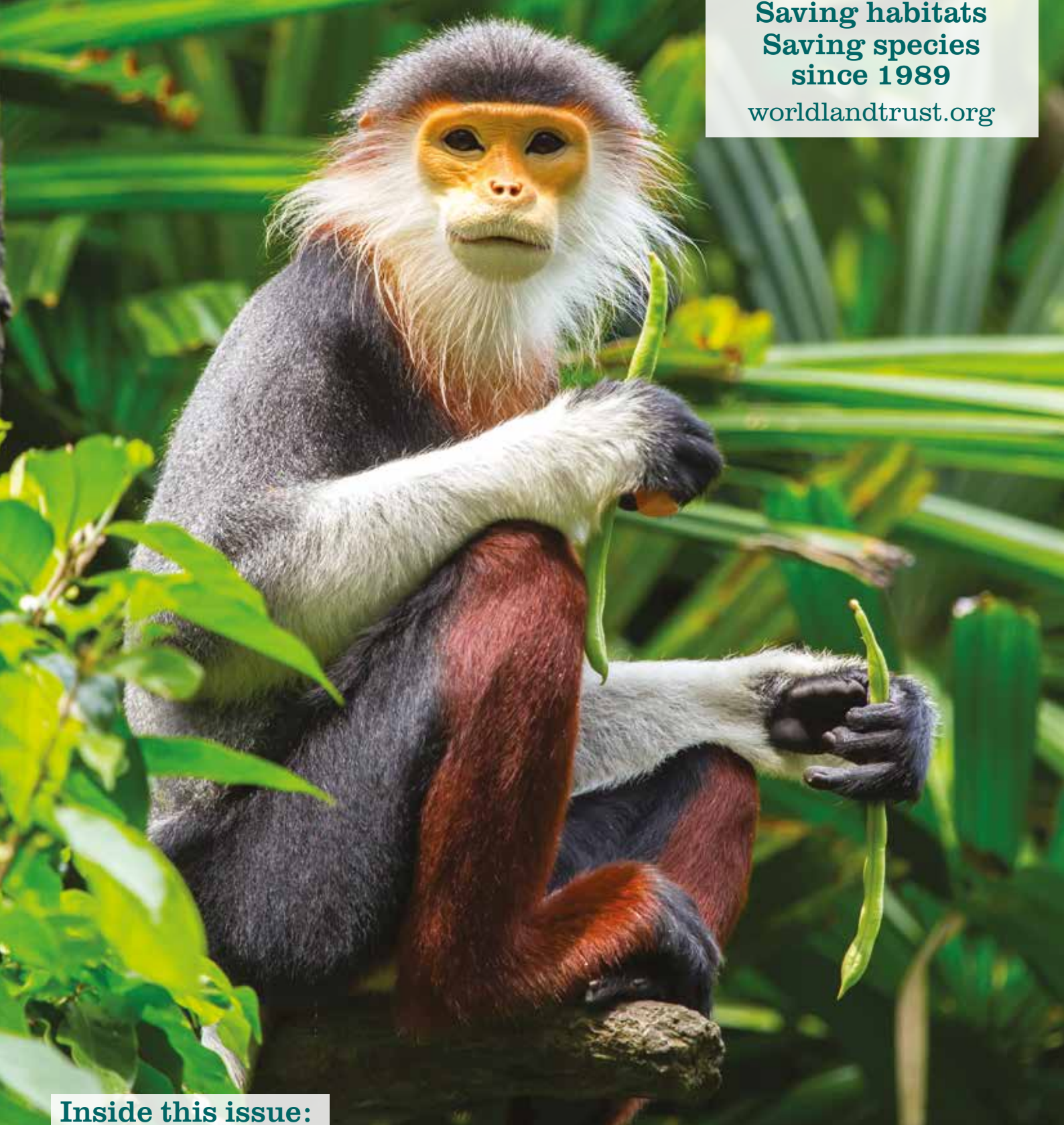


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**Saving habitats
Saving species
since 1989**

worldlandtrust.org



Inside this issue:

