

Is there really such a thing as Tropical Biology?

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BIO

Emilio M. Bruna is a Distinguished Teaching Scholar and Professor at the University of Florida, where he holds a joint appointment in the Department of Wildlife Ecology and Conservation & Center for Latin American Studies. He received his Bachelor's and Master's degree at the University of California, San Diego, followed by a doctorate in Population Biology from the University of California, Davis. After his NSF Minority Postdoctoral Fellowship at Brazil's Instituto Nacional de Pesquisas da Amazônia he joined the UF faculty in 2002, where his research focuses on (1) plant demography and plant-animal interactions in tropical ecosystems, and (2) The structure of scientific institutions and collaborative networks. From 2013-2020 Dr. Bruna served as Editor-in-Chief of the journal *Biotropica*. He is a Past-President of the Association for Tropical Biology & Conservation and recently completed his term as Secretary of the Ecological Society of America. In 2022 Dr. Bruna was elected a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

SUMMARY

Tropical Biology has historically been conceptualized and treated as a specialized subdiscipline of the Biological Sciences. I assessed the origins and validity of this assumption, present why it depends on the framework and evidence used to evaluate it, and discuss the implications of these conclusions for researchers studying tropical ecosystems. I suggest that the way forward as a discipline is not for Tropical Biologists to drop the geographic adjective that unites them, but to recenter The Tropics as the foundation of ecology and evolutionary biology.



Tuesday - September 9, 2025

12:45 - 1:45 pm



Grinter Hall 376 or

Zoom link

Tropilunch is a seminar run by graduate students from the Tropical Conservation and Development (TCD) Program. It provides a forum for a range of discussions and presentations related to TCD work and research. Special guests, visiting scholars, and practitioners also participate. It happens weekly around lunchtime.



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