

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Giovanne Ambrosio Ferreira^{1, 2,3*}, Eduardo Nakano-Oliveira¹ and Gelson Genaro^{1,2}

¹Instituto de Pesquisas Cananéia - IPeC. Cananéia, SP, Brazil.

²Programa de Pós-Graduação em Biologia e Comportamento Animal/UFJF, Juiz de Fora, MG, Brazil.

³Programa de Pós-Graduação em Ecologia/UFJF, Juiz de Fora, MG, Brazil.

*Corresponding author: ferreira.g.a@hotmail.com

Carvalho, W.D., Rosalino, L.M., Dalponte, J.C., Santos, B., Adania, C.H., Esbérard, C.E.L., 2015, Can footprints of small and medium sized felids be distinguished in the field? Evidences from Brazil's Atlantic Forest. *Tropical Conservation Science* 8, 760-777.

de Carvalho et al. [1] demonstrate the difficulty in identifying or differentiating feline footprints, mainly between species with similar body measurements [1]. However, the authors imply, citing our study published in 2014 [2], that our analysis relied solely on footprints for the identification of felids: "Many investigations have reported occurrence and distribution range extensions for felids in the Brazilian Atlantic Tropical Forest, based on footprint identification [...33-39...]" [1] (n.b., our study was referenced as number 36 in this paper). The authors also state, "...none of the above-mentioned studies have used other complementary approaches to confirm their results..." [1].

We would like to emphasize that footprints were not used to identify felines in our study, as this was not the aim of our investigation. Footprints, in addition to myriad other data, were used as evidence to help identify feces collected as outlined: "...the presence of footprints and scarifications and other indications that would help to characterize the excrements were also recorded and identified based on comparisons made using identification guides...linked to other characteristics of the samples that also served to identify them, such as the behavior of burying feces and presence of scarification, the characteristic odor of the feces of domestic cats and the proximity to anthropic areas" [2].

Furthermore, contrary to what was stated in this paper, we also used other methods to identify the fecal samples (the focus of our study): "Microscope slides were prepared of the hairs...to confirm the species to which the fecal sample belonged...we attributed the fecal samples to their origin via the microstructure of 'guard hairs' triage from fecal samples...to distinguish samples from wild felines" [2].

We share the opinion of the authors regarding the difficulty in using this procedure for species identification, and agree that identification should not be made based solely on this methodology. Thus, we are writing to express our concern regarding the aforementioned misinterpretations of our manuscript and hope to resolve this misunderstanding. We consider the information in this study [1] to be extremely important, both to the scientific community and to the development of precise techniques for the identification of these species in natural areas.

[1] de Carvalho, W. D., Rosalino, L. M., Dalponte, J. C., Santos, B., Harumi Adania, C. and Lustosa Esbérard, C. E. 2015. Can footprints of small and medium sized felids be distinguished in the field? Evidences from Brazil's Atlantic Forest. *Tropical Conservation Science* 8:760-777.

[2] Ferreira, G. A., Nakano-Oliveira, E. and Genaro, G. 2014. Domestic cat predation on neotropical species in an insular Atlantic Forest remnant in southeastern Brazil. *Wildlife Biology* 20:167-175.

CORRIGENDUM

Carvalho, W.D., Rosalino, L.M., Dalponte, J.C., Santos, B., Adania, C.H., Esbérard, C.E.L

Carvalho, W.D., Rosalino, L.M., Dalponte, J.C., Santos, B., Adania, C.H., Esbérard, C.E.L, 2015, Can footprints of small and medium sized felids be distinguished in the field? Evidences from Brazil's Atlantic Forest. *Tropical Conservation Science* 8, 760-777.

First of all we would like to thank the authors of the "Letter to the Editor" (Giovane Ambrosio Ferreira, Eduardo Nakano-Oliveira and Gelson Genaro) for their thorough analysis of our paper and for their comments. Throughout our paper we cited their study ([36] Ferreira, G.A., Nakano-Oliveira, E. and Genaro, G. 2014. Domestic cat predation on neotropical species in an insular Atlantic Forest remnant in southeastern Brazil. *Wildlife Biology* 20:167-175.) twice. One in the Introduction session, as an example of studies that relied on field guides for footprint identification since they have mentioned that: "..., the presence of footprints and scarifications and other indications that would help to characterize the excrements were also recorded and identified based on comparisons made using identification guides for species of wild felines of Brazil (Oliveira and Cassaro 2005)". The second was in the discussion section where we again cite it as an example of studies that used "footprint identification from different field identification guides", which can be derived from the sentence we mentioned above that is included in their study.

Having clarified this, and after thoroughly analyzing the entire paper again, we have to admit that one of the sentence included in the discussion may led readers to interpret what was mentioned inaccurately. Thus, in the discussion section, after giving some example of studies that used foot prints metrics available in field guides as criteria for felids identification, it should be written "However, some of the studies [33-34, 55-56] have not used other complementary approaches to confirm their results..." instead of what was stated (i.e. "However, none of the above-mentioned studies have used other complementary approaches to confirm their results...").

We apologize to Ferreira and colleagues for a less accurate reference to their study, but we assure to them, to the editor and to the journal that this was a situation exceptional and not repeatable. Moreover, we can guarantee that the robustness of the data collected and presented, it analytical procedure and data interpretation are above question.

Sincerely yours

William Douglas de Carvalho^{1,2,3}, Luís Miguel Rosalino³, Júlio Cesar Dalponte⁴, Bárbara Santos¹, Cristina Harumi Adania¹ and Carlos Eduardo Lustosa Esbérard²

¹Centro Brasileiro para Conservação dos Felinos Neotropicais, Associação Mata Ciliar, Jundiaí, São Paulo, Brasil.

²Laboratório de Diversidade de Morcegos, Instituto de Biologia, UFRuralRJ, Seropédica, Rio de Janeiro, Brasil.

³Centre for Ecology, Evolution and Environmental Changes (Ce3C), Faculdade de Ciências, Universidade de Lisboa, Lisboa, Portugal

⁴Instituto para a Conservação dos Carnívoros Neotropicais (PRÓ-CARNÍVOROS), Atibaia, São Paulo, Brasil.