



## TReeS Peru – Project Update

All of the projects in this section have received either funding or logistical support from TReeS Peru during the course of 2003 and 2004.

### Reconstruction of the Ese'ejá ancestral territories

Miguel Alexiades and Daniela Peluso, currently based at the department of Anthropology at the University of Kent, Canterbury, have been working with the Ese Eja from Sonene over the past year, as part of FENAMAD's project on the reconstruction of the Ese Eja ancestral territory. Several trips have been made with Ese Eja families from Sonene and Palma Real to the headwater regions of the Heath River, during which the precise locations and histories of sites traditionally used and occupied by the Ese Eja have been recorded. A map showing the Ese Eja names and locations of these sites is being prepared, as part of a program to raise the awareness of the river's social history and cultural importance, and to help ensure that this form of endangered indigenous knowledge is transferred to younger generations of Ese Eja. A film has been produced, based on video footage shot during the trips upriver. Much of the film focuses on Ese Eja testimonies and interactions with their natural environment. Highlights of the film include recounting Ese Eja myths and stories linked to some of the places visited, including the 'pampas', patches of tropical savannah, 'Natewe', the oldest Ese Eja settlement on the Heath river,

as well as scenes involving hunting, collecting different forest products, and encountering and talking about different animals and landscape features.

The film was shown to the public and to government authorities in Puerto Maldonado during April, when the FENAMAD and TReeS hosted a book presentation for Ejabawejakiji ebiohoneki shemeño Ese Ejaha sowiho: Para conocer



los remedios del monte – a bilingual health manual, written and illustrated with Ese Eja from communities in Peru and Bolivia. It is the result of a participatory process facilitated by Miguel and Daniela, which seeks to record health beliefs and practices and facilitate their transmission and use. It also seeks to serve as a model for the more active involvement of indigenous peoples in initiatives pertaining to the documentation and diffusion of indigenous knowledge.

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### About TReeS

TReeS (Tambopata Reserve Society) is a non-profit organization (UK Charity 298054) that supports local conservation and sustainable development initiatives in the Tambopata river basin and surrounding areas in the Madre de Dios drainage basin, Peru. TReeS comprises two sister organisations: TReeS UK, founded in 1986, with around 500 members worldwide and over 18 years experience working in the area; and TReeS Peru, founded in 2000 by a group of Peruvian biologists and social scientists who have worked in the region and share common interests.



# Fauna Forever

## Project Fauna Forever

After several months of intense planning and preparation, the first phase of the year long study entitled 'Fauna Forever' began in February with the arrival of five international participants from Holland, Australia and the USA. Joined by four Peruvian students of tourism and biology from Maldonado and Cusco, the team undertook to monitor the conservation status and the impact of tourism activities on Neotropical wildlife in Tambopata. This first group of participants, who spend just under 3 months in the area, assisted the core team of 3 scientists collecting data on 3 taxonomic groups: Herpetofauna, Birds and Mammals. Study sites include 5 tourist lodges located along the Madre de Dios and Tambopata rivers. Interesting encounters or sightings to date include Bush dogs, Short-eared dogs, Jaguars, and venomous Bushmasters.

Full details of the project can be found on [www.faunaforever.com](http://www.faunaforever.com).

## Picaflor Research Centre

Laurel Hanna at Picaflor Research Centre is carrying out research on the ecology of stingless bees. Stingless bees of the family Meliponini are an important source of honey; certain species produce honey with a fine flavour and/or with reputed medicinal properties enabling it to retail at higher prices than the honey from the domesticated honeybee, *Apis mellifera*.

Hives of Meliponini can be kept as a source of income, and as a supplement to the diet for local people in rainforest regions. As a sustainable resource it represents a useful addition to the productivity of traditional chacras in, or adjacent to, protected forest areas. This is a significant economic activity in Brazil, but has not arrived at a commercial level in Madre de Dios.

In 2003, the first year of the project, systematic transect sampling, was carried out along 50 m stretches of forest trails, to locate stingless bee nests within a 10-metre strip to each side. Volunteers worked in pairs using binoculars to locate nests high in the canopy, as well as searching the ground, tree trunks and understorey.

The majority of nests found were in termite nests on tree trunks. Others were underground or free hanging from branches. All nests were labeled and their position recorded with a GPS. Bees were sampled from about 20 nests (those within easy access from the ground) for later identification. Taxonomic identification is awaiting purchase of the binocular microscope for which TReeS has donated funds.

The project is continuing in 2004 to locate more wild nests and to begin the second phase, which will involve developing appropriate artificial nesting sites and piloting them with captured wild colonies in order to establish methodologies for captive production.

