

## The Tambopata Reserve Society Newsletter

**TReeS AGM - Saturday 7th December 2002, 2.30-4pm; William Ellis School, Highgate Road, London NW5; buses 214, C2, C11; nearest tube station: Kentish Town (10 minute walk). J.Forrest will provide an update about the Society's current activities and the logging threats to the Las Piedras region.**

### FENAMAD Appeal Update

Thanks to the generosity of TReeS members and additional donations from the Rainforest Alliance (New York) and IUCN Netherlands, we were able to reach our \$10,000 target for this emergency appeal. The funds are being used in a campaign against invasion by illegal loggers of the upper reaches of the Las Piedras river, which are home to 'uncontacted' native peoples.

In the weeks following our appeal the situation in Madre de Dios became extremely violent. Fierce rioting left the Ministry of Agriculture offices (a whole block), including the INRENA office, and the office of one conservation organisation, Pronaturaleza, burnt down. Many other buildings and vehicles badly damaged, several people were imprisoned, and one person was killed. The funds raised by TReeS have been used for a media campaign, production and distribution of information materials, journeys by representatives of the indigenous Federation (FENAMAD) to Lima to meet with government officials, and technical support to FENAMAD. In addition, a contingency fund is being established in readiness for visits to Las Piedras by helicopter in the event of an emergency.

It is currently believed that there are at least 1,000 loggers operating illegally out of Monte Salvado, several days' journey by boat up the Las Piedras river from Puerto Maldonado. They are extracting mahogany, principally destined for the US market. Some have withdrawn from the contested area but others are still operating further upriver. Their camp in Monte Salvado - previously a very isolated hamlet of barely a dozen houses - now contains shops and bars. The government sent a small police attachemnt to monitor the situation but with few powers to take action. The loggers are now working several days upriver from Monte Salvado, well within the 'Reserva del Estado' for uncontacted native peoples. Experts consider that there is a grave risk of contact occurring, and TReeS Peru has been participating with several other organisations, including the government authorities in the Manu area, in preparing an emergency plan in case direct contact occurs.

However, there has also been much progress in work to halt the invasion. Government offices, the indigenous Federation, the Farmers' Federation (FADEMAD), conservation organisations and legal

loggers' unions have formed a strong alliance in opposition to illegal logging in the region and continue to lobby for stronger measures to evict the loggers. This month they will be meeting the local ombudsman and others, as well as continuing representation in Lima to seek a solution. Their talks will be informed by results from the recent TReeS-supported expedition up the Las Piedras river which added to its objectives the systematic surveying of logging camps.

\* **Funding appeal:** further donations are still sought to boost FENAMAD's funds, especially to deal with possible large-scale contact of uncontacted peoples.

### Ese'eja Cultural Centre -

TReeS contributed to the costs of Didier Lacaze's visit to the Ese'eja Cultural Centre (Centro Nape) for one week in early September. The Centre invited Didier, who now lives in Ecuador, following his meeting with Jose Mishaja and Roberto Masias at the Tarapoto healers conference earlier in the year. Didier was heavily involved in the establishment of the Centre in the late 1980's.

The aim of the visit was both motivational and to discuss aspects of remedy preparation such as improving their production, presentation and marketing.

\* **Current funding needs:** £50 per month for on-going infra-structure repairs and equipment.

### Bahuaja-Sonene National Park (BSNP) -

There have been some changes within the management team of the Bahuaja-Sonene National Park. The new head of the Park is Carmela Landeo, a former student of J.Terborgh. The Head of the 'Plan Maestro' team is Antonio Arana. Patricia Davila deals with tourism related matters.

In December, sociologist Laia Cateura will join the TReeS Peru team, on a voluntary basis, to carry out an ecotourism study at the request of INRENA. The study will inform the 'Plan Maestro' as to the potential contribution of ecotourism to the BSNP and the Tambopata National Reserve (TNR). It will also look at the extent to which tourism currently contributes to the local economy of Madre de Dios.

TReeS has received a report about the third meeting with respect to the 'Plan Maestro'. TReeS has been asked to contribute to the identification of the conservation objectives.

