



WORLD
LAND
TRUST

news

ISSUE N° 24 SPRING 2005

Sponsored by **ENTERPRISE** plants



World Land Trust
Blyth House, Bridge Street
Halesworth, Suffolk IP19 8AB, UK

Tel: 01986 874422
Fax: 01986 874425

Lo-call number 0845 045 4422*

*If you dial this number you will be charged at local (rather than national) rate – UK only.
Not available to mobile phone users



editorial

Working with Nature, not against it

Patrons:

Sir David Attenborough CH, FRS
David Gower, OBE

Honorary President:

Dr Gerard A Bertrand

Trustees:

Albertino Abela
Gil S Child
Jane Krish
Simon Lyster
Bruce Pearson
Adrian Penrose
Prof Renton Righelato
Dr Nigel Simpson

Chief Executive: John A Burton

Hon Treasurer: Mark Leaney

Special Advisors: Iain Orr
Jonathan Self

Project Partners & Contacts:

Wildlife Trust of India

Exec Director: Vivek Menon

Fundación Patagonia Natural

Exec Director: José María Musmeci

Fundación Jocotoco

UK: Nigel Simpson
Ecuador: Francisco Sornoza
USA: World Parks Endowment
(Byron Swift)

Philippine Reef & Rainforest Project (Danjungan Island)

Project Director: Gerardo L Ledesma

Belize Audubon Society

Exec Director: Anna Dominguez Hoare

Programme for Belize (Belize)

Managing Director: Edilberto Romero

Massachusetts Audubon Society

PFB Liaison: Bancroft Poor

TUVA Foundation

Exec Director: Dr Manuel Alonso

Moving?

Please be sure to let us have your new address so that we can keep your records up-to-date.

For further details on contacts and addresses please visit our website:
www.worldlandtrust.org or telephone the WLT office

Registered charity: 1001291

Christmas 2004 will forever be linked with images of the devastating tsunami engulfing vast coastal areas of S E Asia. As we awoke to the prospect of a relaxing Boxing Day we were suddenly hurtling to the other side of the world to witness the unimaginable terror and devastation of a gigantic tidal wave. We could only imagine what it could be like for the hundreds of thousands of people who lost everything that day, and as the tragic consequences unfolded it touched a raw nerve with other ordinary people in safer places. The response was unprecedented, and in these cynical times it is heartening that faced with such a visual catastrophe everyone wanted to help in their own way. No-one questioned that their donation would reach the people who needed it, instead trust was placed in the organisations whose job it has been to get the funds to the victims, and this faith has not been betrayed.

One might think that WLT's work saving endangered wilderness areas would take a back seat in the face of such a humanitarian disaster but this has not been the case. It seems that this tragedy has been something of a wake-up call, activating people into paying greater attention to the enormity of the power of nature, and the arrogance of humans to think they can control it. So on one hand we are unable to control the destruction that nature can wreak, but on the other hand we do have it within our power to destroy what nature has given us.

Recovery in the tsunami-hit areas is not just about rebuilding lives and homes it is also about working with nature to help it fight back. Despite despite the important role that mangroves play in sheltering the land from the sea, still hundreds of thousands of acres of mangroves have been ripped out to make way for tourism development and commercial



Fringing forests and coral reefs help keep nature at bay on Danjungan Island.

fish farms. As well as mangroves, coral reefs, sand dunes and fringing forests all help keep nature at bay but they too have suffered at the hands of mass tourism.

WLT first became involved in mangrove regeneration ten years ago when we helped purchase Danjungan Island in the Philippines. Back in 1996 the local community on the adjacent island of Negros realised too late that it had been a huge mistake to destroy the mangroves around their island. They were witnessing a good deal more coastal damage as well as soil erosion and WLT helped them plant mangrove 'propagules' which are now well established. Gerry Ledesma, the Philippine Reef & Rainforest Project Director, works with the local fishermen to protect the coral reefs around the island and the tsunami has given us the impetus to bring this back on to our agenda. Using our experience with both reef and rainforest conservation we will shortly be launching a Reef and Mangrove Appeal, and our partners such as the Wildlife Trust of India will be implementing the conservation in the field. We are still working on the costings, but we do know that it will

MANGROVES

"The Frontier Forests"

continued cost less than £1.00 to plant a mangrove seedling, and a donation of £25 will allow about 10m of shore line to be replanted.

