

## Expedition to Azariamas

Participants: Alejandro Araujo, Leslie Cayola (botanists), Daniel Choque, Jorge Uzquiano, Angel Fernández, Consuelo Campos (thesis students in the project), Ana Antezana, Vania Torrez (volunteers), Guzman Jove (logistic leader of the expedition), Pepe Sevillanos, Ramiro Jove, Cecilio Perez (guides), Emilia Jove (cook). Duración 33 días: 17 May–20 June, 2005.

Main Results: 20 non permanent transect plots (0.1 ha each plot) and 3 permanent plots (1 ha). We measured 11483 trees and lianas and made 627 collections (Table 1 & 2). The plots were distributed in three different elevation classes.



View of the dry forest at Azariamas. (L. Cayola).

Table 1: Plot studies carried at Azariamas.

Inventory	Area (ha)	Coordinates	Elevation (m)	# Individuals inventoried
Transect 1	0.1	14°19'52.9"S 68°33'20,9"W	796	359
Transect 2	0.1	14°19'39,5"S 68°33'33,7"W	712	537
Transect 3	0.1	14°19'31,6"S 68°33'54,1"W	711	623
Transect 4	0.1	14°19'18,3"S 68°34'30,7"W	796	426
Transect 5	0.1	14°19'23,6"S 68°34'42,6"W	767	438
Transect 6	0.1	14°18'55,9"S 68°34'54,9"W	820	356
Transect 7	0.1	14°19'57,4"S 68°34'6,3"W	856	522
Transect 8	0.1	14°20'8,9"S 68°33'55,9"W	773	547
Transect 9	0.1	14°19'42,5"S 68°34'30"W	1096	368
Transect 10	0.1	14°20'6,1"S 68°34'26"W	1180	533
Transect 11	0.1	14°20'11,5"S 68°34'28"W	1175	380
Transect 12	0.1	14°20'03,1"S 68°34'17,5"W	1034	377
Transect 13	0.1	14°21'10,1"S 68°32'43,8"W	1031	465
Transect 14	0.1	14°21'00,6"S 68°33'01"W	1090	466
Transect 15	0.1	14°20'52,7"S 68°33'4,4"W	972	429
Transect 16	0.1	14°19'51,9"S 68°32'38"W	701	477
Transect 17	0.1	14°20'43,6"S 68°32'21,9"W	730	390
Transect 18	0.1	14°21'33,6"S 68°32'22,1"W	886	508
Transect 19	0.1	14°18'50,1"S 68°32'28,2"W	721	393
Transect 20	0.1	14°18'12"S 68°32'16,7"W	715	541
Permanent 1	1	14°19'30,2"S 68°33'57,1"W	660	734
Permanent 2	1	14°17'57"S 68°34'0,06"W	830	737
Permanent 3	1	14°20'00,5"S 68°34'20,5"W	1010	877

Table 2: Collections made per participants.

<b>Participants</b>	<b># Collections</b>
Alejandro Araujo	189
Leslie Cayola	114
Daniel Choque	1
Jorge Uzquiano	48
Angel Fernández	131
Consuelo Campos	144

### Notes from the expedition:

This expedition was divided in two working groups. The first group left for Azariamas May 17 and returned to La Paz June 13, 2005. The second group left on May 28 and returned June 20, 2005.

The access to Azariamas was easy, getting in and out this time was very easy compared to the trip to Yarimita. This time we trip took place in the middle of the dry period, the best and easiest time to travel the roads and trails in the area. The principal rivers Machariapo and Tuichi were low and easy to ford. The dry forests in this area are huge they go on for many kilometers in a broad valley and up on the undulating hills that surround the valley here (Photo 1 & 2).

It is our impression that the area is dryer than at Yarimita, we deduce that from the fact that that we see an increase in the Cacti taxa found here as for instance *Pereskia weberiana* (Photo 3). We found the infamous “Palo Santo” (literal translation: Holy Stick) in flowers and fruits. This tree, *Triplaris vestita* (Photo 4) is an endemic to the southern part of Peru and northern Bolivia. It got its name because of its association with very aggressive and stinging ants. No plant or animal, including humans, take up residence close to these trees so aggressive are the ants at attacking anything alive around the nest tree where they live in the hollow trunks.

We expect the area to contain numerous endemic species along with *Triplaris vestita* because of its isolated position. We hope that our collections already contain such elements; however, their identification will take a bit more time. We collected many trees which were at the end of their fruiting period during this trip.

The forest at Azariamas is well conserved and with an abundant fauna, some of the examples we saw were “chanchos de monte” (white lipped peccary), several species of monkeys, rodents (Photo 5), birds (particularly toucans), snakes, a innumerable variety of insects and spiders (among them “friend of the humans” the local name for the wasp that attack the tarantula on Photo 6), small and large lizards (Photo 7), and small venison, as well as its predator the jaguar.



Hilly terrain with dry forest at Azariamas. (L. Cayola).

We also made a few archeological finds. They consisted in stone axes and ceramics (Photo 8).

The Azarimas community was delightful to work with; we had their complete collaboration and interest. It was the first time that this kind of work had been carried out in the area. We were pleasantly surprised with an invitation to take part in two of their community meetings and celebrations. In one of these they celebrated the one year birthday of one of their children with the traditional first haircut. This ritual consists in that each participant cut a lock of hair and then offers a monetary contribution to the child's upbringing. At both occasions we made lasting friends with many members of the community (Photo 9 & 10).



3. *Pereskia weberiana*. (L. Cayola). 4. *Triplaris vestita*. (A. Araujo-M.) 5. Mouse opossum. (*Marmosa murina*). (J. Uzquiano). 6. The tarantula was killed and dragged away by the large wasp. (L. Cayola). 7. *Gonatodes humeralis*, tiny lizard. (J. Uzquiano). 8. Stone axes found at the campsite. 9 & 10. Fiesta in Azarimas. (L. Cayola).