

The Tambopata Reserve Society Newsletter

TReeS Annual General Meeting

Saturday 3rd July 1999, 2.30-5pm, in the Small School Room (2nd floor), Winchester Community Centre, Winchester Road, London NW3 - a 2 minute walk from Swiss Cottage (Jubilee line) tube station, being Swiss Cottage market.

The 1998 TReeS Annual Report and Accounts will be presented to members and the election of the new TReeS committee will take place. Any members wishing to volunteer for the committee should make their candidacy known in writing to - John Forrest, 64 Belsize Park, London NW3 4EH, by 30th June 1999.

The meeting will also include a showing of a recently made video film about the wildlife of the Upper Tambopata region.

Changes in the Carbon Balance of Tropical Forests: Evidence from Long-Term Plots

This was the title of a recent paper published in the international journal *SCIENCE* (vol. 282, pp. 439-441, 16 October 1998), which reported important new findings based on studies of permanent forest plots in Tambopata and elsewhere. Written by long-time TReeS member and researcher Dr Oliver Phillips, with colleagues from the UK, Peru, Brazil and the US, the paper analyses results from more than 150 forest plots in Amazonia and other rainforest regions. It was found that most of the Neotropical plots in mature forest have gained biomass over the years, and therefore that there has been a net carbon uptake by undisturbed forests, i.e. they have taken up more carbon from the atmosphere through plant growth than they have lost through respiration and plant decomposition. On average, the plots have accumulated 0.71 ton, plus or minus 1.34 ton, of carbon per hectare per year in recent decades. Interestingly, plots from African, Asian and Australian rainforests showed no significant change, but this may have been due to the relative scarcity of data from these areas.

The findings provide a powerful new argument for conserving tropical forests, since they are slowing the rate of increase in carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, and are therefore helping to counter global warming. Whilst welcome news for the environment, the forest's capacity to absorb carbon dioxide may actually be diminishing, since only undisturbed rainforests are absorbing extra carbon dioxide - burning, logging, or fragmenting the forests turns them into net carbon sources.

Six of the plots used in the study are located at Explorers Inn, a further four at Cuzco Amazonico, and five are from Manu Biosphere Reserve (one from Pakitza and four others from the National Park near Cocha Cashu).

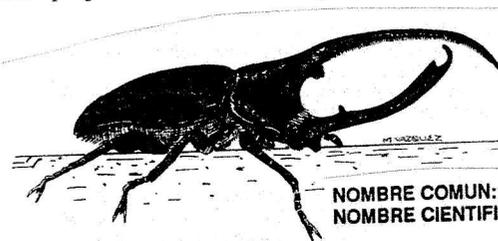
The research highlights the importance of long term monitoring of natural ecosystems. Without long term quantitative data, it is impossible to know for certain what changes are taking place in ecosystems and in particular how they are being affected by human activities. The Explorers Inn plots were set up in the early 1980's by entomologist Terry Erwin and have been regularly

monitored since. There are very few places in the tropics where such long term data has been gathered. The presence of these plots makes the forests at Explorers Inn and Cusco Amazonica scientifically invaluable and deserving of stronger legal protection.

Projects Update

Amongst current projects being supported by TReeS are the following:

- An assessment of low impact forestry methods being undertaken by Hector Vilchez, a Peruvian forester. Hector is currently in the process of setting out a series of study plots and will then go on to assess the effects of traditional and low impact methods of timber extraction on the forest ecosystem. TReeS have received funding for Hector's project from the Lindeth Charitable Trust.
- A study of mammal collpas being carried out by Rebecca Smith of the University of East Anglia, in conjunction with Tambopata Jungle Lodge. Sightings so far include Tapir, Margay and Tayra.
- An investigation of insect communities in the rainforest understorey by students from Cusco University. Based at Sachavayoc Lodge, the study will utilise a variety of sampling techniques to identify insects and their host plants.
- Amazon Consciousness, a series of environmental programmes to be broadcast on local TV.
- FADEMAD Community Workshops. During the first stage of this innovative project, FADEMAD ran workshops in nine rural communities in the TCRZ to analyse the main problems they face. Funds raised through the special appeal in the last TReeS Newsletter have allowed the second stage to go ahead, during which the communities will begin to formulate plans for small projects to address these problems.



NOMBRE COMUN: Catzo gigante
NOMBRE CIENTIFICO: *Dynastes hercules*

Puerto Maldonado Diary

Now that May has finally arrived I can think about drying out my clothes, trying on the only woolly fleece I own and once again looking for my pair of alpaca-wool gloves which I left somewhere in a corner about 6 months ago! The dry season is knocking on the door and the humidity is already noticeably lower. I am looking forward to the long periods of sunny weather and the frequent cold spells, called "frijajes", which refresh us from time to time and are just enough to remind me of the famous British winters, which seem so far away and inconceivable now.

