



Species

ISSUE 64

2023 Report of the IUCN Species Survival Commission and Secretariat



The IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC)

The IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) is a science-based network of thousands of volunteer experts from almost every country of the world, all working together toward achieving the vision of “a just world that values and conserves nature through positive action to both prevent the loss and aid recovery of the diversity of life on earth.”

Members of SSC belong to one or more of near 200 Specialist Groups, Red List Authorities, Action Partnerships, Task Forces, and Conservation Committees that make up the Network, each focusing on a taxonomic group (plants, fungi, mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fishes, and invertebrates), national species, or a disciplinary issue, such as sustainable use and livelihoods, translocation of species, wildlife health, climate change, and conservation planning.

Framed by the Species Conservation Cycle, SSC’s major role is to provide information to IUCN on biodiversity conservation, the inherent value of species, their role in ecosystem health and functioning, the provision of ecosystem services, and their support to human livelihoods. This information is fed into the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

2021-2025 Species Strategic Plan

The IUCN Species Strategic Plan encompasses the joint work of the IUCN Species Survival Commission and a number of partnerships to achieve more than 2,700 targets proposed by the Network during the 2021-2025 quadrennium.

To accomplish those targets, the Species Conservation Cycle was established, which is the conceptual framework for the Network activities. The Species Conservation Cycle’s main purpose is to guide efforts for valuing and conserving biodiversity through three essential components that are linked to each other:

ASSESS: Understand and inform the world about the status and trends of biodiversity.

PLAN: Develop collaborative, inclusive and science-based conservation strategies, plans and policies.

ACT: Convene and mobilise conservation actions to improve the status of biodiversity.



Their implementation requires two trans-versal components:

NETWORK: Enhance and support our immediate network and alliances to achieve our biodiversity targets.

COMMUNICATE: Drive strategic and targeted communications to enhance our conservation impact.

SSC Species Report

Annual progress in the implementation of the 2021-2025 Species Strategic Plan is documented in the SSC *Species Report*, which consists of a comprehensive description and analysis of the activities and results generated by the members of the SSC Network and Centers for Species Survival (CSS) each year. Each SSC and CSS group contributes to this document by providing a yearly summarised description of their achievements, which is presented in stand-alone reports.

Structure of the IUCN SSC and CSS Stand-alone Reports

Stand-alone reports summarize the activities conducted and results generated by each group member of the SSC and CSS. Following, is the structure of the stand-alone report and the contents under each session.

Title of the group

Photograph(s) of the Chair/Co-Chairs

Group information

Includes names of Chair/Co-Chairs, Vice-Chairs, Deputy Chairs, Red List Authority Coordinators, Program Officers, Species Survival Directors, and Species Survival Officers, their institutional affiliations, number of members and social networks currently active.

Logo of the group

Mission statement

Includes the mission of the group.

Projected impact for the 2021-2025 quadrennium

Includes the description of the impact on species conservation resulting from the implementation of the targets formulated by the group for the 2021-2025 quadrennium.

Targets for the 2021-2025 quadrennium

Includes the targets planned by the SSC or CSS group for the 2021-2025 quadrennium ordered alphabetically by component of the Species Conservation Cycle. Each target is labeled with a numerical code (e.g., T-001, T-012) that identifies it in the SSC DATA database and its status for the reported year is indicated (Not initiated, On track or Achieved).

Activities and results

Includes the targets for which activities were conducted and results were generated during the reported year, ordered alphabetically, first by component of the Species Conservation Cycle, and second by Activity Category. Description of activities and results includes the indicator that best describes progress, its associated quantitative or qualitative result, and the narrative description of the activity conducted or result obtained. Each activity or result reported is linked to the Key Species Result to which it is mainly associated (e.g., KSR#1, KSR#5).

Acknowledgements

Includes the acknowledgements to funding agencies, partners, and persons who contributed to the progress of the targets of the group.

Summary of achievements

Summarises information of the group's strategic plan for the quadrennium and progress achieved implementing targets for all the components of the Species Conservation Cycle during the reported year.

