

Puerto Rican scientist nominated for Prince of Asturias Award ^[1]

Submitted on 23 May 2006 - 2:31pm

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Cited from endi.com ^[2] Dr. Juan A. Rivero - professor, biologist, herpetologist and discoverer of 100 species of amphibians and reptiles - was nominated to the Prince of Asturias Award for Scientific and Technical Investigation for his extensive and fruitful scientific career. Dr. Rivero has contributed enormously "to the advance of Biology world-wide - especially in the taxonomy and ecology of the herpetological fauna of the Caribbean, Center and South America. His contribution is so that 13 species that have been baptized with his name. One of these is the coquí *Eleutherodactylus juanriveroi*." "The Prince of Asturias Award, instituted in 1981, is granted annually in the city of Oviedo, Spain to recognize scientific, technical, cultural, social and humanitarian work of people or groups, primarily of nations of the Latin American Community." "Rivero comments with humility that he is sure he won't be the award, that his possibilities are of one in ten million." Nevertheless he is very satisfied with the nomination, made by the director of the University of Puerto Rico-Mayagüez, Jorge Iván Vélez Arocho. This 83 year-old herpetologist has been a professor and investigator for six decades, in which he has written many books and articles and has discovered "100 species of amphibians, several coquíes among them. Dr Juan Rivero conducted the televising program *Ciencia al Día* for 14 years; in addition, he was the dean of the School of Arts and Sciences of the University of Puerto Rico-Mayagüez, founder of the Zoological Garden of Puerto Rico that bears his name; he offered the Skillful Lesson of the University of Puerto Rico and obtained the Distinguished Professor rank, the highest academic honors granted by the University of Puerto Rico." A native of Santurce, he obtained his masters and doctoral degrees at Harvard University. "Most of his works relates with the origin, distribution and evolution of the Andean fauna, amphibians in particular. Between his scientific contributions, stands out a publication on the *Stefania* species, which he described and named in honor of Luis Stefani, former vice-director of the University of Puerto Rico-Mayagüez, who helped Rivero fund his investigations." Perhaps he thinks that he will not receive the Prince of Asturias award, however he already has the maximum distinction: 13 species carry his name. " 'Right now there is a coquí called the *Eleutherodactylus juanriveroi* that would be the 13th species to which other scientists have given my name. It is a great distinction. Those names are perpetuated for life...

they will remain there and nobody can erase that', he commented, flattered. To Juan Rivero nothing seems more interesting and attractive than being able to teach and write. This gentleman personifies the hard and honest work, dedication and passion for science that drives our work in CienciaPR.

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