The tourists are also turning their gaze on the rainforest of Tambopata and have been beginning to arrive in larger numbers day by day. Last year Maldonado topped the 14,000 mark and this year the signs are good for a 15% increase. Most of these visitors spend their time at one of the 12 large lodges. However there are now many smaller family run guest houses up and down the Madre de Dios and Tambopata rivers, which should do relatively well this year now that they have had a year or two to learn the ropes. I look forward to watching the progress of these families as in my opinion they are important indicators of whether tourism can really benefit local populations in a significant way. The first locally organised training scheme for local tour-guides has just finished here in Maldonado, so with luck there should be enough guides to help cope with the demand. Last year many tour operations were left with insufficient numbers of guides.

I went to the Maldonado hospital the other day to see a friend of mine who is usually guiding tourists at this time of the year. Unfortunately, a couple of months ago he got hit on the cheek-bone by a 1 kg Brazil-nut fruit, which fell from 30 m up and left him in a pretty bad state. He should be back to explaining the medicinal remedies of the region to his guests within the next few months. He is a classic example of how the local people here mix and match different jobs depending on the season, in his case nuts, then tourists, then agriculture, then nuts again. The Brazil-nuts have since stopped falling so it's now safe to go back into the forest again!

The streets and pavements of Maldonado are now lightly sprinkled with drying Brazil-nuts, with many people busy shelling them in the backyards and outbuildings. The nuts are subjected to successive wetting and drying, which makes it easier to extract perfect, whole nuts (so now you know the secret - wet your brazil-nuts first, then dry them in the airing cupboard before finishing them off with a nut-cracker!). I have forgotten how much they cost back in the UK, but here a kilogram of large shelled nuts is worth about one pound sterling, and has enough calories to kill a horse! Brazil-nuts from Madre de Dios account for about 9% of the world market, so one in ten of the nuts sold in Sainsbury's or Tesco's could conceivably have originated from around here!

Before the dry season comes to an end in September the forests of Madre de Dios will have been neatly sectioned off into different land use categories, including everything from tourism, Brazil-nuts, commercial timber, gold mining, rubber tapping, agriculture, you name it! This is all part of a long term regional planning scheme put into practice last year, but which still has to be approved and modified by the local

people on the ground who will be directly affected by the plans. Many of us are hoping that the government will have time to take the nice, digitised GIS maps to the local people and be prepared to change them - unfortunately development here is still pretty much top down, so this remains to be seen.

In September we should also know about the extent of forest that Mobil Oil will release for the expansion of the Bahuaja Sonene National Park. The site they were drilling in the Upper Candamo valley has recently been closed down and it is understood that viable deposits were not found. All of the equipment and personnel have now moved to the Inambari valley and the exploration site has been reforested following agreed mitigation procedures. Conservation International recently overflew the site to verify the process. There is no official information available regarding the site, however the lack of information is probably a good sign for the time being. The next site expected to be scheduled for drilling will be in the upper Karene area, although no start date is known and this option is not confirmed yet. We can expect that the lowland forest within the TCRZ section of Lot 78 will be released for addition to the National Park, i.e. something like 200,000 hectares. However, the next drilling area is within a proposed communal indigenous reserve where the social impact could be extremely high. We will continue to liaise with FENAMAD and give updates on the situation in future newsletters.

Chris Kirkby
TReeS Co-ordinator
Puerto Maldonado

ZRTC Zonification

With Mobil apparently not finding viable oil or gas deposits in the Upper Tambopata INRENA, various local representative organisations and NGO's have moved swiftly to consider the future of the Tambopata-Candamo Reserved Zone (ZRTC). The first planning meeting was held in May when proposals were presented by both FENAMAD on behalf of the native communities in the area and by FADEMAD on behalf of small-scale farmers. Various different categories for the zonification (long-term management) of the area around the Bahuaja-Sonene National Park have been proposed to replace the temporary 'Reserved Zone' status. These would take in to account the importance of the flora and fauna of the area as well as its traditional usage by local people and their needs, combined with tourism industry interests.

TReeS will be participating in the discussions and will be highlighting the importance of involving local people in the conservation decision-making process if decisions are to prove workable in the long-term.

More information will be given, in greater detail, in the next TReeS Newsletter once further meetings have taken place.



