

life on the EDGE

WE'RE TAKING YOU ON A JOURNEY
TO ECUADORIAN FORESTS FULL OF
UNIQUE, UNCHARTED LIFE –

AND **TRIPLING** YOUR DONATIONS TO
SAVE THEM THIS BIG MATCH FORTNIGHT

**BIG
MATCH FORTNIGHT**
12-26 OCTOBER 2022

Inside this issue

THANK YOU FOR FIGHTING NATURE'S CORNER WITH US!

Read on to find out how WLT supporters like you have been instrumental in the protection of precious habitats for Armenia's leopards, Borneo's orangutans, Guatemala's manatees, India's elephants, and more.



It's time for Big Match Fortnight!

What your tripled donations could do for the life of Ecuador this month

Dr Catherine Barnard, CEO



In the last newsletter we told you about our Strategic Plan, the roadmap to support WLT partners so that they can save at least one million hectares by 2025. We asked you to help us fund as much conservation action in five years as we have in the prior 30 – and you have risen to the challenge.

Preparing this WLT News issue, there were simply too many stories of your impact to fit within eight pages: the Project Mongma Rama appeal supporters who (see next page) helped us raise £350,000 so that our partner Wildlife Trust of India and the Garo people can safeguard a key elephant corridor; the progress with the land protection funded by those of you

who donated to our 2021 appeals in Borneo (see below) and Guatemala (see back cover); new reserves in Africa, game-changing wildlife sightings in Armenia and more.

Like us, you might have been worrying about the planetary breakdown headlines these past few months. We're not going to deny that some of the environmental changes we're seeing are starting to become quite terrifying. However, we must never lose hope. That's why we wanted to remind you about the difference you've been making and could now make, more than ever, this Big Match Fortnight (see pages 4-7). With our partner Fundación EcoMinga we can save Ecuadorian forests from destruction and in these uncertain and challenging

BMF 22: RÍO ANZU AND RÍO ZÚÑAC

The forests you can save are home to spectacular orchids and amphibians not found anywhere else on Earth. Turn to pages 4-7 to discover them.

economic times, whatever you can give to our new appeal Life on the Edge during this fortnight will be tripled, making your donations go much further for land part of one of the world's most biodiverse regions.

BMF 22: YOUR TRIPLED DONATIONS

Together we can help expand two reserves. What you donate during Big Match Fortnight (see the separate form we've sent you) will be tripled by our matchpot contributors.

Corridor saved just in time through new partnership in South Africa



Giraffes, zebras, elephants, rhinos – these and more were at risk of losing habitats to plantations in South Africa's KwaZulu-Natal province before new WLT partner Wild Tomorrow Fund acted, creating the Greater Ukuwela Nature Reserve to link two pre-existing protected areas. Action Fund donations were key, funding the last reserve sections that required protection.

Third consecutive leopard seen at haven saved with Action Fund's help



Consider this, Action Fund supporters: fewer than 15 Caucasian Leopards are thought to be left in Armenia but three were filmed – within months of each other – in reserves protected with your help. The sighting of Neo (male), Nova (female) and now another male at our partner FPWC's refuge is fuelling hope for the species, and your donations have played a decisive part.

Last year's Borneo appeal unlocks top legal protection for habitats



Last year, our £150,000 Borneo appeal raised £420,000 – and your donations are already delivering. As you can read in our update (check our News web section or reach out to donations@worldlandtrust.org for a copy), our partner HUTAN has now purchased two plots of some of Earth's most biodiverse land for the highest protection, and more purchases will follow.



A WORLD OF IMPACT

A WINDOW INTO WILD PLACES SAVED BY WLT SUPPORTERS THIS SEASON

PROJECT MONGMA RAMA APPEAL HITS TARGET!

To those who donated to our Project Mongma Rama appeal earlier in 2022: **thank you.** Because you acted, our campaign raised £350,000 and now our partner Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) can protect a fourth corridor of a network in the lush Garo Hills of Meghalaya State – thousands of hectares saved for elephants, pangolins, hornbills, gibbons, and you made it possible.