- Big Match Fortnight 2019: Scorched Earth to Forest Haven
- Discover our latest Buy an Acre projects
- Understanding forest fires
- Meet our new CEO

Scorched Earth to Forest Haven

Restoring Vietnam's tropical forests

BIG MATCH FUND FORTNIGHT

"From the edge of the Ho Chi Ming Highway you can look out at the towering cathedral rainforest – beautiful undulating land with different layers of trees; we could see the gorgeous red-shanked douc, which is a monkey wearing bright red trousers. It looks like Michael Portillo sitting up in the branches. I remember walking into the forest and getting the feeling of being surrounded by teeming life. Vietnam and the rest of the world needs more of that – as much as possible."

Simon Barnes, WLT Council Member



Our major appeal for 2019 aims to raise £575,000 to rejuvenate a

landscape still struggling to shed the legacy of the Vietnam War. It will be launched on 3 October 2019 at the start of our annual Big Match Fortnight when all donations will be doubled by matched funding.

The money raised will go to our local partner Viet Nature, which will begin the process of bringing back tropical forest, teeming with rare species and echoing with the haunting cries of gibbons.

This land is now overrun with invasive grass known in Vietnam as "American grass", because it replaced the forests destroyed by Agent Orange.

Regreening the forest

"The target areas for restoration are currently dominated by invasive grasses," says WLT Chief Executive Dr Jonathan Barnard. "Restoring them to healthy, biodiverse forest is no easy task. But with the generous help of our supporters, WLT can fund an ambitious project to rejuvenate the depleted soils, clear invasive grasses, nurture native tree seedlings and care for them until they're established."

As forest re-cloaks the hills, it will reconnect with nearby reserves like Khe Nuoc Trong, creating one of the largest remaining areas of Annamite montane forest. Wildlife will be able to colonise the spreading jungle. Primates such as the flamboyant Red-shanked Douc will find much-needed new territory, as will the

endangered Sunda Pangolin and several species of threatened and regionally endemic birds, including the elusive but spectacular Crested Argus peafowl.

"This is your chance to support a project that not only restores a lost ecosystem and safeguards biodiversity," says Dr Barnard, "but also recreates a healthy environment that local people depend on for fresh water, clean air and livelihoods. By planting the seeds that can transform Vietnam's scorched earth to a forest haven, you will also play a crucial role in tackling climate change, helping to establish forests that will stabilise soils and lock away carbon."

BIG MATCH FUND FORTNIGHT

Please help us restore the tropical forest by donating online or by calling 01986 874422.



Big Match Fortnight 2019

Three species this appeal will protect



Invasive grasses cover the hills of Huong Linh where rolling forests should flourish (above and below).



About our partner: Viet Nature

Viet Nature is a Vietnamese NGO, which evolved from the BirdLife International Vietnam Programme. Inheriting a prestigious 20-year portfolio of conservation successes, Viet Nature are committed to the protection and conservation of Vietnam's rich biodiversity, and enhancing human quality of life and building sustainable development.

The mission of Viet Nature is to research and apply sustainable solutions to nature and biodiversity conservation; to maintain and restore ecosystems; to manage natural resources sustainably; and to make appropriate responses to climate change.

Natural wonders of the Vietnamese rainforest

Red Shanked Douc (*Pygathrix nemaeus*)

One of the most colourful of all primates, Red-shanked Douc are sociable, striking old-world monkeys. Distinctive red-brown legs, a charming vibrant orange-yellow face, and a long white tail that leads from a distinguishing white triangle at its base compliment a mottled coat of silver-grey and black. Found in evergreen broadleaf forests in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, Red-Shanked Douc are classified Endangered.



Sunda Pangolin (*Manis javanica*)

Sunda Pangolin is an incredible nocturnal animal. Covered in thick keratin scales and fibrous hair, the pangolin is well-protected. Nonetheless, its scales are the reason it is the world's most trafficked animal. It has powerful front claws for digging and an extraordinarily long tongue for collecting ants, which makes up for its lack of teeth. They are excellent tree climbers, thanks to their prehensile tail.

