



What's Inside...

Project Updates	2
Animal Rescue Centre	2
Sensor Cameras	3
Maintenance work	4
Vegetable Garden.....	4

May has seen much new advancement in the Taricaya reserve. Now the weather is more stable we have been able to really make some big steps in many of our projects and we have been lucky enough to start some new ones.

Project Updates

Animal Rescue Centre

One of the biggest things that I want to talk to you about is the advancement in the Spider monkey release project. As I told you last month we had finally gotten permission and we just waiting for the papers to be delivered to us again. During that time we began preparing the release cage near the back of the reserve. This area is located as far away from people as we can possible get in Taricaya, there are no tourists, virtually no volunteers go near here and its safely protected on all sides by Taricaya itself which makes it perfect for getting animals used to being alone. We had to out there several times though to repair holes in the netting, replace the wooden climbing structure inside and make some repairs to the camp that we have close by, the camp will be used when we are monitoring the monkey's after release, this work took about 5-6 activities and was a little harder than most of our work because it was located so far back in the reserve.

Once we received the documents back from the government we were able to move the monkey's, after they had been put to sleep for a final check-up and to place their radio tracking collars, to the release site which took us a whole morning. They were placed in the new cage and obviously spent a while getting used to everything but no one suffered any bad effects of being moved. Over the course of the next week we had to go out twice a day to take them food and to replace the water bowls and of course make sure that they were all in good condition. During this time however we began to see a young harpy eagle sitting over the cage, now even a young harpy eagle is huge! And we obviously got concerned with what would happen if we released the money's in this area. After a few days of talking about it we decided it would be safer for all of them if we moved them to another area, which we did on release day.

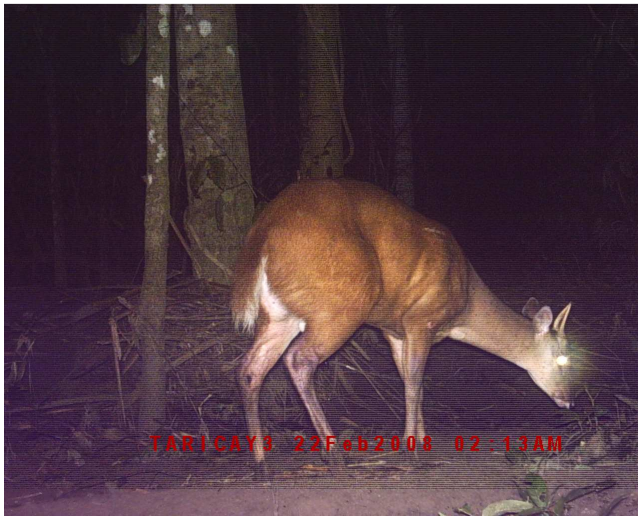
The new release area was just by H.O.B platform and straight away we had a problem, Otto one of the male monkey's decided he didn't want to be here and run off into the forest alone and after several days of constant tracking through swamps, dense forest, over creeks, bumping into snake, peccaries and wasps I finally got him into a routine of coming down and eating from my hands near new farm. With a little patience and a lot of luck I caught him again, brought him back and he was released again with the other group where he has thankfully stayed and doing fine! Unfortunately it wasn't the same story for two other monkey's, one of them managed to get an infection that we didn't like the look of and another somehow managed to fracture her arm which is now healing nicely. So after many trials we have 3 of the monkeys still out in the forest and we hope to be able to keep track of them for many more months to be able to release other monkeys with them.



Otto Chilling Out Near The Canopy Platform. An Amazing Sight After So Many Years Of Work.

