

Caterpillars feeding on *Ficus* trees in Chimbu mountains  
(Papua New Guinea)

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Study of caterpillars feeding  
on four species of fig trees  
in Chimbu mountains:

- *Ficus wassa*
- *Ficus dammaropsis*
- *Ficus copiosa*
- *Ficus ioditricha*



## WE STUDIED:

- Species composition of caterpillars feeding on fig trees
- Differences between caterpillars feeding on fig trees in Chimbu mountains and in the lowlands in Madang
- Number of fig tree species used as food by each caterpillar



## METHODS:

The study is based at our laboratory in Mu Village



## METHODS:

### 1. Collecting caterpillars from the leaves of fig trees



## METHODS:

### 2. Photographing caterpillars



## METHODS:

### 3. Rearing caterpillars in the laboratory



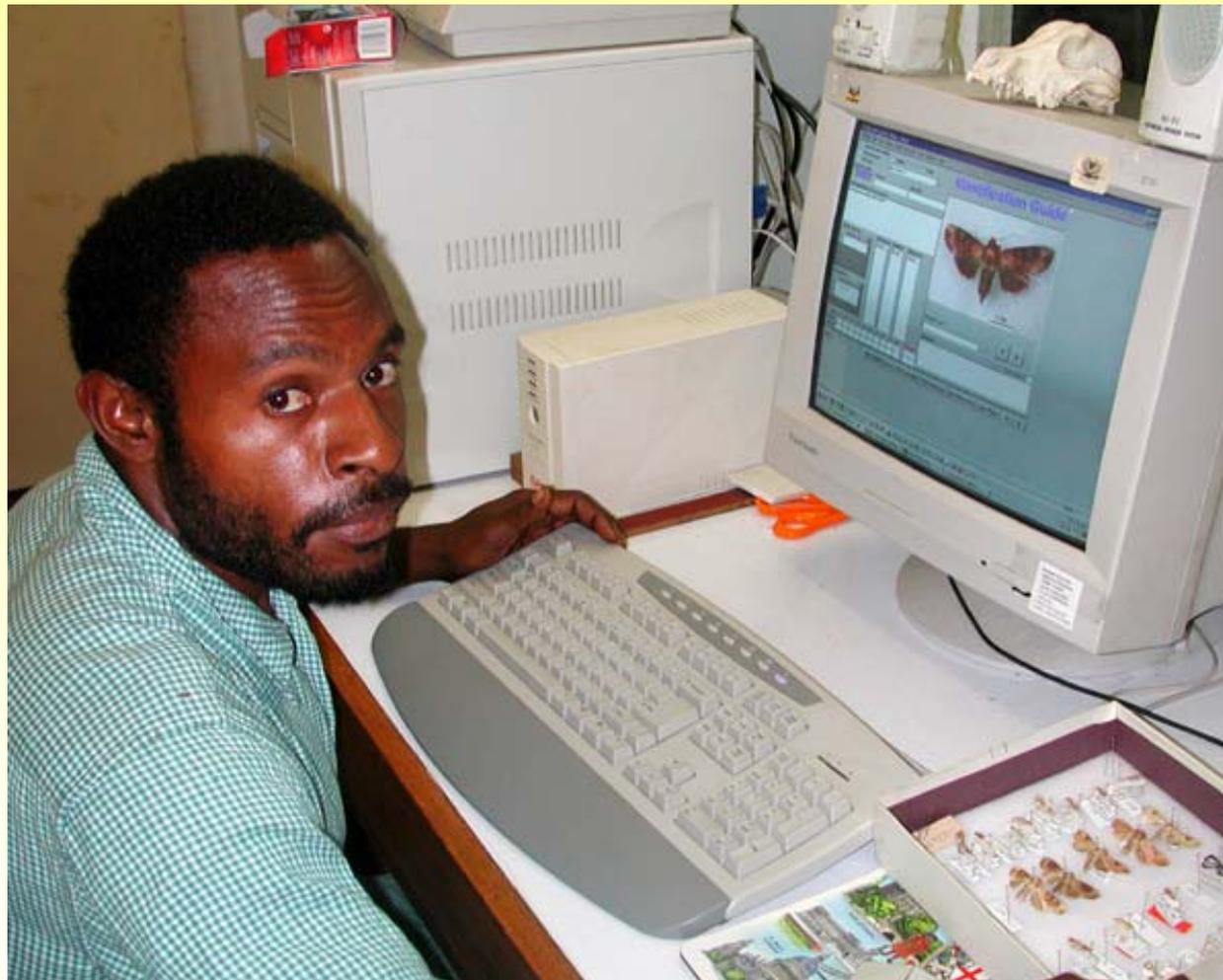
## METHODS:

