

'Projects and Expedition Evening' of the Anglo-Peruvian Society featuring the **Las Piedras expedition; *Dipteryx* research at Tambopata and Hummingbird studies at Machu Picchu**, 5th March, 6.30-9pm, Canning Ho., 2 Belgrave Sq., London SW1 (nearest tube station - Hyde Park: Picadilly Line). Tickets - £6 (TReeS members), including light refreshments (£7 non-members). Tickets available on the door (arrive by 6.15pm).

Severe Flooding - Emergency Appeal

Southern Peru has been severely affected for the last month by torrential, El Nino related, rains. They were the worst rains for several years with over 60,000 people affected in some way and at least 10 deaths.

On 8th February the government declared a 90 day state of emergency in the departments of Madre de Dios and Puno. President Toledo visited the worst affected areas, including Puerto Maldonado.

In Madre de Dios river levels rose at 7-10cm per hour at their peak. Over 180 settlements have been badly affected, including 7 native communities, involving 5,000 families (16,000 people), especially in the Inambari area. The P.Maldonado-Cusco road has been cut in five places, the rivers are impassable and, though Hercules planes have flown emergency aid in to Puerto Maldonado airport, there is a lack of helicopters to distribute it. Thirty schools and eight medical posts have been badly damaged. Lowlying districts of Puerto Maldonado and communities along the Tambopata river have also been affected.

* **Emergency appeal** - donations are requested to generate a fund for allocation by TReeS Peru through local representative organisations.

FENAMAD Appeal Update

The rainy season means that logging activity on the Las Piedras river has ceased until April/May.

However, the funds raised by TReeS have remained crucial in enabling FENAMAD to secure media coverage for their views with respect to the presence of illegal loggers on the upper Las Piedras river, to visit other relevant organisations in Lima and to prepare and distribute related educational materials.

FENAMAD, through co-ordination with the central government have successfully blocked a new draft timber extraction law covering untitled lands. They have also contributed wording to the new 'Ley de Regionalisacion', which will define the powers of the new Regional governments and insisted that they must follow national law with respect to the granting of mining and forestry concessions. A new Inter-sectoral Ministerial Commission will look into illegal logging in the Peruvian Amazon.

Following the local regional elections, in which the 'loggers' leader was elected President of Madre de Dios, local NGO's met with the Federation of Small

Timber Workers for the Sustainable Management of Madre de Dios (FEPEFMAD). A delegation was sent from the meeting to Lima to develop strategies for negotiation on forest policy and territorial regulation.

FENAMAD is also now directly involved in the running of guard posts, guarding against illegal logging, on the Las Piedras and Tahuamanu rivers.

TReeS Peru, working with other NGO's, has assisted FENAMAD in compiling an Emergency plan - development of procedures and their validation - in case of future contact between the 'uncontacted' native peoples and illegal loggers.

Bahauja-Sonene National Park

In mid-November TReeS Peru met with other NGO's to discuss the National Park & National Reserve Master Plan. Since June '02 20 workshops have been held with communities and other interested parties. From December '02 to April '03 socio-economic and technical studies will be carried out to generate more definite community proposals for the Master Plan.

Laia Cateura, a TReeS volunteer, is assisting INRENA in preparing the management Master Plan.

English Language Students -

Thanks to the generosity of a TReeS member a total of 3 students can currently be funded. One of these is Oscar Mishaja, the young trainee healer, from the Ese'ija Cultural Centre.

TReeS Peru

The TReeS Peru office has been very active over recent months (see the above sections) as well as continuing to advise the Ese'ija Cultural Centre, Project La Torre and numerous researchers passing through Puerto Maldonado.

* **Current funding needs** - \$100 per month to cover central running costs.



Project La Torre

Elizabeth Raine (ex EI RN and co-coordinator of PLT) is developing an International School Partnership Programme (ISPP) which aims to enhance the education of rural schools in Tambopata and schools in the UK. Students of both participant schools benefit through enhanced environmental, cultural and social education. The relationship is reciprocal; the UK school receives an exhibition, information packs and presentations with regards to life in the Amazon and for the children living there; the Peruvian school will send a package of drawings, arts and crafts and other gifts depending upon their available resources. In return for this the UK School executes fund raising activities to send donations to their Peruvian counterpart. Donations will be administered by TReeS and allocated to the individual schools according to problems identified by the teacher, Children, Parent's Association and Elizabeth. Progress updates will be emailed with appropriate frequency.

