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OBITUARY

ADELMAR F. COIMBRA-FILHO

REMEMBRANCES OF ADELMAR F. COIMBRA-FILHO

I first heard about Ademar F. Coimbra-Filho back in early 1971, when I was visiting Barbara Harrison, the first-ever Chair of the IUCN/SSC Primate Specialist Group, at her office in Cornell University. Throughout my undergraduate years at Dartmouth college, I developed a major interest in primates and spent most of my senior year at Dartmouth working on a thorough revision of what was known of New World monkeys at that time, as well as a three-month field study of howler monkeys in Panama. This led me to think that I should focus my graduate work on this large and diverse primate fauna during my graduate studies at Harvard University, which were scheduled to begin in September, 1971. To move this forward, I planned to visit nine South American countries in the summer of 1971, after graduation from Dartmouth, to look into potential primate research sites. I had never been to South America before, so I wanted to benefit from Barbara's knowledge and find out about possible primatological contacts in that continent. I was not disappointed.

Barbara gave me two papers published in Portuguese in 1970 in the *Revista Brasileira de Biologia* by a guy named Ademar F. Coimbra-Filho. She knew nothing about him and I couldn't read Portuguese at that time, but I used my Spanish to struggle through a translation of the papers. The results were fascinating. Coimbra had rediscovered two lion tamarin species, the black or golden-rumped lion tamarin (*Leontopithecus chrysopygus*) and the golden-headed lion-tamarin (*Leontopithecus chrysomelas*) that hadn't been seen since the first decade of the 20th century. I was hooked on lion tamarins for the rest of my life.

Shortly thereafter, I wrote Coimbra a letter and received a very rapid response, a copy of which is attached here – the first contact we ever had. Based on this first letter and his recommendations on Amazonian species, I decided to focus heavily on Brazil as part of my continent-wide exploration in the summer of 1971 after graduating from Dartmouth College.

After several weeks in the Brazilian Amazon, and a very long series of bus rides from Belém to Brasília to Rio, I arrived in Rio in July, 1971. I got in touch with Coimbra and visited him at his address on Rua Artur Araripe 60, where his family still lives to the present day. I was a 21-year-old kid, who showed up at his place in shorts and sandals – a nobody from another country arriving at the doorstep of this scientist who was already famous in his own country.

To my delight, Coimbra and his wife Jacqueline, and his son Sérgio and daughter Simone, welcomed me with open arms, fed me some hearty meals, and took me in. That was the start of a friendship that lasted for 45 years.

Among other things, Coimbra took me to see one of the species he had rediscovered, a golden-headed lion tamarin being held at the Rio de Janeiro Zoo. At that time, this was truly a mystery animal, and this individual was, in 1971, the only member of its species in captivity. Coimbra let me into the cage to take photos, but the lion tamarin would have nothing of it and promptly attacked me, leading to a rapid retreat.

Coimbra also put me in touch with another of Brazil's great conservation pioneers, Dr. Paulo Nogueira Neto of São Paulo. Paulo took me on a trip to the interior of São Paulo to the Morro do Diabo State Park, where Coimbra had rediscovered the black lion tamarin the previous year. On that trip, I saw the widespread and very recent destruction of the once lush forests of São Paulo's interior, leaving images in my mind that are still with me today and reinforcing my commitment to conservation. Indeed, even back then, Morro do Diabo was already an island in a vast sea of deforested land.

Based on this early interaction, Coimbra and I worked together on several publications in English highlighting the importance of the lion tamarins. Two papers had appeared in the U.S. the previous year about the declining situation of the golden lion tamarin, one by Clyde Hill, Curator of Mammals at the San Diego Zoo, in the zoo journal *Zooneos*, and the other by John Perry, Assistant Director of the National Zoo in Washington, D.C., in the journal *Oryx*. Both attracted a lot of attention in the conservation community in the U.S. at that time, but nothing was available in English on the ecology of these animals in Brazil. The papers I was able to publish together with Coimbra added a great deal to international awareness of the species.

This growing interest in the lion tamarin in 1970 and 1971 led to the convening of a conference entitled "Saving the Lion Marmoset" in February, 1972, at the National Zoo in Washington, D.C. This was a joint effort of the National Zoo, the Bronx Zoo in New York (now the Wildlife Conservation Society), and the Wild Animal Propagation Trust in Wheeling, West Virginia. Among those invited were Bill Conway from the Bronx Zoo, John Perry, John Eisenberg and Devra Kleiman from the National Zoo, and Coimbra-Filho and his close colleague Alceo Magnanini, then Director of the tiny National Parks section of the Brazilian Forestry Development Institute (IBDF). I also came along to provide my perspectives from my trip to Brazil eight months earlier and to serve as a translator for Coimbra and Magnanini, having picked up Portuguese during my trip.