### 4. Mounting reared moths and butterflies



## METHODS:

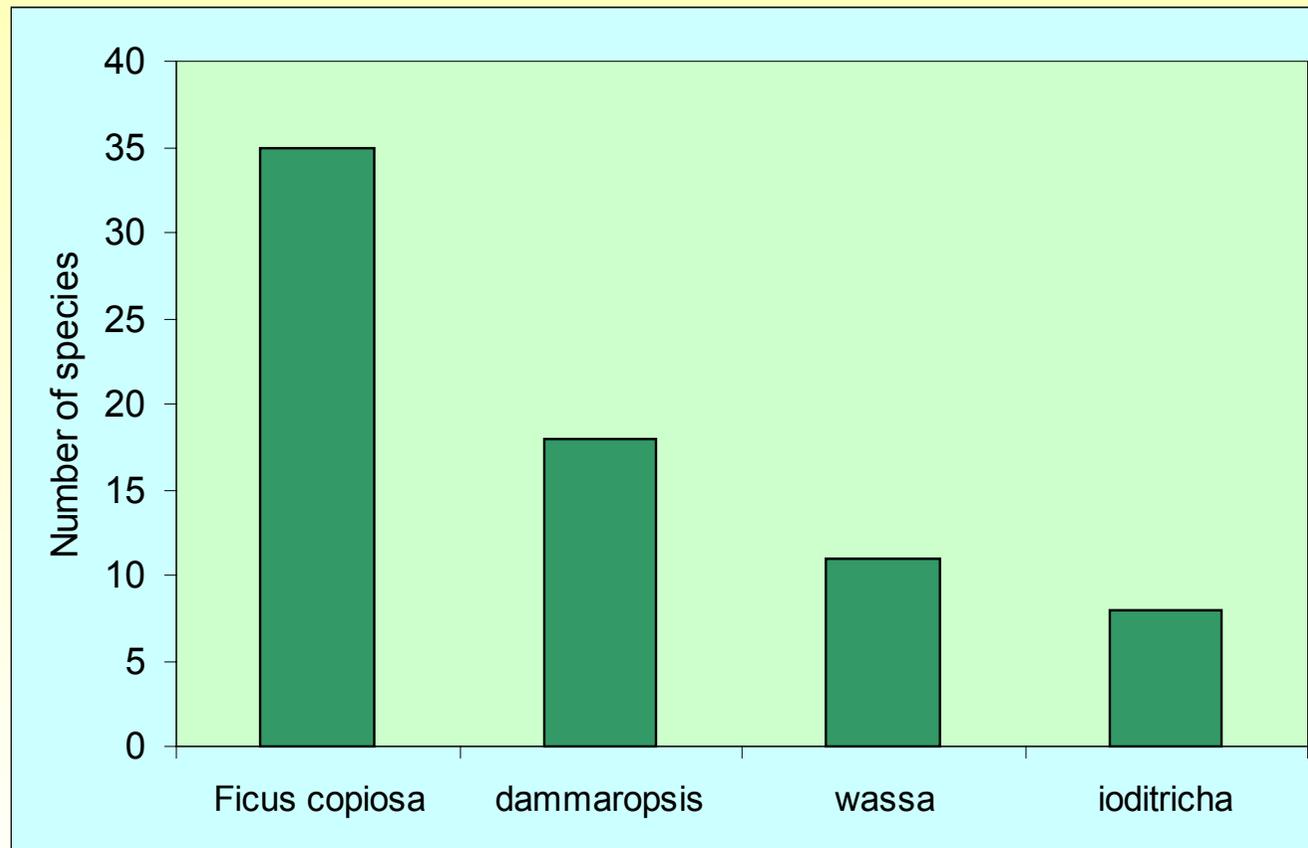
### 5. Databasing information in a computer database