Animalia

Fungi

Plantae

National Species

Disciplinary

Action Partnership

Task Force

Red List Authority

Committee

Center for Species Survival

Example for the recommended citation:

Street, B, Canteiro, C, Birkhoff, J, Perry, L, Böhm, M, Ivande, S, Henriques, S, and Griese, K. 2024. 2023 Report of the Global CSS Indianapolis Zoo. In: IUCN SSC and Secretariat. *2023 Report of the IUCN Species Survival Commission and Secretariat*. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN. 8 pp.

2023 Report

Global CSS Indianapolis Zoo



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Facebook: [Global Center for Species Survival](#)
Instagram: [@protectspecies](#)
Linkedin: [Global Center for Species Survival](#)
Threads: [@protectspecies](#)
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Mission statement

The Global Center for Species Survival is built upon a partnership and a commitment to conservation. As human pressure continues to drive biodiversity loss, the work of conservationists from around the world becomes more vital in protecting and restoring nature. Only through collaboration can we protect species and the spaces they call home. That is why the Indianapolis Zoo partnered with the world's largest conservation organization – the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) – which connects thousands of dedicated species experts under the Species Survival Commission (SSC). The Global Center for Species Survival supports, connects, and communicates the work of more than 10,500 conservationists joined together in Specialist Groups, Red List Authorities and Task Forces of the IUCN SSC. It is the mission

of the Global Center to support the IUCN SSC in influencing, encouraging and assisting societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature

Projected impact 2021–2025

Increase conservation planning and action for species protection and recovery and develop capacity to support the work of the SSC Network.

Targets 2021–2025

ASSESS

T-016 Support SSC groups and Conservation Committees in IUCN assessment processes.
Status: On track

T-027 Contribute to improve current resources and guidelines on assessments for the SSC Network.
Status: Not initiated

PLAN

T-018 Work with SSC groups and conservation committees to identify priority needs for conservation planning.
Status: On track

T-019 Support SSC groups with the production of conservation plans.
Status: Not initiated

ACT

T-020 Influence grant support among partners and Centers to better support IUCN SSC priorities.
Status: On track

T-021 Support and improve SSC groups' ability to fundraise for conservation planning and action.
Status: Not initiated

T-022 Identify and overcome the challenges of moving conservation plans into action.
Status: Not initiated

T-023 Provide support and encouragement for SSC groups to write letters of intervention to governments and/or companies that

are responsible for an immediate environmental threat to species.

Status: On track

T-028 Support SSC groups on behaviour change in their conservation actions.

Status: On track

NETWORK

T-004 Support diversification of SSC membership based on: 1) geography, 2) gender, 3) age, 4) other disciplines, and 5) indigenous and traditional communities.

Status: On track

T-005 Support the SSC volunteer recognition program and broaden the number and scope of existing awards.

Status: On track

T-006 Provide administrative, hosting, and facilitation support for SSC groups and conservation committees.

Status: Achieved

T-007 Develop a One-Stop-Shop online system within the SSC Data to make information and resources more available to the SSC Network, including fundraising opportunities, events calendar, and communication forum.

Status: Achieved

T-008 Support the identification and creation of new SSC Groups.

Status: Achieved

T-009 Support the development of SSC groups funding proposals to instigate assess, plan, and act projects.

Status: Achieved

T-024 Organise thematic webinars on key issues and resources periodically throughout the year, consulting priority themes with the SSC groups and respective Conservation Committees where applicable.

Status: On track

T-025 Facilitate the identification and development of beneficial partnerships for SSC groups in consultation with the SSC Director of Strategic Partnerships.

Status: On track

T-026 Support to increase the number of SSC group members trained in IUCN assessment processes.

Status: On track

COMMUNICATE

T-010 Develop a shared communications approach across Species Survival Commission (SSC) and the wider International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

Status: On track

T-011 Disseminate communication pathways and guidance on targeted communication strategy development to SSC groups.

Status: On track

T-012 Support the improvement of social media presence of SSC groups.

Status: On track

T-013 Support SSC groups with the preparation of specific communications, e.g. on under- or misrepresented biodiversity, lesser-known species, specific conservation topics, and dissemination of techniques.

Status: On track

T-014 Provide website support for SSC groups and Conservation Committees, including the development, hosting, content development, ongoing management and operational aspects of websites.