THE SPECIES YOU HAVE HELPED



A pivotal corridor in an area supporting 1,000+ elephants



Habitat for India's only ape and 84 other mammal species



Safety for 206 bird species such as the Great Hornbill

THANK YOU FOR MAKING THESE PROJECTS A REALITY!

THE IMPACT YOU HAVE MADE

2,000 HA

Protected through community-owned reserves (2021-2026)

15,000 HA

Protected through biodiversity-friendly community plans (2021-2030)

170 HA

Restored through 125,000 native trees (2021-2026)

THREE WATCHERS

Enlisted from local communities of Garo people (2021-2026)

Together with funds from a corporate supporter of WTI, the project will support a total of **4,000 ha** of reserves, **35,000 ha** of community plans, **400 ha** of restoration and **five** watchers.



THE CORRIDOR FUNDED BY YOUR DONATIONS



“On behalf of WTI, I'd like to thank WLT supporters for their contribution. Because you acted, after two decades of partnership with WLT we can now secure the last of the elephant corridors in the Garo Hills, in a project that affirms the Garo people's Indigenous rights and will create positive social impacts for these communities.”



Vivek Menon

Founder, Trustee & Executive Director, WTI

Looking to fund the next conservation good news story?

Donations to our Action Fund will support urgent land purchases, anti-fire kit and more, always wherever and whenever our partners most need them. Visit worldlandtrust.org/donate for more info.



Our £1,430,000 appeal to fund the saving of Ecuadorian forests – and how you can help



This year in Ecuador, WLT supporters have a chance to bring about a powerful win for global conservation. Our Big Match Fortnight will triple your appeal donations in support of Fundación EcoMinga, who have a plan to save forests within one of the world’s most biodiverse regions. Together, we can expand reserves before deforestation is allowed to take hold, in life-packed Andean foothills where every hectare we protect could be home to species as yet unknown to science.

One of South America’s great ecoregions, the Eastern Cordillera Real montane forests unfurl east of the Andes like a vast green trail, 900-plus miles north to south, from Colombia to Ecuador and Peru. Shaped by elevation, isolation and precipitation, the mist-shrouded canopy is a home fit for rich, unique life. Eagles, New World monkeys, bears, big cats, dazzling orchids, emerald frogs, crimson forest birds – all find shelter in the wooded fragments still clinging on these steep slopes east of the Andes.

It is here that two majestic Ecuadorian valleys, full of spectacular life, can be found. To the east of the Abitagua Range, Río Anzu’s rainforest remnants and limestone caves boast one of the world’s highest diversities of amphibian and reptile species. To the west, Río Zúñac’s cloud forests routinely yield discoveries of plant species not found anywhere else on Earth. The two landscapes are united in the threats they face as much as in their shared beauty: oil extraction projects have been proposed nearby and plantations would most likely follow as roads expand. But you can stop this.



TURN OVERLEAF FOR OUR MAP OF RÍO ANZU AND RÍO ZÚÑAC



WHAT YOUR TRIPLED DONATIONS WILL DO

Whatever you give online (worldlandtrust.org) or through the form we’ve sent will be tripled during Big Match Fortnight (12-26 October), and this is what your donations will help to fund:	These hectares funded by WLT supporters will join those funded by EcoMinga’s other supporters to increase our impact, protecting a combined...	LEADING TO A TOTAL OF...
586 HA (1,448 ACRES) ADDED TO ECOMINGA’S RÍO ANZU RESERVE	1,173 HA (2,898 ACRES) AT RÍO ANZU	2,073 HA (5,123 ACRES) ACROSS BOTH RESERVES
500 HA (1,235 ACRES) ADDED TO ECOMINGA’S RÍO ZÚÑAC RESERVE	900 HA (2,224 ACRES) AT RÍO ZÚÑAC	ENOUGH TO PROTECT OVER HALF THE SURVIVING FOREST IN THESE AREAS



Steve Backshall helped WLT fund another Río Zúñac Reserve expansion in 2019, and then saw a newly discovered species – Backshall’s Plump Toad, pictured above – named after him. The WLT Patron recently said: “Since then, the toad has been followed by yet more new discoveries, each a reminder of just how important these forests are, and what we stand to lose if we don’t save them.”



