



WORLD  
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# Editorial

## It's Official . . . No niggling doubts, rare species are thriving on WLT funded reserves.

It is something we knew all along, or at least thought we did. It stands to reason that by buying threatened habitats we are automatically saving species from extinction. Doesn't it? But how do we know for sure?

Back in the Programme for Belize days, and a few years after the protection of the Rio Bravo Conservation Area, news from the field was that "Jaguars are increasing with protection—more people are seeing them". That was great to hear, but a niggling doubt creeps in: might it be that they were getting just a little less fearful of humans now they were no longer hunted? Was it that communications were improving and more people were actually visiting the rainforest so the chances of seeing a Jaguar were greater?

I have visited some of the reserves, but mostly I am based in Suffolk reading the news sent by our overseas project partners and writing it up. Recently the news has been increasingly positive. In this our 22nd birthday year, the reports from partners have included hugely inspirational stories about wildlife. Finally I think my niggling doubt can be put to bed. There is undisputable evidence, thrilling confirmation that rare species are living, breathing, moving safely, and breeding in the safe havens you have helped us create. This issue of **WLT News** is a celebration. A celebration of what our supporters have helped us achieve in protecting wilderness and habitats and the success of our partners in protecting the wildlife of which they are the guardians.

It is probably no coincidence that this living proof of wildlife using WLT-funded reserves coincides with our new 'Keepers of the Wild' initiative. We have funded 10 rangers so far and they are wonderful communicators. You can read about a recent sighting of a Woolly Spider Monkey, photographed by ranger Adilei on the REGUA Reserve in Brazil. This is one of the world's most endangered monkeys and only found in the Atlantic Rainforest of Brazil. You can also read about 'our' Jaguars and Giant Anteaters in Paraguay



Above: This male Jaguar is resident in the Chaco-Pantanal Reserve, funded by World Land Trust and owned and protected by Guyra Paraguay. Read more about him on Page 4.

and you have probably already noticed the endearing Long-wattled Umbrellabird chick (see opposite), photographed by WLT trustee, Nigel Simpson, in Ecuador.

Saving the land is critical, be it forest, grassland, wetland or desert. By buying the land we create more safe havens for wildlife. It works, the signs are there and wildlife is increasing. Our supporters have made all this possible. That has to be Good News.

Vivien G Burton, Editor

### Quote from WLT Patron, Sir David Attenborough

"The thing about WLT is that they recognised that ecosystems are what need saving. If you want to save Jaguars and hummingbirds the only way to do so is to save the places where they live. They have Land in the title and land is what matters. WLT had arrived at this conclusion more than 20 years ago: they have always been an organisation on the cutting edge."

# Wildlife welcome:

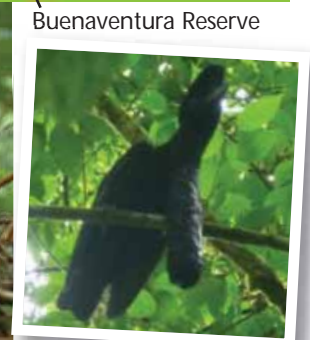
numbers increasing on Ecuador reserve

Nigel Simpson, WLT trustee, reports



**Tropical forests: perhaps the greatest natural show on Earth. The Buenaventura Reserve, saved with the help of funds from the World Land Trust, revels in their splendours and gives hope to their wildlife.**

The reserve currently safeguards over 4,750 acres (150 ha); the goal is 12,000 acres. WLT trustee and co-founder of Fundación Jocotoco (FJ), Nigel Simpson, has just returned from his thirteenth visit where he found the wildlife abundant and increasing. He reports below:



**Main picture:** A Long-wattled Umbrellabird chick in the Buenaventura Reserve. This is a Globally Threatened species. **Right:** An adult, showing the wattle. They are about the size of a crow and perform (with their wattle) at a lek in the trees to attract females.

