

Shady Susana Ruiz Díaz Medina

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EDUCATION

School of Forest Resources and Conservation, University of Florida

Master of Science in Forest Resources and Conservation
Funded by Fulbright Fellowship
GPA 3.84/4

August 2018 – Present
Expected graduation: June 2020

Agricultural Sciences College, National University of Asuncion

Forestry Engineering Degree (Honors)
GPA 4.35/5

2012 – 2016

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Spatial Ecology and Conservation Laboratory, University of Florida

August 2018 - Present

M.Sc. dissertation in progress: *Bioclimatic and structural drivers of phenological variation in the Paraguayan Dry Chaco forests and effects in growth and mortality dynamics.*

- Performed geospatial analyses of forest phenology through micro-satellite imagery.
- Partnered with the Paraguayan Permanent Plot Network to monitor biodiversity and led the remeasurement of three plots belonging to the Network.
- Detected bioclimatic and biomass trends between plots.

Forest Engineering Program, Universidad Nacional de Asuncion

May – July 2019

Undergraduate research experience mentor

- Recruited 2 undergraduate students to be involved my fieldwork in Paraguay.
- The students participated in field sampling. Received training in plot reinstallation and use of measurement tools (diametric tape, laser range finder, compass, GPS). Became familiarized with the use of drones for forest monitoring
- One student is writing a technical report on species composition which will be the basis of her undergraduate academic internship.

Department of Silviculture and Forest Management, Universidad Nacional de Asunción.

Undergraduate thesis: *Phenology of Aspidosperma tomentosum Mart., Qualea grandiflora Mart. And Vochysia tucanorum Mart. in the Cerrado Aguara Ñu, Department of Canindeyú*

2015 – 2016

- Described the reproductive phenophases of three forest species belonging to Cerrado ecoregion.
- Established a relationship between reproductive phenophases and meteorological events.
- Related morphological parameters and fruit production.

Department of Silviculture and Forest Management, Universidad Nacional de Asunción

Academic internship: *Plot characterization of silvopastoral systems associated with carob trees (Prosopis spp.)*

2015 – 2016

- Established permanent plots in the Central Chaco
- Characterized silvopastoral systems components: soil, herbs, cattle and forest trees.
- Created thematic maps using GIS resources.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Department of Silviculture and Forest Management, Universidad Nacional de Asunción

Establishment and Strengthening of a Seed Center for Native Forest Species from the Atlantic Forest, Alto Paraná

June – December 2017

- Collaborate in the elaboration of a manual of seeding trees
- Systematize information from different sources: peer-reviewed journals, books, technical reports, online databases.
- Edit preliminary versions of manual

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Agricultural Cooperative Development International and Volunteers in Overseas
Cooperative Assistance (ACDI/VOCA)

Intern – Cooperative Development Program

January – February 2015

- Independently developed content for Forest Management and Leadership workshops
- Led workshops for a 50-member female agricultural committee
- Assisted participants with completion of the National Family Farming Registry application

PUBLICATIONS (in Spanish, available upon request)

C.C. Gamarra Lezcano; Diaz Lezcano, Maura Isabel; Medina, L; RUIZ DIAZ, S; Leguizamón, L; Santacruz, A. Characterization of the vegetal component in cattle ranching plots in the Central Paraguayan Chaco, *Steviana* (Paraguayan Journal of Botany), v. Vol 10 f: 1, 2018. ISSN/ISBN: 2304-2907 (http://www.facen.una.py/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Steviana-101_Resumenes-III-JPB_2018_online.pdf)

Ruiz Díaz, S; Benítez, E; González, L; Da Ponte, G. Flowering of *Aspidosperma tomentosum* Mart. in the Cerrado Aguara Ñu, Canindeyú. Proceedings of the National Congress of Agricultural Sciences (4, 2017, Paraguay). 2017. Department, Paraguay. San Lorenzo, PY.