Small though it was, this was a landmark and historic conference that really set the stage for all future lion tamarin

conservation efforts. At this event, Devra Kleiman took responsibility for the captive population outside Brazil and turned it into a huge success, Coimbra took on the task of creating captive populations in Brazil, and Coimbra and Magnanini highlighted the need to create protected areas for the golden lion tamarin and the golden-headed lion tamarin. The sites chosen were the Poço das Antas region in the county of Silva Jardim in the state of Rio de Janeiro for the golden lion tamarin and the Una region in southern Bahia for the golden-headed lion tamarin, where Coimbra had rediscovered the species two years earlier. Biological Reserves were eventually created in both regions: the Poço das Antas Biological Reserve in 1974, and Una Biological Reserve in 1980. The black lion tamarin, fortunately, already had a protected area in the Morro do Diabo State Reserve in São Paulo, where Coimbra had rediscovered that species. The international community represented at the conference took on responsibility for helping to fund-raise for the creation of these reserves and to facilitate captive breeding both within Brazil and internationally.

During this trip, in the winter of 1972, I had the great pleasure of seeing both Coimbra and Magnanini experience their first snowfall. I will never forget watching the two of them make snowballs and roll around in the snow like little kids, savoring something that just didn't exist in their part of the world.

In 1973, I was again with Coimbra and Magnanini in Washington, D.C. at the start of what was then called the Washington Convention. Both of them were on the Brazilian delegation that helped to create what is now one of the most important wildlife treaties in the world, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). Coimbra was there for the start of that as well.

After finishing my first two years of graduate courses at Harvard, I returned to Brazil in 1973 and 1974 for a period of 18 months. This included a four-month survey of Amazonian primates, notably the uakaris and the white-nosed saki, and much further collaboration with Coimbra. By then Coimbra had succeeded in convincing the government of the state of Rio de Janeiro to let him create a Biological Bank of Lion Tamarins at the edge of Tijuca National Park in Rio, a captive facility for all three species, including the first-ever black lion tamarins to be kept in captivity. I based myself at the Banco Biológico, as it was called, and Coimbra and I collaborated on a number of new papers and also wrote Red Data sheets on both Amazonian and Atlantic forest species for the IUCN Red Data Book, a much simpler and more straightforward process back then than it is today.

Over the course of the next few years, although I decided to do my doctoral research in Suriname rather than Brazil, I saw Coimbra again a number of times. We were together twice in 1975, first at the follow-up to the 1972 meeting at the National Zoo, another meeting entitled "The Biology

and Conservation of the Callitrichidae,” again hosted by the zoo at its facility in Front Royal, Virginia. Once again, both Coimbra and Magnanini were there representing their country and providing expertise on both the lion tamarins and other callitrichid species. Later that year, we met again in Rio, this time at a meeting on the international trade in primates for biomedical research, this one convened by the National Institutes of Health of the U.S.A.

In 1977, Coimbra and I again joined forces, this time in Germany, where we presented papers together at the conference entitled “The Marmoset Workshop,” held at the German Primate Center in Goettingen, Germany.

Coimbra always felt constrained by the relatively limited space available in Tijuca and the instability of the site, and planned the creation of a much larger facility outside the city limits of Rio. He started a six-year process that eventually bore fruit on November 9, 1979, when he opened the Rio de Janeiro Primate Center in Magé, about 60 km from Rio and right at the foot of a beautiful forest area in the mountainous region of the state. I had the great honor of being there when this historic facility was opened, and it remains a critically important colony for endangered Brazilian primates to the present day.

In early 1977, I was asked by the Species Survival Commission (SSC) of IUCN to Chair the Primate Specialist Group. I immediately began work on reorganizing this group, and invited Coimbra to become one of the charter members. Later that year, key members of the group worked with me to write the first-ever “Global Strategy for Primate Conservation,” the precursor of today’s action plans. Once again, Coimbra was a key collaborator, giving us many of the ideas and project concepts for that document, which later led to the creation of the World Wildlife Fund-US Primate Program and its Primate Action Fund.