## Forest Future – Project Las Piedras

Last year (2003) saw Project Las Piedras complete its second successful field trip looking at the impact of mahogany extraction and associated hunting on wildlife populations. Preliminary results from the research and that of the previous years study in the same areas indicate that the abundance of mammals at hunted sites in Las Piedras is at least twice as high as in the Bahuaja Sonene National Park, SW of Puerto Maldonado. This surprising result has been discussed with Chris Kirkby (TReeS) and Juan Loja (Conservation International-Perú) and led to a plan for developing a joint database for storing and analysing mammal census data for numerous areas across Madre de Dios. This new database is currently being set up by Chris and Juan and will hopefully give insight into the natural factors that influence mammal populations on a regional scale.

Project  
Las  
Piedras

### International School Partnership Programme

Elizabeth Raine, ex-Resident Naturalist at Explorer's Inn, is leading a project that aims to link schools in Tambopata with international schools in a reciprocal educational partnership. With the help of Elizabeth, participants identify and examine their culture, and design methods of sharing it and exchanging materials with their international friends. In addition, schools in Tambopata will be helped to improve education, according to their specific needs. These improvements will be funded by money raised collaboratively by the two partner schools.



Since March 2003 La Pastora School, PEM and Hornsey Girls School, London have exchanged letters and executed money raising initiatives. La Pastora painted rainforest pictures in watercolours, and Hornsey have auctioned them at their Christmas sale 2003. Funds from these paintings and other Hornsey fund raising initiatives will be used to build a new 6 classroom school in 2004.

A partnership between Bajo Piedras School, Piedras and Shanghai American School, China was established in March 2003. Shanghai school has raised money for Bajo Piedras which they are using to build a second classroom for the 40 students.

Elizabeth returned to the UK in April to work with various groups of children to make cultural "packs" to bring back to Tambopata in July 2004. She will then work with children in Tambopata to do the same.

### La Torre Community Project

This project, started in 2002, by two ex-Resident Naturalists (RN's), Nicole Antonie and Elizabeth Raine, works together with the La Torre Community (LTC). The aim is to improve the benefits of tourism from nearby lodges. During the course of 2003, it became apparent that a permanent coordinator is needed to maintain initiatives and relations between LTC and the tourist lodge Explorer's Inn (EI) so that Community may continue to benefit from tourism. In 2004, EI will have a permanent volunteer RN who, amongst doing other RN duties, will act as coordinator of the project's initiatives (with help from Elizabeth & Nicole).

### Special Feature - Sexual and Reproductive Health in Adolescents in Madre de Dios

In December 2003, the department of the Prevention and Control of STI's and AIDS (PROCTSS, Ministry of Health), together with TReeS-Peru conducted a baseline study to determine the attitudes, knowledge and behaviour of adolescents towards Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH), in Tambopata, Madre de Dios. The main objective was to take into consideration the needs, knowledge and attitudes of young people in order to design an effective programme for the prevention of HIV / AIDS.

The study comprised of a 10-page questionnaire adapted from a previous study conducted for the Programme of Sexual and Reproductive Health in Adolescents by the Ministry of Health (Lima) and the Institute of Education and Health (IES), in Lima, Ucayali and Puno. A total of 372 interviews were conducted in 25 secondary schools in Tambopata, with 50% of the schools representing the rural areas. Of the adolescents interviewed, 196 were female and 176, male, and evenly distributed from 9th to 12th grade, the youngest being 12 years old, and the oldest, 19.

In summary, the investigation revealed the following information for adolescents in Tambopata:

- The majority of adolescents have sexual intercourse for the first time, between the ages of 13 and 15, with 14% being younger than 13, and 80% younger than 17 years old.
- In most cases, the first time is not planned and happens unexpectedly, which reduces the



- likelihood of the use of any method of protection against HIV and pregnancy.
- Only 24% of those who have had sexual intercourse have ever used a condom as a form of protection against STI's, HIV and pregnancy, while 50% have never used any form of contraception.
- Many adolescents considered it impossible to fall pregnant the first time they had sexual intercourse.
- 80% of the adolescents felt they were capable of communicating with their partners about sexual relations and contraception, although only 35% had ever done so.
- Health establishments are hardly ever frequented by adolescents for information or advice, and most receive their information from either their teachers (39%), mothers (33%) or friends (11%).
- Although most interviewees had a good knowledge base on the prevention of HIV, many were misinformed about how the virus was spread, and believed myths which could fuel discrimination against those who are HIV-positive.
- When asked what they would most like to receive workshops about, the most common answers were on: Making a life plan; adolescent development; teenage pregnancy; communication; finding information and love.

