



Volunteers cooling off in the river after a hard days work

What's Inside...

Flood Waters
2
Auto Camera Feature
5
New Buildings and Enclosure
9
And Finally...
12

Species List
4
Animal Arrivals and Releases
6
Local News and Update
11

Flood Waters...

As most of you have read in the last few months, Taricaya has been through a pretty rough time with the flood waters and the resulting inconveniences of high swamp levels throughout most of the reserve.

The high levels of water meant that we really only had about 5 different dry trails for a few months and it was only until a couple of weeks ago that we could walk through the trails from here to canopy, HOB and even NF without getting soaking wet and covered in mud!

Now, this being Taricaya meant that we were not really bothered about getting wet or muddy to do some observations and we even had a fair amount of tourists who didn't mind trekking through the waters to get to Canopy either, but there was nothing worse than sitting at HOB at 5:30am wet up to your stomach and not seeing any birds...

Which happens all too often at HOB.



Rachel, Dave and Benna making their way up to HOB observation point.

Like everything at Taricaya though, we managed to have a few funny times, I myself fell into the swamps twice trying to get to Canopy and HOB, luckily (And I don't actually know how) I managed to keep my bag above the water, saving the book, Obs sheet and my cigarettes from getting soaked! And I know of a few other times when staff and some of the volunteers suffered the same fate.

However during last week I was given a task, which meant walking to the very back of the reserve. Naturally I went prepared to get soaking wet and told my group that we would probably be swimming at some point so they should avoid taking anything they didn't want to get wet.

Trekking through the forest, we came up against a few obstacles like a tree that had fallen over the trail, having to climb under and over branches and sliding down a few parts to quickly emerge back on the trail was a delight indeed! We were having a real adventure!

After we had passed the tree, we were then confronted with our first big swamp, which actually didn't turn out to be so bad, in fact the entire walk wasn't as bad as we thought it was going to be, with the deepest swamp only getting to just above belly

www.projects-abroad.net

<http://www.volunteer-conservation-peru.org>

button height, which although made the men in the group scream like little girls, it really wasn't that bad.



Me making my way through a long stretch of cold smelly water!

Now of course that we know roughly how deep the swamps are in the deepest parts of the reserve, we can move around with a lot more confidence, pretty safe in the knowledge that we won't be swimming, which from personal experience, is a very tiring experience and makes working with reptile traps, butterfly traps and auto-cameras virtually impossible.

We are now also pretty sure that given another month we will be able to move around without getting water in our boots at all. This means that we can now start work with our pre-flood activities (Part of our December work schedule is working out our month by month plans for the next year – Which projects we will do when, which budgets we should apply for and when ETC), like inviting the botanists to the reserve, which we had planned for January, working with the reptile traps and butterfly traps again and being able to use the auto-cameras away from the immediate lodge area – Which always gets better results.

One of the things that we have discovered over the last two months since the flood is the dramatic decrease in mammal movement around the reserve, all the mammals are of course still in the reserve but they don't seem to be moving around from dry area to dry area, avoiding crossing the deeper waters as much as possible. Which of course is logical, why cross deep water when you don't need to? We have discovered this using the auto-cameras and the old fashioned method of searching for animal tracks, not that the flood waters are well on the way to drying up, we are seeing an gradual increase in the amount of mammals in certain areas, which we believe is due to the fact that the animals are now starting to move around more. We have also noticed an increase in the amount of nests and burrows being made along the drier sections, this has only happened in the last month really, which suggests that these animals have decided it's safe to start digging houses again!

Species List

Since 2005 Taricaya has been working hard in creating an accurate and up to date species list, which now includes 359 birds, 54 mammals, 42 amphibians, 54 reptiles and 105 species of butterfly. Various methods have been used to collect this data from mist-netting to manual capture.