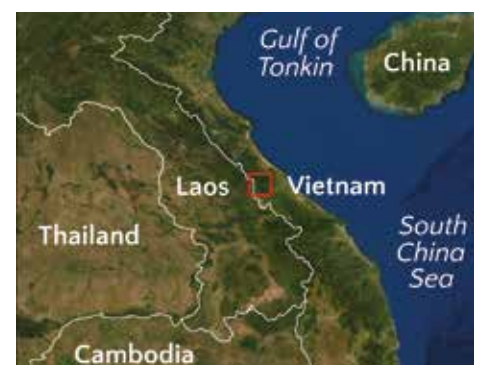


Crested Argus (*Rheinardia ocellata*)

The woo'o-wao call of the Crested Argus, a pheasant endemic to South-East Asia, is just one of many distinctive features of this endangered species. The black-brown plumage of males is peppered with white, while females are a warmer-brown with delicate black and buff banding and vermiculations. Their spectacular tails are the longest of all wild birds, reaching up to 173cm in males.



- Location of reforestation areas
- Khe Nuoc Trong Forest Reserve
- Bac Huong Hoa Nature Reserve
- Community land



WLT say ‘goodbye’ to John and Viv Burton, founders, as they retire

Meet our new CEO



John and Viv presented with lifetime achievement award for elephant conservation by WTI ambassador Dia Mirza and Vivek Menon, August 2018.

A fond farewell to our founders

John and Viv Burton, who founded World Land Trust in 1989, step down from their roles.

Jonathan Barnard, who joined us in September as WLT’s new CEO, says, ‘John and Viv Burton demonstrated remarkable vision in founding WLT. Their incredible determination and commitment to nurturing WLT into the internationally important charity it is today is extraordinary. Not only are they responsible for ground-breaking conservation action that has saved land and species, they continue to inspire others to act in the face of threats to habitat, wildlife and climate. They leave behind strong foundations for our team to build on and continue to grow WLT, and we will do all we can to continue their work to positively impact nature and reduce the threat of the climate crisis.’

Throughout the last thirty years, they have remained grounded, concentrating on their belief that buying land for local conservation NGOs, the people best placed to care for habitats in urgent need of protection, is the most effective ways of preserving wildlife.

The first Buy an Acre mission, Programme for Belize, launched in the UK in May 1989, today safeguards 262,000 acres of forest and lagoon; the surrounding forests that were there thirty years ago have today

been cleared for agriculture. As WLT has grown, it has successfully secured protection of more than three-quarters of a million acres across the world and the reserves and wildlife corridors that have been created ensure that wildlife can move safely across a wider landscape. The leverage effect of these land acquisitions also means that several million more acres have degrees of protection.

Today, WLT still focusses on the original vision: save land to save species. And, as climate change has evolved into a climate crisis, the work of WLT has evolved along with it, ensuring that the Trust continues to do all it can to protect the natural world. It is no small thing that John and Viv built, and the heritage they leave in our hands includes several innovative programmes backing up the land acquired by our partners, including Plant a Tree, Keepers of the Wild, and Carbon Balanced. Together, these programmes work in parallel with Buy an Acre, the Action Fund and our special appeals to ensure that threatened habitats and endangered species will be protected forever.

Of course, it isn’t really goodbye. John and Viv’s passion and purpose weave through every element of WLT and they will continue to be on hand to help for the foreseeable future. On behalf of all at WLT, our partners, and the wild, wonderful world you inspire us all to protect every day: thank you, John and Viv.

Meet our new CEO



At the beginning of September, WLT welcomed Dr. Jonathan Barnard as our new Chief Executive Officer.

We’ve thoroughly enjoyed getting to know him – so we asked him a few questions to give you some insights.