### English Students -

A new FENAMAD student of tourism has been selected to study English with a TReeS scholarship.

\* **New sponsorship** is sought for two more students - £140 for a 6 month course or £25 / month / student.

### Guadua (Bamboo) Project -

TReeS contributed funding to the workshop and construction of a bamboo house on the outskirts of P.Maldonado. Over a dozen local people have been participating in the project which, it is hoped, will generate transferrable knowledge and skills.

### Explorer's Inn -

Kim Failor, an ex-guide (2001), has been appointed as head-guide to co-ordinate and organise guiding and research. She plans to introduce some projects that can run on an on-going basis that will be suitable for naturalists to undertake in with their guiding duties. She also wants to re-organise their other activities so they are undertaken more rigorously, for example, the collection of reliable weather data, monitoring trails, keeping detailed logs, etc. She is planning on staying until June next year and then hopes to hand over to someone else to continue the role.

### TReeS Peru -

TReeS funded Alfredo Garcia, TReeS Peru, to attend the 'MAP' (Madre de Dios, Acre, Pando) workshop in Cobija, Bolivia, in September. It brought together NGO's from Acre, Brazil; Pando, Bolivia; and Madre de Dios interested in sustainable development issues. The reports for the June and July meetings will be placed in the TReeS UK libraries.

The TReeS Peru office has provided support, including e-mail facilities, to other organisations during recent months to enable them to maintain contact with counterparts.

### Friends of TReeS: news -

Our congratulations to Chris Kirkby and Sandra Felipe, long-term TReeS collaborators, who have recently tied the knot in Puerto Maldonado.

Our congratulations as well to Alfredo Garcia y Jenny Gomez, TReeS Peru representatives, with the arrival of Nicolas. Mother and baby are doing well.

We were also saddened to learn of the passing of Mirtha Gunther after a short illness. Mirtha was responsible for ensuring that the Explorer's Inn survived the difficult early 1990's when tourist numbers fell drastically. Our commiserations and thoughts have been passed to Max.

### Notes from Picaflor Research Centre

In May, an abundance of ripe fallen breadfruit enticed the usually wary paca to approach the buildings after dark, slinking across patches of light outside the kitchen windows. They soon habituated to observers, allowing guests to approach within a few metres to take photos. We recorded up to 10 paca at a time, and had plenty of opportunity to wonder at the range and

volume of groans, grunts and growls produced by these large rodents when they get together. Although there were still plenty of breadfruit available in June, the number of paca dwindled and our attention switched to daytime visitors. A grey-necked wood rail made its first appearance around the buildings, and has continued to appear early mornings and late afternoons, having developed a taste for fallen papaya. It is frequently seen feeding on the same papaya as an agouti - the agouti initially drove the rail away, but they have now settled down to feeding side by side, although the rail remains decidedly jumpy.

Out on the trails, and I was surprised at a close encounter with an adult male white-fronted capuchin. Seeing one isn't so unusual, but its behaviour was unusually aggressive; where I would have expected a small squeak followed by an unobtrusive retreat, this individual approached to within 6 metres, shaking branches and breaking off sections to hurl violently to the ground, squeaking as he circled me. When I moved on, he followed for about 5 minutes. The rest remained more typically cryptic, betraying their presence by the occasional rattle and squeak as they watched their strawberry blonde hero see me off. I'm glad they are such small monkeys if that's their attitude.

I had recently been lamenting the absence of razor-billed curassow around Picaflor, and so I was very pleased to walk into one at the start of Picaflor main trail in July. Observations over the next week revealed two individuals, always within the first 100m of the main trail. The bird would typically walk slowly along the trail ahead of the observer until it could turn up a convenient side trail and let the person go past. These large, impressive birds are particularly vulnerable to overhunting, having the unfortunate tendency to be extremely conspicuous and virtually tame when approached by humans. Their long term future in the buffer zone will depend on whether there are large enough areas of suitable habitat free from hunting, to support a breeding population. I hope we will see more curassow around Picaflor in the future.

