



Jo-Anne Sewlal

Jo-Anne Sewlal is a PhD student in arachnology from the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine in Trinidad. She is visiting Grenada to conduct a two-week survey of the spiders found on the island.

Sewlal is being hosted and assisted by the National Science and Technology Council. Assistance is also being provided by the Grenada Research Institute,

Researcher visits to study local spider

Ministry of Agriculture and the Forestry Department.

The islands that make up the Caribbean are of two types; oceanic and continental. Oceanic islands have formed due to volcanic activity and as a result all the fauna on them have either been brought in by humans or have found their way there via wind or water. Continental islands have broken away from a larger land mass. It is expected that Grenada to have fauna typical of an oceanic island. However, its geographic

location between the oceanic islands of the Lesser Antilles and the continental island of Trinidad implies it will have some continental elements.

Sewlal is collecting spiders from the main vegetation types on the island including those influenced by human activities. Species from around homes will also be included in the survey.

By comparing Grenada's size with an island whose area and spider fauna is known, it is estimated that Grenada should contain approximately 80 species.

Currently 16 species belonging to 8 families have been identified. Sewlal will take back specimens to Trinidad for further identification. Some of the data will also be included in her doctoral thesis.

The ecosystems on the island are still in a state of recovery from the devastating effects of Hurricanes Ivan and Emily and therefore the fauna contained in them will be recovering. This may be one of the reasons for the low species diversity on the island. Unfortunately a survey of the spider fauna was not done

before the hurricanes so it is not possible to say what species have been lost.

Specimens of the most

common species will be submitted to the Grenada National Museum for their collection. However, no species collected thus far are

fatal to humans or pose any health threat.

Churches call for cultural change in HIV/AIDS campaign

Everyone must be concerned about the HIV/AIDS infection that is now the subject of an active media campaign in Grenada. A personal health approach is being urged. In particular, two techniques are promoted: individual medical tests for the virus, and the use of condoms. As leaders of Christian churches in Grenada, we are as concerned as anyone about ending the human suffering that comes with this infection, but we doubt that reliance on such techniques will be enough. Personal effort is needed, but far-reaching social changes are more important, for HIV/AIDS spreads in a culture of promiscuity and poverty. Only sweeping life-style changes and socioeconomic improvements