

ON THE CLUBBING STRATEGIES OF TROPICAL TREES:  
DO THEY BOP THE OPPOSITION?  
A Provocative Filler in the Fashion of D. Janzen

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Once upon a time, while watching an antbird in the forest at Drayton Trail 1 on Barro Colorado Island (Panama Canal Zone), I realized that I was in the sunny but cluttered ring around the base of a huge sandbox (Hura crepitans) tree. Eyeing upward, I stepped back hastily as it seemed to lean my way in a slight breeze. This tree has been surrounded by a ring of fallen branches the 17 years I have visited the Island and reminded me of similarly huge and ringed jequitibá (Cariniana legalis, Lecithydaceae) trees in southern Brazilian woodlands. Could some emergent or tall forest trees club the opposition by dropping brittle limbs or deciduous leaves or bark on them? The clubbing or smothering could lower root competition or create light gaps for progeny. If so, the moral would seem to be: don't stand on a faerie ring in the forest; there may be a giant tree in the center.

\*I appreciate some of the suggestions of an anonymous reviewer, plus those of Robin B. Foster. This work was not read by \_\_\_\_\_, head of my Departamento, nor by two other doctors in it, as I consider unscientific their rule that forbids use of the address without such prior censorship.

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