Status: On track

Activities and results 2023

ASSESS

Red List

T-016 Support SSC groups and Conservation Committees in IUCN Red List assessment processes. (KSR 6)

Number of new global Red List assessments completed: 9

Result description: Cátia Canteiro supported the publication of six assessments of fungal species from Latin America, with another 14 fungi still in progress, as well as three succulent plants from India. Monni Böhm facilitated the assessment of 73 new cone snail species at Senckenberg's Cone

Snail assessment workshop in December –to be published in 2024. In collaboration with the IUCN SSC Freshwater Crustacean Specialist Group and the IUCN SSC Mollusc Specialist Group, we also are nearing the completion of 26 assessments of land crabs as well as four species and two subspecies assessments of *Nautilus*.

Number of global Red List reassessments completed: 92

Result description: Cátia Canteiro supported the reassessment of one polypore (*Fomitiporia nubicola*) from Brazil. Monni Böhm facilitated the reassessment of 91 cone snail species at Senckenberg's Cone Snail assessment workshop in December –to be published in 2024.

Research activities

T-016 Support SSC groups and Conservation Committees in IUCN Red List assessment processes. (KSR 6)

Number of scientific publications about species research that acknowledge SSC affiliation: 3

Result description: Global Center staff supported or contributed to three publications relevant to increasing species knowledge, assessment processes and analyses: (1) Cazalis, V., *et al.* (2023). 'Prioritizing the reassessment of data-deficient species on the IUCN Red List' *Conservation Biology* 37(6): e14139, (sRedList project output; Global Center for Species Survival affiliation); (2) Gumbs, R. *et al.* (2023). 'The EDGE2 protocol: Advancing the prioritisation of Evolutionarily Distinct and Globally Endangered species for practical conservation action' *PLoS Biology* 21(2): e3001991, (with IUCN SSC Phylogenetic Diversity Task Force); (3) Meiri, S., *et al.* (2023). 'Done but not dusted: Reflections on the first global reptile assessment and priorities for the second' *Biological Conservation* 278: 109879 (with IUCN SSC Skink Specialist Group and IUCN SSC Snake & Lizard Red List Authority).

Number of research projects completed or supported by SSC members per taxonomic group and region: 8

Result description: In 2023, Global Center staff continued supporting several SSC research (or other) projects that carried over from the previous year: 'Assessing EDGE Fungi: Boletales, Russulales, and Cantharellales plus 6 Monotypic Families' and 'Developing a tool for Rapid fungal assessments: case-study on macrofungi from North America' (Cátia Canteiro, fungi); 'IUCN Guidelines for Conservation Management of Terrestrial and Freshwater Invertebrates' (Sérgio Henriques and Monni Böhm, invertebrates); and 'sRedList - Accelerating IUCN Red List assessments for rapid and effective biodiversity monitoring' (Monni Böhm). In addition, Global Center staff supported the following new projects that were started in 2023, all involving SSC members: (1) 'Latin America Workshop: Promoting conservation of the Latin American Funga through specialists' capacitation and extinction risk assessment of threatened fungi' (Cátia Canteiro, fungi); (2) 'Understanding challenges and opportunities for NatureServe partners to include fungi in their work' (Cátia Canteiro with IUCN SSC Fungal Conservation Committee); (3) 'FUNACTION: Aquatic FUNgal biodiversity: developing knowledge and strategies to inform Conservation priorities and measures' (Monni Böhm and Cátia Canteiro, with members of the newly formed IUCN SSC Aquatic Fungi Specialist Group); (4) 'North American Freshwater Mussel SAFE' (Monni Böhm, IUCN SSC Mollusc SG); (5) 'Re:wild Lost species-Fagilde's trapdoor' (Sérgio Henriques, IUCN SSC Spider and Scorpion Specialist Group); (6) 'IUCN SSC EDGE of Spiders' (Sérgio Henriques, IUCN SSC Spider and Scorpion Specialist Group); (7) 'Protecting Indiana's wildlights – assessing fireflies extinction risk' (Sérgio Henriques, IUCN SSC Firefly Specialist Group); (8) 'Conservation and research of the priority species *Penstemon deamii*' (Cátia Canteiro, with the Indiana Plant Conservation Alliance).



