

**11th March**, Anglo-Peruvian Society 'Expedition evening', 6.30-9pm, Canning House, Belgrave Sq., London SW1 (nearest tube station: Hyde Park Corner) with speakers about: **Birds of the Tumbes** dry forests, **Las Piedras expedition 2003** and **Serjali expedition** (central Peru, Machigenka territory to the north of Manu). Tickets: £6 (including refreshments) available from - The Secretary, Anglo-Peruvian Society, P.O.Box 494, Wembley, Middx HA9 8ZB (State that you are a TReeS member).

**13th March**, TReeS meeting, 2-5pm, Ground Floor Meeting room, BTCV, 80 York Way, London, N1 (nearest tube station: Kings X). Dr Helen Newing of TReeS will report on her recent trip to Peru for TReeS and DICE (University of Kent), plus Karen Tailby about the start of the 'Forests Forever' project.

## Ese'aja Health & Medicinal Plant Manual

The bilingual (Ese'aja / Spanish) health and medicinal plant manual (65pp), written and illustrated by Ese'aja collaborators is close to publication as a result of TReeS support.

The aims, outlined in greater detail in the last Newsletter, are to promote the use of medicinal plants to treat common illnesses; to strengthen, encourage and value the Ese'aja's concepts of health and illness; to strengthen Ese'aja capacitation; and to encourage and strengthen the Ese'aja language: this is one of the first publications in Ese'aja.

The print-run (600 copies) will provide a copy for every Ese'aja household - almost all households have a family member who can read.

**Sponsorship** is sought to contribute towards the total cost - £1,450 (£1,250 already secured).

**Funding sought - £200**

Any funds secured over and above this will be put towards the Bolivian edition of the manual - the Ese'aja language has several distinctive variations.

## Ese'aja ancestral territories reconstruction project

The Ese'aja are the traditional inhabitants of the Bahauja (Tambopata) and Sonene (Heath) river valleys. During the 20th century they were progressively forced to settle close to P.Maldonado by church and state, and to give up their nomadic way of life. Though traditional stories tell of the lands they once occupied it is only the few remaining 'elders' who have direct experience of these places. In recent decades very few Ese'aja have had the resources to revisit these lands.

This new project aims to provide Ese'aja elders accompanied by younger community members with the resources and opportunity to visit the territories of the upper Bahauja and Sonene valleys that they once roamed across to facilitate the retention of their ecological and cultural history.

With this enhanced knowledge they will also be in a better position to participate in the remaining rounds of discussions relating to the future of the area within the Bahauja-Sonene National Park. To date the Ese'aja have only been able to contribute on a limited basis from a position of partial cultural ignorance.

Initial meetings have already been held in the Ese'aja communities of Sonene & Palma Real with associated trips up the Sonene (Heath) and Palma Real rivers.

**Funding sought - \$9,572** (\$500 already secured).

## Fauna Forever

The first phase of the project begins this month with 5 international volunteers whose contributions pay for the running of the project, plus 3 students from P.Maldonado and another from Cusco. The trails to be used at each lodge were cleared during January so a prompt start can be made in the field.

TReeS USA has assisted in the transfer of donated equipment out to Peru.

## TReeS Peru Update

\* **TReeS Peru:** the TReeS Peru website can be viewed at - [www.geocities.com/treesperu](http://www.geocities.com/treesperu)

In addition to activities mentioned elsewhere Alfredo Garcia and TReeS Peru team members have recently been involved in a variety of meetings and the preparation of reports as follows:

\* The 'Defensoria del Pueblo' (local ombudsman) for Madre de Dios requested reports about mining and logging threats to native communities in the region.

\* 'Indigenous populations in isolation and initial contact: actual problems & institutional perspectives' - a week long conference in Cusco involving representatives from Peru and Brasil for which TReeS acted as co-ordinator, made the logistical arrangements for the Brazilian delegates from Acre and chaired some of the workshops. TReeS is also responsible for publishing the conclusions of this meeting: <http://earth.prohosting.com/nativo>

\* Rubber tapper representatives from Peru, Bolivia and Brazil were brought together - TReeS acted as one of the facilitators - as a result of discussions earlier in the year at the MAP workshops. Discussions considered ways of improving technical aspects of small-scale rubber production as a mechanism for reactivating the rubber trade in the region.

\* Madre De Dios regional government meeting to establish a working forum with NGO's so there is greater inter-action and understanding between them.

\* International Forum of native peoples, government organisations and NGOs from Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador, for 2 days, in Lima, organised by a Danish NGO. A variety of common themes and an interchange of experiences were covered.