Meanwhile fisherman Sombat Seeneu, and his granddaughter Pupeu Seeneu, are incubating 80 leatherback turtle eggs in Styrofoam containers at the rear of their general store near Mai Khao beach on Phuket. This was a traditional nesting site for the endangered leatherback turtle but because of human disturbance they had not returned for several years. It seems that the tsunami delivered this female turtle to the beach and as it was deserted she decided to stay and lay her eggs once more. Let's hope that Sombat and Pupei are successful in rearing and releasing their brood. This would, indeed, be a very good omen for the future.

Vivien Burton, *Editor*

GLOBAL WARMING is here to stay

While the tsunami could not be linked to global warming, and could not have been predicted, it is arguable that it is within man's power to halt many catastrophes before they occur. For instance, global warming could well see major flooding that has the potential to affect each and everyone of us. Although predictions vary wildly there is no question that Global Warming is with us. For the past three years WLT has been working on this complicated issue too, and if you would like to know more please look at our website:

www.worldlandtrust.org/carbon
WLT is inviting companies and organisations to work with us on carbon balancing. Please telephone John Burton if you would like to discuss participation: 01986 874422 or email: jab@worldlandtrust.org



Mangroves are an important buffer between the land and sea. Their nutrient-rich waters provide breeding grounds for fish, crustaceans and other wildlife, often commercially important. They also act as 'shock absorbers' for typhoons and hurricanes. United Nations have reported that they could certainly have reduced the recent tsunami damage.

The arching prop roots of mangroves have several important functions as well as providing stability. Under water they create a complicated woody mesh which strains the silt and debris from tidal currents. This sediment accumulates as a submerged bank and becomes enriched with the decaying remains of plants and animals swept in from the reef. Dead mangrove leaves are also decomposed by the thriving hordes of marine bacteria which feast on the rotting compost.

These shallow waters are full of marine life - some taking up residence others using it to breed - they are also an important nursery for coral reef fish. Mangroves flower in June and July and the nectar is used in some areas by local people to make 'mangrove' honey which is of very high quality.

The WLT has already supported successful replanting in the Philippines, and as we go to press our Projects Co-ordinator, Kirsty Burgess, is about to visit the coastal villages on Negros with our local Partners from the Philippine Reef & Rainforest Project, to see the results of the plantings a decade ago, and to discuss the future programmes. Meanwhile in India, our partners, the Wildlife Trust of India, are keen to start mangrove projects in the Nicobar Islands and other areas devastated by the tsunami. They are also investigating the potential of coral 'planting'.

The Reef and Mangrove Appeal



Above: This one-year old mangrove 'propagule' was planted by Dominic White, former WLT Projects Manager, as part of the Philippine Reef & Rainforest Project in 1996. The flowers and fruit are also important to wildlife.

Left: The aerial roots of the mangrove provide stability in the shallow waters and if cleared immediately destabilise the coastline and expose it to erosion.

With Fundación Jocotoco in Ecuador



WLT Trustee, Jane Krish, visits 'her' acres

Eco-gifts really gained profile this Christmas. In 2003, I was given a single WLT rainforest acre, but in 2004 I was delighted to receive three acres plus an Oxfam 'veggie patch'. These gifts are an excellent antidote to the consumerist Christmas, especially since both giver and beneficiary can enjoy a warm glow of helping the world.

However, an acre isn't just for Christmas. Giving money for acres is fantastic and, as a trustee, I'm not remotely embarrassed about urging everyone to think of giving them as presents at all times of the year. These acres really do last forever, as I saw last autumn when I joined a small group to see first-hand how our money is being used to buy land to save it for nature.

