Supplemental information for Seed Dispersal in Tropical Forests

I used this resources in a 400-level Dendrology course. Because this is a blended course I will began with a learn-before-lecture approach. The students review the video online and answer a quiz about the video before coming to class.

In class I used the large group discussion format to answer some specific questions and go into more details on some elements of seed dispersal and ecology. I began by asking about the differences in abiotic and biotic dispersal mechanisms and their impact on the potential survival of the seeds. When I asked the students to name types of dispersals, they often mentioned pollinators. So we had a lengthy discussion about pollination and dispersal and all the different types of both pollinators and dispersals. I think it would really benefit the students to ensure they had a good understand of how plants are pollinated and types of fruits that plants produce prior to working on a module on dispersal of plants.

I also had the students do a hands-on activity where they categorize groups of seeds—based on how they thought they may be dispersed: small mammals, birds, wind, etc.

Much of the material online was very foreign to my audience, tropical forests, seed genera they have never heard of, spider monkeys, etc. I focused on relating the same concepts to Appalachian forests and to specific tree species that they have already learned about. This was a great way to incorporate plant family characteristics.

The HHMI video said that spider monkeys are the largest primate in the Americas. I added this: <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/why-are-humans-primates-97419056/> so the students can realize that we are primates too!