

News from Tambopata

- Based on a letter from Anna-Marie Edwards,
Resident Naturalist at Tambopata.

A new sign marking the Reserve's border was put up in the presence of officials from the Ministerio de Agricultura, at the mouth of La Torre river. However, occasional logging further up la Torre continues - mainly just beyond the Reserve's boundary upriver from lake Katicocha. Some of the chainsawed wood may have been cedar - it is illegal to use a chainsaw on cedar, so a letter was sent to the Ministry in Puerto Maldonado. Logging could increase now that the rainy season is underway. Hunting continues in the region - more shots were heard at lake Cocacocha, and a 1.5m jaguar skin was found by Michel Alexiades in the village of Infierno, which may have been a gift to an anthropologist working in the area. There are also reports that a hunter near the Reserve has shot 120 tapirs since his family moved there, to sell at \$1/kg in Puerto Maldonado.

The good news is that a Peruvian TReeS may be set up in the near future, using money raised on the Reserve and by TReeS in England. Isabel Bohorquez, a Peruvian entomologist, who has worked several times at the reserve, has offered to coordinate a group in Lima. This will be invaluable for coordination with Peruvian officials, as well as providing equipment at Tambopata (shopping is rather limited in Puerto Maldonado). And, of course, the greater the involvement of Peruvians at all levels of concern about Tambopata, the better.

Our mascot, Rodney the capuchin monkey, seems to have a slight identity crisis. He's adopted a baby howler monkey, who sits on Rodney's back! A group of howlers were seen nearby which probably included the mother, but none of them responded to the baby's calls. Meanwhile, a razor-billed curassow was recently seen on the far side of La Torre river, and the big leafcutter ant colony at the start of the Main Trail was covered one afternoon by winged males and queens, out for their nuptial flight at the start of the rainy season.

A special appeal has been made for pictures for a display to emphasise the need for conservation, using pictures of cut trees, animal skins, chacras, etc. If you have slides/prints which might be useful please contact Kevin Morgan (64 Fairford Gardens, Worcester Park, Surrey KT4 7BJ) and TReeS will pay for enlargements to send to the Reserve. Still on the subject of photos, Vicki Funk has started another plant photoguide (the original one was lost in the fire) and has offered to try to identify photos taken at Tambopata, and send copies on to the Reserve. She needs 2 prints or 1 slide, with information on time of year and location. Please write to Vicki Funk, Dept. of Botany, Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC 20560, USA.

For those of you thinking of going to Tambopata as a Resident Naturalist, you need to know that from now on all Naturalists need an official research permit in addition to any collecting/export papers, so formal research proposals need to be sent to the Ministerio de Agricultura in Lima (Contact Helen or the Naturalists at Tambopata for details).

Progress with AMETRA, the traditional medicine project, is very good. The community of Infierno have agreed to the construction of an ethnobiological centre on their land, and an architect from Lima has visited the proposed site to draw up plans and estimate costs. Clare Matthews, an English medic, has been carrying out a house-by-house medical survey at Infierno, and also working with the hospital at Puerto Maldonado on trials of Ojé - a traditional remedy for gut parasites, made from the latex of a species of Ficus tree. Didier Lacaze is looking for office space for AMETRA in Puerto Maldonado to deal with the increasing administrative business.