Work on this document made it clear that Brazil was the richest country on Earth for primates and that both Amazonia and the Atlantic Forest were the highest priority ecosystems. Dr. Tom Lovejoy, then at World Wildlife Fund – US, asked me to prepare a proposal for extensive primate survey work in Brazil, with a strong focus on Amazonia. However, after discussion with Coimbra, we decided that the Atlantic forest was a higher priority in conservation terms given that it had already lost more than 90% of its original natural vegetation and held the majority of Brazil’s endangered primates. As a result, he and I, and later Prof. Célio Valle of the Federal University of Minas Gerais in Belo Horizonte, submitted a proposal to World Wildlife Fund – US for a multi-year program entitled “Conservation of Eastern Brazilian Primates.” It was funded and led to a decade of survey work in the protected areas of the Atlantic Forest, providing us with many new insights and helping to train many of Brazil’s current leaders in primatology and in biodiversity conservation in general.

This program made it possible for us to carry out many expeditions to parks and reserves in the Atlantic forest to see which primates occurred in them. The first was to the Poço das Antas Biological Reserve, where I saw my first wild golden lion tamarin and got the first-ever photograph of this species in nature. The second was to the now famous Fazenda Montes Claros (currently Feliciano Miguel Abdala Private Natural Heritage Reserve) in Caratinga, where Coimbra and I met up with Célio Valle to look at this important stronghold for the northern murreti. This led to a film that we produced with Harvard undergraduate Andy Young in 1981 and to the start of a 36-year continuous project on this species by Dr. Karen Strier, whose work there began in 1982. And another highlight was our trip to southern Bahia, where we met up with Dr. Anthony Rylands, who was carrying out the first-ever study of the golden-headed lion tamarin.

In 1983, Devra Kleiman of the National Zoo, following a decade of work on the global captive population of the lion tamarins, collaborated with Coimbra to start a comprehensive conservation program for the species, that included a long-term field study of the golden lion tamarin in the Poço das Antas reserve run by James Dietz, an environmental education program run by his wife Lou Ann Dietz, and a major reintroduction program, run by Benjamin Beck, also of the National Zoo, in close collaboration with Coimbra’s Rio de Janeiro Primate Center, that brought captive animals back to Brazil to be reintroduced into their natural habitats.

The return of the lion tamarins to Brazil clearly showed the Brazilian authorities that global collaboration with the international conservation community was essential—and that it worked—and this led to the creation of the International Committee for the Golden Lion Tamarin. This committee became a model for Brazil, leading to the establishment of a number of other committees that still function to the present day, as well as serving as a model for international collaboration in conservation.

None of these many positive developments would have been possible without Ademar Coimbra-Filho’s immense expertise, his leadership and his willingness to collaborate to achieve shared global conservation objectives.

Among the many publications on which Coimbra and I collaborated were the two volumes entitled *Ecology and Behavior of Neotropical Primates*. The idea for these two books started in the mid-1970s when we discussed with the Brazilian National Academy of Sciences the need to have a publication summarizing all we knew of the behavior and ecology of these animals. Then President of the Academy, Professor Aristides Pacheco-Leão, recognized this need and agreed to sponsor the book. As it turned out, the project took us much longer than expected, but the first volume did finally come out in 1981, followed by a second volume

in 1988. These books remain an important reference to the present day.

Another was our collaborative effort on tree-gouging and gum-eating among the marmosets of the Atlantic Forest, something that Coimbra had discovered during his expeditions to northeastern Brazil. This led to a paper on this topic that was published in the journal *Nature* in 1976. Over the many years since these in-depth collaborations of the 1970s and 1980s, Coimbra and I kept in close contact and I would visit him as often as possible. Throughout it all, even though I saw him less in recent years, I always valued him as one of my closest and most loyal friends, someone I could always count on. He and Jacqueline would always welcome me into their home, and later as my family grew, my children came to know and appreciate him as well. He was always a critical thinker and we would sometimes have long arguments about conservation issues. But, although I didn't always agree at first, I often found him to be correct on so many different topics. As I look back now, I see that many of the things that he taught me helped me through the course of my life, and more and more I have come to value his wisdom.

I last saw Adelmar in November, 2015, when we launched a beautiful book recounting the story of Coimbra and the Rio de Janeiro Primate Center (CPRJ). This book, produced by the state's Instituto Estadual do Meio Ambiente, was made possible through the efforts of Denise Rambaldi, another of the younger generation of leaders in Brazilian primatology and founder of the Golden Lion Tamarin Association (AMLD), along with a friend and skillful editor, Tania Machado. I was so pleased that they finished this book in time for Coimbra himself to see it. The event, held at the Palácio Guanabara and attended by the State Governor Luiz Fernando Pezão, brought together numerous colleagues and friends including many of the still surviving pioneers of Brazilian conservation, including Alceo Magnanini and Dionísio Pessamílio, director of the Poço das Antas Biological Reserve in the 1980s, and Coimbra's long-time friend, veterinarian, colleague, and successor as director of the CPRJ, Alcides Pissinatti, along with Coimbra's entire family. We had a wonderful time together, and I think that Coimbra was able to see how much he was loved and how much his contribution meant to Brazil and to the world.