Each time I visit Buenaventura I see for myself that we have been able to prevent extinctions in this part of the Tropical Andes. The forest, the large mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians are all showing very positive trends. Buenaventura today is an island of cloud forest, yet only a few years ago it was a mosaic of pastures and forest remnants. The rate of the forest's regeneration has been remarkable, especially in the lower more humid parts.

I was accompanied by FJ's Reserve Director, Javier Robayo (a graduate botanist), Marco Galvez (the reserve administrator and a resident of nearby Zaruma), and Baldomiro Beccera (who lives within the reserve). Baldo has worked most of his life in the reserve, first as a farmer and for the last 10 years as the senior ranger.

As we ate breakfast at sunrise in the open-sided lodge we were invaded by a flock of eight Globally Threatened Rufous-headed Chachalacas, emerging from the foliage to feast on bananas. The hummingbird feeders were also busy with about 50 individuals of at least six species, and on the slope below us a pair of the impressive and rare Guayaquil Woodpeckers foraged. A party of noisy Howler Monkeys were performing close by, demonstrating another conservation success: the original three groups recorded 10 years ago have expanded to five groups.

Our first task was to look at a new land purchase of around 300 acres of pasture with forest remnants. This was funded by donations from the WLT together with other conservation groups including World Land Trust-US. Some of this land will be left to regenerate naturally, and parts of it will be

planted with native trees grown in local nurseries. A trail had been cut for us the previous day, through 500 metres of tall grass, and overnight fresh footprints of at least five mammals had appeared including armadillo, agouti, peccary, Ocelot and Puma, giving further proof of resident wildlife.

Most striking was the sheer abundance of amphibians. Every footstep disturbed tiny frogs which jumped away like grasshoppers, and streams and ditches were crowded with hundreds of frogs and tadpoles. A small snake we encountered, no doubt enjoying the feast, has proved to be another new species and is now awaiting description. We have noted with concern that the deadly fungus disease which is destroying frog populations in the Americas is still spreading, but thankfully the reptiles and amphibians at Buenaventura (home to 41 species, 34 of them endemic to Ecuador), are thriving.

The flagship species of the reserve is the endangered El Oro Parakeet, with more than half of the known world population found here. A nest-box programme, in place for about 10 years, has resulted in an increase of about 50 per cent in the number of this species. While we walked across the area three separate flocks flew by us.

Later in the day we had an encounter with the remarkable, and Globally Threatened, Long-wattled Umbrellabird. These too have become more numerous with up to five males gathering at a lek, and sometimes visiting the Lodge. (A lek is a group of the males of some animal species, which come together for a competitive

mating display during the breeding season. This often includes elaborate plumage displays and vocal challenges). Another lek species, the Club-winged Manakin, whose males dance and vibrate their wing feathers to create noise, is also noticeably more abundant.

The recovery of the original forest is most obvious in the valley below the Lodge. In October 2004, Javier Robayo and I planted a group of young trees, and their progress has been monitored since; they are now fruiting closed-canopy forest. Young palms and tree ferns are appearing and it is impressive to see the abundance of epiphytes (which comprise the majority of plant diversity in these forests) that have already become established. A typical walk here along a kilometre of trail can result in 50 species of birds, several of them Globally Threatened.

Dr Nigel Simpson was awarded an OBE in 2005 for "services to environmental conservation and the local communities in Ecuador".

## About Buenaventura

The Buenaventura Reserve is located near Piñas and Zaruma in El Oro province and is now accessible thanks to the new Santa Rosa airport, with daily connections to Quito.