\* IAP (Instituto Indigena de la Amazonia Peruana) meeting to compile tourism website for Madre de Dios. UNAMAD (Amazon University of Madre de Dios) will co-ordinate the group.

\* **Chris Kirkby:** Chris is now co-ordinating the RN programme and research at Explorer's Inn. Further details can be found about being an RN at - [www.geocities.com/resident\\_naturalist](http://www.geocities.com/resident_naturalist) and about field research at the Explorer's Inn at - [www.geocities.com/fsp\\_tambopata](http://www.geocities.com/fsp_tambopata)

\* **Wilfredo Arizabal:** as director of the Natural History museum at UNSAAC (University of San Antonio de Abad), Cusco and with TReeS support, organised a 10 day workshop in Alto Madre de Dios. It focused on fauna monitoring and evaluation techniques in tropical rainforests and was attended by 30 students from Peru, Bolivia, Colombia and Spain.

\* **Daniel Rodriguez:** a TReeS volunteer, has continued to liaise with Ese'ija communities about the Bahauja-Sonene Plan Maestro and visited Pilcopata in the Upper Madre de Dios to participate in a meeting about establishing a medicinal plant project. He is preparing a socio-economic study for FENAMAD about the small Harakmbut community of Masenawa which is seeking recognition as native community.

\* **Jana Traboulsi:** also joined as a TReeS volunteer. She has updated the TReeS Peru website and assisted with the production of the 'Masenawa' report.

\* **Ese'ija Cultural Centre (Centro Nape):** the Centre continues to operate on a financially autonomous basis based on fees received from tourist visits, principally from the Posadas Amazonas lodge. TReeS meets regularly with the Centre staff.

\* **English students:** two students will progress up to the next level when classes restart later this month.

TReeS has been approached by numerous other students with appropriate backgrounds but without the funds to take a supplementary english course, at Tina Smith's Academy, to complement their studies.

New sponsorship is sought - £25 per student.

## **Project La Torre**

### **\* La Torre Community (LTC) project -**

Explorer's Inn is now going to provide a Resident Naturalist volunteer (RN) as project co-ordinator. The responsibilities of the co-ordinator are to:

- maintain relations between EI and LTC;
- continue initiatives to bring benefits from tourism;
- hold educational workshops for the children;
- assist in any other LTC initiatives.

Elizabeth will frequently visit EI and LTC to liaise with the RN and collect details for the Newsletter.

The project house will be dismantled and the materials used to renovate LTC community buildings.

### **\* World Challenge Expeditions in La Torre -**

In August Inotawa Lodge, located near the La Torre community, received a group of young volunteers from World Challenge expeditions, who assisted in the painting of the school.

### **\* Life Skills Programme -**

During 2003 Nicole, together with a team from the local hospital of Santa Rosa, developed a sexual education and life skills programme. A Doctor, two psychologists and a reporter worked with a group of 37 health promoters, aged 11-15 years, from four secondary schools in P.Maldonado. The function of health promoters is to work among their peers, promoting healthy lifestyles, identifying problem cases and referring them to the local hospital.

Over four Saturdays, the group worked through various topics related to sexuality using drama, games, music and role plays. Eventually, these young people will be trained to give talks and work amongst their peers in topics related to HIV / AIDS.

### **\* HIV / AIDS in Madre de Dios -**

The collaboration with the Ministry of Health over the control of sexually transmitted infections and HIV / AIDS has led to the following initiatives:

1) 400 questionnaires were conducted in schools in Tambopata to determine the behaviours, attitudes and knowledge of adolescents in sexual and reproductive health. The results were collated and processed in the TReeS office. This baseline data will help to develop strategies of intervention for 2004.

2) A Dance and Theatre Youth Festival for International AIDS Day held in the main plaza attracted hundreds of onlookers since it was the first of its kind in the area. Young people from schools and universities presented dances and dramas with messages around HIV / AIDS and a responsible sexuality.

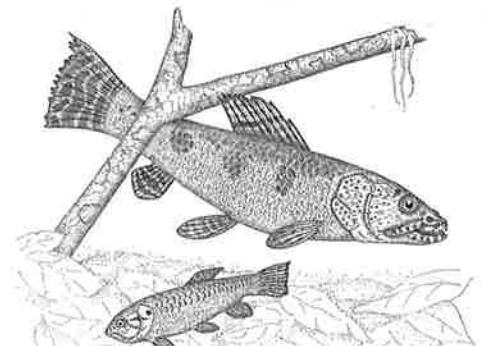
3) The Association Manos Amigas has recently been formed by members of the general public, the Ministry of Health and TReeS-Peru. Although the main objective is preventative education around HIV / AIDS, it is also to provide support for people in P.Maldonado living with HIV / AIDS and have been rejected by their families/friends. The Municipality of Tambopata, which is currently under renovation and will be used as an information centre, for workshops and as a home for people in extreme conditions.