Part of the Peruvian School educational enhancement involves an environmental education module with the aim of encouraging local support for sustainable development and respect for protected areas.

Currently there are 3 UK schools involved - Alice Ottley School, Worcester; Ardgowan Primary School, Glasgow; Hornsey School for Girls, London.

TReeS Peru have assumed responsibility for managing a \$10,000.00 fund of Conservation International, a large US NGO. The 'Environmental Fund for Schools in the Protected Areas of Tambopata' aims to improve the environment for learning, general and environmental education. The project officially starts on 1st February and will terminate on 1st August 2003. The project is a pilot venture involving 10 schools (3 urban and 7 rural).

For more information on both projects please contact elizabeth_raine@yahoo.co.uk

Reaching new heights

Tim Baker of the University of Leeds, describes his recent work on long-term changes in forest dynamics and biomass at Tambopata -

How will tropical forests respond to climate change? What is, and will, happen to the vast quantities of carbon stored in these ecosystems, as a result of increases in temperature and atmospheric carbon dioxide? What effects will climate change have on tropical forest biodiversity?

These are some of the questions that are being addressed by a new project initiated by researchers at the Universities of Leeds and Edinburgh, UK, entitled, 'RAINFOR' (Amazon Rainforest Inventory Network, Rede Amazonica de Inventarios Forestales, Rede Amazonica de Inventários Florestais). By bringing together researchers who maintain forest plots through-out Amazonia, this project aims to monitor long-term changes in forest biomass and dynamics and answer crucial questions concerning future trends in the global carbon cycle.

Forest plots maintained in the Tambopata region of Peru play a critical role in this network. Originally established by Al Gentry, starting in 1979, and since maintained and augmented by Dr Oliver Phillips, they provide some of the most valuable, long-term data on forest dynamics in the Amazon region.

Repeated measurements of these plots over the last 20 years have played a vital role in establishing two key results: both forest biomass and turnover rates (the mean of mortality and recruitment) have significantly risen in Amazonian forests since the 1970s.

An important function of the network is to maintain regular censuses of existing forest plots. I worked with Dr Phillips and Rodolfo Vásquez, in the Iquitos region of Peru earlier in 2002, remeasuring trees in the cluster of forest plots that have been established in this area.

However, the network also provides the opportunity to develop a wide variety of other research, and answer questions at a regional scale that have previously been out of reach. I am currently interested in the differences in stand height between different forest types, and how this relates to climatic and edaphic variation. Understanding these patterns will improve our estimates of forest biomass. Currently, above-ground biomass is simply estimated from stand basal area (the total cross-sectional area of all stems >10cm diameter, in each of the one hectare plots). However, stand height varies between forests growing in different climates or on different soil types, and therefore forests with equivalent basal area may not have equivalent biomass.

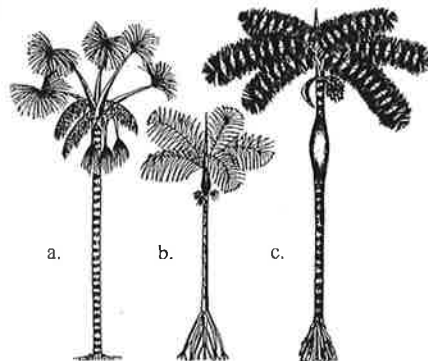
To address this problem, I will be working in the Tambopata region with a Peruvian botanist, Antonio Peña Cruz, and comparing stand height here, with data from across western Amazonia: northern Peru, Ecuador and Bolivia.

Calling all ex-RNs of Explorers Inn

There is now an email newsletter for all ex-RNs of Explorers Inn. If you would like to receive this newsletter, please contact me at - perunaturalist@yahoo.com.

Also, if any ex-RNs would like to contribute articles, on either current projects of interest or comments or stories from your time at Explorers Inn, please send them to the same address.

Kim Failor



a) Aguajo palm (*Mauritia* sp.)
b) Pona palm (*Socratea* sp.)
c) Huacrapona palm (*Iriartea* sp.)

