

**TReeS News**  
**The Tambopata Reserve Society**  
**Newsletter, No. 29**

**February 1995**

**MOBIL OIL Exploration in Madre de Dios – the latest developments**

In September a team of about 40 people set off up the Tambopata river into the Tambopata-Candamo Reserved Zone (TCRZ) to carry out pre-seismic surveys on behalf of the sub-contractor 'Serving S-A.'. F.Rubio, head of the Rio Heath National Sanctuary, indicated that they did not have the appropriate permits to undertake their intended studies in a Reserved Zone. A wide variety of stories subsequently circulated amongst local people about the activities of this group and the destruction they were causing to the forest in the Upper Tambopata.

RN's at lodges along the Tambopata reported that military helicopters flew up and down the river on several occasions during early November, almost certainly on behalf of Mobil. This activity suggests that a base camp for pre-seismic survey work has been set up in the vicinity of Astillero, where the rivers Tavera and Tambopata meet and not far from the Colpa. The setting up of a camp at this point was expressly opposed in the EIA prepared, at the request of Mobil, by Centro EORI. Clearly, helicopters flying over the Colpa could be disastrous for the large macaw population that frequents the area.

International concern is growing at the activities of mobil/Perupetro in Madre de Dios. Rettet den Regenwald, in Germany, and the Indigenous World Alliance, in Switzerland, have been in touch with TReeS about the latest developments in the area. TReeS is keeping Survival International and several other organisations informed of any new information received from Peru. In Hamburg Rettet den Regenwald organised a demonstration outside the offices Of Mobil. We would request all TReeS members and their friends to try to avoid patronising Mobil Service stations, in the current circumstances.

The fight against oil exploration in the area and the promotion of the Bahuaja-Sonene National Park has been dealt a further blow with the departure of Oscar Rada, head of the TCRZ for the last 5 years, from his post at INRENA (the Protected Area office of the

Ministry of Agriculture). He was the co-author of the Bahuaja-Sonene National Park proposal, in conjunction with Conservation International. It is understood that he disagreed with an Environmental Impact report presented to Mobil by some former INRENA officials.

The 53rd anniversary of the Rio Protocol setting the border between Peru and Ecuador has led to a revival of tensions along the frontier and several skirmishes. If the dispute escalates, Peru's northern oil fields could come under threat, thereby encouraging efforts to locate new reserves in other parts of the country.

**1995 TReeS Membership Reminder**

A 'Reminder' is enclosed with this Newsletter to those members who have not renewed their membership recently. If you have not renewed your membership since October 1994, we would be most grateful if you could renew your membership as soon as possible. \*\* The funds donated by our members provide a crucial proportion of our income \*\*

**RESIDENT NATURALIST**  
**News from the Explorer's Inn**  
**Climate**

Month	Temperature °C		Rainfall		Humidity %
	Av. Max.	Av. Min.	Amount mm	Days of rain	
Jul *	26	17	21	4	89.0
Aug	28.6	18.5	31	5	93.0
Sep	29.3	22.1	102	7	90.0
Oct	29.9	22.0	405	13	89.2
Nov	27.8	21.9	353	9	92.4
Dec	29.4	24.7	503	?	92.4

\*data not recorded on 11 days

**Recent Sightings**

The rainy season began in October, though 152mm of rain fell on just one day, while in December it rained continuously for 6 days and nights. However, recent sightings have been good with a Giant Anteater seen on Main trail; Jaguar at 2300m on Tapir trail; a 9-banded Armadillo at 200m along Laguna Chica trail; Jaguarundi on Capirona trail; several sightings of Peccary; Tapir close to the lodge; a small-eared dog crossing river La Torre; a Bi-coloured Spined Porcupine was found dismembered at 700m on Tapir trail with Jaguar footprints around it; Giant River Otters were seen more frequently in late rather than early autumn, with at least 6 individuals

seen regularly.

More unusual bird sightings include a Horned Screamer nesting at the eastern end of Cococochoa; Orange Breasted and Laughing Falcons; an Osprey at Cococochoa; a pair of Harpy Eagles at 2550m on Tapir trail; a Spot-backed Antbird.