Further details - [manosamigaspem@yahoo.com](mailto:manosamigaspem@yahoo.com)

### **\* International School Partnership Programme -**

The cultural exchange between local schools and schools in the UK, China and South Africa will be developed further in 2004. The aim is to help the children see the cultural diversity and wealth they share in each of these disparate countries.

Further details about Project La Torre - [projectlаторre@yahoo.com](mailto:projectlаторre@yahoo.com)



## Notes from Picaflor Research Centre

Mike McKinlay writes:

"Laurel Hanna has been somewhat preoccupied for the last few months. At the end of January she gave birth to her son, known for the time being I believe as simply 'Picito'. So I rashly said I would try to fill in for her in the TReeS newsletter this month.

Just a few months ago I visited Picaflor with my daughter Alison. We come from the same Oxfordshire village as Laurel and, on return, I produced an account of our visit for the village magazine. If you know the Tambopata scene well this may be an over simple account for you. But if you do not know it, or would like a brief non-scientific and thoroughly personal impression of a magical few days, you can find it on the TReeS website under the title "Up a Lazy River in Peru". As a taster, here is a brief extract:

As we proceeded up river the signs of agriculture and human habitation slipped away, the jungle closed in, and Laurel told us about the river. The Amazon river system at this point is less than 1,000 feet above sea-level, but still over 1,000 miles from the sea. So it is no surprise that it meanders as it does, covering many more than 1,000 miles as it twists and turns, forming ox-bow lakes and other wonderful watery environments for wildlife of all sorts. Laurel told us of river dolphins, electric eels and giant catfish.

What were these doing up muddy rivers so far from the sea. And the giant otters, six feet long, and crabs that had left the water altogether and lived in the jungle? Well, once upon a time, it seemed, the Amazon flowed the other way. That was before the tectonic convulsions that threw up the Andes. The rising mountains had left the forebears of these and many other creatures to adapt or die. We did not see any of these exotic creatures as we motored on but, from time to time, Pico would slow down and creep closer to the bank to show us a family of capybara, the world's largest rodents, wallowing in the mud with little black birds on their heads, or turtles sunbathing on a log with butterflies on their backs.

We were greeted at the Picaflor Research Centre by Rob and Pip, two young doctors from Cornwall, who were taking five months off to travel around South America. They had come to Picaflor as volunteers. As such they paid a modest US\$10 per day for full board, but had to stay at least 10 days and put in 3 hours work each day. Today one of their tasks had been to prepare lunch for all of us. But there were more demanding tasks too, like varnishing the whole centre, pumping water, and digging a fish pond.

We were also greeted by Loretta. Loretta was a green parrot who had been confiscated by a park warden from a local farmer who had illegally clipped her wings, and given to Laurel to regrow her feathers and return to the wild. The feathers were now regrown but Loretta was no fool and showed no sign of answering any call of the wild. She gave love bites to those she favoured and simply bit the rest.

We were briefed on domestic details. Water had to be pumped up, half a litre per pump action, from 200

feet down, which was good exercise but hard work. It could be drunk as it came, slightly brown and gritty and probably clean enough, or brown, gritty and chlorinated, so certainly clean but tasting horrid. Carry a torch when walking along the corridors at night. Otherwise you might stumble over a porcupine. Porcupines do not like being stumbled over and are liable to react spikily. One morning a porcupine that had somehow got caught out by the daylight clambered upwards and was found hanging onto the roof timbers. It glared balefully at those passing below all day before disappearing the next night."

Volunteers to assist in manging the rainforest around Picaflor lodge sought for 2004 - [www.picaflor.com](http://www.picaflor.com)

Our congratulation to laurel on the birth of 'Javier'.

## Giant River Otter population census in the River Heath watershed

The River Heath basin collects waters arising in Peru as well as Bolivia. In effect, this river not only forms the border between the two countries but is also the limit between two of the most extensive protected areas in the Amazon: the Bahuaja-Sonene National Park and Tambopata National Reserve, Peru, and the Madidi National Park, Bolivia.