## RESULTS:

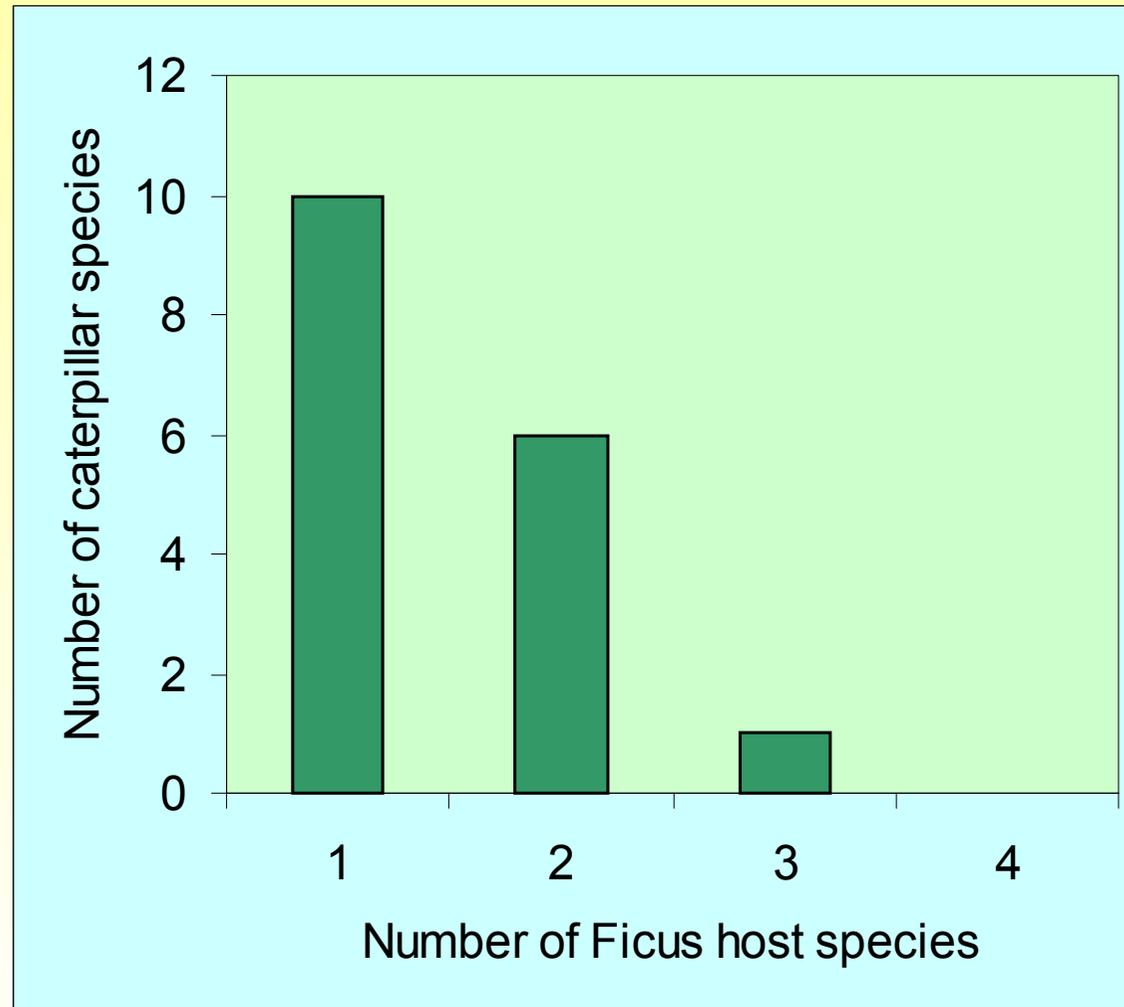
During 14 months of study in 2001-2002, we collected 2,400 caterpillars from 56 species.

*Ficus copiosa* had the highest number of caterpillar species while *Ficus ioditricha* the lowest number of species.



