



PLANT DIVERSITY ATTRACTS BIRD DIVERSITY IN A JAMAICAN GARDEN

Speaker: Mr. Andreas Oberli

Mr. Oberli is a Swiss National, conservation botanist, forester and long standing member of the Natural History Society of Jamaica. He served in various functions on the board of the society. His most recent activities include the participation in botanical surveys of the Hellshire Hills and Peckham Woods.



Starting in 1993, the transformation of a former coffee plantation into a four-acre conservation garden has resulted in increased numbers of birds and bird species. It was hoped that the discontinuation of monoculture, its chemical management and the ban on bird shooting by plantation workers would decrease mortality of native birds. By the end of 1994 all coffee trees had been eradicated, staff had been dismissed, and all former activities related to the farm ceased. All chemicals, insecticides and herbicides were banned; hundreds of vacant coffee planting holes were systematically filled with rare, endemic and native Jamaican, Caribbean and other plant species. Native tree species still present on the property and in a small adjacent lower montane forest regrew immediately. Both the number of birds and the number of bird species have steadily increased over the period of twenty-one years, reaching 62 observed species in 2015. However, as successful as this exercise in plant diversity and - as a result and bi-product - in bird diversity has been, the outlook to the future in the light of climate change gives rise to concern.

Date: Thursday, November 26, 2015

Time: 5.30 p.m. Refreshments; 6.00 p.m. Presentation

Venue: Botany Seminar Room 1, UWI Mona,
Dept. of Life Sciences, Block B upstairs

Come and hear what is going on!