

Alexander I. Gray

Jungle Adventures in Science and Nature; who are the scientists?

Lecture “Jungle Adventures in Science and Nature; who are the scientists?”, will illustrate some of research experiences in the Amazon Rainforest over the last 25yrs or so. This work, carried out mainly in Colombia and its neighbouring countries Brasil and Peru, has involved field-work with Indigenous Amazonian Communities such as Muinane, Ticuna, Uitoto and Yukuna groups (Sabedores & Sabedoras or knowledgeable men & women of these communities) studying their traditional methods for use, management, preservation & recuperation of the forest while utilising it for medicinal and food plants as well as other valuable ‘commodities’.

I would like to present some of my experiences working with these local people, their mythology and history (‘Science’), and also some of the workshops/conferences in Amazonia and laboratory research carried out by Colombian ‘sandwich’ PhD students to examine the ‘value’ of some commodities, such as incense, used by the indigenous tribes. This latter phytochemical & biological testing work, along with the local knowledge, also ties in with some environmental issues such as fertility of the soil/earth, ‘environmental controls’ and the production of rain! [Do you believe it?! We will see.]

Carol Clemens

Drug Discovery: from Rainforest to Microplate to Clinic?

The challenges of drug discovery from natural product sources will be discussed and illustrated including: sourcing material, extracting, screening, bioassay guided fractionation and identifying and elucidating the structures of active components. Some case studies will also be presented.