

Vertebrate Biology

Questions for Whitfield and Pierce 2005

Bring typed responses to the questions below to lecture on Friday, October 31st. Put your answers in your own words. Do not simply quote from the paper.

1. What are some of the different hypotheses put forth to describe the importance of tree buttresses to species diversity? What types of data support these competing hypotheses?
2. What hypothesis was addressed by this study? What prediction do the authors make based on this hypothesis?
3. What **basic** technique do the authors use to test their prediction? (you do not need to give details)
4. According to the results section and figure 1, was there a difference in the herpetofauna between buttress and non-buttress plots? Explain.
5. Did any of the species in the study appear to be buttress specialists?
6. Did leaf-litter volume have an effect on abundance or species richness?
7. What do the author's conclude from their data? Did they support their initial hypothesis? According to the discussion (page 197) what factors might account for the effects of tree buttresses on species abundance and diversity (describe two of them)?
8. What is the importance of this study to the conservation of tropical herpetofauna?