For details on visiting the Umbrellabird Lodge at Buenaventura or Fundación Jocotoco's other three reserve lodges, contact: Paola Villalba at: [reservations@fjocotoco.org](mailto:reservations@fjocotoco.org)

# Wildlife takes charge at the Three Giants Biological Station in the Chaco-Pantanal Reserve



## King of the Chaco-Pantanal Reserve

*The Jaguar is the largest cat in the Americas and thought to survive in less than half its historic range.*

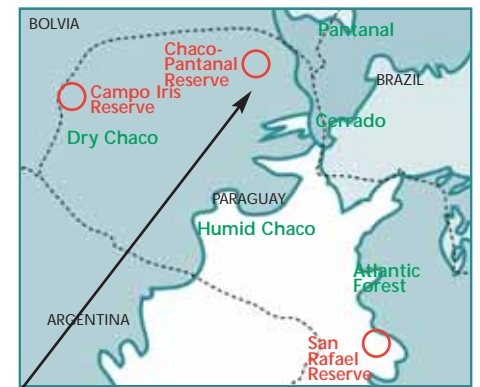
While, in many parts of the world large mammals are finding it increasingly difficult to roam freely without coming into conflict with humans, in the Chaco-Pantanal Reserve in Paraguay the message is clear: *“This is our home”*.

Over the past five years WLT has funded the purchase of parcels of land to help Guyra Paraguay protect the Chaco-Pantanal Reserve. As “development” creeps ever nearer to the reserve it is great news that these tropical habitats are doing what they set out to do—provide a safe haven for all the animals of the ecosystem. Life for Jaguars outside the reserve is less secure.

The creation of the Chaco-Pantanal Reserve was made possible because several WLT donors saw its potential when it was virtually unknown. Later another WLT supporter and council member, Kevin Cox, funded the construction of the Three Giants Biological Station in the reserve on

Jaguars occur on several reserves funded by WLT and protected by our partners, including Sierra Gorda in Mexico (GESG), Rio Bravo in Belize (Programme for Belize), Laguna Grande in Guatemala (FUNDAECO), Misiones in Argentina (FFV), as well as in three separate locations protected by Guyra Paraguay: the Dry Chaco, San Rafael, and the Chaco-Pantanal Reserve where all these photographs were taken.

the edge of the Rio Negra river, and it is here that some stunning encounters with wildlife have recently been recorded. It is as if Jaguars, Giant Anteaters and Giant Otters know they are no longer persecuted in this corner of Paraguay and are taking control of their landscape.

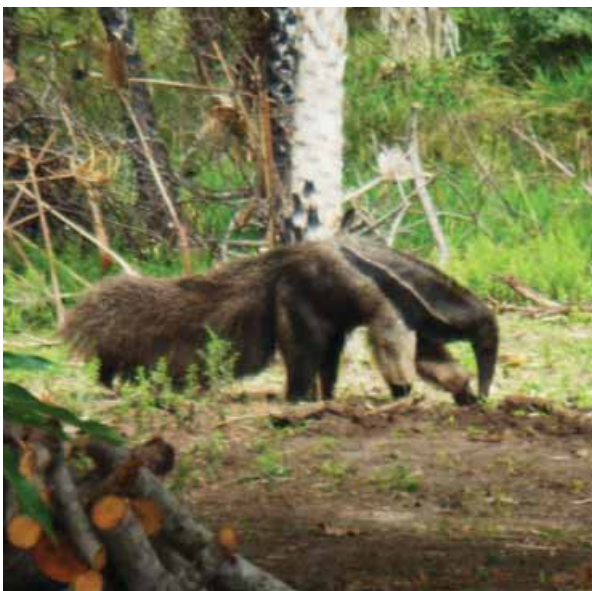


The Chaco-Pantanal Reserve where the Three Giants Biological Station is located.



Ranger, Saul Arias, wrote that there is a family of Jaguars living in the reserve: a male, female and two young. He said: *“The male doesn’t seem to mind us being around and uses our trails around the Three Giants without seeming to be worried. It is fantastic for us to be able to watch him, and take photographs, without getting in his way.”*

The Three Giants Biological Station is named after the Giant Anteater, Giant Otter and Giant Armadillo, endangered species all living in the reserve.