Although only six years old WLT's Ecuadorian partners, Fundación Jocotoco (FJ), have achieved a huge amount, and with Nigel Simpson, a fellow WLT Trustee and FJ Board member, leading our trip it was with huge excitement that we set off to visit four of the seven FJ reserves - two in the south, Buenaventura and Tapichalaca, Yanacocha near Quito and Rio Canandé in the north west.

Ecuador has some of the most biologically diverse fauna and flora in the world but growing pressures from increased population mean accelerating rates of deforestation, thus removing key habitats for wildlife.

The Canandé reserve abuts on to a huge stretch of land owned by a legal logging company. One day, with the company's knowledge, we drove as far as the road would take us through the logged area. On the way, we saw plenty of evidence of settlers who slash and burn everything, put up a rudimentary dwelling and eventually claim it as their own. When we could drive no further along the track we continued on foot, soon coming across a group of men extending the road. Palm tree trunks

The shadowy figure at the bottom right of the main photo is Nigel Simpson, WLT Trustee, who helped establish the project. He is looking out over the Fundación Jocotoco Rio Canandé reserve. As far as the eye can see these forests have been saved.

Inset photo:
Adjacent areas have been less fortunate.

LOTS OF POSITIVE ACTION



are used as sleepers prior to a layer or two of stony gravel being dumped on top by a lorry.

Then suddenly we saw a small troupe of capuchin monkeys high up in the thinned out trees. When you witness destruction right there in front of you, the loss of their habitat really hits home. Of course that's a superficial observation because taking out trees means losing so much more in terms of plants, invertebrates, bird and mammal habitat but at the time you don't see all that. More positively, on another day, we took a long walk up a steep incline right to the edge of the reserve. For a good half-hour we enjoyed the antics of a family group of capuchins, including two tiny ones. FJ's Chief Executive, Francisco (Pancho) Sornoza, who has been there many times, said it was the best sighting he'd ever had of them. Lucky me! This is secondary forest which means there are banana plants now growing wild that the capuchins (and even visiting humans) can enjoy. It was such a relief to know that the capuchins would be safe here in perpetuity.

But maybe logging companies aren't all bad. After all, don't they log because we perpetuate the market for them? On our way to their land, we had the beginning of a dialogue with them. They were asking for advice about how to log 'more sustainably', their motive being to acquire Forest Stewardship

Council status. Olaf Jahn, a German ornithologist living in Ecuador, is hoping to monitor new logging techniques being developed and subsequently to produce some serious research, which could lead the way for a change of approach. Optimistic this may be but you have to start somewhere.

An acre is small and rarely sustainable on its own but it really could be home to species of bird, orchid, liverwort or invertebrate, new to science. Buying Fundación Jocotoco acres through the WLT has already thrown up several previously unknown species, underlining the fact that an acre can be a real biodiversity treasure-house. So please keep buying!

Jatunpamba Fundación Jocotoco's Seventh Reserve

Last Autumn FJ's seventh reserve was created at Jatunpamba, on the border with Peru, near the town of Macara. This land purchase comprised about 400 ha of high quality deciduous forest in the 'Tumbesian' habitat zone. And, in December, WLT Trustees authorised a further transfer of US\$60,000 from funds earmarked for Ecuador, to purchase an additional 400 ha adjacent to the original parcel. The area contains many globally threatened species.

India – helping elephants, people, hornbills and more



The existence of Asian Elephants is threatened by degradation and fragmentation of their natural habitat by an ever-increasing human population and economic development. Elephants are forced into small ranges surrounded by hostile landscape resulting in increased human-elephant conflict in the fringe areas of the forest. One way of reducing the conflict and genetic isolation of these elephant populations is by protecting the corridor connecting these fragmented and isolated habitats.

The Wild Lands Elephant Corridor project is a joint project of the World Land Trust and local partners, the Wildlife Trust of India. The corridor is located in an isolated area of Meghalaya in the Garo Hills of N E India and aims

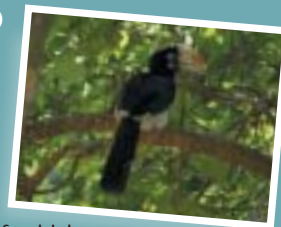
to protect an important population of Indian elephants as they migrate between the Siju Wildlife Sanctuary and the Rewak Forest Reserve.

