

DARWIN INITIATIVE: Fellowship Awards 2010

Darwin Reference: EIDPS025: María de la Luz Ruiz Maqueda

Interim Report: April 2011

Luz arrived in Reading in September 2010 to join the 2010-2011 MSc Plant Diversity class. The MSc course runs from October to September, and Luz will spend a full academic year at the University of Reading.

The principal aims of the Fellowship were to ensure that Luz enhances her skills and her on-paper qualifications so that she can become a future project leader in Mexico. Her participation in the MSc training has provided her with an opportunity to further develop skills in project design, data collection and analysis, and analytical and writing skills.

To date, she has participated in 10 modules as follows,

1. Basic Plant Ecology,
2. Conservation and Biodiversity: Global and local scales,
3. Diversity and Identification of Plants,
4. Evolution and Classification of Plant Diversity,
5. Plants and Climate,
6. Advanced Plant Ecology,
7. Creating Revisions, Monographs, Floras and Information Systems,
8. Critical Discussion of Systematic Literature,
9. Ecological Biochemistry, and
10. Mediterranean Field Course.

Grades for the modules taken will be available after the exam period (27 April - 3 June 2011). Marks for continuous assessments are available. These are listed below:

Module	Assessment 1	Assessment 2	Assessment 3	Assessment 4	Examination	Final mark
Basic Plant Ecology						
Conservation and Biodiversity: Global and Local Scales						
Diversity and Identification of Plants						
Evolution and Classification of Plant Diversity						
Plants and Climate						
Advanced Plant Ecology						
Creating Discussion of Systematic Literature						
Ecological Biochemistry						
Mediterranean Field Course.						

NA – Not available.

NA* - Not available, in progress.

The MSc training to date has provided Luz with excellent opportunity to gain confidence in networking in an international academic environment. This year's MSc class includes students from Spain, Colombia, Libya and the United States of America as well as the UK.

Whilst in Reading Luz it was intended that Luz would take the opportunity to finalise publications arising from the research work she carried out as part of the original Darwin project. This would be valuable experience for Luz in dissemination of research findings, but it also serves to make the work arising from the original project more widely available. To date Luz has not been able to prioritise this work, since she has found the course itself demanding. We are hoping that the time for project work will afford her more opportunities to work closely with Dr Hawkins (UK PI) to achieve this additional aim of the Fellowship.