## Giant Anteaters visit the “Three Giants”

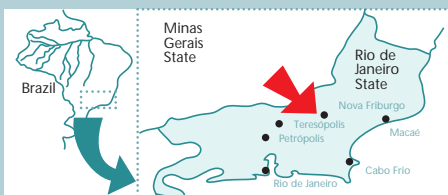
Silvia Centron, a naturalist with Guyra Paraguay who has also been to the UK to work with WLT, spent the summer at The Three Giants Biological Station carrying out a bat survey. While there she was lucky enough to spy this Giant Anteater and also photographed the resident Giant Otters. Her next challenge is to find a Giant Armadillo. While skulls have been found, a live animal has not yet been photographed.

# Alive and well: rarest primate in South America is living on the REGUA Reserve



## A rare photograph of the Muriqui

As Nicholas Locke, Project Director at Reserva Ecológica de Guapi Assu (REGUA) says: *“By far the most exciting mammal to be found at REGUA is the Muriqui, or Southern Woolly Spider Monkey, which is the largest primate found in the neotropics and the largest endemic mammal found in Brazil.”* So no wonder there was excitement recently when ranger Adilei Carvalho da Cunha, photographed one in the reserve.



Nestled on the slopes of the Serra dos Órgãos Mountains, in the coastal state of Rio de Janeiro, the REGUA reserve protects 18,000 acres (about 7,500 ha) of Atlantic Rainforest.



These long fawn coloured monkeys with delicate facial markings are not at all aggressive, but quiet and reclusive. Through hunting and loss of their forest habitat, the Muriqui population crashed and in 1987 it was estimated that there were less than 400 in the wild making them the rarest primate in South America.

In the south-east of Brazil, WLT partner organisation REGUA are providing a safe haven for a small but healthy population in the REGUA Reserve. A family group is encountered two or three times a year by a ranger or a visitor, but these sightings are brief and very few photographs have been possible.

The rangers have been instrumental in reducing hunting pressure in the reserve and to photograph this species was on the ‘wish-list’ of ranger Adilei. He was given time to go in search of the Muriqui and on his third walk he was lucky. He reported that just as he reached the researcher’s cabin on the Green Trail at 650m above sea level, in pristine forest, he heard some fruit falling and a gentle

*Above: This Southern Woolly Spider Monkey was photographed on the REGUA Reserve by ranger, Adilei. Family groups are seen very occasionally on the reserve but few photographs have been taken.*

The Woolly Spider Monkey is the largest New World primate and has recently been divided into two subspecies, the main difference between the two being the presence of a small thumb in the Northern variety. It may eventually be shown that they are separate species.

call. Stealthily he approached a large tree and spied a female feasting on the fruit. She had seen Adilei but she didn’t consider him a threat and continued to eat and lazily stretched herself to lie down and doze - as is often their midday habit. Adilei was able to observe at fairly close quarters and took some photographs to record the sighting. Eventually she took off, merging into the canopy of the forest and was gone. Adilei was delighted with this rare encounter.

# Endangered: Pale-headed Brush-finch numbers increase



Numbers of the Pale-headed Brush-finch have dramatically increased, but WLT questions why it is no longer considered Critically Endangered.

After more than a decade of sustained conservation action, one of the world’s rarest birds has increased in number from fewer than 25 pairs recorded in 1999 to over 100 pairs today. This exceptional achievement is thanks to WLT partner organisation, Fundación Jocotoco (FJ).

Zoltan Waliczky, Executive Director of FJ, said: *“For a long time, everyone thought that this bird was extinct. When it was rediscovered in 1998, conservationists recognised a unique second chance and were determined not to waste it. Sustained, focused international cooperation is what made the difference.”*

Supported by WLT, Fundación Jocotoco established the Yunguilla Reserve to safeguard the only known tiny population of this species and with protection and research into its behaviour, numbers have risen to over 100 pairs and continue to climb. This is an exceptional achievement, yet any species whose entire global range is limited to just one site of a few hundred acres faces difficult challenges. This bird still perches precariously on the knife edge between survival and extinction. Its fate depends on continued conservation action.