Meghalaya is not as densely populated as much of India, and it still has 80% of its forests. Consequently there is an opportunity here to protect important wildlife habitats for the future. But forests are being cleared for citrus, pineapple, beetlenut, banana and tapioca plantations, and rice, tea, rubber and quarrying for limestone and coal could also present problems, as Kirsty Burgess, WLT's Projects Co-ordinator, witnessed when she spent two weeks on a field visit to India to meet with WTI personnel and to see the development of the Corridor Project.



£25 SAVES ONE ACRE FOR THIS BABY AND FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS OF INDIAN ELEPHANTS

The Elephant Corridor will help other wildlife too



India has 9 species of hornbill all of which are threatened by the traditional value of their feathers and the supposed medicinal value of their meat. Hornbills are entirely dependent on forest habitat and as a key seed disperser may be critical to forest survival and restoration. The forests of N E India are one of their last strongholds.



A project brief with full details and a map showing the location of the corridor is available from the WLT Office. Contact details on Page 2

Left: Kirsty Burgess (right), WLT's Projects Co-ordinator, meets with residents of Arthika Village, situated within the Elephant corridor.

L-R: four village residents, Mr Kennedy (District Forestry Officer) and Dr Sandeep Tiwari, WTI Senior Programme Officer.

Working with the residents of Arthika Village

Arthika Village is situated within the Wild Lands Elephant Corridor and extensive discussions have taken place with the local people including Mr Peter Marak, the *Nokma* (land owner) prior to the start of the project in September 2004. The villagers believe in the peaceful co-existence of wildlife and people and broadly agree to the exchange of reducing their use of the forests in return for an alternative livelihood.

Mr Mizanur Marak, who is originally

from the Garo Hills and therefore knows the local dialect, has been appointed Field Officer. In addition to continuing dialogue with the villagers, he is working on the socio-economic status of the villagers and the level of dependence on the corridor forest. He is also mapping the corridor area as well as creating an inventory of flora and fauna, based on direct sighting and information from villagers and forestry staff.

The Photographers

Stacey Manley and Gareth West, two students studying for a BA (Hons) in Wildlife Photography at Blackpool & Fylde College (Lancaster University) accompanied Kirsty Burgess on her visit to the Siju-Rewak Elephant Corridor. Their main objectives were to capture images for their final year project and to use their work to help conservation. They will be showing their slides at a presentation at the New Cut in Halesworth on 22 April. See website or ring the office for further details.



Stacey and Gareth were self-funded on their trip.

Patagonia – Bill Oddie on the Ranch of Hopes

by John A Burton

Parrots, Penguins and Whales

Last November I was able to take Bill Oddie and his BBC TV crew to 'our' ranch in Patagonia to make a film about the wildlife there. This was broadcast in late January and included great footage of Guanaco, Burrowing Owls, Killer Whales and seals. Some supporters were disappointed that our conservation work was not mentioned but this had been agreed at the outset, and the point of the film was to show the wide range of wildlife in what appears, at first sight, to be a barren desert. And the wildlife performed exceptionally well. Helped by having a film crew of exceptionally keen naturalists, we filmed at least four birds not previously recorded on the reserve.

Funding from the film enabled FPN to upgrade the facilities on the ranch. Although the accommodation is still basic, it does mean that visitors can stay on the ranch for a day or two and this will help to generate some income which is desperately needed for wardening and protection.



The Book of Thanks

The photograph above shows Bill Oddie on his recent visit to the Ranch of Hopes Wildlife Refuge, meeting with José María Musmeci, Executive Director of Fundación Patagonia Natural. He is

handing over the Book of Thanks which records all World Land Trust supporters who have made donations to the Restoration Appeal. The book will be updated and kept at the Field Station.