Penstemon deamii grown from seed
at the Indianapolis Zoo
Photo: Kelly Griese

Graphic to promote a webinar series focused on Key Biodiversity Areas
Graphic created by Kelly Griese



PLAN

Planning

T-018 Work with SSC groups and Conservation Committees to identify priority needs for conservation planning. (KSR 8)

Compile a list of species/threats/regions for priority planning: 0

Result description: The Global Center for Species Survival's officers started to compile this information in 2022 and continued to work on it in 2023. Most taxonomic groups were completed in 2023, and the remaining information will be added by the end of the first quarter of 2024.

T-019 Support SSC groups with the production of conservation plans. (KSR 8)

Number of species conservation plans/strategies developed: 0

Result description: The Global Center team continues to make efforts to expand conservation planning by Specialist Groups. In conjunction with the Conservation Planning Specialist Group, the team is exploring opportunities for regionally focused, multi-taxa Assess to Plan workshops with the hopes of scheduling one in 2024 or 2025, dependent on scheduling and funding restrictions. Additionally, through the Indianapolis Zoo's Saving Species Challenge, the Global Center team was able to assist with the development of 59 action plans as part of the application process; many were supported by individual Specialist Groups.

ACT

Conservation actions

T-023 Provide support and encouragement for SSC groups to write letters of intervention to governments and/or companies responsible for an immediate environmental threat to species. (KSR 10)

Number of intervention letters addressing major drivers/emerging threats of species or population loss: 3

Result description: The Global Center for Species Survival supported the preparation of three intervention letters in collaboration

with SSC Specialist Groups.

T-028 Support SSC groups on behaviour change in their conservation actions.

(KSR 10)

Number of SSC groups supported: 5

Result description: Our Behaviour Change coordinator met with around 30 groups to discuss their behaviour change needs, including via support of Saving Species Challenge applications. Ultimately, five of these moved forward with more substantial and targeted support: IUCN SSC Vulture Specialist Group, IUCN SSC Anguillid Eel SG, IUCN SSC Cetacean SG, IUCN SSC African Elephant SG, and IUCN SSC Bear SG.

Technical advice

T-020 Influence grant support among partners and Centers to better support IUCN SSC priorities. (KSR 10)

Percentage of projects receiving an Indianapolis Zoo Grant aligned with the SSC priorities: 19%

Result description: In 2023, we increased this target by 19%, for a total of 74% of projects receiving an Indianapolis Zoo Conservation Grant aligned with the SSC priorities, or supporting SSC strategic goals.

NETWORK

Capacity building

T-024 Organise thematic webinars on key issues and resources periodically throughout the year, consulting priority themes with the SSC groups and respective Conservation Committees where applicable. (KSR 2)

Number of webinars organized: 2

Result description: In 2023, the Global Center supported a four-part webinar series on Key Biodiversity Areas and a Freshwater Conservation Committee-organised webinar on the Green Status of Species. We also ran three separate webinars for the Saving Species Challenge, throughout the Challenge's application process, with several participants from IUCN SSC Specialist Groups – these are not included

in the number reported though, as they were not specifically targeted at SSC groups.

T-025 Facilitate the identification and development of beneficial partnerships for SSC groups in consultation with the SSC Director of Strategic Partnerships. (KSR 1)

Number of zoos/aquaria/botanical gardens identified that could partner with specific specialist groups: 4

Result description: Beneficial partnerships facilitated for some three invertebrate Specialist Groups (IUCN SSC Spider and Scorpion SG, IUCN SSC Dung Beetle SG and the upcoming Stag SGs) and one Task Force (IUCN SSC Behavior Change TF). Conversations remain ongoing for the Hippo and Canid SGs.

T-026 Support to increase the number of SSC group members trained in IUCN assessment processes. (KSR 2)

Number of people trained in assessment tools: 20

Result description: Cátia Canteiro ran a one-day IUCN Red List Training workshop in 2023 with 20 participants, followed by a one-day red listing workshop to assess Latin American fungi, during the XI Latin American Mycology Congress in Panama. Compile a list of potential Red List assessors for each Specialist Group: 0

Result description: This work has not yet progressed due to difficulty accessing the best data for current or potential Red List assessors, by Specialist Group. We received questionnaire responses from IUCN SSC members via the SSC Chairs Office and the resulting data will be evaluated in 2024 in time for the IUCN SSC Leaders Meeting in Abu Dhabi.

