

Monday, February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020

International Association for Plant Taxonomy  
Grant Program

It's a great pleasure to recommend Biologist Santiago Costas for the IAPT Grant Program. I know him since he was an undergraduate student. Currently he is carrying out his doctorate at the Evolutionary Ecology and Floral Biology lab, where I am associate researcher.

Before obtaining his degree in biology, Santiago participated in many research projects and developed his undergraduate thesis on the diversity of high elevation lichens in the Andean region. This research was part of a long-term international project to study the effects of climate change on mountain ecosystems (Global Observation Research Initiative in Alpine Environments). He also has worked as field assistant in projects related to pollination ecology and plant diversification in the Southern Andes, acquiring field and laboratory experience.

In 2019, Santiago was awarded with a scholarship from CONICET, the Argentinean Council for Science and Technology, to do his Ph. D. Currently, he is ending the first year of the Biological Sciences Postgraduate Program, at the National University of Córdoba. During this year, he has attended courses in systematics, molecular evolution, macroevolution and science communication. He is developing an interesting and original research project about the evolution of dispersion in Asteraceae, with the aim of mapping dispersion syndromes in this extremely diversified plant group and, particularly, to examine the relationship between fruit phenotype and wind dispersion ability within a phylogenetic framework. I am confident that his work will provide novel insights in fruit dispersion evolution within Asteraceae, and will help to understand why fruits from different species strongly differ in their flight abilities.

Finally, I wish to stress Santiago's broad interest in nature, in outreach activities and science communication, aimed at the general public. He has demonstrated an outstanding will to carry out his research projects, while his friendly personality, open mind and positive attitude has allowed him to engage in collaborative projects. Concluding, I am pleased to strongly recommend his application.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Dr. Santiago Benitez-Vieyra  
Scientific Researcher

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