D.Brown wrote in October "all trails were flooded . . . some up to knee height for short stretches . . . On this day the forest came alive frogs – fantastic !!! A cacophony of different species and sounds – so many of them! I have to say that it was probably the most amazing experience of my life!!"

Despite such comments and international publicity about the incredible wildlife of the

Tambopata region, some local guides in P.Maldonado are still prepared to accede to the wishes of some tourists and organise hunting trips. In September a group of Americans were apprehended by the police in P.Maldonado after RN'S at TJL tipped them off and a quantity of skins, including several rare cat skins, were confiscated. TReeS hopes that 'Wanamey', the local conservation group based in P.Maldonado which TReeS helped to re-establish earlier this year, can enter into a dialogue with local people in this respect.

**Current/Recent RN's and visitors include:**

**A.Edwards** – studying fish species and populations of the cochas.

**S.Allen** – ornithological studies.

Extract from: "Quantative Ethnobotany & Amazonian Conservation", O.Philips and others. Conservation Biology, Vol 8, No. 1, March 1994

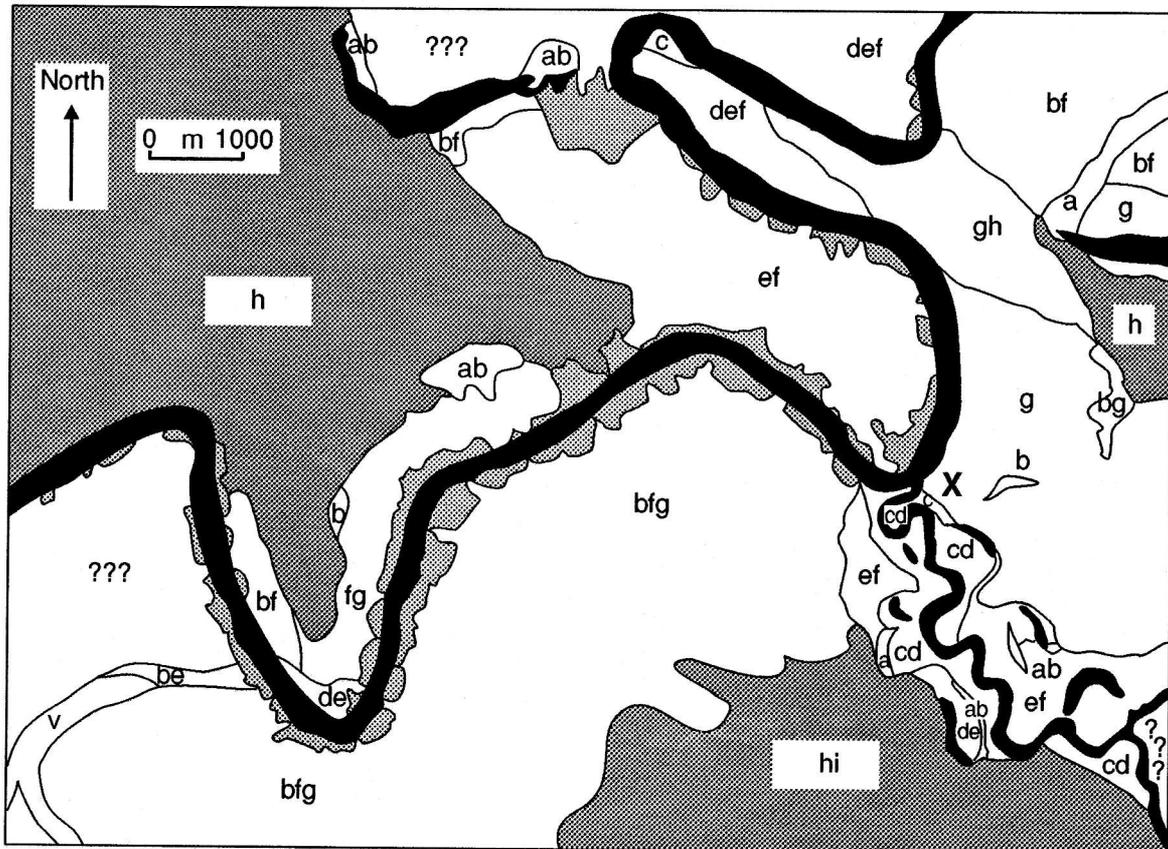


Figure 2. Large-scale map of the study area based on a ground-truthed July 1991 Landsat image.