Membership

T-004 Support diversification of SSC membership based on 1) geography, 2) gender, 3) age, 4) other disciplines, and 5) indigenous and traditional communities. (KSR 2)

Report with an analysis on the SSC membership diversity and advise on how to diversify it: Ongoing.



2023 IUCN SSC Steering Committee Meeting
at the Indianapolis Zoo
Photo: Kelly Griese

Result description: In 2023, little progress was made on the report due to staff shortages and pressures from other projects. This activity will now be carried out in the run-up to the IUCN SSC Leaders' meeting. The Global Center team directly supported the establishment of diverse new Specialist Groups by considering membership diversity throughout the proposal process and during scoping meetings (e.g. see Target 008 for new groups supported in 2023).

T-005 Support the SSC volunteer recognition program and broaden the number and scope of existing awards. (KSR 2)

Number of innovative ways identified to recognize volunteerism in the SSC: 0

Result description: We launched an initiative to summarise the Specialist Groups' main achievements – as published in their reports – and share them widely on social media to recognise their volunteerism. The first social media threads were shared online in 2023, and this task will be ongoing in 2024, as the specialist groups' reports get published and made available. When all reports are published in the annual SSC report, we expect to have highlighted all the Specialist Groups' work online.

T-006 Provide administrative, hosting, facilitation support for SSC groups and Conservation Committees. (KSR 3)

Number of meetings supported: 109

Result description: The Global Center team supported and facilitated no less than 109 meetings – mostly virtual – for SSC groups

and Conservation Committees across different cross-cutting and taxonomic remits. Percentage of specialist groups and conservation committees within the Global Center's remit that submitted their SSC Data reporting by the end of the first quarter: 20%

Result description: About 20% of specialist groups uploaded results by the end of the first quarter of 2023. However, more than 70% submission of SSC group reports was reached by the third quarter of 2023.

Number of in-person meetings hosted in Indianapolis: 2

Result description: The Global Center hosted the first in-person post-COVID-19 meeting of the SSC Steering Committee in April 2023 at the Indianapolis Zoo. The Global Center also hosted the first in-person meeting of all the Centers for Species Survival during the week after the SSC steering committee meeting.

T-007 Develop a One-Stop-Shop online system within the SSC DATA System to make information and resources more available to the SSC Network, including fundraising opportunities, events calendar and communication forum. (KSR 2)

Platform developed and communicated to members: Achieved

Result description: The One-Stop-Shop was launched during the SSC Steering Committee Meeting; it is now online and available for all members of the SSC

networks. The Global Center for Species Survival in partnership with the SSC Chair's Office team has been monitoring registrations and working closer with the developers to make this the most relevant and effective platform possible.

T-008 Support the identification and creation of new SSC Groups. (KSR 2)

Number of new SSC groups established: 7

Result description: The Global Center supported the creation of the IUCN SSC Aquatic Fungi Specialist Group, the IUCN SSC Seaweed Specialist Group, the IUCN SSC Brazil Fungal Specialist Group, the IUCN SSC Succulent Plant Illegal Trade Task Force, the IUCN SSC Marine Star Specialist Group, the IUCN SSC CEC Task Force on Behaviour Change, and the Fungal Use Group within the IUCN CEESP/SSC Sustainable Use and Livelihoods Specialist Group. A proposal is being finalised for the IUCN SSC Isopod Specialist Group to be approved in 2024. The Global Center also supported the early stages of proposals for multiple groups to be established in 2024, such as the IUCN SSC Tulip Specialist Group, the IUCN SSC Sponge Specialist Group and the IUCN SSC Marine Decapod Specialist Group. Several meetings were held towards the formation of the IUCN SSC Wild Parrot Specialist Group, the IUCN SSC Gekkota Specialist Group, the IUCN SSC Anolis Specialist Group, the IUCN SSC Termite Specialist Group, the IUCN SSC Water Bear Specialist Group, the IUCN SSC

Stag Beetle Specialist Group, the IUCN SSC Tiger Beetle Specialist Group, the IUCN SSC Spring Tail Specialist Group, the IUCN SSC Millipede Specialist Group, and the Illegal Wildlife Trade Online Task Force, and the official proposals are forthcoming.