I last talked to Coimbra by phone on his 92nd birthday. He was in good spirits and very happy that I had called. The lion tamarins, the primates of Brazil, and the world have lost a great ecohero, and I have lost a wonderful life-long friend. But I know that he will always be with us in spirit, and that he and all that he accomplished will never be forgotten.

Russell A. Mittermeier, Executive Vice-Chair, Conservation International; and Chair, IUCN/SSC Primate Specialist Group



Meeting at Fundação Getúlio Vargas in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 1982.



Coimbra and baby *Callithrix jacchus*



Adelmar F. Coimbra Filho on the left, Russell Mittermeier in the center and, Admiral Ibsen de Gusmão Câmara on the right.

Adelmar Coimbra-Filho was an accomplished, largely self-taught, all round naturalist and pioneer of field primatology and the conservation movement in Brazil. He first saw a captive, pet golden lion tamarin, in 1940, and in 1942, enchanted, he saw them for the first time in the wild, and so began his lifelong passion for the species and for the primates and fauna of Brazil. Intrepid, he studied golden lion tamarins through the 1940s and 1950s, gathering information on the then entirely unknown lion tamarins and marmosets. Early on and through the 1970s, he was the single reference, the source of all our information, on the behavior and habits of the Brazilian callitrichids. In 1968, Coimbra and his colleague Alceo Magnanini published an analysis, species by species, of the status of Brazil's threatened mammals, and detailed the causes of their decline and the conservation measures needed. This formed the basis for Brazil's first threatened species' list for mammals, and was eventually published in 1972.

His research and his dedication to saving the lion tamarins and conserving the remnants of Atlantic Forest following centuries of depredation and destruction gave rise to his numerous, diverse, visionary and grandiose achievements: the first to breed lion tamarins in captivity; seeding and guiding the Golden Lion Tamarin Conservation Program, a pioneer and exemplary program for endangered species; rediscovering the Black lion tamarin; creating Brazil's first federal Biological Reserve, Poço das Antas for the golden lion tamarin and the Una Biological Reserve for the golden-headed lion tamarin, now the core of an extensive and invaluable network of protected areas conserving the precious remaining forests of southern Bahia; the creation of the world-acclaimed Centro de Primatologia do Rio de Janeiro; the species' reintroduction program for the Tijuca National Park, notably for the Channel-billed Toucan (*Ramphastos virtellinus*); his innumerable publications and contributions to our understanding of the flora and fauna of the Atlantic Forest; and, permeating all this, his lifelong, involvement, obstinacy, and relentless determination in promoting and advancing the conservation of Brazil's biodiversity, its genetic patrimony, its fauna, flora and ecosystems, along with his colleagues and friends, Alcides Pissinatti, Alceo Magnanini, Wanderbilt Duarte de Barros, Maria Tereza Jorge Pádua, Paulo Nogueira-Neto, Célio Valle, Russell Mittermeier and, most especially, Admiral Ibsen de Gusmão Câmara.

Coimbra was the only, and unnervingly revered, Brazilian primatologist when I arrived in Brazil in 1976, knowing less than little, to work in the Instituto Nacional de Pesquisas da Amazônia in Manaus. The 1988 Congress of the International Primatological Society (IPS) held in Brasília, was organized by Milton Thiago de Mello. It was the first to be held in South America, and the international primatological community was surprised and so impressed with the wealth, depth, and diversity of primate research and conservation initiatives in the country. Coimbra co-authored no less than eight papers presented at that congress and was

the instigator and inspiration for numerous others. Coimbra was given a special homage at the 1992 IPS Congress in Strasbourg. The Society's Lifetime Achievement Award was created only in 2004, but if it had existed in 1992, Coimbra would undoubtedly have been the recipient.

One of the great privileges of my life is to have known him, to have learnt from him, to have been inspired by him, and worked with him on numerous endeavors, projects, and publications. He was above all an extraordinarily good and faithful friend. Helping Devra Kleiman to edit her book *Lion Tamarins: Biology and Conservation* (2002), we wrote: "We dedicate this book to Adelmar F. Coimbra-Filho, a truly remarkable man, who has always challenged us to do our best and to keep questioning, who has never swayed from his beliefs, and who has inspired so many to seek careers in primatology and conservation biology."

Anthony B. Rylands, Deputy Chair IUCN SSC Primate Specialist Group, Senior Research Scientist, Conservation International, Arlington VA, USA.