Can you tell us a little about the path that has led you to WLT?

I have always been passionate about wildlife and the natural environment, and have been fortunate to spend a lot of time working in the tropics which fostered my love of tropical forests. My career has always been about having a positive impact for nature that also supports and benefits local people, and I have been responsible for large projects that conserve land and support local people’s livelihoods, as well as managing teams in large NGOs. I am delighted to have joined WLT to be able to use my passion and skills with such a fantastic team, partners, and supporters to help save our natural world.

What do you think are the best ways to tackle climate change?

The climate crisis is real, and something that we can all do is support conservation of forests around the world. Conservation and restoration of these forests locks up significant carbon and importantly saves species and helps support local people’s lives at the same time so the benefits stretch far beyond carbon alone.

Do you have a favourite species?

That’s a simple answer: meerkats. This was the species that I studied for my PhD, and I was fortunate to spend several years with them in the Kalahari.

New Buy an Acre projects that need your support

Join us to save land and save species, one acre at a time

Sonora, Mexico



The Jaguar del Norte Reserve, in the foothills of Sierra Madre, is the first Jaguar reserve in Mexico.

Conservation of the Territory for the Northern Jaguar

Funds raised through Buy an Acre will enable Naturalia to purchase and protect 3,953 acres to extend the Jaguar del Norte Reserve.

Habitat: Sonoran desert thorny scrub.

Biodiversity: Crucial to the protection of the northernmost population of the Jaguar, this remote reserve in the foothills of the Sierra Madre is also home to Ocelot, Neotropical Otter and Military Macaw, as well as 70 species of migratory birds.

Threats: Human-wildlife conflict is a particular threat to Jaguar, while habitat loss and degradation is caused by livestock farming and mining.



Central Province, Zambia



The forest in the middle-Magdalena Valley of El Silencio, Colombia, which is one of just 18 megadiverse countries, home to a large percentage of Earth's species, with high levels of endemism.

Mulaushi Reserve

Buy an Acre will help Kasanka Trust secure a 99-year lease of 941 acres of land in Mulaushi, expanding the buffer zone for Kasanka National Park.

Habitat: Seasonally inundated grassland (dambo) and miombo woodland.

Biodiversity: Part of the vast Bangweulu Wetlands, Mulaushi Reserve borders Kasanka National Park and provides a vital buffer zone for the Vulnerable Black Lechwe (found only in Zambia), as well as African Elephant, Lion and some 500 bird species. Kasanka also hosts the world's greatest mammal migration of 10 million Straw-coloured Fruit Bats.

Threats: Human encroachment and chitemene (slash-and-burn) farming.



Barbacoas Wetlands, Colombia



Forest at El Silencio Reserve.

Expansion of El Silencio Reserve

Buy an Acre will fund the purchase of 380 acres of wildlife-rich habitat by Fundacion Biodiversa Colombia (FBC) as part of a larger project to extend El Silencio by 2,471 acres.

Habitat: Tropical forest and wetlands.

Biodiversity: Once extinct in the area, Colombian Mahogany is being reintroduced to Barbacoas by FBC, enriching valuable habitat for several primate species, including the Critically Endangered Brown Spider Monkey and Endangered White-footed Tamarin and White-fronted Capuchin. The forest is also home to Jaguar, Ocelot and Blue-Billed Curassow.

Threats: Clearance for cattle ranching and agriculture.



The Earth on Fire

Learn more about forest fires,
and how WLT reserves tackle them



This year, Jose Acaro, a Keeper of the Wild at Laipuna Reserve, Ecuador, underwent forest fire specific firefighter training alongside community members and fellow rangers from nearby reserves, learning to combat and control forest fires in the region. The training programme, run by the Environmental Ministry of Ecuador, provides education and development that enables communities to act quickly, limiting the damage that the flames can cause. This is the kind of action that is vital for the protection of habitats worldwide.

What do forest fires really mean for life on Earth?