Proposal development and funding

T-009 Support the development of SSC groups funding proposals to instigate assess, plan, act projects. (KSR 1)

Number of funding proposals supported: 53
 Result description: In 2023, the Global Center for Species Survival supported the development of 54 grant proposals in collaboration with Specialist Groups' members, of which 15 were successful in securing funding, 11 were unsuccessful, and the remaining are pending results.

**COMMUNICATE
 Communication**

T-010 Develop a shared communications approach across the Species Survival Commission (SSC) and wider International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). (KSR 13)

Approach developed through ongoing meetings and workshops: Ongoing.
 Result description: We have tried to maintain a twice-monthly meeting schedule, but due to scheduling conflicts, these meetings have been less regular than initially planned. In 2024, we will resume the twice-monthly meeting schedule. We have discontinued the maintenance of the shared communications calendar, as it was not being utilised by the network.

T-011 Disseminate communication pathways and guidance on targeted communication strategy development to SSC groups. (KSR 13)

Guidance documents developed and shared on One-Stop-Shop: Ongoing.
 Result description: We plan to conduct an assessment in 2024 to determine the communications needs of Specialist Groups. This assessment will inform the types of deliverables we create for addition to the One-Stop-Shop.

T-012 Support the improvement of social media presence of SSC groups. (KSR 12)

Number of SSC groups mentioned per year in the Global Center's Twitter/X account (30 groups mentioned per year): 72
 Result description: Through the Global Center social media accounts (X, Facebook, Instagram, Threads, and LinkedIn), we regularly highlight Specialist Groups and their species of focus with targeted messaging and links to experts. We collect monthly data on engagements and followers. In 2023, we mentioned 72 different Specialist Groups on X/Twitter, many of them more than once.

Social media content created for every group within the Global Center's remit that completes an Annual Report: Ongoing.
 Result description: We produced social media content based on reports from nine Specialist Groups. Due to delays in the production of the final reports, we were not able to initiate the creation of the social content until October. In 2024, we hope to see earlier reporting by Specialist Groups, allowing us to highlight more of these reports through Global Center social media channels.

T-013 Support SSC groups with the preparation of specific communications, e.g. on under- or misrepresented biodiversity, lesser-known species, specific conservation topics, and dissemination of techniques. (KSR 13)

Number of communications pieces supported: 7
 Result description: We published seven blog posts in 2023, highlighting orcas, succulents, spiders, amphibians, fungi, wetlands, and EDGE species. The fungi blog included a video abstract we produced for a paper by the IUCN SSC Fungal Conservation Committee, titled 'What Do the First 597 Global Fungal Red List Assessments Tell Us about the Threat Status of Fungi?'; the EDGE species blog discussed the new EDGE2 metric and the Phylogenetic Diversity Task Force; the Freshwater

Conservation Committee contributed to the wetlands blog post. The podcast was further delayed, but we hope to launch it in March 2024.

T-014 Provide website support for SSC groups and Conservation Committees, including the development, hosting, content development, ongoing management and operational aspects of websites. (KSR 12)

Number of Guidance documents developed and shared on One-Stop-Shop: Ongoing.
 Result description: We continue to provide one-on-one support to groups that seek our help in the development of their websites and other external communications. The Global Center is unable to provide website hosting and maintenance to Specialist Groups, but we are able to review current websites and offer suggestions/tips/best practices.

Summary of achievements

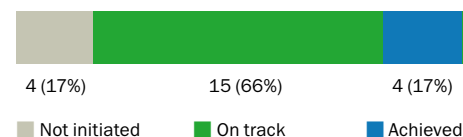
Total number of targets 2021–2025: 23

Geographic regions: 23 Global

Actions during 2023:

- Assess: 4 (KSR 5, 6)
- Plan: 2 (KSR 8)
- Act: 3 (KSR 10)
- Network: 12 (KSR 1, 2, 3)
- Communicate: 6 (KSR 12, 13)

Overall achievement 2021–2025:





Nothobranchius fuscotaeniatus
Photo: Csenge Nagy



Tetra Parnaiba
Photo: Karina Molina



Trioceros hoehnelii
Photo: Christopher V. Anderson



Sternberia lutea
Photo: Hayri Duman



Egretta rufescens
Photo: Ernesto Gómez



Lactifluus neotropicus
Photo: Aida Vasco



Mayfly nymph (*Ecdyonurus* sp.)
Photo: Astrid Schmidt-Kloiber and Wolfram Graf