Danjungan Island. Its forests and reef are safe

To save Danjungan Island, in the Visayan Group of Islands in the Philippines, from catastrophic development, and to save the reef and its wildlife from dynamite fishing, the WLT helped set up the Philippine Reef & Rainforest Project and raised funds to purchase and protect it for the future. **Mission accomplished.**



And since then three areas of the surrounding reef have been declared marine sanctuaries and are run by the local fishing community. While carrying out surveys of the island Filipino researchers discovered the bare-backed Fruit Bat *Dobsoni chapmani* - formerly thought to be extinct - among the 10,000+ bats in the main colony.

As you will have read in the Editorial, WLT was involved in mangrove replanting on the adjacent island of Negros and will be working on mangrove regeneration again this year.



Belize update

In Belize, 262,000 acres of forests are now protected by Programme for Belize, but there are still opportunities to do more.



In October last year I made a flying visit to Belize to investigate the possibility of further land purchases. As well as overflying the area, meetings were held with the Prime Minister of Belize, Hon Said Musa, as well as several of his senior ministers. All of them expressed their enthusiasm for the support that the World Land Trust has given the conservation movement in Belize over the past 15 years. Belize is a country with a very large percentage of its land under protection, and therefore it is extremely important that conservation is part of a sustainable development strategy, generating income through ecotourism and other activities in Belize.

John Burton

The Outdoor Classroom

Afoot in Costa Rica, age 6



Above: Standing alongside a mature rainforest tree gives even a six year old a sense of perspective.

Left: One of the first lessons of the rainforest is that it rains a lot!

After much soul-searching, we decided to ask our son's headmaster to excuse him the first days of new spring term to enable us to take a special family holiday in Costa Rica. We agreed that he would keep a diary and report back to his classmates, and invested in a digital camera to enable him to take his own snap shots to illustrate his story. This was to be his first big overseas adventure. What would he make of it all?

The tropical sun and humidity, the musty smells and high-pitched squeaks and croaks of the forest added to the dense cloud and warm thunderstorms of the higher slopes were real experience – Cambridgeshire this was not!

A walk on a Caribbean beach playing 'guess the flotsam' is a good way to stretch the mind to begin with. Bird-watching has hitherto not been junior's top past-time, but the directory-sized Costa Rican bird guide *Stiles and*

Skutch soon became his trusty companion. "It doesn't matter if he has identified the wrong bird" says mother very indignantly, "he's having enormous fun doing it". Being a scientifically accurate father, this took some getting used to. But, after a week, he had pretty much learnt in which order the birds appeared on the plates.

Diary highlights? Metre-long iridescent iguanas joining us to sunbathe; the haunting dawn boom of the howler monkey, thermal hot springs – bath time was never so stress free; his first experience of snorkelling in the Pacific accompanied by dolphins, and watching the Olive Ridley Turtles emerge from the deep at dusk to lay eggs on the beach, as their ancestors have done since the dawn of time.

While walking in the 'garden' at Tortuga Lodge, Tortuguero, a nature guide from another party said. "Have you seen the six metre crocodile that's here somewhere". We looked at each other and gulped. "It's not as dangerous as standing underneath that coconut tree" he added. Local knowledge is a wonderful thing.

But Arenal Volcano topped the lot. Junior had been building up his hopes of a viewing for months, despite information that the summit is seen only ten days a year. After two days shrouded in fog and unrelenting rain, the skies cleared miraculously and the summit revealed itself. As we deserted the regulation breakfast *gallo pinto* for a better view, a rumble from the bowels of the earth echoed around the valley and a huge

plume of white ash spewed from the summit. This is where boyhood dreams begin and end.

A night drive on the track back to Arenal Observatory Lodge was hard work – and then it happened! Out of the grass verge it meandered across the headlights. This was no fleeting glimpse, it stayed by the roadside long enough for a full view, "Look son", pointing with a shaky hand and trembling voice, "Ocelot!". Then, perhaps conscious of its feline beauty and rarity, it slunk back into the night. A once in a lifetime experience? For this youngster, possibly not. Possibly. An experience that can be re-created in a classroom? Never.

