Abstract
Germination of Ficus insipida (Moraceae) seeds from toucan (Ramphastos sulfuratus) and spider monkey (Ateles geoffroyi) feces. To test the null hypothesis that two vertebrate frugivores, toucans (Ramphastos sulfuratus) and spider monkeys (Ateles geoffroyi), are equally specialized in germinating Ficusinsipida seeds after these have passed through their digestive tracts, we fed fruits to captive individuals. We extracted seeds from feces and placed them on filter paper in petri dishes under controlled light, temperature and humidity. Control seeds had not passed through a digestive tract. We found that a greater proportion of seeds from A. geoffroyi (65%) germinated (R. sulfuratus: 4%). The germinative value was also greater in seeds from monkey feces (rate=13.76; toucan 0.046; control group 0.172). If, despite individual variability of seeds and dispersers, future studies continue to show that A. geoffroyi favors germination more (maybe because of a longer digestion time), this would indicate that diet specialization is not necessarily related to dispersal efficiency. Rev. Biol. Trop. 54(2): 387-394. Epub 2006 Jun 01

Keywords
Ramphastos sulfuratus, Ateles geoffroyi, Ficus, germination, dispersal, frugivory.