

## **GUANA SCIENCE NEWS #1 May 30, 2005**

Gad, Razi, and Skip have just published a note on water loss in the weird "worm lizard", *Amphisbaena*, that lives on Guana and some other VIs. It is a species with relatives elsewhere in the Greater Antilles, but this one is only in the VIs. What we found out is that these pallid, blind, annulated, legless beasties have little more resistance to water loss than a wet sponge and thus must remain in moist earth to survive. We do not find one often, and a grad student at U of Missouri has asked us to save the next one in ethanol for DNA studies.

Scott Miller, Smithsonian, found a decade-old paper on "rapid evolution of courtship song pattern" in fruit flies that includes a lot of data on Guana flies collected by Peter Chabora, AMNH, in the early 90s. The paper, by Ritchie of St. Andrews U., Scotland, and Gleason of Yale, was previously unknown to us. The Guana flies had the shortest primary interpulse interval among all studied -- thought to be of major significance for mate selection. This harks back to the previous work on our fruit flies' DNA (described in my upcoming Book), which indicated our population was of very recent origin, therefore indicating very rapid evolution indeed. We are looking into sending a shipment of these Guana flies to Kansas so as to determine if this is real evolution or just another example of Intelligent Design. HJ, have you hired any Intelligent Designers other than Howard to work on Guana? Did you contract him to mess with the singing of our fruit flies?

I will try to locate and correspond with Dr. J. M. Gleason at Yale to see if further research is warranted and if a more synthetic overview of our flies' biology and status can be developed. It was another species of fruit fly that was the first Guana insect ever published on, by Dr Richard Levins of Harvard in 1969.