CENTER for
ADVANCED
STUDY

Food for Thought

11:00am–11:45am

Ramón Soto-Crespo

CAS Associate 2024–25, English

Can the Bejuco Speak? The Origin of Puerto Rico's Ecological Literature

In this talk, Professor Soto-Crespo discusses Enrique Laguerre's literary works *The Blaze* (1935) and Montoya's *Plantation* (1941), as key roots of ecological thought in Puerto Rico. Laguerre's ecological viewpoint offers a way to understand the connection between humans (sugarcane workers) and non-human entities (soil, weeds, rivers) within a landscape of harsh exploitation. His writing implies a sense of communion with the bejuco, a herbaceous, weed-like vine that Professor Soto-Crespo takes to represent the non-human.

Noon–12:45pm

Alison Bell

CAS Associate 2024–25, Evolution, Ecology, & Behavior

The Evolution of Family Life in a Small Fish

There is tremendous diversity in family life among animals, but little is known about how differences in family life arise over the course of evolution. In this talk Professor Bell will present insights that her lab is starting to get into the proximate basis of evolutionary divergence in family life in three-spine stickleback fish. By studying the recent evolutionary loss of paternal care, we are learning about coordinated changes at multiple levels of biological organization and in mothers, fathers and offspring.

For more information please consult cas.illinois.edu.

To request special accommodations, please contact cas@cas.illinois.edu

Thursday, April 16, 2026

Center for Advanced Study
Levis Faculty Center—Room 208
919 W. Illinois, Urbana

A series of public events featuring research and creative projects by recent CAS Associates and Fellows.

We are delighted to showcase the work of some of our most productive and creative faculty in this informal series of intellectually and spiritually invigorating presentations. You are invited to drop in when you can to learn about the exciting projects undertaken by our faculty.