In August 2003, 12 years after Christof Schenck first investigated the area, a team of 4 individuals (Raphael Notin and Kimberly Failor, biologists; Dario Cruz, field assistant; and Remberto Chihuapuri, Madidi National Park game warden) carried out a giant otter population census along the Heath, applying the methodology presented in "Standard Field Survey Techniques for the Giant Otter (*Pteronura brasiliensis*)", Groenendijk, J., et al. (in prep.).

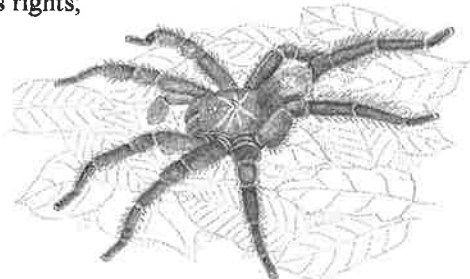
The journey had a total duration of 4 weeks, traveling upriver by 'peque-peque' for two and a half weeks, to parts increasingly more pristine. We entered 37 ox-bow lakes and 3 streams within the study area, using an inflatable boat. A total of at least 42 different giant otters were observed and their neck markings filmed; clearly, an important population has been identified for south-eastern Peru.

The Frankfurt Zoological Society Giant Otter Project collected this data in the heart of the Vilcabamba/Amoro Conservation Corridor, thanks to a binational collaboration between staff of the protected areas, and with logistical assistance from the Wildlife Conservation Society, Bolivia.

For more details visit - [www.giantotters.com](http://www.giantotters.com)

## TReeS UK Libraries: Forthcoming deposits -

- Giant River Otter project newsletter No.9;
- Project LaTorre Newsletter (January 2004);
- Las Piedras Expedition 2003 preliminary report;
- An article entitled: 'The Camisea Project and indigenous rights;



### Peru News -

Further details from the Truth Commission report in to the years of insurgency (1980-2000) show that it took 17,000 testimonies and visited 2,000 of the 6,000 mass graves identified. It also revealed that there was not a single professional Quechua/Spanish translator in Peru nor a related University course.

Of the 69,000 deaths 75% were Quechua speakers, 80% were men, 68 had no Secondary education, 56% were peasants and 50% from the dept. of Ayacucho.

President Toledo has announced a \$800m Peace and Development Plan to improve health, education, infrastructure and production in the worst affected areas.

The UK Department for International Development (DfID) is expected to cut all funding to Peru which it ranks as a 'middle income' country to cover the costs of the Iraq war. This could end support for a range of highly respected projects across Peru plus small-scale funds available for distribution by the UK Embassy, in Lima - TReeS has been a beneficiary in the past.

### Forthcoming events -

\* **'Projects & Expedition Evening'** and **'TReeS meeting'** - see box on first page of this Newsletter.

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

**This Newsletter is sponsored by -**

**Anchor Bay Entertainment:** distributors of **'Fitzcarraldo'** a film by Werner Herzog about the opera loving Peruvian rubber baron Fermin Fitzcarraldo who transported a steamboat over the watershed from the Ucayali river basin in to the Madre de Dios river basin in the late 1890s. He was attempting to take control of the rubber trade in the Madre de Dios region away from the Bolivian Suarez but drowned at the Sepahua rapids, on the river Ucayali, before he could fulfill his dream.

The rusting hulk half hidden on the river Madre de Dios bank just downriver from Puerto Maldonado is not the same boat.

Available now from all good video shops on VHS and DVD.



### TReeS Merchandise -

\* **NEW - 'Andes to Amazon':** a beautiful substantial (336 pages) coffee-table book published in Peru covering the Tambopata (Peru) and Madidi (Bolivia) regions, with superb photos by TReeS member Andre Bartschi.

TReeS special price - £48 (RRP - £60), plus £7 UK postage. This is a one-off opportunity: only 4 copies are still available on a first come first served basis - please send a separate cheque for any other purchases.

\* **NEW - Peru Calendar:** a beautiful limited edition wall calendar has been produced featuring photos from the Peruvian highlands of mountains, festivities, alpacas, etc. The calendar opens to A3 size and is perpetual - valid for any year at any time.

TReeS price - £12 (£3 to TReeS), including postage.

\* **'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).

\* **'Curl Crested Aracari' T-shirt:** based on a colour painting by rainforest artist Eustace Barnes. Price - £9 (XL) (unbleached).

(All prices include postage and packing)

**TReeS UK website - [www.geocities.com/treesweb](http://www.geocities.com/treesweb)**

**TReeS - P.O.Box 33153, London NW3 4DR**

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