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Machado, T. 2015, CPRJ Centro de Primatologia do Rio de Janeiro / Rio de Janeiro Primatology Center. Centro de Primatologia do Rio de Janeiro, Instituto Estadual do Ambiente, Rio de Janeiro

Professor Adelmar Faria Coimbra-Filho foi sem dúvida um dos maiores naturalistas brasileiros no século XX. Tive a honra de fazer parte de uma geração de primatólogos que existe graças a esse fantástico pesquisador. Nasceu na cidade de Fortaleza no ano de 1924, e morreu no Rio de Janeiro em 2016. Teve, portanto, uma vida longa e muito profícua.

Com curso de técnico agrícola pela Universidade de Viçosa, seguiu o bacharelado em História Natural (hoje Biologia) e mestrado em Zoologia pela Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro. Coimbra-Filho foi casado com Jacqueline Nevier Coimbra, com quem teve dois filhos: Simone e Sergio. Ainda muito jovem assumiu a função de primeiro administrador do Parque Florestal da Gávea (hoje, Parque da Cidade) no Rio de Janeiro, onde ficou de 1947 a 1957. Saiu da chefia do Parque por defender com galhardia o patrimônio público que estava ameaçado de pilhagem por políticos inescrupulosos. Por retaliação a esse ato de probidade administrativa

acabou sendo transferido para o Jardim Zoológico do Rio de Janeiro, então sob a direção do grande naturalista Henrique Lahmeyer de Mello Barreto. Coimbra, em uma de nossas conversas sobre essa fase de sua vida, me contou como Dr. Mello Barreto nessa ocasião lhe dava grande liberdade para fazer o que achasse importante para o Zoológico. Foi assim que Coimbra-Filho começou a caminhar pelas aleias do Zoo e se interessar profissionalmente pelos micos-leões-dourados que faziam parte do cativeiro, mas que já conheceria na natureza de sua juventude, quando caçava no interior do Estado do Rio de Janeiro. Foi nessa fase de sua vida que ele decidiu estudar primatas, o que certamente mudou seu rumo como pesquisador e, consequentemente, como ser humano. Mudou também a vida de muita gente tocada pelo seu conhecimento e suas descobertas.

Segue-se uma longa e profícua carreira de pesquisador e gestor no serviço público do Rio de Janeiro, sempre com ênfase em primatas e conservação da natureza. Os micos-leões se tornam seu tema principal de pesquisa. Realiza diversos trabalhos de campo com esses primatas e publica os primeiros trabalhos sobre a autoecologia e conservação do gênero *Leontopithecus*. Entre esses estudos do início de sua carreira estão alguns clássicos da literatura primatológica, como a situação do mico-leão no Brasil, os micos-leões escuros e a redescoberta de *Leontideus chrysopygus* (atualmente *Leontopithecus chrysopygus*).

Graças a esses trabalhos e outros da mesma época, Coimbra-Filho chamou a atenção de alguns primatólogos internacionais, entre os quais a de um jovem norte-americano recém-graduado e em busca de tema para seu doutorado. Foi assim que em julho de 1971 conheceu o Dr. Russell Mittermeier, que se tornou seu grande amigo de toda a vida e coautor em inúmeras publicações. Logo em seguida, em 1972, Coimbra participa de uma conferência histórica para a primatologia: Salvando os Micos-Leões. A partir daí, galga os passos da esfera internacional, publicando uma quantidade de trabalhos intelectuais e práticos de grande relevância para a primatologia no Brasil e no mundo.

Coimbra-Filho fez parte da primeira geração dos pesquisadores brasileiros envolvidos com a conservação da biodiversidade nos tempos modernos. Entre seus colegas e amigos na época estão Paulo Nogueira Neto, Maria Tereza Jorge Padua, Almirante Ibsen de Gusmão Câmara, José Candido de Melo Carvalho, Célio Valle e Ângelo Machado, entre muitos outros. Aliás, foi numa reunião de alguns desses pesquisadores que tive a honra de conhecer Coimbra-Filho mais de perto (já tendo o assistido falar em congressos e outras reuniões afins, me inspirando grande admiração). Foi na casa de Arnaldo Ferreira Leal em Laranjeiras que entabulamos as primeiras conversas que culminaram com nossa aproximação profissional, me abrindo as portas para fazer parte da excelente equipe de pesquisadores que à época trabalhava sob sua batuta. Foi assim que me aproximei de Alcides Pissinatti e Roberto da Rocha e Silva e que me tornei amigo de seus amigos como Russ Mittermeier,

Devra Kleiman, Anthony Rylands, Jeremy Mallinson e outros, importantes até hoje em minha vida. Foi assim também que travei contato com diversos jovens brasileiros que, como eu, sonhavam em proteger a fauna brasileira. Coimbra me influenciou a mudar minha vida radicalmente, pois acabei largando a vida de administrador de empresas para me dedicar profissionalmente à conservação dos micos-leões-pretos e à biodiversidade como um todo.