NOMBRE COMUN: Tigrillo, ocelote
NOMBRE CIENTIFICO: *Felis pardalis*

Andrew Gray Lost in Aircrash

It is with much sadness that we have to report the death of Andrew Gray, a leading champion of international indigenous rights and one of the closest supporters of the indigenous movement in Madre de Dios. Andrew was lost on 8th May, when the small plane in which he was travelling crashed into the sea near Vanuatu in the Pacific. Although he survived the crash and escaped the plane along with five other people, he became separated from the group after two hours in the sea, and is presumed to have died that night. Those of us who knew him will miss his boundless enthusiasm, ready humour and outstanding integrity for a long time to come.

Andrew first visited Madre de Dios in 1979 to begin his doctoral fieldwork with the Arakmbut community of San Jose del Karene. On completion of his doctorate he worked for six years as executive director of the International Working Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA) in Denmark, and latterly worked as advisor and consultant to organisations including IWGIA, the Forest Peoples' Programme of the World Rainforest Movement, and the International Alliance of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples. He was a member of the Board of Anti-Slavery International. However, he always kept in touch with the Arakmbut, whose territory lies between the Tambopata and Manu regions, and with whom he had an exceptional relationship based on the highest mutual regard.

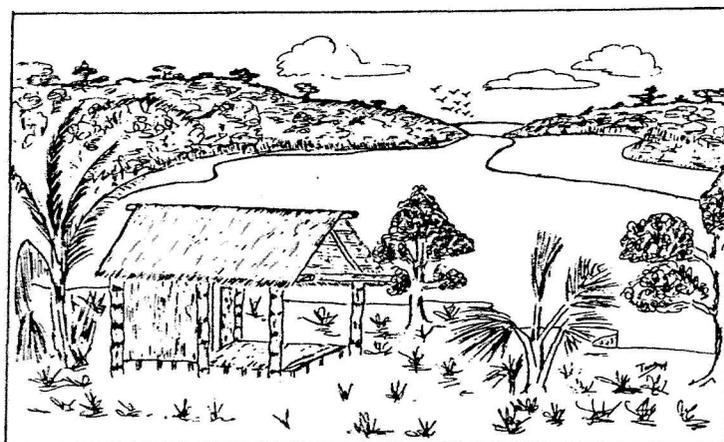
Andrew offered his support and expertise to the Indigenous Federation of Madre de Dios (FENAMAD) in a variety of ways. He and his wife, Sheila, helped to set up a student grants programme, through which a university degree was awarded to an indigenous person from Madre de Dios for the first time in 1998. They introduced FENAMAD to the international indigenous rights network, bringing representatives to Europe to participate in meetings of the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations. Over the years, Andrew advised FENAMAD and the Arakmbut on a series of major threats to indigenous lands, including an invasion by gold-miners, oil exploration in an area with isolated indigenous groups, and a proposed road through Arakmbut territory.

During further research visits in 1985 and the early nineties with Sheila and their son, Robbie, Andrew looked in depth at indigenous rights and the process of change brought about by increasing external threats. His findings, written up in a trilogy of books, stimulated a long process of discussion amongst the Arakmbut about their situation which eventually led to the "Plan Karene" - an ambitious plan to safeguard their lands and rights through the creation of a Communal Indigenous Reserve. Andrew helped formulate the plan into a funding proposal which was approved by the Danish aid agency DANIDA through IWGIA. Through the Plan Karene, which is now entering its second phase, Andrew has left the Arakmbut with renewed hope and a last chance to safeguard their future.

" Dear Andrew, at this moment of great pain, the spirits are crying with us - the spirits of the forest, of the water, of the animals and of the birds; nonetheless, we are consoled

by the knowledge that your spirit, "nokiren", will always be among us, protecting our dear Huiknpo Sheila, our oamambuysipo Robbie, guiding your people and revisiting the lovely Harakmbut places where you had been before; San Jose del Karene, your home, Kirashue, your favourite little creek and source of spiritual nourishment, where you would imagine a beautiful future for the Harakmbut people, dreams which we will ourselves turn into reality, in your memory and for our children."

Taken from a letter from the Harakmbut Indigenous People of Madre de Dios, Peru.



Harakmbut river scene drawing - taken from the Memorial service program.

TReeS UK Libraries

Members should note that the TReeS Oxford Library has now been closed and will shortly be moved to Canterbury, Kent. Anyone wishing to use it should contact Dr. Helen Newing, Durrell Institute of Conservation Ecology, Dept. of Anthropology, University of Kent at Canterbury, Canterbury, Kent, CT2 7NZ. The London library remains at the Living Earth Foundation, 4 Great James St., London WC1. If you intend to visit the London library please ring first (Tel.: 0171 242 3816). It is a 5 minute walk from Holborn tube station. Opening times 10am-5pm.