Water bodies (rivers & oxbow lakes)

Forest that shows little or no topographic evidence of succession from a riverbed (hi).

Deforested area, up to July 1991.

The Tambopata river flows approximately southwest to northeast; La Torre river flows southeast to northwest. All forest that is up to (a) north, or up to 1 km west, of La Torre river and (b) east of Tambopata river is protected in the Zona Reservada Tambopata.

Vegetation: (a) Permanently Water-Logged Swamp Forest; (b) Seasonally Water-Logged Swamp Forest; (c) Lower Floodplain Forest; (d) Middle Floodplain Forest; (e) Upper Floodplain Forest; (f) Old Floodplain Forest; (g) Previous Floodplain Forest; (h) Terra Firme Sandy-Clay Soil Forest; (i) Terra Firme Ultrasand Soil Forest; (v) Floating herbaceous vegetation. e, f, g = Mature Floodplain Forests; c, d, e = Present Floodplain (Salo et al. 1986); a, b, f, g = Previous Floodplain; each is considered to contribute equally in the area calculations (Table 7).

**S.Fratello** – studying butterflies.

**B.Boyd** – filming around the lodge.

**K.Oram** – painting new educational posters for display in the lodge.

**D.Brown** – renewing and expanding the amphibian and reptile photo guide.

Many RN's over the years will have had contact with Didier Lacaze, who has been involved in a variety of activities in the Tambopata area. He is currently assisting P.Safaris as temporary manager of the EI until a permanent replacement is found.

RN's at Tambopata Jungle Lodge (TJL) also reported good sightings over recent months further upriver including Red Howler monkeys – seen often close to the lodge, and Capybara and Caiman along the river.

### **Climate data appeal**

O.Phillips has written to TReeS to highlight the significance of the climatic data collected by RN's at the EI over the last 20+ years. This is one of the longest collection periods in the Peruvian Amazon. Unfortunately, over the years some recordings have disappeared or been damaged and the record is slightly incomplete. If any former RN's have complete data for the the following months we would be most grateful to receive it – June '78; June '79; Nov '88; Sept, Nov & Dec '91; and March, June, July, August, Sept, Oct, Nov '92.

### **Bird Research Funding Request**

TReeS has received a request for a small-scale contribution towards the initial funding for a long-term study of bird communities in the TCRZ. The request comes from a young Peruvian birder whom TReeS previously supported as an RN. To date, most bird studies in the region have been limited to species lists or a single taxonomic group. There is a great lack of quantitative data on overall community structure and population dynamics. The proposed study site adjoins the Colpa, on the Upper Tambopata, and the project will be linked to the on-going macaw studies there.

Any members who would specifically like to help fund this project should write to TReeS for further details. Initially only commitment to help fund will be sought.

### **Peru News**

At the end of 1994 year-on-year inflation stood at just 15.4%, the lowest for 21 years, and the target of achieving an inflation rate below 20% was met. However, the trade deficit of \$0.6bn in the first 9 months of 1994 was an 84% increase on 1993. The deficit is mainly due to unfavourable exchange rates for

exporters and the Sol has recently been gaining in strength against the US dollar. Peru's industrial sector grew 16+% in 1994, though this only returned many industries to their output levels of 5 years ago.

The next Presidential elections will be held on the 9th of April. In a recent large-scale national poll Fujimori polled 55%, while Perez de Cuellar (ex-UN General Secretary) polled just 20%. None of the other 13 candidates, including those of the former established parties, polled more than 10%, while 10% of those polled were uncommitted. Susanna Higuchi, Fujimori's ex-wife, was controversially banned from standing and embarked on a hunger strike.