Sensor Cameras

We have re-started another project in Taricaya this month; something we piloted many years ago was the use of Sensor cameras in Projects Abroad conservation projects. A sensor camera is a self-contained unit about the size of a bag of flour which has an infra-red sensor, flash, light sensor and display panels built into it. Completely digital, water proof, silent and without odour, they are very good at detecting and photographing animals that are more shy. Over the last 8 years of using similar systems we have detected many species, Giant ant-eaters, sloth, tapir, deer, Ocelot, peccary, monkeys, opossum, rats, birds and even reptiles. We currently have 8 cameras and have begun using them immediately and already we have some pretty cool pictures. The first session gave us some good shots of Deer, Tapir and White lipped peccary. We will be using them as constantly as possible. Placing them around the reserve in points of interest, a clay-lick, water hole, nest or an obvious animal trail that we can see, we will be leaving them for about 2 weeks. On occasion we will even use bait to attract animals to the cameras; on similar projects we have heard that people have used Lynx deodorant, Cat-nip, Tuna and urine from other species of animal. So we will see how things go and as we get some of the more amazing species we will be pleased to share them with you all.



Two of our best photos from our old camera system. A Red Brocket Deer and a Brazilian Tapir.

Maintenance work

One of the biggest changes that Taricaya is experiencing at the moment is a shift from using wood to cement or metal. Ever since we began this amazing project we were forced to use wood for most of our constructions. Even treating the wood with Tar or other preserving chemicals we were only ever able to get about 2-3 years of use out of most things before it began to rot too much. Now however we are able to use steel tubes and cement in everything which is going to last many many more years. As I have already talked about every new cage is being made out of steel tube, cement and chain-link fencing and we have also come up with a new design of bridge so we don't have to use wood on these structures either. On the trail which goes towards H.O.B and Canopy platforms we have 3 bridges that help us keep dry crossing the swamps in the rainy season. Unfortunately due to the nature of leaving wood in stagnant swamp water these bridges are useless after a couple of years. Now we have replaced the first with a steel tube and chain-link design which is suspended like canopy Platforms Bridge. This design is better obviously because the material is better and also because the structure doesn't even touch the water! This means that everything will last at least 5 years before we even think about having to do any repair work, giving us much more time to work on other much more exciting things!

Vegetable Garden

A month or so ago we began work on clearing an area for a new vegetable garden in Taricaya, this area is going to help us reduce the amount we spend in both kitchens and will give us a good area to try new crops and new ways of growing, something that the farmers in the area need to see to believe. One of the biggest problems that farmers have here is that they are using old techniques and they are all growing the same thing, which keeps prices in Puerto Maldonado very low because everyone has the same product to offer. After clearing the area we had to leave it a while because the ground was still too wet but we have now been able to till the land have begun planting the seeds in small nursery bed where they

will grow until they are big enough to be moved into the main plots of land. It's an easy project for everyone to work on, taking out weeds, watering and eventually picking the crops but the best thing will be that we will have fresh completely organic vegetables for everyone to eat!



The Vegetable garden doesn't look like much now, but soon it will be full of life!

Finally this month I just want to quickly talk about an activity that Raul has started where he is taking a small group of volunteers and visiting the neighbours on what we have called a Border Patrol walk. The idea is to keep visiting the neighbours to keep them up to date on what we are doing and to help them feel involved in the area and most importantly to give them constant reminders that they cannot go into Taricaya land to cut wood, hunt or do any other activities that could have a negative impact on the area. So far we have done 2 of these walks and both have been met positively by the neighbours who have listened to everything we have to say and the volunteers have enjoyed going deeper into the reserve and meeting some of the people in the area. We hope to continue doing this on a regular basis to keep up our relations with the people in our area.

Hi,

If you would just like to send a note, we would love to hear from any of you who have volunteered at Taricaya, it doesn't matter how long you were here for or how long ago, we're always interested in what you're doing or where you are now.

We welcome your feedback on the newsletter as well, what would you like to see or hear about here every month.

Also, if you have any queries about the rainforest (or Peru), we have a number of qualified biologists on the team who would be very happy to answer any of your questions.

For quick updates or information about Taricaya, check out our website at www.volunteer-conservation-peru.org, or you can reach us through the Projects Abroad website at www.projects-abroad.net.

Have a good month, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Richard Munday
Volunteer Co-ordinator
Reserva Ecologica Taricaya