

BIO 279 - Paläontologische Exkursionen – 3 Kredit-Punkte – Prof. M. Sánchez
Maximum number of student participants:9 / Start: 2.2.2011; return: 17.2.2011

*Palaeontology and evolution in terrestrial and marine environments
of northwestern Venezuela*



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This excursion involves activities in several field sites, aiming at developing an understanding of the evolution of marine, near-shore and terrestrial animal communities in the Caribbean region, in particular in the last 10 million years of the northern coast of Venezuela. We will work in fossiliferous exposures of several geological formations in the Paraguana Peninsula and in the Urumaco region, collecting and identifying diverse invertebrate and vertebrate groups. We will visit the local Zoo and fish market to take a look at the extant fauna of the region; the visit to the coastal areas will allow us a comparison among extinct and recent communities. Activities will involve talks, demonstrations and short practical projects such as dissection of fish, processing and identification of palaeontological samples, making of casts of vertebrate fossils, and study of geological sections. Language will be English, those with knowledge of Spanish will certainly have the chance to practice. We will work in close collaboration with Venezuelan and Argentinian colleagues. This course is aimed at Bachelor students with special interest in palaeontology and/or organismal biology and most likely aiming at conducting Master work in this area of Biology/Geology.

Prerequisites: course(s) in one or all of these disciplines: Zoologie / Evolution / Palaeontology.

Costs: CHF 1800 per person (to cover airfares and a few other costs), plus meals while in Venezuela (approx. 30 Francs / day). The course organiser will subsidize most of the transportation, accommodation, some meals and several logistical costs.

Registration: Anmeldung mit Namen, Matrikelnummer und Angabe in welchem Semester studiert wird, können bis 27.10.2010 at the PIMUZ, be Heike Götzmann heike.goetzmann@pim.uzh.ch gemacht werden.

An information meeting on 21. October at 17:00 will take place at the Paleontological Institute (KO2-E-72a/b, Karl Schmid-Strasse 4, Universität Zentrum). Payment will be required by 15.11.2010 at the latest. Own insurance arrangements and organisation of passport will be required.

Final report: A 10-pages report to be delivered within 4 weeks after end of the excursion will be required and will be graded. This will include a summary of the activities and a section on a small project to be conducted during the excursion.

For any questions, please feel free to contact Marcelo Sánchez at:
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