### **TReeS UK Libraries – Recent Deposits**

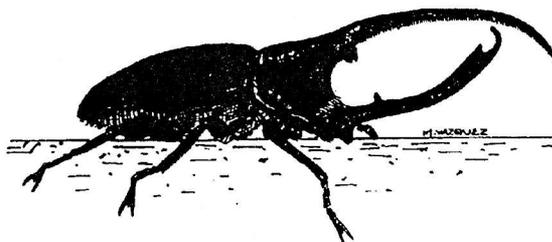
Reports in English placed recently in the TReeS UK members libraries in Oxford and London include the proposal for the establishment of the 'Bahuaaja-Sonene National Park'; the reports of the 1994 Imperial College Manu expeditions; 'Quantitative Ethnobotany and Amazonian Conservation', a paper by O.Phillips et al; and a general information document about the Pampas del Heath National Sanctuary.

### **Anglo-Peru Raffle**

The Anglo-Peruvian Society would like to thank all the TReeS members who helped to raise over £7,000 in their Rainforest Raffle in October. We are unaware of any TReeS members, unfortunately, among the winners.

### **New TReeS Merchandise Tambopata Bird Checklist:**

A Checklist with a colour cover listing the 592 bird species identified to date in the former Tambopata Reserved Zone. The Checklist gives details of Habitat, Foraging Position, Sociality and Abundance of each species. It is also cross-referenced to the 'Birds of Colombia' (Hilty & Brown), provides details about the Tambopata area, is wonderfully illustrated with drawings by E.Barnes and includes advice on bird-watching by K.Morgan. It is suitable for visitors to any part of south-western Amazonia. Price: £5 each, 2 for £9 or 4 for £15.



### 'Macaws' Greeting cards:

Based on an original full colour 'plate' painting of several Macaw species by Eustace Barnes, a full colour greetings card is now available. Price: 4 for £2.50, 10 for £5, including envelopes.

### TReeS Merchandise

**T-Shirts:** 'Earth Warrior' (electric blue design on unbleached cotton, XL only) £7.50 each, Or 3 for £20.

**'Scarlet Macaws'**, painting by Martin Jordan (scarlet macaws against a blue background, bleached cotton, XL only) – £8 each, 3 for £22.

**Postcards:** Tree-frog, Tapir, Hummingbird/Heliconia, Hoatzin & Butterfly – 10 for £2.50, 30 for £7, 60 for £12.

**TReeS Tapes** (recorded at the TRZ): 'Jungle Sounds' (general interest) & 'Birds of south-east Peru' (Birders guide): £5.00 each, 2 for £9 Plus, 'Birds of south-east Peru', recorded by the late Ben Coffey in the mid-1980's – £7.50 each, only a few copies remain. A comparison between the 2 bird tapes is now available. Please request when ordering your tapes or send a sae.

**'The Ecology of Tropical Rainforests** – an introduction for eco-tourists': A small booklet with B & W photos published by TReeS – £2.50.

**'TReeS 1992 Upper Tambopata Expedition'** report \*\* – £10.

**'Biodiversity conservation and its impact on Indigenous Peoples'** by A.Gray, published by IWGIA – £6.

**TReeS Newsletters:** any 6 – £2, please specify the back numbers required.

**'The Budget Travellers Guide to Peru and Northern Bolivia'**, 7th edition: £4.95 per copy, including a £1 donation to TReeS.

**Bird Prints** – 'Andean Cock-of-the-Rock' and 'Rufus-Headed Woodpecker' set in their natural habitat. High quality colour prints of paintings by Eustace Barnes. £25 each (20% to TReeS).

