



## A message from Sir David Attenborough



A Jaguar in the Pantanal

Sir David Attenborough, a WLT Patron, spent three months in Paraguay in 1958 on a Zoo Quest Expedition. It remains one of his favourite places and he sends the following message:

*"This is one of the last great wilderness areas left in the world, and it is hugely encouraging that much of it is still as it was when I was there half a century ago. It is vital that we save the incredible biodiversity of these habitats and I think it is wonderful that the World Land Trust has been able to play such an important role in saving it for future generations."*

Sir David Attenborough OM, CH FRS

### Saving Atlantic Rainforest, Pantanal wetlands and Dry Chaco - Paraguay's varied habitats are vital for the survival of a wide range of disappearing wildlife

WLT has helped Guyra Paraguay with land purchase and protection over the past few years but we are not currently raising funds for new land purchase. However, you can still earmark your donation for Guyra Paraguay and this is where we will direct it. We are also supporting Guyra Paraguay through 'Keepers of the Wild' – providing more rangers for the protection of their many reserve areas, and in particular the Dry Chaco. You may still receive a personalised certificate recording your support – for yourself or on behalf of the person you designate. You (and your gift recipient) can also receive **WLT News** three times a year and you can receive our electronic bulletins by registering to receive them on our website.

[www.worldlandtrust.org](http://www.worldlandtrust.org) [www.regua.co.uk](http://www.regua.co.uk)

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Project Brief: Paraguay



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## Paraguay: habitats of contrast

Almost in the middle of the South American continent, Paraguay is about the same size as the state of California. It is landlocked and has borders with Argentina in the west and south, Bolivia in the north and Brazil in the east. Paraguay's natural habitats, consisting of several eco-regions of global importance, range from Atlantic Rainforest, Pantanal wetlands, Humid and Dry Chaco, Pampas and Cerrado (a mosaic of grassland, dry forest, savannah and wetlands).

With a population of less than six million people one would think that the wildlife would have plenty of space, but that is not the case. All these habitats are threatened, mainly from deforestation for agriculture and cattle grazing. The Pantanal is the world's largest wetland, but in Brazil, where 95% of it occurs, much of it has already been lost and the Paraguayan Pantanal is increasingly threatened by development, pollution, intensive agriculture and fires.

World Land Trust is funding land purchase and protection in three different eco-regions.



Above: The "Three Giants" Biological Station is located on the Chaco-Pantanal Reserve, on the shore of Rio Negro. This is one of the least explored places on Earth. Giant Otters are regularly seen.

### The Reserves Chaco-Pantanal Reserve

WLT's first land purchase funding in Paraguay was made possible by a legacy from the late Sid Templer, and this was the start of the Trust's relationship with its partners, Guyra Paraguay, and the birth of the Chaco-Pantanal Reserve. This reserve, in north-east Paraguay, has a wonderful mix of habitats: as well as Pantanal wetlands, it has grassland, palm savannah and dry forest, and is, as yet, relatively unspoilt.

Since 2006 WLT has been raising funds for the purchase of a network of adjacent land-holdings, which are strategically important to the protection of the whole area. When land purchase is complete the reserve will provide enough protected habitat for wildlife to move safely and spread. Mammals in the reserve include Jaguar, Ocelot, Capybara, Marsh and Grey Brocket Deer, iguana and caiman, as well as the 'Three Giants': Giant Anteater, Giant Armadillo and Giant Otter. Bird species include Gray-crested Cacholote, Swallow-tailed Hummingbird and Jabiru Stork.

## Saving Rainforest, Wetlands and Desert



### Atlantic Rainforest: San Rafael Reserve

San Rafael, one of the largest relicts of the Atlantic Rainforest in Paraguay, protects nearly 15,000 acres (6,200 ha). This humid tropical forest is a 'biodiversity hotspot' because of its large number of endemic species. Massive habitat destruction has taken place over the last century and less than 7% of the original forest remains, in fragmented patches throughout Brazil, Argentina and Paraguay. San Rafael has over 300 bird species, including King Vulture, Crested Eagle and Black-fronted Piping-guan, and 40 species of mammal have been recorded so far.

WLT is also working with Guyra Paraguay to reforest areas of Atlantic Rainforest, which have previously been cleared, with funds raised through the Carbon Balanced programme.

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

### The Dry Chaco

This is the driest region, in north-western Paraguay, with xerophytic vegetation: trees and shrubs which are able to survive with very little water. Dominated by thorn scrub, low forests and thickets, full of cacti and interspersed with the Palo Borracho (or the 'drunken') tree, to humans this is a very hostile environment. But not so for wildlife. The Dry Chaco is exceptionally rich in flora and fauna but it is very fragile, and once it has been degraded it will take centuries to recover.

The Campo Iris reserve, funded by WLT, is known to contain Tapirs, and endangered Chaco Peccaries (only discovered in the 1970s), Crowned Eagles, Puma and Jaguar. It is also a centre of armadillo diversity, with at least ten species occurring in the Paraguayan Chaco. The reserve area was chosen because it protects one of the only semi-permanent lakes of the zone, which, in periods of extreme drought, becomes an important wildlife refuge.

But, as with all of Paraguay's unique habitats, the Dry Chaco is threatened, primarily by the spread of agriculture, and in particular the growing market for biofuels and soya.



Above: Main habitats are shown in green



Above: The endangered Chaco Peccary