Notes from Picaflor Research Centre

Trail clearing in September near the buildings revealed a grey-brown fur ball under a clump of grass, which squeaked when approached. We hastily covered up the exposed baby Brazilian rabbits and I kept an eye on the nest over the next few days, impressed with how the fur ball expanded to accommodate the growing young-sters whilst still providing them with shelter. Any worries about their vulnerability were dispelled when we found a big cat print in the soft sand of the trail just a few centimeters from the rabbits, the nest still intact and occupied. We are now pretty much over-run with Brazilian rabbits- they must also be beyond the scope of the tegu lizards.

After a very welcome month's holiday in Britain in October, we were back at Picaflor in November with a backlog of trail clearing and gardening to keep our volunteers busy. Checking on the boat one night, Pico was surprised to find a two-toed sloth eating clay at a spot often visited by paca and rabbits.

In December, Pico crossed the path of a herd of 20-30 white-lipped peccary on the Picaflor quebrada trail, the first sighting in the area for several years. Other sightings in December included a group of 5 giant otters on Lago Condado, red howler monkeys on Picaflor main trail and several armadillos trundling around numerous Picaflor trails. I can recommend armadillos for easy wildlife viewing, they appear to neither know nor care if people get in their way on the trail, one almost walked over my foot.

In 2003 we hope to start a Honey bee research project and another looking at the Anuje and Brazil-nut zones close to the lodge.

September temperature range: 16-32.5 C 6 days rain
October: 19 - 33.5 C 7 days of rain
November: 17 - 33.6 C 12 days of rain
December: 21.4 - 32.7 C 16 days of rain

Laurel Hanna

www.picaflor.org

New Conservation initiatives

* **Manu National Park** - on the 14th of July, 2002, Manu National Park was extended by just over 215,500 hecs, to include the majority of the former the Manu Reserved Zone, as well as additional land along the Pinquen River.

No less than 80% of the Reserved Zone (194,841 hectares), and a large chunk of the headwaters of the pristine Pinquen River (20,696 hectares) are now included in the National Park.

Research during the last decade has shown that more than 50% of Manu's giant otter population inhabited what was formerly the Reserved Zone. Moreover, a vast majority of large oxbow lakes, the favorite habitat of the giant otter and where an average of around 80% of cubs are born every year, are located here. The new decree thus officially protects not only Manu's entire giant otter population but also the region where the species' reproductive success is greatest. The increased status will also permit a more integral approach to tourism management in the Park.

The 20% of the Reserved Zone that was not incorporated into Manu National Park forms part of the Amigos River watershed and has been included in the adjacent Amigos River Conservation Concession, thereby creating a buffer zone to the east of the Park.

***Otishi National Park** - a new National Park has been declared after 40 years of lobbying. The Otishi (Cutivireni) National Park is located to the north of Machu Picchu and west of the Urubamba valley. It covers 305,973 hectares, has an altitudinal range of 500-4,520m and consists of a limestone plateau covered with humid sub-tropical forest. It includes a huge cave, a 250m high waterfall and the largest natural rock arch in the world - 250m wide and 130m high.

A RAP team in 1997 confirmed the very high levels of biodiversity in the area including Spectacled and Andean bears, and many endemic species.

Adjoining the Park two new Comunal Reserves have also been declared: **The Ashaninka C.R.** (184,468 hecs) and **The Matsigenka C.R.** (218,906 hecs).

These 3 protected areas help to extended northwards the important 'conservation corridor' that runs from northern Bolivia in to Peru, already linking the Bahuaja-Sonene National Park, Amaraeri Comunal Reserve and Manu National Park.

Giant Otter Research Project

The Project reports that -

In September, the FZS Project once again conducted its annual giant otter census in Manu. A total of 63 different individuals were observed, including 4 in Isla de los Valles, 3 in Cocha Juarez, 7 in Otorongo, 12 on Cocha Salvador, and 5 plus two solitaries on Cocha Cashu. Of the 11 otter families encountered, 6 had a litter of cubs. There were many exciting changes, for instance, we were delighted to recognize three animals that we had not seen for 3 years. In addition, two new families were observed.

Giant otter survey methodology and habitat management standardization - 23.11.-6.12.2002, the first giant otter field course took place to standardize distribution survey and population census methodologies as well habitat management techniques. The course was organized by FZSGOP and brought together giant otter specialists from several countries.