Coimbra, nessa época e nos anos que se seguiram, esteve totalmente envolvido na consolidação de sua maior obra: o Centro de Primatologia do Rio de Janeiro (CPRJ). Esse Centro foi fruto de sua grande visão e conhecimento, e de uma série de centros e institutos que criou ou dirigiu todos dedicados à conservação dos primatas do Brasil. Sob sua batuta o CPRJ se tornou uma referência internacional em conservação de primatas. Foi sempre bem gerenciado e após sua aposentadoria em 1994, passou às mãos de Pissinatti e outros associados dedicados também à proteção dos primatas do Brasil.

Coimbra-Filho foi mentor e professor de uma geração de primatólogos nacionais e internacionais. Sua cultura geral era invejável, assim como sua capacidade de formular ideias e hipóteses, o que deixava aqueles que com ele conviviam boquiabertos. Quantas e quantas vezes eu disse a mim mesmo, “agora o Coimbra errou em sua predição de algo”, para depois ter que reconhecer que ele estava correto, mesmo que anos depois.

Membro fundador das Sociedades Brasileiras de Botânica, de Zoologia e de Primatologia, pertencia também a diversas outros grupos científicos e conservacionistas. Recebeu inúmeros prêmios e honrarias no Brasil e no exterior, pelo empenho com que se dedicava à pesquisa e à salvaguarda do patrimônio natural de nosso país. Com carreira acadêmica sólida, publicou mais de 200 trabalhos científicos. A importância de suas conquistas foi reconhecida por colegas, que o homenagearam dando seu nome a espécies de macaco (*Callicebus coimbrai*), de percevejo (*Taedia coimbrai*), de bromélia (*Neoregelia coimbraii*) e de um fóssil de macaco (*Cartelles coimbrafilhoi*).

Coimbra-Filho foi, acima de tudo, pessoa íntegra de bons princípios com sólido conhecimento interdisciplinar e coragem invulgar. Homem de sonhos grandes que perseguiu com vitalidade a qualidade em tudo o que fez na vida. Nunca desistiu daquilo que almejava. Um pesquisador que traz orgulho ao Brasil e ao mundo e que deixa saudades no mundo da primatologia.

Claudio Valladares Padua, Reitor Escola Superior de Conservação Ambiental e Sustentabilidade, and Vice-President Instituto de Pesquisas Ecológicas

Adelmar Faria Coimbra Filho, para nós uma notável perda como pai, amigo e homem de ciência. Desde a sua juventude esteve diretamente em contato com a natureza.

Algumas dentre as muitas ações em favor da conservação, como a solta de aves no Parque Nacional da Tijuca, RJ, o esforço para a criação de Reservas Biológicas de Poço D'Antas, RJ e UNA na Bahia, a organização do Projeto Mico Leão Dourado, o Centro de Primatologia do Rio de Janeiro, RJ, etc, foram um legado inestimável para o meio científico e ambiental no Brasil.

Apesar disso, espera-se que em futuro próximo haja melhor entendimento sobre a real importância e significado que suas realizações representam.

Uma pessoa cujo saber foi negligenciado pelo Estado, infelizmente.

Alcides Pissinatti, Centro de Primatologia do Rio de Janeiro Instituto Estadual do Ambiente

O COIMBRA PODE ESTAR CERTO!

Poderia, ao homenagear o Coimbra, falar sobre suas realizações, sua contribuição para a primatologia e para a conservação da biodiversidade no Brasil, notadamente o programa de conservação do mico-leão-dourado, que se tornou referência para conservação de outras espécies no mundo inteiro e que envolveu a criação de uma das mais importantes unidades de conservação do país, a Reserva Biológica de Poço das Antas. Contudo, gostaria de homenagear o Coimbra tratando de uma das suas mais fortes características: o pioneirismo.

Pioneiro é aquele que abre novos caminhos, que desbrava, que descobre, que traz algo novo e, principalmente, que se antecipa. Escolho falar do seu pioneirismo porque o Coimbra expressou opiniões e defendeu teses que ainda não tivemos a capacidade de digerir-las adequadamente e que por isto consideramos muitas delas heterodoxas, se não hereges. Entre as tantas opiniões do Coimbra, sobretudo para a conservação da biodiversidade no Brasil, o seu entendimento sobre a caça, por exemplo, vai de encontro ao que se pensa e se pratica hoje em termos de conservação. Verdadeira heresia. Mas será?