Forthcoming deposits in the libraries will include:

- Summaries of recent mammal and herp sightings and climate data.
- Report on the 'Second Workshop on the Indigenous Language of the EseEja'.
- INRENA Technical Bulletins No.s 1 & 2 on 'The Production and Growth of Brazil Nuts' and 'Vermiculture and Humus Production in Tambopata.'
- Environmental Programme for Sustainable Development in Madre de Dios.
- Cambridge Peru 95 Expedition Report.
- Paper on the 'Movement and Activity Patterns of the Black Piranha.'
- Data on the behaviour of the Saddleback Tamarin.

March Project Appeal

TReeS would like to thank all those members who generously contributed to the appeal which was circulated with the last newsletter. Approximately £3000 has been raised so far, which will be used to support projects in the Tambopata area. However we still need to raise a further £3,000 to meet our commitments for 1999, so members are urged to help in any way they can - by making donations, recruiting new members, selling TReeS merchandise or fundraising from local businesses.

Peru News

President Fujimori is expected to run for the Presidency again next year, though it is still unclear whether this is permissible under the constitution. Several strikes have been held around the country protesting "against the policies and centralist character of the government." The regular shuffling of cabinet ministers continues with ongoing rumours of corruption in high level positions.

AeroPeru has ceased trading after its parent company, AeroMexico, withdrew its support amid rumours of having deliberately starved the airline of funds. This leaves AeroContinente as the sole major operator.

'Hello' Magazine & Tambopata

Members may have noted that the June 8th issue of 'Hello' magazine contained a 9 page photographic feature about the macaws of Tambopata and the research that has been undertaken to increase our understanding of their behavioural patterns and breeding activities.

the tea & coffee plant

Suppliers of *Peruvian organic fairtrade coffee* (medium & continental roasts) and *Mexican & Guatemalan organic fair trade coffees* (strong medium roasts) -

£5 / lb, plus £1.50 p & p (minimum order 1 lb). Please specify the type of 'grind' required (filter, plunger/cafetiere, etc).

**** a donation from each sale will be made to TReeS ****

the tea & coffee plant also stocks a variety of other organic and fair trade coffees and teas from around the world.

Available from -

the tea & coffee plant, 170 Portobello Road,
London W11 2EB

0171.221.8137 www.coffee.uk.com

Please make cheques payable to - 'the tea & coffee plant' and state that you are a 'TReeS' member.

For a full stock and price list please send a sae to the above address.

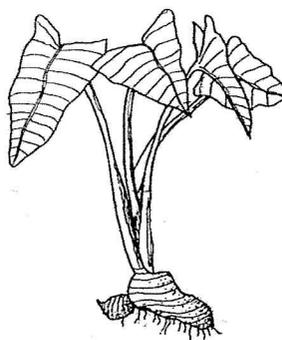
New 1999 Membership Rates

Members are reminded that new membership rates came into effect from the 1st of January 1999:

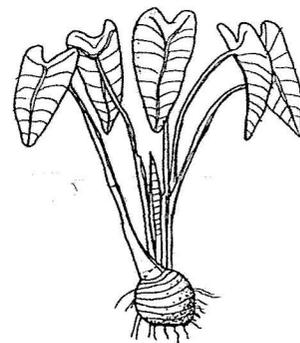
- ◆ Tree-frog - £10 / \$15
- ◆ Hoatzin - £25 / \$40[#]
- ◆ Tapir - £100[#] / \$175[#] ([#] unchanged)

Any members who have not renewed their membership since October 1998 are requested to renew their subscriptions as soon as possible at the above rates.

**** The base funding provided by subscriptions is an essential element of our income****



PAPAHALUSA (*Colocasia esculenta*)



UNCUCHA (*Xanthosoma s. gittifolium*)

TReeS Merchandise

* **New - "Tambopata Map Guide"** - a fold out guide, with a beautiful full colour illustrated map of the Tambopata region. It gives a brief history of the area and details of the tourist facilities in and around P. Maldonado. Price: **£3.00** (available in English or Spanish).

* **'Macaw T-shirt'** - this very popular T-shirt is now back in stock. Price: **£7.50** (S) and **£8.00** (XL), bleached or unbleached.

All prices include postage and packing. All other TReeS merchandise as per the listing sent out with the last but one Newsletter.

The Tambopata Reserve Society (TReeS)

64 Belsize Park

London,

NW3 4EH, UK

Patron - Norman Myers

The work of TReeS has been endorsed/supported by the Rainforest Alliance, IUCN, IWGIA, Helpage, OXFAM, Anglo-Peruvian Society, Body Shop International PLC, Earthlove Fund, Reuters Foundation, the Yew Tree Gallery and the Lindeth Charitable Trust.