

the S A M N O B L E
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of N A T U R A L H I S T O R Y



As part of a research group led by Dr. Guarino R. Colli of the Universidade de Brasília, we have had the opportunity begin studies on part of the fauna of the region, specifically, amphibians and reptiles. Our preliminary results indicate a highly diverse fauna, including several species new to science. These can be seen at:

<http://www.snomnh.ou.edu/personnel/herpetology/vitt/Cerrado/Cristalino/indexPort.htm>

Future studies will undoubtedly add species to the list and detect additional undescribed species. Research by other scientists indicates a diversity of mammals and birds as well.

We are convinced that the Cristalino Park and the Cristalino Lodge are highly valuable resources for the State of Mato Grosso and Brazil in general, and they are most valuable as undisturbed rainforest. The lower Cristalino River region is unique because it is situated below the Serra do Cachimbo, an ecoregion very different in vegetation and fauna, and because it is one of the last and richest continuous areas of Amazon rainforest remaining in Mato Grosso. In addition, it is a unique region because it lies at the interface between the Amazon rainforest and the Cerrado to the south.

Finally, potential economic and social impacts of retaining this region in its undisturbed state should be much greater and longer lasting than any possible conversion to agriculture. In addition to serving the global community in a rapidly expanding ecotourism industry, which benefits Brazil economically, the potential exists for discovery of chemical compounds and genetic resources in native plants and animals that will have long-lasting social and economic effects for the people of Brazil.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Laurie J. Vitt". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Dr. Laurie J. Vitt
George Lynn Cross Research Professor *and*
Curator of Reptiles

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Janalee P. Caldwell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Dr. Janalee P. Caldwell
Curator of Amphibians *and*
Professor of Zoology

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