thailand.
- **1-5 June 2009** e-Biosphere 09: The International Conference on Biodiversity Informatics, London, UK.

Contact Us!

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PACIFIC SCIENCE ASSOCIATION