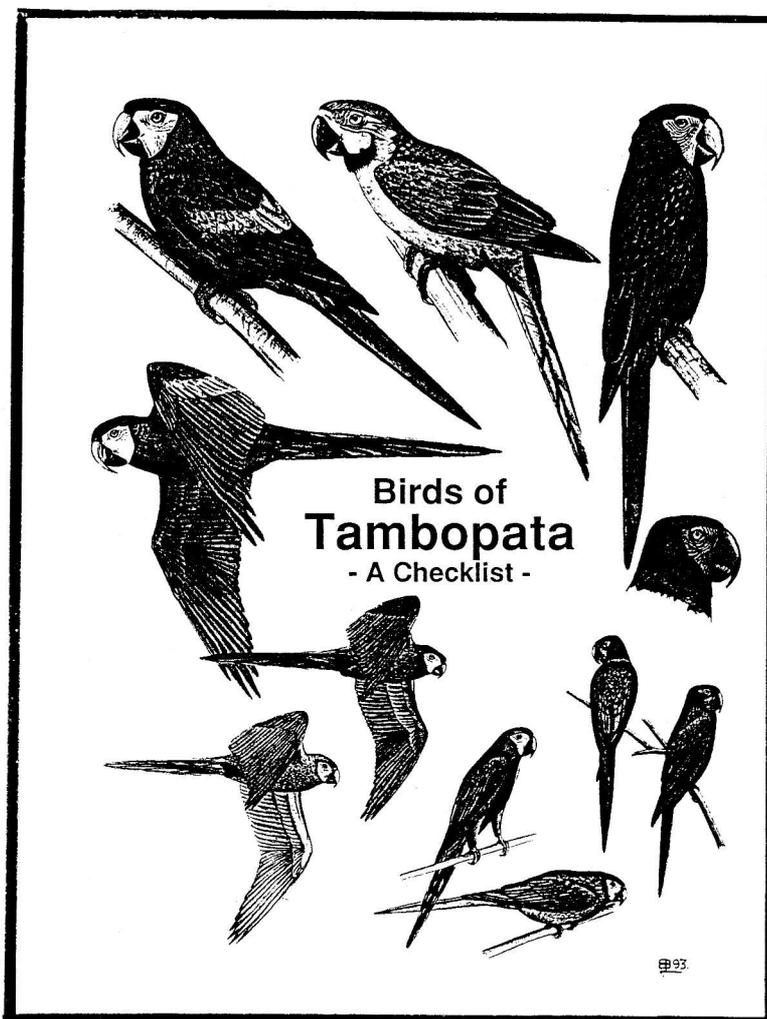
**'Giant River Otters in SE Peru'** Report \*\* of the Munich Wildlife Society – £5 (state whether english or spanish version preferred).

**'UK Forest Network – Forests Memorandum'** \*\* – £2 (TReeS is a member of the Network).

All prices include postage and packing. Cheques payable to 'TReeS'.

**Available from:** J.Forrest, 64 Belsize Park, London NW3 4EH.

\*\* newly available.



The 1995 Findhorn Foundation 'Trees for Life' calendar includes a photo from Tambopata. It is available from many good bookshops.

### Forthcoming Events

**TReeS Meeting:** 2-5pm, 11th March, Room C102, Christchurch Ho., Bournemouth, Univ., Talbot Campus, Fern Barrow, Wallisdown, Poole, Dorset. A.Frizzell will speak about her time as an RN, J.Edwards about the 1992 TReeS Expedition and J.Forrest about the latest developments in the Tambopata area and visiting Peru.

**27th March,** 6.30pm, Bolivar Hall, Grafton St., London WC2 (Nearest Tube - Warren St.). An exhibition of photos of Lima by I.Mackay, plus a talk by Dr E.Belaunde on 'Amazonian tribes'.

**10th June,** 10-5pm, Univ., of Southampton. 'Bio-diversity in S.America: Plants & People' - TReeS, Kew Gardens, Imperial College and TheRainforest Foundation will provide speakers. £15/£7.50 conc.. Further details are available from Dr Knight, Dept. of Adult & Continuing Education, Soton Univ., SO9 5NH.

The work of TReeS is endorsed/supported by Helpage, OXFAM, Anglo-Peruvian Society, the Body Shop International PLC, several FoE groups and schools, and various small trusts and charities.  
Patron – Norman Myers.



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