Mammal sightings around Picaflor in July included 'paca with sheep's tails'- a group of 5 pacarana (*Dinomys branickii*) ambling past the kitchen at 5am, and on the trails the largest group of coatis we've seen at Picaflor so far - 16 individuals in one tree; they descended one by one.

I walked unexpectedly into another bird in August, this time an ocellated poorwill which I completely failed to see until it leapt from the ground in front of me, and landed a metre along the trail, giving a convincing imitation of mortal injury by beating its wings irregularly against the ground. Sure enough, there were 2 pinkish-white eggs in a shallow hollow at the side of the trail. A step closer to the bird and it flipped another metre away and renewed its floundering, at which point I retreated.

Mammal sightings in August were boosted by a river journey to Condénado and back, at the request of a guest with a yearning to see capybara. We saw a record 35 individuals, in 6 separate groups, most of them well habituated to passing boats. We've given

up assuming that a boat stopping outside Picaflor means visitors - it's usually tour groups taking photos of capybara on the beach.

**May:** temperature range 19-30.5 C, 14 days of rain.

**June:** 14.5-29 C, 9 days of rain.

**July:** 16.5-30 C, 10 days of rain.

**August:** 15-31.5 C, 8 days of rain.

Laurel Hanna [www.picaflor.org](http://www.picaflor.org)

### **Project La Torre**

This project which is supported by a Peruvian NGO, ANIA, has made much progress since May. The community of La Torre, which is just upriver from Explorer's Inn on the Tambopata river, has set aside an area as a 'children's forest'. Workshops for children are held on the sustainable collection of natural resources and their processing - for example, carving balsa wood into animals such as tapirs and armadillos which can be sold to tourists. Also, a nutritional expert is checking and diagnosing the health and nutritional status of the children in the community, and a clean water system is being installed at the school. English classes, for children and adults, continue to be held in the school twice a week, with the help of Greenforce volunteers.

The community as a whole is also benefitting from visits by tourists from Explorer's Inn who cross the Tambopata river by canoe to the nearest house and then walk upstream along the river bank visiting several other family homes until they arrive at the centre of the community. Individual families benefit by selling them handicrafts they have made. Also, a donations box at Explorer's Inn is opened each month at the community assembly, and has provided significant funds for community level benefits.

[www.projectlаторre.org](http://www.projectlаторre.org)

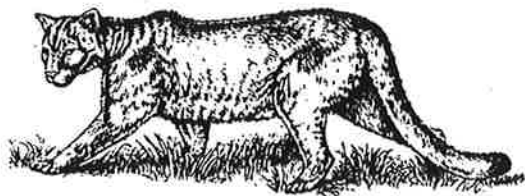
### **Las Piedras Expedition 2002**

Bjoern Schulte-Herbruggen, the Expedition leader, writes: "I have just come back from six weeks travelling up the river Las Piedras. We collected very interesting but disturbing data. We walked 1000km of transects, completed more than 100 interviews collected in logging camps as far up as the Alto Purus, made estimates of the number of loggers working in Las Piedras, and compiled monthly extraction of mahogany figures and data on the market for bushmeat.

We have discussed our preliminary results with the NGO's in P.Maldonado and are organising extended follow-ups in logging concessions for next year.

We also stayed at the lovely Las Piedras lodge, run by ex-RN Emma Hulme and her partner, where we saw lots of spider monkeys and also got a sighting of a jaguar !!

Further details will be included in the next TReeS newsletter.



### **Shihuahuaco Research Project**

Adela Hepworth, a TReeS member, writes: "I have been undertaking a research project since May 1992 entitled 'The ecological importance of *Dipteryx micrantha* to nesting macaws in Lower Tambopata, Madre de Dios, Peru: a comparison of natural cavities in five species of emergent trees'.

