

A view from the field: Keeper of the Wild, Berjaya



Ranger Berjaya Elahan is surrounded by some of the most spectacular wildlife in the world and he knows how lucky he is. **“Being a reserve ranger has changed my life”,** he said. **“I have learnt to better appreciate the Earth’s environment and wildlife. As a ranger I am now able to share my passion for conservation, especially in protecting wildlife and nature.”**

Berjaya lives in the Malaysian state of Sabah, in north-east Borneo, where WLT is helping to save vital fragments in the Kinabatangan floodplain to help provide continuous habitat for Orang-utans, Pygmy Elephants and other endangered species.

Living locally in Sukau, a village alongside the Kinabatangan River, Berjaya works for Hutan. Although he is passionate about his job, it is far from easy; he is on-call 24 hours a day, seven days a week in case there are any reports of poaching or illegal felling of trees within the protected area. He would like to see more rangers employed to help with this work, as well as more training to continue improving their knowledge.



Above: A rare close-up shot of a Linné's Two-toed Sloth in the rainforest canopy on the Rio Zuñac Reserve in Central Ecuador

Ranger pledge: to keep in touch and send images from the field

Head Ranger with Fundación EcoMinga, Luis Recalde, took these photographs with a basic point-and-shoot camera. Luis has become an accomplished wildlife photographer and has captured animal behaviour that was new to science: an

image of a Caecilian attempting to eat a giant earthworm. This photograph and story was subsequently published in BBC Wildlife Magazine.



Left: Luis also photographed this Black-and-chestnut Eagle in the Rio Zuñac Reserve

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

Tel: +44 (0) 1986 874 422
Fax: +44 (0) 1986 874 425
Email: info@worldlandtrust.org

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Project Brief: Keepers of the Wild

Helping WLT programme partners protect reserves and their wildlife



This Mountain Tapir was encountered by two rangers on Fundación Jocotoco's Tapichalaca Reserve in Ecuador. The photograph was taken by Ramiro Mendoza and shows Cliserio Roa.



Ranger Manuk works with FPWC in Armenia, he protects habitat for the endangered Caucasian Leopard and Bezoar Goat.



Adilei Carvalho da Cunha, a ranger at REGUA in Brazil, releasing a sloth that had been rescued outside the reserve.



All in a day's work: Luis Recalde, Head Ranger with Fundación EcoMinga in Ecuador frequently has to cross freezing cold rivers.

Half a million acres saved Protection needed



All in a day's work for a reserve Ranger



World Land Trust (WLT) works with overseas project partners all with the same ambition: to save as much threatened habitat as possible and protect it for the future.

WLT has been raising funds to save threatened tropical forests and other habitats, acre by acre, since 1989. So far some 500,000 acres have been saved with the help of donations from WLT supporters. The Trust's overseas project partners now have the task of protecting the land and all its wildlife.

And not just these 500,000 acres. The WLT model has been so successful that governments of several countries have recognised the international support for their conservation challenges and have taken unprecedented steps to take action to save some of the last wilderness areas in their countries, giving responsibility to WLT's NGO partners to assist in the protection of the land. But safeguarding all this land puts a strain on these organisations and to address this urgent need WLT launched **Keepers of the Wild** to raise funds to get more rangers into the reserves to ensure their protection.

WLT currently works with partners in these countries



How are the reserves protected?

The most obvious form of protection comes from having rangers in the field. Showing a presence on the reserve acts as a real deterrent to would-be poachers of wildlife, plants and trees. Rangers also ensure that boundaries are clearly marked to ensure that others know too. They make regular patrols and often need to clear forest trails to keep them open as they go. Rangers may have to deal with forest fires and carry out maintenance after storm damage. To do their job they need uniforms, and adequate clothing for extremes in weather and inhospitable conditions; they also need tools and binoculars, and WLT has been able to give some of them digital cameras to record wildlife and any signs of problems.

Who are the Rangers?

The rangers employed are usually members of the local community and some were once hunters. This may seem a strange decision but because of their knowledge of their particular habitat they can make excellent guides and invariably turn into some of the best ambassadors for conservation within their community.

The transition is a simple one: by earning a wage they become well-respected in the village and instead of spending many hours in the forest in search of something to kill for their family to eat, they are able to look after their families in a sustainable way.



Left: The Head Ranger on Fundación Jocotoco's (FJ) Buenaventura Reserve in Ecuador is keeping the trail clear, using his machete, and monitoring and photographing bird populations.



Left middle: Ranger Venancio Florez Lopez is WLT's Keeper of the Wild working for Fundación ProAves in Colombia. He helps protect the Rana Terribilis Amphibian Reserve in the westernmost part of the country, home to healthy population of the Endangered Golden Poison Frog - one of the deadliest creatures on the planet.



Bottom left: Protecting wildlife in the most diverse region of Mexico, the remote wilds of the Sierra Gorda mountains, ranger Abel no longer has to work as a migrant in the USA thanks to his first secure job with WLT partner, GESG. He said: "I feel proud of my work now because we are protecting special places that were being destroyed."

Bottom right: Staff and rangers were needed to urgently put out this fire in Paraguay which came perilously close to the Three Giants Biological Station. The Chaco Pantanal ecosystem is adapted for fire but strong winds caused this one to spread rapidly.



WLT's patron, Sir David Attenborough, says:

“The World Land Trust's policy of buying land is the most direct and certain road to conservation. It deserves the support of all who care about the survival of the wild places of the world.”