In light of this, WLT questions if it is right that the conservation status of the Pale-headed Brush-finch has been downlisted from Critically Endangered to Endangered, on the IUCN Red List of globally threatened birds. John Burton, CEO of WLT, said: *“It would seem that the motive for ‘downlisting’ was more to do with wanting to demonstrate conservation success than to demonstrate the actual status of species in the wild, and their conservation needs. Otherwise, as any practicing conservationist would probably agree, the precautionary principle should always apply.”*

# Back in the wild: thanks to Keepers of the Wild on Margarita Island, Venezuela



In 2009, through the generous support of the Taylor Family Foundation, WLT was able to fund the purchase of more than 1,780 acres (720 ha) of critically threatened dry forest habitat on Margarita Island in the Caribbean, off the coast of Venezuela. WLT partner, Provita, have the task of protecting what is now the Chacaracual Community Conservation Area, home to rare and endemic species threatened by hunting, capture for the pet trade, and habitat destruction through sand mining activities.

The latest news from the reserve is good and bad. In July there was an armed theft of 16 Yellow-shouldered Parrot chicks which were part of a nest-box programme to build up numbers. This was a huge setback for the ranger team, but now that the breeding season is over Provita have reported that another 50 fledglings flew free in La Chica, which is indeed good news.

As well as protecting the Yellow-shouldered Parrot the island is an important nesting ground for four threatened turtle species, an endemic sub-species of White Tailed Deer (*Odocoileus virginianus margaritae*), as well as the 'Margarita' Ocelot.



*Above: Found only on the Venezuelan islands of Margarita and La Blanquilla, and the island of Bonaire (Netherlands Antilles), Provita are working tirelessly to protect the nests of the Yellow-shouldered Parrot.*

The Ocelot, locally known as Cunaguaro, is Critically Endangered on the island and the animal in the photograph opposite was found being kept captive after it had been trapped because it was attacking chickens. When rescued it was suffering from stress and malnutrition but after a few months with little human contact it was considered ready to be released. The Chacaracual Community Conservation Area provides enough territory and prey species for its survival.



*Above: A rare Ocelot is released back into the wild at the Chacaracual Community Conservation Area, on Margarita Island.*

## Book review by John A Burton

*Handbook of the Mammals of the World - Volume 2: Hoofed Mammals*

**Edited by** Don E. Wilson, Russell A. Mittermeier  
**Illustrated by** Toni Llobet  
**Published by** Lynx Edicions (in association with Conservation International and IUCN)  
**Price** £140.00



to the families contain much information that, although specific to individual species, is not repeated under

the species accounts. This makes reference rather slow, as generally speaking if one is looking up an individual species it is convenient to have all the information in one place.

I also wonder why only some domesticated species are included? Llama and Alpaca are given full species accounts, but the domesticated horse (*Equus caballus*) is not. An anomaly since the domestic/feral horse has a huge distribution, and occurs in many different forms and has major ecological impacts, as do the various goats, wild sheep and cattle of which very ancient introductions have had massive impacts on the local ecology.

The illustrations are beautifully drawn, and, as I wrote at the outset, this is a significant work, that needs to be on the bookshelf of any serious mammalogist.

For full book review go to WLT website: [www.worldlandtrust.org/reviews/](http://www.worldlandtrust.org/reviews/)

As I wrote when reviewing Volume 1, it is a mammoth undertaking and has to be admired, and will doubtless be a major work of reference for a long time to come. However I still have a few reservations about some aspects and one of the functions of a review is to point out errors, and to hopefully improve future editions/volumes.