*Dipteryx* is a keystone species in Tambopata providing essential resources for endangered macaws, as well as a host of other species. Its ecological importance is two-fold: firstly, *Dipteryx* has a propensity to form cavities which provide crucial nesting sites for birds in particular scarlet macaws (*Ara macao*) and red-green macaws (*A. chloroptera*); and, secondly, *Dipteryx* fruits during the dry season providing valuable food sources both for birds, and for a host of other species. *Dipteryx* also play an important economic role in the Lower Tambopata, in the form of timber extraction and charcoal production by the Native Community of Bahauja (NCB). *Dipteryx micrantha* (Harms), or the Ironwood tree, is regionally known as the shihuahuaco. *Dipteryx* is a canopy emergent and has been found to reach a height of up to 60 metres. On average trees with 1 metre diameter are 800 years old, and individuals have been found as old as 1200 years old. This life cycle makes *Dipteryx* extraction an unsustainable option. If extractive activity continues

at the current rate, the *Dipteryx* population will be greatly depleted within 2 years and the only individuals remaining will be those in reserves or within areas designated to ecotourism. The scarcity of natural nest sites in the Lower Tambopata is a problem confounded by current *Dipteryx* logging activity in the NCB. Results of this project so far confirm that *Dipteryx* not only provide the largest number of high quality cavities of any emergent species in the forest, but are one of the most abundant emergent tree species in the study area. This study highlights the urgent need to protect *Dipteryx* in the Lower Tambopata and the Native Community of Bahauja due to the scarcity of natural nest sites, the propensity of *Dipteryx* to form cavities, and the lack of alternative species with good cavities.

This research is providing the groundwork for a further project to be set up working with the NCB 'Adopt a *Dipteryx*'. This project aims to provide an alternative income for the NCB to enable them to protect *Dipteryx* in the community.

Please see <http://www.duke.edu/~djb4/> for details of how you can help.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Anglo-Peruvian Society who kindly provided funding towards this project, Dr D. Brightsmith (University of Duke, USA) for his academic support, and Rainforest Expeditions (Puerto Maldonado, Peru) for their logistical support.

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## Peru News

After over one year in office President Toledo's popularity rating has fallen from 60% to just 17%. Most people feel frustrated and disappointed by a lack of action and a failure to make good electoral pledges. This was compounded by scandals involving an illegitimate daughter (now acknowledged) and the First Lady receiving payments for consultancy work. Local elections in mid-November will prove a good indicator of Toledo's first year in office. Local elections will be held on 17th November and will be an important indicator of Toledo's initial policies.

Freezing temperatures and snowfalls hit southern Peru in July/August. Over 75 people died, 25,000 suffered damage to their homes and 80,000 cattle died. Even llamas couldn't cope with the conditions!

