INTRODUCTION TO THE ISLA DE MONA SPECIAL ISSUE

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Isla de Mona is an isolated uplifted carbonate island that offers a unique laboratory in which to study the development of karst landscapes and groundwater flow. The remote island is home to sea turtles, iguanas, and a variety of other rare species in an exotic setting. The Isla de Mona Project began in May of 1992 when Joe Troester led a trip of five other scientists to the island for 10 days, to analyze the groundwater, study the bedrock characteristics, begin paleomagnetic studies, and examine the caves. Return trips in 1993 and 1994 brought more scientists to the island, where research projects of the preceding year continued and new studies, such as condensation corrosion research, cave morphology analysis, and geophysical investigation of the groundwater, were initiated. Since that time, trips have been conducted under the direction of Dr. John Mylroie. At the 1993 and 1994 Geological Society of America Annual Meetings, the newly proclaimed "Friends of Mona" gathered. At those meetings, preliminary research findings were presented and many voiced the need to find a place to present the findings of the various research projects. After the 1995 GSA meeting, I requested that they submit the results of their work to a special issue of the *Journal of Cave and Karst Studies*. The papers presented in this issue represent the culmination of the cave and karst work that was done through the Mona Project. As a group of cave scientists who also love caving, we hope that the *Journal of Cave and Karst Studies* readership enjoys the articles, which represent a variety of techniques utilized to increase our understanding of caves, karst, and karst waters.

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Please remember that all visitors to Isla de Mona need permits from the Puerto Rico Department of Natural Resources. In addition, scientists need scientific permits to sample on the island as there are federally endangered species and archaeological materials that deserve and require our utmost respect. Take care, and cave and study softly.