From (left to right) *Meriania aurata* trees to *Masdevallia stigii* orchids or what scientists believe could be a new poison dart frog species, nearly 100 new species have been discovered in the Upper Pastaza Watershed. Your donations to expand EcoMinga’s reserves will help to ensure more can be found before it’s too late.



These forests are the most important known Black-and-chestnut Eagle habitat left in Ecuador, as well as the home of the Spectacled Bear and big cats like the Jaguar. The land protected by your donations will join a vast network, helping to preserve the connectivity that these roamers need for their long-term population health.

THE MOST STRATEGIC LAND

The land your donations fund could not be more critical. It will help to enlarge reserves in what is seen, in Ecuador, as the weakest link between the Andes and the Amazon. The reserve additions will connect all of Río Anzu's pre-existing, individual protected plots to one another, as well as to the Los Llanganates National Park and, by extension, to the also-expanded Río Zúñac Reserve. Once all purchases take place, they will be added to a 1.6-million-ha protected network – an area nearly twice the size of Cyprus guarded by rangers like EcoMinga's Santiago Recalde (pictured above).



SAVING AN EVOLUTIONARY ISLAND

The location of the Río Anzu and Río Zúñac reserves is no accident. Studying this area years ago – the Abitagua Range, the last mountain line before the largely flat Amazon Basin – EcoMinga created both protected spaces to cover the elevations where biodiversity is highest, up 1,700-1,800 metres where near-constant clouds form over the slopes. In the words of EcoMinga President Lou Jost (pictured to the left): "The vegetation abruptly changes above this line, and so do the frogs. Scientists who make it this far are treated to an evolutionary island every bit as interesting as the Galápagos."



- Existing Río Anzu and Río Zúñac reserves
- Other protected areas in this area of Ecuador
- Corridor protected in the past with help from WLT and others
- At Río Zúñac, your donations will help to protect this 500 ha property
- At Río Anzu, your donations will help to protect 586 ha within this broader area

Los Llanganates
National Park

Río Zúñac

Río Anzu

Sangay
National Park

CONSERVATION LED BY LOCALS

This area of Ecuador is not just part of one of the world's most biodiverse regions; it is also the home of communities at Mera and other nearby towns. Once the reserves are expanded with your help, they will be patrolled by locally hired conservationists, including WLT-funded Keepers of the Wild such as Jordy Salazar (pictured to the left). Communities of this landslide-prone area will also see soil and climate benefits as carbon-storing trees are kept standing. In addition, EcoMinga will help them embrace ecotourism as an alternative to extractive industries.



Common Woolly
Monkey



Andean Cock-of-
the-rock



Pristimantis ardyae



Meriania zunacensis

**BIG
MATCH**
FUND
FORTNIGHT
12-26 OCTOBER 2022

HELP US EXPAND TWO RESERVES

So much unprotected forest has already been cut down around EcoMinga's Río Anzu and Río Zúñac reserves. With your help, we can act to save much of what is left.

Donate through our separate form or online (worldlandtrust.org) until 26 October and what you give will be tripled. A **£20 donation** will become **£60**, three times the funds for Fundación EcoMinga as they purchase habitats to protect them for good.

Laguna Grande, one year on

What Big Match Fortnight 2021 donations have done for a haven of Guatemala



If you're wondering what difference you could make through this year's Big Match Fortnight (BMF) in Ecuador, we've got a story for you: the transformation already delivered by donations to last year's BMF-backed appeal – Guardians of Nimla Ha'. In late 2021, WLT supporters allowed us to raise our most ambitious appeal in history, enough to save a tropical paradise of Guatemala. One year on, a better future is already taking shape for people and planet.

