

ACADEMIC STUDY TRIP: *Costa Rica: Field Tropical Ecology*

Trip dates: December 2022 – January 2023

Meet Your Trip Leaders:

PROFESSOR PAUL CONSTANTINO

Prof. Constantino is an evolutionary biologist and alumnus (Class of '92) who joined the biology faculty in 2014. He regularly teaches courses in ecology, evolution, and anatomy. His research focuses on the evolutionary morphology of the primate skull and dentition, including recent work investigating how the microstructure of tooth enamel helps teeth adapt to diet, and how tooth damage can be used to reconstruct past feeding behavior. Prof. Constantino has conducted independent fieldwork on the dietary ecology of baboons in South Africa and Giant Pandas in central China, as well as paleontological/archaeological work in Kenya, South Africa, Wyoming, Texas, South Carolina, and Massachusetts. He joined the Costa Rica Tropical Ecology course in 2016 and gets particularly excited about the non-human primates on the trip.



PROFESSOR PETER HOPE

Prof. Hope earned an MS in botany from the University of Vermont and began teaching at SMC in the fall of 1992 teaching Vascular Plant Morphology and Evolution. In 1999 he began teaching a field course, The Natural History of Vermont which later became Ecosystem Ecology along with other courses. Having gone to Costa Rica three times with UVM classes in Tropical Plant Systematics taught by his former advisor at UVM, and knowing how transformative and inspirational the trips were for him, Prof. Hope wanted to create a similar trip for students at Saint Michael's. In 2003 after a scouting trip in August, he and Professor Valerie Banschbach (who'd also studied in Costa Rica) created the two credit course and study tour and took the first group of SMC students to Costa Rica to study tropical ecology over the 2003-2004 semester break. Since then the course has run another 7 times. Prof. Hope has been to Costa Rica a total of 13 times and loves exploring and sharing the extremely diverse tropical biology and ecology with the students and the other instructors during the courses and trips.



Professor Hope retired from full time teaching at the end of 2019, but continues to team teach the Costa Rica: Field Tropical Ecology 2 credit course and very much looks forward to sharing another course and trip to study the fascinating diversity and ecology of Costa Rica.

PROFESSOR SCOTT LEWINS

Prof. Lewins has been conducting applied agricultural research on farms throughout Vermont since he moved here in 2006. His research has focused on biological control of agricultural pests through enhancing native natural enemy communities. For eight years, he has brought his love for field-based research and passion for teaching into the classrooms of Saint Michael's College as an instructor for a variety of courses including Field Tropical Ecology, Introduction to Ecology and Evolution, Introduction to Cell Biology and Genetics, Applied Insect Ecology, and Insects and Society. More recently, Prof. Lewins has been working as the Entomology Extension Educator with the UVM Extension Northwest Crops & Soils Program and Extension Coordinator with the Agroecology & Livelihoods Collaborative. At UVM he works with a multitude of farmers in the region in various agroecosystems (e.g. hemp, hops, mixed vegetables, small fruits, etc.) with a focus on sustainable pest management, as well as teaches undergraduates in the Department of Plant and Soil Science.