Forest fires are not a new phenomenon. What is new is their frequency and intensity. The overall scale of the fire is not determined by its cause, which can be natural, such as lightning, or a result of human action, which can be intentional or accidental.

The Amazon and Beyond

Although the Amazon fires are fresh in all our minds, 2019 has also been a year of unprecedented wildfires in places as far afield as Siberia and Indonesia. This year, WLT partners in Bolivia, Paraguay, and Mexico have reported fires. Climate change is undoubtedly responsible for this, as higher temperatures leave land drier, and deforestation leaves them bare.

The Impact of Forest Fire

While there are some ecosystems that require fire to maintain their health, the current acceleration of uncontrolled fires has devastating consequences that leaves land and animals dead or displaced, with no access to the food and cover that they need for survival. Not only is climate change contributing to the acceleration of forest fires, but they advance it too. As the forests burn they turn from carbon sinks into rapid sources of carbon emissions, releasing CO₂ from the trees and soil.

What You Can Do to Help

Over the past few weeks, WLT has often been asked, 'why aren't you buying land in the Amazon?' Quite simply, much of the Amazon is not for sale, and so there is no land to purchase. Of course, we share your concerns about the Amazon and are doing everything we can to ensure the safety of the reserves we have funded elsewhere in South America and the rest of the world because all are at increased threat of fire. Our priority is, and has always been, to save these critically threatened forests. However, for ongoing solutions, the biggest impact that individuals can make is to use their voice, their consumer power, and direct their charitable giving to charities that are protecting habitats.

Steve Backshall, WLT Patron, said of the fires, "All of the world's major tropical rainforests, Sumatra, Borneo, New Guinea, Madagascar, Congo - exactly the same thing is happening every single year. To my mind the most practical thing we can do is to join up with local partners and purchase rainforest, to extend the range of existing national parks and put it back into local stewardship. That's why I support the World Land Trust".

Bolivia



Fires at Nembi Guasu, Bolivia in August 2019.

Armenia



Rangers attempt to control the fires at Caucasus Reserve, Armenia.

Watch Steve Backshall's video on our YouTube channel where you'll also find Sir David Attenborough's 'What can I do?' and other project information.

An Epilogue

By John Burton, founder and former CEO



*Why this is nature, nor are we out of it:
Think'st thou that I, who saw the
wilderness*

*And tasted the eternal joys of Nature,
Am not tormented with ten thousand hells
In being deprived of everlasting bliss?*

Thus spake Mephistopheles in Marlow's Faust (with some minor adjustment by myself), as Faust is damned, and it is an important point.

We humans are part of nature. I was fortunate to grow up in a time when wildlife was still relatively abundant and have seen sights that are now forever gone. I have also been fortunate to work with teams of very committed conservationists, patrons and board members, all supported by very committed donors. At times it can be depressing but we have to see light at the end of the tunnel (and hope it is not simply a train careering towards us). But enough of idioms.

As I step aside, leaving the Trust in the very capable hands of the new CEO, Dr Jonathan Barnard, I have taken the opportunity to summarise the findings of August's questionnaire. These findings will help mould the future of WLT as we do our best to conserve nature for the future.

First, I would like to thank everyone who responded to the questionnaire. It is really important for us to know what you, our supporters, think about what we are doing. Clearly, we are doing things right as so many of you wrote that you were happy for WLT to decide priorities but all the feedback will help us in deciding those priorities, and make decisions in conjunction with scientific advice.

To summarise, most respondents thought that more action was needed in

Armenia



John Burton opening Gnishik Visitor Centre, Armenia in memory of Hugh Synge, with staff from FPWC including Ruben Khatchatryan, Director of FPWC, renowned botanist, Nora Gabrielyan.

Madagascar, Brazil and Indonesia, closely followed by the Congo and China. This agrees with our internal thinking. The issue now is identifying suitable local partners, which is critical to our approach. Consequently, if anyone reading this knows of good NGOs in countries where we are not funding, do let us know. They must be able to own or manage land and have a good track record of conservation.

