Coastal Forests and Fog in the California Channel Islands

A Geography Colloquium presentation by

Professor Christopher Still

3:30 – 4:45, Thursday, October 20; 1930 Buchanan

Abstract
The California coast and offshore islands harbor a large number of relict and endemic plant and animal species, including many conifers. A central objective of my group’s research has been to understand how the low-level stratus clouds and fog that are common to these coastal regions influence ecosystem carbon and water cycling, plant stress and mortality, and plant geography. This research is centered on a Bishop pine (Pinus muricata) forest on Santa Cruz Island in Channel Islands National Park off the Santa Barbara coast. For this research, my group and I combine research approaches from plant and ecosystem ecology, biogeography, isotope biogeochemistry, remote sensing, and dendrochronology. In this talk, I will discuss our findings from this project, and also highlight future research directions.

Christopher Still
My research program focuses on interactions between terrestrial ecosystems and the atmosphere, carbon cycle science, and the biological impacts of climate change. I am studying how coastal clouds influence ecosystem structure and function, the biogeography and biogeochemistry of C₄ vegetation, and linkages between the carbon and water cycles. I seek out and enjoy interdisciplinary collaborations, and I am interested in scientific questions that interface natural science with other disciplines, including social science and engineering.