As before, when I reviewed Volume 1, I turned to a page where I thought I knew quite a bit about the subject to see how accurate it was, and I was disappointed to find that the section on the Guanaco failed to mention the Chaco population of the Guanaco, that was confirmed in Medanos National Park, Paraguay, in 2006. It is disconcerting when you find mistakes straight off, as it does lead to questioning the reliability of the rest. Another irritation is that the long and extensive introductions

## Your order can benefit WLT

This book is not widely available but can be obtained from NHBS. If you order online following the link on the WLT website a percentage of the sale will be donated to WLT at no extra cost to you. Follow the link on this page:

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# Dear WLT: The questionnaire and what you asked

John Burton, WLT Chief Executive, replies

We sent supporters living in the UK a questionnaire with the Spring issue of **WLT News** and were overwhelmed by the response and encouraging comments. We reported on clear patterns and donor opinion in the Late Summer issue but said we would answer more specific questions in this issue.

*"I sometimes wonder how WLT fits in with other organisations with similar aims? Are there other European or US bodies buying reserves in the Atlantic Rainforest, for instance? How much of the effort does WLT represent?"*

Rob English, Knutsford

We have very close links with Nature & Culture International in the USA, and co-operate closely with IUCN Netherlands and Acción Natura in Spain, both organisations sharing a similar vision to WLT. We also have a close working relationship with the Brazilian Atlantic Rainforest Trust (BART), who support land purchase of Atlantic Rainforest. We work on a project with the British and Irish Association of Zoos and Aquariums (BIAZA), who have raised funds for land purchase with REGUA in Brazil and now fund the 'Keepers of the Wild' initiative.

*"Have you thought of getting paid advertising in WLT News—I wouldn't object to adverts that were relevant and that way we could have them more frequently and probably more pages."*

J Stiles, Warwick

We have considered paid advertising in **WLT News** and while some supporters wouldn't mind, others really don't like it so we have decided against it so far.

*"I would like to be able to choose a project to support when Carbon Balancing. You don't seem to offer that?"*

Sonia Jupp, London

Carbon Balancing needs to be done on a fairly large scale, which means we have to aggregate the donations, and it is difficult to predict where the funds will be used. This means we can only give locations for relatively large donations. We can, of course, report retrospectively on the projects supported by smaller Carbon Balanced donations and frequently report on them in **WLT News**.

*"Why have the Dry Chaco and the Brazilian Atlantic Rainforest projects disappeared from the donation forms. Are these appeals completed?"*

Mrs J K Dixon, Teddington, Middx

No these appeals are certainly not completed, and we are continuing to work closely with both partners. However, we aren't currently asking individual donors to support land purchase but donations through 'Keepers of the Wild' go to both. We change the emphasis on fundraising from time to time as there are space restrictions and we have to prioritise.

*"I have a WWF credit card, and a small percentage on my statements is donated. I have mentioned this several times to WLT and wonder if you have looked into this possibility? I would get one!"*

Mrs Hadley, Warminster

We have looked into it, but because we are a relatively small organisation, we have not been considered suitable. However, we have grown, and we will revisit the issue although I think we are still too small to appeal to credit card companies.

*"I see that WLT has over 20 project partners. I realise it's important to do as much as possible but aren't you running the risk of overstressing resources. Wouldn't it be better to consolidate?"*

*"I also wonder if it would be profitable/possible to offer small group visits to project area that WLT is supporting? I would see this as being small and eco-friendly."*

Sally Dean, Worcester

First, we are very aware of this risk, and several of the new partners have joined our network without expectations of lots of funding. Sometimes by being a WLT partner this can leverage high level recognition and support in their own countries.

Regarding visiting reserves. We are currently compiling up-to-date information on visiting project areas and hope to have more information available in the New Year. We may be in a position to organise small group visits also. Meanwhile if potential visitors would let us know where they would like to go we will let them know about our plans.