In addition to the countries identified above, at least one of our supporters, nominated almost every other country in the tropics, together with Eastern Europe, demonstrating the truly international interests of our supporters. Of those receiving the printed newsletter, just over half visited our website, with a very slightly higher number reading our eBulletin. This is part of a continuing trend for more people preferring electronic communications to paper, but it is also an indication that a large proportion of our supporters still like to have a printed copy. This is important because printed newsletters are often read by more than one person and have a longer 'shelf life'.

The questions relating to whether or not

we should use leases to acquire land were particularly important. The overwhelming majority were in favour of permanent leases (often the only option in post-communist countries) but opinion was divided over shorter-term leases. However, the overall opinion was that WLT was fulfilling the wishes of its donors by giving multiple choices as to how they donated.

I would like to conclude by thanking all the donors to WLT, particularly our rapidly growing band of Friends of WLT. Your commitment and enthusiasm for our work is truly inspiring in times of multiple environmental disasters. Many times I have felt like giving up, but the tremendous support we have received over the past 30 years (and raising over £50 million) means that not doing something has never been an option. If we all do something then there is perhaps hope for the future of wildlife and humans, which are, after all, part of nature, which is where I started.

Two major legacies making a positive difference

A thank you to our corporate supporters

Generous legacies making a big difference



La Soledad, a reserve in Huehuetenango, is a unique biological area comprised of five ecosystems and home to many endemic and endangered species.

Legacy Funds New Land Purchase Protecting Biodiversity In Guatemala

The generous gift came from WLT supporter Maurice Melzak, whose legacy has allowed WLT to save 1512 acres (612 hectares) in Huehuetenango, west Guatemala. In June 2019, WLT supported partner FUNDAECO to purchase La Soledad reserve, adding to the 1749 acres protected by WLT funding in this region. In 2005, over one third of Guatemala remained forested. However, since then

an average of 73,000 hectares of forest is lost each year. This rapid deforestation is triggering a loss of genetic diversity and placing the endemic and threatened wildlife and plants at risk. As the fifth most biodiverse country in the world, conservation in Guatemala is critical. La Soledad is abundant with endemic wildlife including amphibians, reptiles, butterflies and insects.

This incredible gift came at just the right time. A year earlier, the site nearly sold for logging and agricultural expansion,

which would have devastated the forest. Luckily, this sale was not completed and FUNDAECO and WLT grabbed the chance to protect this valuable reserve.

Pioneering botanist leaves legacy to Armenia's floral heritage

WLT founder and former CEO, John Burton, visited Armenia in August to open the Hugh Synge Visitor Centre, dedicated to the world-renowned botanist. His legacy to WLT will be used to further conserve the 13,000 acre Caucasus Wildlife Refuge in Armenia, managed by our partner Foundation for the Preservation of Wildlife and Cultural Assets (FPWC).

During his lifetime, Hugh discussed his wish to leave a legacy to WLT with John, hoping to benefit floristically rich, threatened habitats, so the work of FPWC in the Caucasus resonated strongly with Hugh. Armenia's plant diversity is stunning with over 7,500 species; the meadows are full of wild tulips, lupins, narcissi, lilies of the valley, fritillaries and forget-me-nots, which, not unsurprisingly, attract a huge diversity of butterflies, of which Armenia is home to 576 species - 220 of which are endemic.

Thank you to WLT's Corporate Supporters

WLT receives generous support from companies of various sizes and from a wide range of sectors. From creative agencies to manufacturers, travel companies to service providers, what WLT's Corporate Supporters have in common is the positive action they are taking to reduce the environmental impact of their business. Increasingly, companies want to do more to address climate change and save threatened forest and wildlife. WLT works

with companies in various ways and corporate support continues to fund land purchase and reforestation projects across WLT's programmes to protect habitat and biodiversity.

Longtime WLT supporter, Puro Coffee, provided hot drinks at Birdfair. Fun fact: there are three species named after the brand in Ecuador!



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