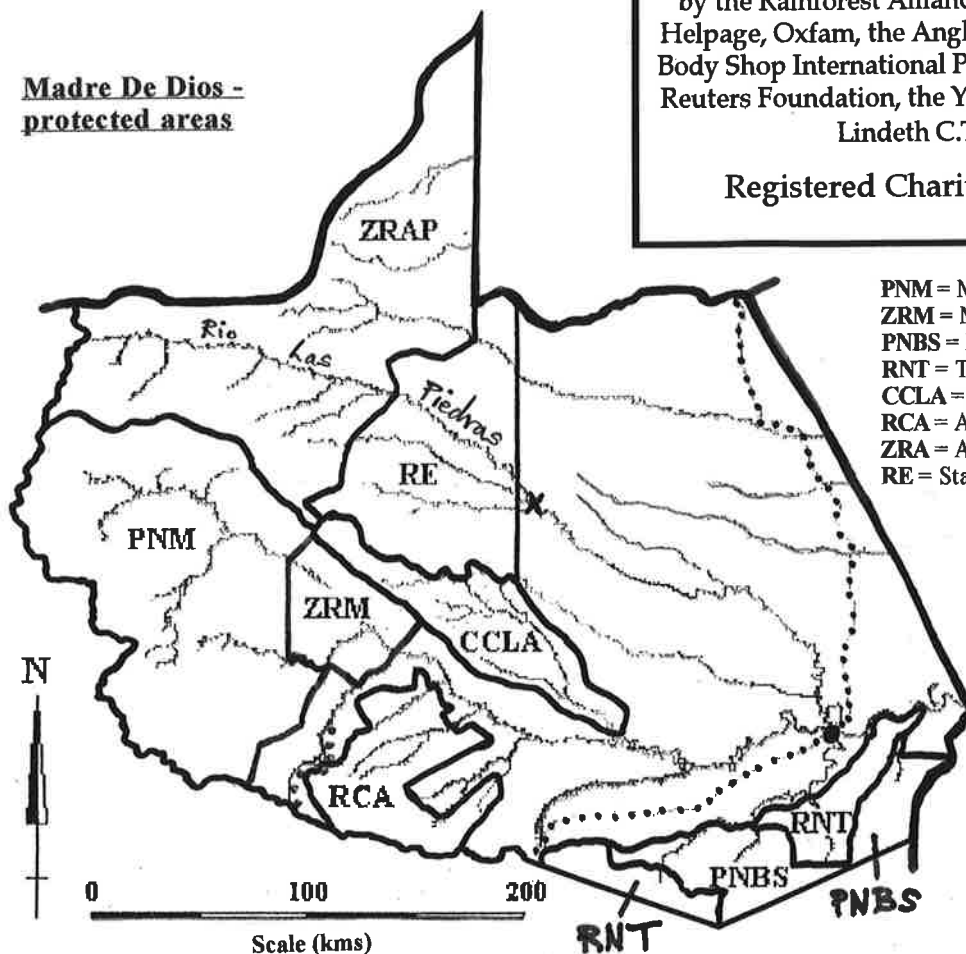
In July 26 young people died in a fire in a disco in a wealthy Lima suburb which was holding a themed night with 'zoo' animals and fire stunts!

## TReeS UK Libraries

Forthcoming deposits will include -

- Project Las Piedras: Preliminary Report;
- Project La Torre newsletters nos. 2 + 3;
- MAP workshop reports;
- Conservation International report on the TCRZ (Nov'99) (untranslated);
- Preliminary report from the BSN & TCRZ planning workshop held in June 2002;
- 'Infierno cuida sus bosques' a report by 'Insituto Bien Comun' as to how the native community of Bahauja manages its forest resources (untranslated);
- various reports about the conflict between loggers & non-loggers in Madre de Dios (mainly untranslated);
- Project Sepahua 2002 preliminary report.

## Madre De Dios - protected areas



## Forthcoming Events

'Peruvian Xmas Fair', Peruvian Embassy, 52 Sloane St., London SW1 (Tel. 0207.435.1917), 30th Nov. and 1st Dec, 10am - 4pm. Stalls selling Peruvian food & crafts. TReeS will have a stall.

'Expedition Evening' of the Anglo-Peruvian Society featuring the Las Piedras expedition is likely to be held next March. More details in the next newsletter.

## TReeS Merchandise - for Xmas!

\* **NEW - Frogs of Tambopata CD.** A CD of frog calls identifying 70 frog species found in the Tambopata area. Price - £12.50.

\* **NEW - Curl Crested Aracari T-shirt** based on a colour painting by rainforest artist Eustace Barnes. Price - £9 (XL), £8.50 (L), bleached & unbleached.

\* **Girl of the Rainforest:** a CD of Andean music and poems by Sophia Buchuck & other Peruvian musicians. 10 tracks. Price: £9 (£4 to TReeS).

\* **Fiesta Music of Peru:** a CD of traditional Andean music recorded at fiestas in small mountain villages. Over 60 tracks. Price: £10 (£4 to TReeS).

(All prices include postage and packing)

\*\* See enclosed **Merchandise List** for details of other products \*\*

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Patron - Norman Myers

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

Registered Charity No. 298054

PNM = Manu National Park  
ZRM = Manu Reserved Zone  
PNBS = Bahuaja-Sonene National Park  
RNT = Tambopata National Reserve  
CCLA = Los Amigos Conservation Concession  
RCA = Amaraeri Comunal Reserve  
ZRA = Alto Purus Reserved Zone  
RE = State Reserve for uncontacted native peoples

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x Monte Salvado.  
... Road