Adrian Penrose, WLT Trustee



Close Encounters with Wilderness

Most of the features in this issue of *WLT News* are first-hand accounts of recent visits to WLT's project areas by staff, trustees and colleagues. One of the things that sets aside WLT projects from the others is that supporters can actually go and visit the areas they have helped save. For details of staying at project sites please see our website or contact the WLT office, (details on page 2).

Although our land purchase commitments have been successfully

achieved in Costa Rica we are still working with local people on community projects on the Osa Peninsula and when Trustee, Adrian Penrose, told us he would be holidaying in Costa Rica with his wife and six year old son we asked if he could write something on the family adventure for *WLT News*.

The Penrose family and Jane Krish (see page 3) were self funded on their trips.

www.focusonforests.org

Although WLT does not primarily undertake education work we do our best to encourage young people to get involved. Often this is through teachers, and our school pack is available to children and adults alike. We are pleased to include any group who has raised funds in our Hall of Fame on the website.

Focus on Forests Booklets and Teacher's Manual aimed at Key Stage 3 (11-13 year olds) are available from the WLT office.



About Wilderness and its Wildlife

Bill Oddie on the Ranch of Hopes



The photograph above was taken last December while Bill Oddie and the BBC crew were filming *Parrots, Penguins and Whales* which was broadcast in January. John Burton, the WLT's Chief Executive is at the back, third from the left. Bill Oddie is just in front of him and he is standing next to Carla Poleschi one of the main volunteers on the ranch. To the

right of her is Stephen Moss, the Director of the film. Others in the photograph are BBC crew and FPN volunteers, plus, of course, *Princesa*. *Princesa* was found as an orphan *chulengo* (young Guanaco) last year and was successfully reared by FPN volunteers. Now mature, she has recently joined a wild herd but still returns to the refuge occasionally.

WLT competition

FIRST PRIZE:
Ten bars of Fairtrade Darkly Divine chocolate.

Unscramble the words below - they are all mammals or birds found on WLT Reserves:



PHLATEEN
UNGOACA
ECOOLT
GENNUIP
RHINBOLL
JARAUG

Send your answers with your name and address to
WLT Competition
Blyth House
Bridge Street
Halesworth
Suffolk IP19 8AB, UK
Entries to be received by 1 July 2005

The winner of the Rainforest Planter in the Autumn issue of WLT News was Ms M. Mesa-Villalba of London.

WLT Partners

Make your commitment now

To become a WLT Partner all you have to do is pledge a minimum of £5 a month. Knowing that you are behind us helps us plan for the future. If you aren't a WLT Partner already please consider joining us. You can make regular contributions via Standing Order or credit card. Please telephone Anne Clifford (Donations Manager) for further information. Lo-call number: 0845 0454422



Name your Reserve



Rainforest Cafe, Enterprise Plants and the Good Gifts Catalogue were major supporters of the Ecuador project in 2004 and are committed to further support in 2005. Areas of rainforest have been set aside for them so that they can find 'their' rainforest on a map. We will be pleased to name a piece of rainforest specifically for you or your company for donations in excess of £5,000.



Will you Marry Me?

Dear Hannah,
Please agree to marry me with two acres of rainforest rather than a diamond ring.
Love John.

This was the message that supporter John Elliott asked us to put on his gift certificate. We have since heard that Hannah said 'Yes' and the wedding is being arranged. WLT Acres are the perfect way of asking any question and getting the response you wish for.



LAST WORD

The Internet: Love it or Hate it?
For those that hate it, good news: The World Land Trust is more than happy to take donations by letter or phone and will continue sending printed newsletters. But not everyone wants communications this way, and for those who are Internet users, we are doing all we can to integrate all our fundraising on line. The advantage of the Internet is that it is an unbelievably cheap way of communicating with thousands of people. WLT is successfully utilizing new technology, but do let us know how you feel about it - your views are extremely important to us.