Since the end of 2003, the association Manos Amigas has been formed for people living with HIV / AIDS in Madre de Dios. The aim is to provide support for these individuals as well as for their families, to raise awareness around HIV / AIDS and to provide efficient information to reduce stigmatization and discrimination against HIV-positive people. The results obtained from the above-mentioned study will be taken into consideration when working with young people and adolescents in the future. We hope to use arts and culture more, to raise awareness, as we did in the Youth Festival for International AIDS day in December 2003. We are also looking at ways to promote healthy living for those with HIV, making use of the natural resources and medicinal plants available in Tambopata.

At the end of February 2004, Manos Amigas hosted a Telethon to raise money and awareness for HIV / AIDS in Madre de Dios. The day was a wonderful success, with \$15,000 worth of materials donated for the completion of the house for people living with HIV, who have been marginalized by their families and the society.



The house will also be used for training and workshops. The owner of 'Palacios de la Salsa' (a disco / bar) has agreed to donate the materials as well as the operational costs for a small health centre where people can get STI and HIV testing. A total of \$7,800 has also been donated for the setting up of the house.

For more information on the Life Skills Training Workshops conducted from August to October 2003; the baseline study (above) or the work Manos Amigas are involved in, please contact Nicole Antonie at [nicoleantonie@tiscali.co.za](mailto:nicoleantonie@tiscali.co.za) or [manosamigaspem@yahoo.com](mailto:manosamigaspem@yahoo.com).

Any comments, suggestions, recommendations or donations are welcome!

### Life in Tambopata

A new feature to show what life is like for the people and communities in the Tambopata region.

### The Community Nurse

Anni Rengifo, a 27 year old nurse from the frontier with Bolivia, trained as a nurse in Puerto Maldonado and came to work in the La Torre and Sachavacayoc communities 7 months ago. She lives with her husband (their 12 year old daughter lives in Puerto Maldonado) at the La Torre medical post – a small three-roomed wooden building, painted bright blue and standing on shaky stilt supports. On the wall of her office are maps of the two communities with all the houses marked. Community nurses work 10 hrs a day, 7 days a week and receive around USD\$180 a month. They have 5 days holiday a month, and one month off every year. Now 8 months pregnant, Anni will have 2 months maternity leave and will then return to complete the rest of her one-year contract.

**TReeS:** Why did you want to be a nurse?

**Anni:** I wanted to work with people and to be able to help them.

**TReeS:** The last nurse worked here for only 7 months. Why do you think it is difficult to maintain staff?

**Anni:** Life is difficult here. Locals generally don't come to the medical post as they live too far away. I cannot do educational talks. Usually I wait here in the mornings, which can be very boring, and then I travel around to the houses in the afternoons to check on everyone. I try to see everyone in the community once a week, but it is difficult. Transport is a problem especially as I do not know how to drive a boat. I cannot swim and there are no lifejackets. The food also is not very varied – tuna fish, rice, potatoes, tomatoes, onions, eggs, sometimes porridge - food that will not rot quickly. We can't keep chickens, as the hawks eat them. We can only afford to run the fridge when we are running vaccination projects – about twice a year.



**TReeS:** How much does a consultation cost?

**Anni:** For under 17s and pregnant women it is free, otherwise about USD\$0.30. Minor surgery is USD\$1.5. Family planning is free.

**TReeS:** What is the most common illness in the community?

**Anni:** Food poisoning, parasites and bronchial infections. The infections are probably contracted from bathing in, washing in and drinking from the same river. They can usually be cured with antibiotics.

**TReeS:** In England if anyone contracts a botfly whilst traveling they have to go to a specialist hospital – do you see many of cases of botfly at the medical post?

**Anni:** Not at all, they are very common and the locals know how to deal with them themselves.

**TReeS:** Do you use medicinal plants to cure any of your patients?

**Anni:** Yes, I use piro-sanal - that is very good for stomach problems, also caña caña (for fever) and of course uña de gato. The older people in the community use a lot of medicinal plants but although they pass this knowledge onto their children, the youngsters, tend to use western medicines.

**TReeS:** What has been your greatest challenge?

**Anni:** Assisting at a birth alone, in a small community near the frontier. But it went well.

**TReeS:** What is your greatest worry?

**Anni:** That the community will contract bronchitis, and that the medical post will fall down. It is not well maintained and has termites. Many of the supporting legs have fallen away.

**TReeS:** What is your greatest hope?

**Anni:** That the community will live closer together so that I can give them better attention and educational talks, and that we receive more funding, and occasional visits from a doctor. I would also like to be able to drive a boat.