Ruiz Díaz, S; Díaz, M; Cabrera, A; Ramírez, J. Characterization of the forest component of silvopastoral systems associated with *Prosopis* species Proceedings of the National Congress of Agricultural Sciences (4, 2017, Paraguay). 2017. San Lorenzo, PY.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS

- UF – Latin American and the Caribbean Scholarship August 2018 – Present
- Fulbright – Carlos Antonio Lopez Scholarship August 2017 – Present
- Undergraduate thesis approved with honors November – 2016
- National University of Asunción Chancellor’s Merit Scholarship 2014 – 2016
- Scholarship to attend Interamerican Leadership Training (ILT) September – 2015

ADDITIONAL TRAINING

Participant, Drone Flying and Mission Planning Workshop, Austin Cary Forest, SPEC Lab April – 2019

The workshop included a general overview of drone application for forest monitoring, mission planning with AirMap and DJI Go, drone settings and use of functions like screenshot, picture and video recording.

Participant, Fulbright Enrichment Seminar: Leveraging diversity, entrepreneurship and Innovation for economic growth, Atlanta, GA January 2019

Meeting of Fulbright awardees with experts to gain insights and discuss about the seminar theme and its implications with policy, culture, and global issues.

Participant, Interamerican Leadership Training, Guatemala January 2016

Regional event seeking to strengthen leadership skills of participants. Topics included: effective communication, problem solving/decision making, consensus building/conflict management, networking and team development.

Participant, National Parks and Protected Areas, Defensores del Chaco Organization, Paraguay June 2017

Participants in the Forum had the opportunity to learn the vision of different conservation stakeholders like government officials, academics, park rangers, NGO’s and conservation advocates.

Participant, Women’s Empowerment & Leadership Program, School of Agrarian Sciences Nacional University of Asunción, Paraguay 2013 – 2015

Participants received training on gender equality, women’s empowerment and power dynamics in rural areas

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LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

Communications officer, Forestry Graduate Student Organization (FGSO) August 2019 – Present

School of Forest Resources and Conservation, University of Florida

Keep information flow between FGSO members, board and the department. Collaboration in organization of events like the student symposium and activities that promote student integration.

Panelist, Burning Forests in Bolivia, Brazil & Paraguay: Causes, Responses and the Future October 2019

UF Tropical Conservation and Development Forum, Gainesville, FL

Discussed issues about forest in Paraguay: wildfires, forest loss drivers, policy, general public perception, and media response. Took questions from audience and compared perspectives with panelist from Brazil and Bolivia.

Staff, Interamerican Leadership Training, Ecuador January 2019

Worked in an international team in the transfer of knowledge and experiences regarding leadership.

Gave workshops and mentored a team in the process of planning a community service project.

National Commissioner of the Better World Framework in Paraguay 2018

Scout Association of Paraguay, Fernando de la Mora, Paraguay

Promoted the development of educational programs framed in the UN Sustainable Development Goals, based in guidelines of the World Organization of the Scout Movement, a global youth educational organization.

National Program Coordinator, Good Deeds Day 2018

Articulated communication between the regional coordinator, Scout Association of Paraguay, Asuncion City Council and WWF – Paraguay. Organized simultaneous tree plantations in four cities in Paraguay.

Course Director, Paraguayan Leadership Training, Scout Association of Paraguay 2016 and 2017

Intended to build leadership skills for Paraguayan youth aged 18 to 22, based on the Interamerican Leadership Training which I had attended previously.

SKILLS AND OTHER EXPERIENCES

- Intermediate use of GIS software: ArcGIS Pro, ArcMap, ENVI, Google Earth Pro and QGis.
- Intermediate use of R Studio
- Languages
 - Spanish: Native Speaker
 - English: Advanced level
 - Guarani: Intermediate level
 - Portuguese: Intermediate level
- Recent volunteer work experience
 - Hands on Atlanta Discovery Program – Panola Way Elementary school (2019)
Provided homework assistance and engaged kids in educational games.
 - Earth Hour 2018 – WWF Paraguay, Scout Association of Paraguay (2018)
Coordinated the participation of at least 100 members of the Scout Association of Paraguay in this activity that calls attention to climate change.
 - Mborayhu Añua (Hug of Love) – Food Drive Project (2017)
Collaborated in the promotion of the project in different media, helped gather, sort and deliver donations.
- Member of the Paraguayan Traditional Dance Student Group, Agricultural Sciences College, National University of Asunción (2013 – 2015)
- Extensive experience in planning and conducting fieldwork related to forest inventories.
- Strong network within the Forestry Program in the Universidad Nacional de Asuncion.