Importante esclarecer que o Coimbra jamais defendeu a caça em benefício de quem a pratica. Ao contrário, externava a sua perplexidade diante da estúpida eliminação das espécies pela caça indiscriminada. Chamava a atenção tanto para as espécies de interesse cinegético (venatório, como gostava de expressar em seu português correto), como para o absurdo do abate de espécies predadoras, perseguidas por competirem pela caça, especialmente quando rara. O lobo-guará (*Chrysocyon brachyurus*) é um exemplo desta estupidez.

Tinha visão clara de que a fauna tropical embora rica em espécies é normalmente pobre em indivíduos e que, por

isto, o impacto da caça sobre as comunidades bióticas é altamente significativo, ainda mais quando agravante de outros efeitos fortemente deletérios, como a redução do habitat ou a sua perda de qualidade. Nesta linha, recriminava veemente as práticas agrícolas de controle de pragas, que de forma indistinta combatia ou afetava indiretamente espécies animais que naturalmente poderiam exercer esse controle.

Fundamentado em premissas objetivas defendia uma governança inteligente e eficaz sobre a caça, apontando para uma política cinegética criteriosa como forma de enfrentar e equilibrar a pressão. Falava no estabelecimento de espaços destinados a este fim, a partir de áreas restauradas e do repovoamento de espécies cinegéticas. Ideias que não encontram qualquer abrigo na doutrina vigente que serve de base para o nosso sistema de conservação, tanto no campo técnico quanto no jurídico.

O que haveria de mais próximo a estas ideias seria a Reserva de Fauna prevista no Artigo 19 da Lei 9.985, de 18 de julho de 2000 (SNUC), que até hoje, diga-se de passagem, é carente de um representante no Sistema Nacional de Unidades de Conservação. Mesmo a Reserva de Fauna está a anos-luz do que apontava o Coimbra, pois ainda que destinada a estudos para o manejo econômico sustentável dos recursos faunísticos, proíbe enfaticamente o exercício da caça a qualquer pretexto. Assim é a nossa doutrina de conservação. Mas será que depois de experimentarmos tantos caminhos em defesa das espécies da fauna no Brasil, não acabaremos por trilhar os caminhos que o Coimbra assinalava? Será que se tivermos a coragem de experimentarmos algumas de suas ideias heréticas não encontraremos ali uma solução para questões que ainda não conseguimos resolver?

Sinceramente, não sei. Mas rendo a minha mais sincera homenagem ao Coimbra ao alimentar a desconfiança de que ele, ao final de contas, pode estar certo.

Marcelo Marcelino de Oliveira, Diretor de Pesquisa, Avaliação e Monitoramento da Biodiversidade, Instituto, Chico Mendes de Conservação da Biodiversidade

Com gratidão ao querido e respeitado Prof. Ademar Faria Coimbra-Filho.

Nos deixou em junho de 2016, aos 92 anos, o Professor Ademar Faria Coimbra-Filho. Caçador, criador e amante de galos de briga, de cachorros de caça e de eucaliptos. Pode soar estranho começar assim o obituário deste que foi um dos maiores conservacionistas brasileiros. Sim, estamos falando do mesmo Prof. Coimbra. Cearense, criado em Pernambuco e radicado no Rio de Janeiro há meio século, era um apaixonado pela biodiversidade em todas as suas formas. Biólogo e primatólogo, teve participação decisiva na criação da primeira Reserva Biológica brasileira, Poço

das Antas em Silva Jardim, RJ. E essa foi apenas a primeira Unidade de Conservação de uma série de outras criadas com a sua valiosa contribuição.

De personalidade forte, decisão firme e caráter inquestionável, esse biólogo com perfil de naturalista e que acabou se transformando em zoólogo, tinha a sensibilidade e a curiosidade necessárias para se encantar com a flora e a fauna brasileiras e do mundo todo. Conhecedor dos biomas brasileiros, especialmente a Mata Atlântica, das paisagens e da ecologia das plantas e dos animais e das interações entre eles, ele descreveu processos complexos e identificou aspectos críticos para a conservação *in situ* e *ex situ* de inúmeras espécies de primatas ameaçados, o mais ilustre deles, o mico-leão-dourado (*Leontopithecus rosalia*).