**TReeS:** What is your fondest memory?

**Anni:** Working on a project to vaccinate the communities in Manu National Park against measles. The people there are extremely poor; the children run around without clothes, but they are happy, and what little they have they share with you.

**TReeS:** What would you say to someone wanting to be a community nurse?

**Anni:** You need to be patient, to try and reach out to people. People should trust you and you should know your job. You also need to be brave as you often have to walk alone and there are many snakes here!

## News from the forest

### Explorer's Inn

Two new long-term Resident Naturalists (RNs) have been appointed; Marcia DeLonge (USA) and Bridie Gunn (UK). They have been given the challenging task of renovating the library, museum, tourist displays and medicinal plant garden, amongst many other things. The lodge aims to have 2 RNs present at all times, appointed and trained by RN Coordinator Chris Kirkby. RNs are also assisting with wildlife monitoring activities begun by Project Fauna Forever, sightings over the past 3 months include species such as Jaguar, Ocelot, Giant anteater, Giant Otters and Black Caiman (on Lake Cocococha and in the Tambopata River).

The Giant Otter Monitoring Program is also being continued and the tourism management plan on Lake Cocococha is adhered to – ie. restricted use of the lake and daily use of the viewing hide has resulted in the otter family (2 adults and 4 cubs) being seen on approximately 75% of visits to the lake. Karl Melkerts (UK) is currently in charge of monitoring Giant Otters on both Cocococha and Katicocha.

### Rainforest Expeditions (Tambopata Research Centre & Albergue Posada Amazonas)

Sited next to the renowned macaw colpa, biologists and assistants continue their long-term studies of macaw ecology and behavior. This year will see the TRC relocated further back from the river as this seasons rains have put the buildings within just 20m of the Tambopata River.

Rainforest Expeditions (RE) continues to support the local community of Infierno via their agreement related to the administration and management of Albergue Posada Amazonas. Tourists also frequently visit the Ese Eja Cultural Centre (Centro Ñape). Guides from Infierno show tourists around the Centre teaching them about the medicinal plants present. The entrance fees charged to the tourists go directly to the Centro. RE also supported a number of community members during their participation on the annual guide course, modules of which were taught by Chris Kirkby this year.

## Recent Research and Publications

New studies based on long-term monitoring have shed light on the impact of global environmental changes on remote tropical forests. It appears that, rates of growth and death of trees in pristine forests across the Amazon have accelerated substantially in recent decades. Scientists have also demonstrated that tropical forests globally have warmed by half a degree in the last 20 years and warn that this is expected to increase by a further three to eight degrees by the end of the century, with dangerous implications for the forests, climate change and human welfare. The papers are published in a themed issue "Tropical Forests and Global Atmospheric Change" by the Royal Society in England.

## Volunteer Work

A number of lodges and organizations in Puerto Maldonado offer opportunities for volunteer work. Typically volunteers pay to cover the cost of their accommodation and food whilst having the chance to work as either English Teachers/assistants, assisting researchers and scientists with their field studies, or helping lodges with reforestation and maintenance. You can call-in at the TReeS office in Puerto Maldonado for details of up-to-date opportunities, or alternatively e-mail us on [treesbulletin@yahoo.com](mailto:treesbulletin@yahoo.com)

## Peru News

Saturday 10 April – At least six Peruvians died after a landslide hit the community of Aguas Calientes near the famed Inca ruins of Machu Picchu. Fifteen homes were destroyed, affecting 60 people. A second landslide destroyed railway tracks near Machu Picchu, trapping about 1,500 tourists. Repairs commenced immediately and evacuation of tourists began the following day.



### Other News ...

- With the worst of the rainy season now behind us, we can look forward to drier months ahead. Whilst, thankfully, there was no repeat of the flooding that caused damage to neighborhoods in the lower part of Puerto Maldonado last year, transportation between Puerto and Cusco was still badly effected. Lorries laden with vegetables and fruits coming from Cusco were at one stage taking over a week to complete the 300 Km trip, resulting in some very sad looking produce and inflated veg prices of over 200%. Lorry drivers caused disruption locally, when they drove their vehicles laden with rotting fruit and veg in convoy slowly round town, voicing their protests and demanding improvements to the conditions of the only road between ourselves and Cusco.
- Easter in a truly catholic country is very different from Easter in the western world. There are no signs of Easter eggs, no large family meals and no repeats of "The Sound of Music" (or "The Rebellious Nun" as it is called here). Instead all shops and even the market are shut, fish only is eaten and on both Thursday and Good Friday evening masses are held in the central Catholic Church. They were broadcasted by the local radio station so that those living along the rivers out of town could also "attend" the ceremony. The mass on Good Friday culminated with a beautiful procession with religious effigies through streets lined with palm trees and full of townsfolk carrying lighted candles and straw crucifixes.
- Raphael Notin and Kim Failor - Resident Naturalists at Explorer's Inn (2001) left