Following the course, participants visited the Palma Real River watershed, 4 hours from Puerto Maldonado, within the Tambopata National Reserve and the Bahuaja Sonene National Park. During the first 6 days we investigated the Patuyacu, tributary of the Palma Real River, for signs of giant otter activity. Despite frequent heavy rain, we encountered a pair of giant otters on the Palma Real and a group of 3 on the Patuyacu, as well as several campsites and dens, of varying freshness. Experiences were compared from each of our own work areas, which include flooded forests, oxbow lakes, small rivers, and large rivers with rocky banks, to improve upon a first draft of a paper on distribution survey and census methodology standardization, and to test the accompanying data collection sheets such that they can be applied to any

region throughout the giant otter's range in South America. A number of workshops were held to this effect, as well as a brainstorming session on how to incorporate the standardized methodologies within an overall monitoring strategy (using that which exists for *Lutra lutra* as a starting point).

The second part of the course brought us to the relative comfort of three different tourism lodges, each involved with tourism management plans on two lakes, Cocococha and Tres Chimbadas. Since tourism is an important, potentially sustainable activity which can be harnessed as a force for conservation in many of our study sites, we were interested to learn more about the collaboration of FZSGOP, tourism companies, and the Protected Area authorities, in particular how to minimize the impact of tourists on giant otters yet maximize tourist satisfaction.

President Toledo - UK visit

During his first official UK visit, a one day visit, President Toledo met with Tony Blair at Chequers (after visiting a country pub), then the Dept. of Trade & Industry, before giving a lecture at the LSE.

In the lecture, his main focus was on the need to improve education standards as a mechanism for generating long-term investment and jobs, which would then lead to economic development and a reduction in poverty levels. 54% (44% Latin America) of Peruvians live below the poverty line and 23% (18%) live in extreme poverty (below \$1/day). He acknowledged that this was not a quick fix approach and would not produce immediate results as reflected by his declining popularity in the polls. However, greater economic stability would reduce the risk of 'narco-terrorism' reappearing and the need to accept EU and US food aid, which Toledo has rejected.

Other Peru News -

Economic growth for 2002 was 4% - one of the best rates in Latin America - albeit from a low base.

In elections in November for the 25 new regional Presidencies President Toledo's party did very poorly only winning Callao outright. APRA, led by ex-President Alan Garcia, did much better than expected winning 12 regions outright, including Lima. Madre de Dios was won by the 'Movimiento Nueva Izquierda' - their only region, while independents won another 7 and smaller parties the other 4 regions.

The Camisea consortium developing the Camisea gas field have applied to the Inter-American Development Bank for \$500 million to complete the pipeline to the coast but were fined \$1 million by the government energy regulator for environmental infringements.

HIV figures indicate that 53,000 (UK - 34,000) people in Peru are infected with HIV in a population of 26 million (UK - 59 million). In 2001 3,900 died (7.3% of all cases) while in the UK 460 died (0.13%).

The trial of Vladimir Montesinos, right-hand man of ex-President Fujimori, has begun. He faces 57 charges including drug trafficking, money laundering, bribery, etc. Over 1,300 other people, including generals and former government ministers, also face charges.



TReeS UK Libraries

Forthcoming deposits will include -

- Mammal Log Summary from Explorer's Inn, Sept. '01 to June '02.
- Giant River Otter sightings log, Explorer's Inn, 1984-2000.
- Giant River Otter Project Newsletter No.6.
- A paper entitled: 'A concerted approach to *Una de Gato* development in Peru.'
- A paper entitled: 'Assessing Habitat Utilization by Neotropical Primates: A New Approach'.

Forthcoming Events

'Projects and Expedition Evening' - see box on first page of this Newsletter.

TReeS AGM - this will be held in London, in June. More details in the May Newsletter.

TReeS Merchandise - T-shirts for the Summer !

* **NEW - Earth Warrior T-shirt:** the return of our very popular T-shirt from the mid-1990's. A design, based on a Nasca lines image, in 'Andean earth red' on an unbleached T-shirt. Price - £9 (XL), £8.50 (L).

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

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

(All prices include postage and packing)

** See enclosed **Merchandise List** enclosed in last Newsletter for more items **

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