Coimbra tinha uma exemplar combinação de conhecimentos teóricos e conhecimentos adquiridos pela observação, aos quais dava preferência. Ele identificou novas espécies de vários grupos de plantas e animais, e propôs teorias próprias sobre biogeografia, especialmente a continuidade entre a flora da Amazônia e da Mata Atlântica. Dizia que jovens pesquisadores se descuidavam das observações históricas de naturalistas, e por isso não entendiam, porque nunca tinham observado, que muitas espécies arbóreas, especialmente de madeira de lei, ocorriam tanto no leste amazônico como na Mata Atlântica.

Ao longo de toda uma vida dedicada aos estudos, ao manejo e à conservação da biodiversidade, Prof. Coimbra fez carreira em duas importantes instituições brasileiras de proteção ambiental, os antigos IBDF e a FEEMA, em suas versões contemporâneas, o Instituto Chico Mendes de Conservação da Biodiversidade – ICMBio e o Instituto Estadual do Ambiente – INEA. Sempre foi um profissional exigente, rigoroso e intolerante com a corrupção em quaisquer de suas formas, o clássico caso do vaso chinês de propriedade pública que quase foi subtraído pela esposa de uma autoridade pública, e que lhe custou o cargo, demonstrava isso. Era um crítico contumaz da mediocridade especialmente a vernacular, e tinha a liberdade e o respeito conquistados ao ponto de poder dizer o que quisesse. E assim o fazia sem delongas e com uma lucidez espantosa. Em suas aulas, palestras, discursos ou mesmo intervenções ele sempre deixava perguntas, questionamentos e ideias para futuros debates.

Com muita coragem, perspicácia e pioneirismo, ele contribuiu para o avanço da ciência primatológica e para a formação de centenas de jovens primatólogos brasileiros e estrangeiros. É possível que não exista um primatólogo brasileiro da atualidade que não tenha se inspirado em algum trabalho ou ideia dele. Todos, de uma forma ou de outra, foram influenciados e fazem referência ao pensamento e à vasta obra coimbriana. A síntese de seu legado, ao lado dos mais de duzentos artigos e livros publicados, é o Centro de Primatologia do Rio de Janeiro (ele energeticamente corrigia quem dissesse “Centro de Primatas”). Idealizado por

Coimbra e criado pela FEEMA na década de 70, o CPRJ/INEA é totalmente dedicado à pesquisa, ao resgate e à conservação de primatas neotropicais ameaçados de extinção. É uma referência global na primatologia cuja contribuição foi e tem sido decisiva para salvar diversas espécies, dentre elas o mico-leão-dourado que foi resgatado do limiar da extinção e transformado em símbolo da conservação da Mata Atlântica reconhecido internacionalmente.

Pessoalmente nos sentimos privilegiados pela oportunidade do convívio e do aprendizado. Muito obrigado Professor Coimbra.

Denise M. Rambaldi
Carlos R. Ruiz Miranda

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

BOOKS

An Introduction to Primate Conservation, edited by Wich Serge A, Marshall Andrew J. 2016. Oxford University Press. 302 pp. ISBN: 978-0198703396. This book provides a comprehensive and state-of-the-art synthesis of research principles and applied management practices for primate conservation. Potential solutions in the form of management practice are examined in detail. *Contents:* 1) An introduction to primate conservation – Wich SA, Marshall AJ.; 2) Why conserve primates? – Marshall AJ., Wich SA; 3) IUCN Red List of Threatened Primate Species – Cotton A, Clark F, Boubli JP, Schwitzer C; 4) Species concepts and conservation – Groves C; 5) Primate conservation genetics at the dawn of conservation genomics – Salgado M, Sechi P, Chikhi L, Goossens B; 6) Primate abundance and distribution: background concepts and methods – Campbell G, Head J, Junker J, Nekaris KAI; 7) Habitat change: loss fragmentation and degradation – Irwin M; 8) Present day international primate trade in historical context – Njiman V, Healy A; 9) Hunting and primate conservation – Fa JE, Tagg N; 10) Infectious disease and primate conservation – Nunn C, Gillespie TR; 11) Primates and climate change: a review of current knowledge – Korstjens AH, Hillyer A; 12) Are protected areas conserving primate habitat in Indonesia? – Gaveau DLA, Wich SA, Marshall AJ; 13) The role of multifunctional landscapes in primate conservation – Meijaard E; 14) People – primate interactions: implications for primate conservation – Humle T, Hill C; 15) The role of translocation in primate conservation – Beck BB; 16) Payment for ecosystem services: the role of REDD + in primate conservation – Garcia-Ulloa J, Koh LP; 17) The role of evidence-based conservation in improving primate conservation – Tranquilli S; 18) Some future direction for primate conservation – Marshall AJ, Wich SA.