Tambopata in April to return to the USA in order to continue their studies. Raphael, aided and abetted by Kim, has been working for the Frankfurt Zoological Society Giant Otter project for the past 2 years. Aside from monitoring the Giant otter population in the Tambopata and the Heath rivers, they have been instrumental in the implementation and construction of Interpretation Centres in the Tambopata National Reserve (Sandoval Control Post) and in Manu National Park (Limal Control Post). Their work will be continued by a Peruvian biologist (name to be confirmed), whilst the Giant Otter Project office in Puerto Maldonado is now under the charge of Carlos Arevalo, their environmental education co-coordinator.

- The TReeS office sees a new face as TReeS volunteer Karen Tailby takes up residence while Alfredo Garcia of TReeS-Peru and his family have moved up to Iquitos for the next year or so. Alfredo is currently working for IAP, although he still co-ordinates TReeS Peru via email. Karen will take on the maintenance of the office and its re-organization.

### And finally ...

We hope you like your new look newsletter. For the first time, Spanish (electronic only) and English versions are also being produced for circulation in Peru itself. The latter will be distributed in Tambopata primarily to visiting tourists in a bid to increase awareness of TReeS and its activities, and to attract more members and hence funding. If you have any comments, submissions or suggestions for the bulletin, we would love to receive them - please send them to: [treesbulletin@yahoo.com](mailto:treesbulletin@yahoo.com)



**Please join TReeS and help support Conservation and Development projects in this area!!**

**Aims**

TReeS has three main aims: 1) Biodiversity Conservation, 2) Community - based Development, and 3) Environmental education. The work of TReeS is based on the idea that there is a strong link between these objectives: nature conservation can only come about if it addresses issues relating to social well-being, particularly health and justice, and environmental education should underline virtually everything. TReeS' philosophy is to support local initiatives as they arise, so as to improve local capacities, increase awareness and help generate solutions to environmental and social problems.

the subscriptions and donations received from its members: mostly visitors like you who have come over here as researchers or tourists and care about the future of the rainforest and its people. If you identify with the aims and work developed by TReeS and would like to contribute, you can become a member by completing the form attached. Membership will enable you to receive our newsletter four times a year, keep in contact with Tambopata, and hear how your funds are being used. UK residents can also attend meetings every 3 - 6 months that include talks on our work.

**What you can do to help!**

**Join TReeS** - The vast majority of the funds channelled through TReeS to projects in the Tambopata area and beyond depends largely on

**Make a donation** - A small donation can make a big difference in achieving this: most of the projects supported by TReeS have budgets under US\$1,000. We work on a minimal budget, and on a volunteer basis, thus ensuring the maximum amount of money goes directly to the projects.



**Application for Membership/Donation** - complete this form and return to:  
UK and Europe: John Forrest, TReeS-UK, PO Box 33153, London NW3 4DR, United Kingdom  
USA: William Widdowson, TReeS-USA, P.O. Box 1114, Woodland, CA 95776, USA  
or drop it into our office in Puerto Maldonado at Jr Lambayeque 488

(Mr/Mrs/Ms/Other) .....

**Types of Membership (please tick box)**

Name .....

Tapir (Superior) - £100/\$180 pa....

Address:.....

Hoatzin (family) - £25/\$45 pa.....

Zipcode/Postcode.....

Tree Frog (individual) - £10/\$18 pa.....

Telephone.....

Donation: - £ \_\_\_\_\_ / \$ \_\_\_\_\_ / Other \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail.....

Total :- £ \_\_\_\_\_ / \$ \_\_\_\_\_ / Other \_\_\_\_\_

Please make cheques payable to "TReeS", or British Subscribers can pay by Banker's order using the form below. Pay as you earn donations, gift aid donations and covenants are also welcome.



**Banker's Order:**

To (Members Bank) \_\_\_\_\_ Bank PLC

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Sort-code & Account No. \_\_\_\_\_

Please pay now and thereafter on January 1st each year to: Lloyds Bank PLC, Queen Square, Wolverhampton, WV1 1TF (Sort Code: 30 99 83), to the credit of the 'Tambopata Reserve Society (TReeS)' Account No. 0574637, the sum of £ \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_