## RESULTS:

Most caterpillars were feeding on only 1-2 *Ficus* species



## RESULTS:

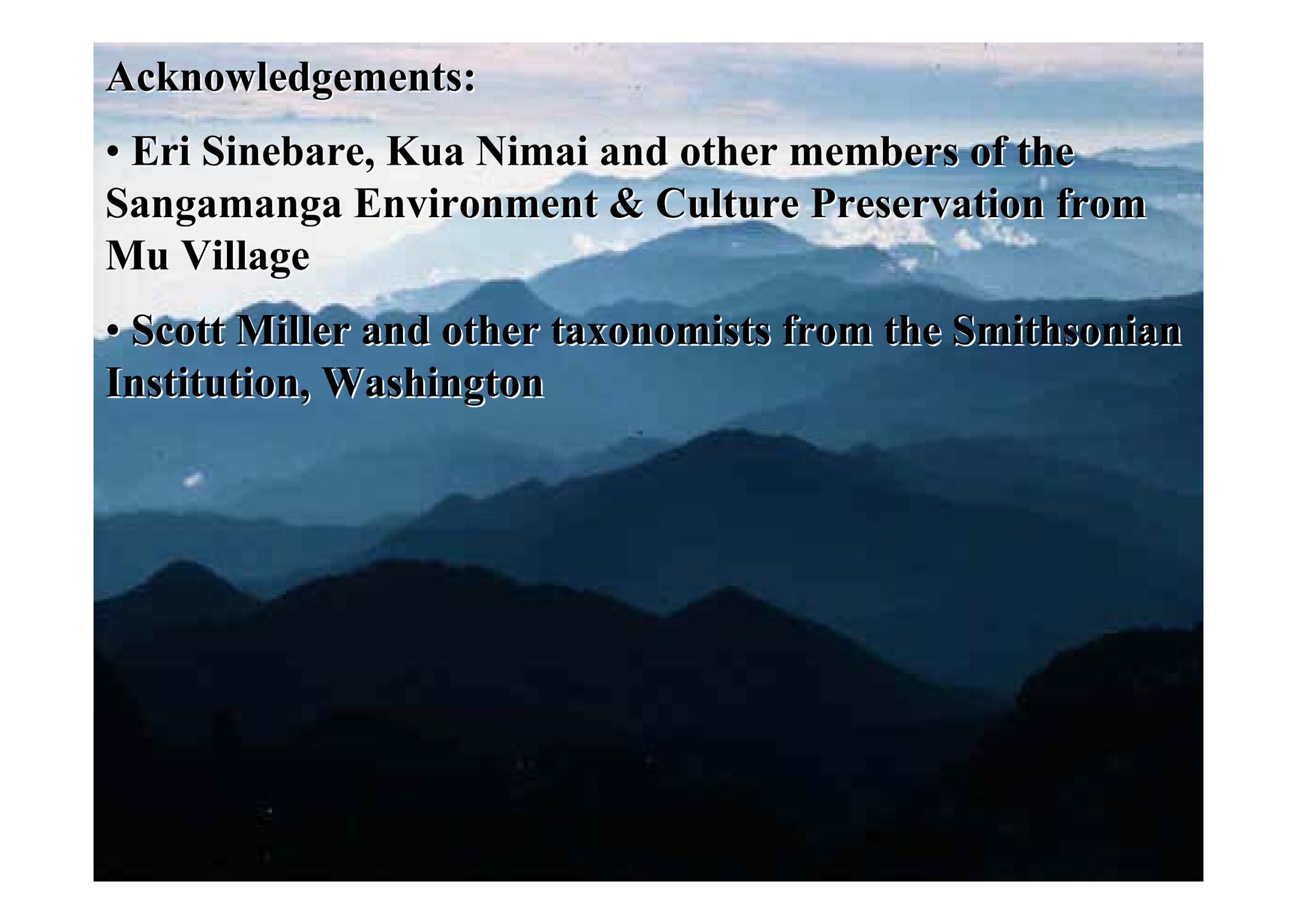
- Almost all moth species are special to Simbu mountains.
- Only 3 from the 56 Chimbu species live also in Madang lowlands



*Asota versicolor*: one of the species living both in montane Chimbu and lowland Madang forests

# Examples of moths feeding on *Ficus* trees in Chimbu





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