*"Does WLT work with organisations who support population control? The sheer pressure of people is out of balance and we will soon be running out of natural resources, including fresh water. Do environmental charities take this into account?"*

Dan Jeffries, Edinburgh

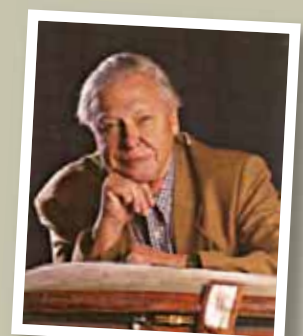
Anyone reading my blogs will know that I take this very seriously. However, it is not a direct part of the WLT's remit, and we try to keep focussed on what we are good at, and where we have expertise: land acquisition and protection. It is not something environmental charities can have a huge impact on – it is really the province of the aid charities such as Oxfam and Christian Aid, but unfortunately, being a somewhat contentious issue, they do not seem to want to confront it or place a high priority on it.

Have your say through 'Dear WLT'. Write to us at the address on page 2 or email The Editor: [info@worldlandtrust.org](mailto:info@worldlandtrust.org)

## Saving Life on Earth with World Land Trust

A legacy to the World Land Trust is a legacy for future generations, ensuring some of the last remaining strongholds of our earthly paradise will survive for our descendents. You may also like to consider a 'living legacy' by making a donation that will create an entire reserve, which you can go and visit in your lifetime.

If you would like to speak, in confidence, to John Burton (our Chief Executive) please telephone: 01986 874 422.



# Plant a Tree with WLT for £5

For only £5 we can plant a rainforest tree for you in Brazil  
For £25 we can plant five trees and send a beautiful Gift Pack

## Help restore the Atlantic Rainforest



The Atlantic Rainforest is reduced to less than seven per cent of its former cover but WLT is working with overseas project partners to restore forests where they have been cleared in the past, focussing on land adjacent to existing protected forests.

- For £5 we will plant a tree for yourself or as a gift. We will send a Gift Card, if you wish, with standard text.
- For donations of £25 we will plant five trees and send you a personalised Certificate and Gift Pack.

## GREAT CHRISTMAS GIFT

**Above and right:** On the REGUA Reserve in the Atlantic Rainforest of Brazil tropical forests are being restored through WLT's Plant a Tree initiative.

REGUA has a thriving nursery from seeds collected locally and these provide seedlings for the reforestation programme. Once big enough they can be planted to restore forest. With so much of the Atlantic Rainforest lost to the bulldozer it is vital to restore forest cover to provide continuous habitats for wildlife.

## Saving the world's most deadly creature



The Golden Poison Frog *Phylllobates terribilis*, is a deadly species, thought to be the most poisonous creature on Earth. Its skin is covered in alkaloid poisons which prevent nerves from transmitting impulses; if you come into contact with it you will probably die of heart failure. While it is deadly, the poison is only used for self-defence.

Unfortunately their poison cannot protect them against the bulldozer, development, gold-mining and coca cultivation that has led to their catastrophic decline. On the verge of extinction in the wild they survive across less than 250 km<sup>2</sup> in the Choco rainforests in the western Cauca Department of Colombia.

In the past this species has been very important to the local indigenous cultures, such as the Choco Emberá people, who used the poison in their darts to hunt. WLT believes that habitat must be saved for them and are working with ProAves to create the first protected reserve for the Golden Poison Frog.

## Cover picture

Artist, Oenone Hammersley, generously donates the use of her images to WLT. Influenced by the work and colour of Gauguin, Matisse and Rousseau, she has developed her own style, with a hint of the surreal, to express her own passion



for wildlife and nature, deriving inspiration from her travels to India, S E Asia and Latin America. She exhibits regularly and her website is a wonderful showcase of her work.

[www.oenonehammersley.com](http://www.oenonehammersley.com)



Howard Smith Paper Group donates the paper for WLT News



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[www.carbonbalancedpaper.com](http://www.carbonbalancedpaper.com)

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## New WLT website

Great look, with improved usability and navigation. More information on all our projects and nature reserves and the partners we work with. Follow links to live webcams direct from our rainforest projects and read about the importance of valuing biodiversity and natural resources. Meet our Keepers of the Wild and find out who our corporate supporters are. Read the latest news, press releases, WLT CEO's Green Diary Blog and info on recent and upcoming events.

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