Like Ecuador's Río Anzu and Río Zúñac, Guatemala's Laguna Grande is a place the world cannot afford to lose: near-pristine forests, mangroves and wetlands for 700+ species; a flood barrier and water filter for local people; a carbon sink for all on Earth. Armed with the £1,370,000+ raised through the Guardians of Nimla Ha' appeal in 2021, our partner FUNDAECO has already completed the tripling of the Laguna Grande Reserve's size to 2,023 ha (5,000 acres), all of which will enjoy the highest protection under Guatemalan law.

Because WLT supporters funded these hectares last year, FUNDAECO can go on mapping out and protecting Laguna Grande's breathtaking life. A three-year monitoring programme for West Indian Manatees – this lagoon is their top breeding habitat in Caribbean Guatemala – is already underway. Over 110 bird species were counted in a recent survey, including a returning hummingbird visitor (the Band-tailed Barbthroat) whose comeback brought "great joy" to FUNDAECO's rangers.

The team safeguarding Laguna Grande on behalf of those who donated last year is also growing, with FUNDAECO bringing in new staff and investing in infrastructure. Assistant Marta Tiul Cabnal is leading efforts to ensure the project benefits local Maya Q'eqchi' people through health clinics, women workshops, and more. This is the power of WLT supporters: habitat saved for posterity, support for the people who know it best. With your help, we can deliver equally transformative conservation in Ecuador's Río Anzu and Río Zúñac, this year.



- Existing Laguna Grande Reserve
- Purchases financed with WLT's 2021 appeal
- Purchase financed by private donor

BMF 2021: THE SPECIES YOU PROTECTED



West Indian Manatee

Ornate Hawk-eagle

Ocelot

BMF 2022: BE A PART OF THE NEXT WIN FOR NATURE

Laguna Grande is the living proof: when WLT supporters join forces, you are big enough to take on biodiversity loss and climate change. Together we could deliver another win like this in 2022. Will you help us save Ecuador's Río Anzu and Río Zúñac?

Donate online (worldlandtrust.org) or on the form we've sent you with this newsletter between 12-26 October 2022 and what you give to our appeal **Life on the Edge** will be tripled by our generous matchpot supporters.

Cover: WLT; Main image - Lou Jost / Fundación EcoMinga; Leopard - Dreamstime.com; Orangutan - HUTAN; Manatee - Eric Carlander / Shutterstock; Elephant - David Bebb; Page 2: Orchid - Fundación EcoMinga; Armenia - FPWC; Borneo - HUTAN; South Africa - Wild Tomorrow Fund; Page 3: Elephant - David Bebb; Gibbon - WLT; Hornbill - Archana-AERF; Background - WLT; Vivek - Charlotte Beckham-WLT; Map - WLT; Page 4: Landscape - Nigel Simpson; Map - WLT; Page 5: Steve Backshall - David Bebb; Toad, *Meriania aurata* tree - Lou Jost / EcoMinga; Poison dart frog - Andreas Kay; *Masdevallia stiglii* orchid - Fundación EcoMinga; Eagle - Lee Dalton / Alamy Stock Photo; Bear - Sun, Shine / Shutterstock; Jaguar - Martin Pelanek / Shutterstock; Page 6, 7: Maps - WLT; Santiago Recalde, Jordy Salazar - Lou Jost; Lou Jost - David M. Bennett; Common Woolly Monkey - GTW / Shutterstock; Andean Cock-of-the-rock - J Pablo Reyes / EcoMinga; *Pristimantis ardayae* frog - newhenriady; *Meriania zunensis* - Lou Jost; Back page: Header - FUNDAECO; Map - WLT; West Indian Manatee - Jeff Stamer / Shutterstock; Ornate Hawk-Eagle - FUNDAECO Archive / Francisco Asturias; Ocelot - Leonardo Mercon / Shutterstock.



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