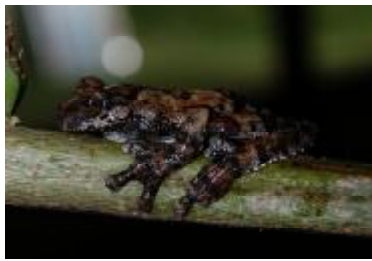
Anhinga



Harpy Eagle



Chestnut Fronted Macaw



Hyla marmorata



Yellow Spotted Side Necked Turtle (AKA Taricaya)



Thecadactylus solimoensis



White Bellied Spider Monkey



Brown Agouti



Brown-throated Three-toed Sloth



Auto Camera Feature

The Auto-Cameras use infra red sensors to detect movement (Like a burglar alarm) which then activates the camera. They have memory for 150 photos and rechargeable batteries which last for up to 1 month. Completely water proof, they can be left out in the jungle in all conditions.



Brazilian Tapir – 5th Individual identified.



Pale Vented Pigeon.



Anaconda Colpa's Infamous Ruddy Pigeon.



Red brocket deer – 4th Individual identified.



White Lipped Peccary with Young



Brown Agouti

Animal Arrivals And Releases

March has seen another very busy month with the animal release program, with more arrivals and more releases!

Amongst our new arrivals we now have animal that not only have I never seen, but I didn't even know existed with a name I have never heard of in my entire life! And I'm not the only person either, our very own Stuart Timson hadn't ever seen one either! We are now the proud care-takers of two young Pacarana's, these large rodents are very hard to spot and have virtually no information about them recorded anywhere. So who knows, Taricaya might have another first by working out what these interesting creatures actually do!



Our young brother and sister couple have been living happily with us now almost a month, although every time I see them they seem to be asleep, which makes me understand why its so rare to see them... they don't move around a lot!

Its amazing what some people get freaked out by, some people hate spiders, some snakes, some water and some weird people hate oranges...Its true I know someone that finds the fruit section of Morrison's the scariest place on earth, I'm happy to mention at this point that I'm not actually friends with this person.



Personally I find Sloth's the most horrible things on the face of the earth, they do actually freak me out, the way they move, the stupid stoned expression they have on their faces all the time and the fact that they pretty much have no purpose or use on this earth except to eat, sleep and produce high nitrate waste. Anyway, our second arrival of the month was a Hoffman's two-toed sloth, which like all the sloth's we get at Taricaya was immediately released and slowly started to make its way back in to the wild (I'm writing this about 2 weeks later so it should be a little over a 1000M away by now) Even with an animal I'm not keen on, its still great to see one released back into the wild.

www.projects-abroad.net

<http://www.volunteer-conservation-peru.org>

Our next new arrival for this month was another baby brown capuchin monkey. This latest addition has actually been a saviour for our baby Howler monkey, following our amazing bad luck with Howler monkey's, we managed to have 3 at one point and are now back down to 1, we were trying everything we possibly could to keep the last alive, saving it from dehydration and a stomach infection using antibiotics and re-hydration salts we managed to get him eating solids again, but we soon noticed the tell tale signs of a lonely howler monkey, which almost always results in further trouble, but our baby capuchin and one of our night monkeys seem to have made the ideal match, making the howler monkey more active, eating regularly and of course having some thing else to snuggle up to on cold nights!



A sight you won't see anywhere else in the world – A Red howler monkey, Brown capuchin monkey and Night monkey snuggled together on a cold day!

Along with all the new arrivals at Taricaya, we have also had a good number of releases.

Along with the Sloth we have also released 2 different species of bird, the first to leave (Although they are still frequently seen around the lodge) were our pair of Scarlet Macaws, Macaws are the birds which require the most amount of time to recover cut feathers and weak flight muscles, so this pair have been in captivity for almost 2 years now, but finally seeing them flying around the lodge, perching on high branches and stealing the brazil nuts they can find in the brazil nut shell pathways has been amazing!



One of the Macaws perched on a fruit tree, getting some breakfast.

www.projects-abroad.net
<http://www.volunteer-conservation-peru.org>

And our final release for March was another couple that have been with us for what seems like forever, two of our Yellow crowned parrots have been set free around the lodge to enjoy the freedom of the reserve (Like the Macaws though they seem to enjoy being around the lodge a lot more than flying free where ever they want)

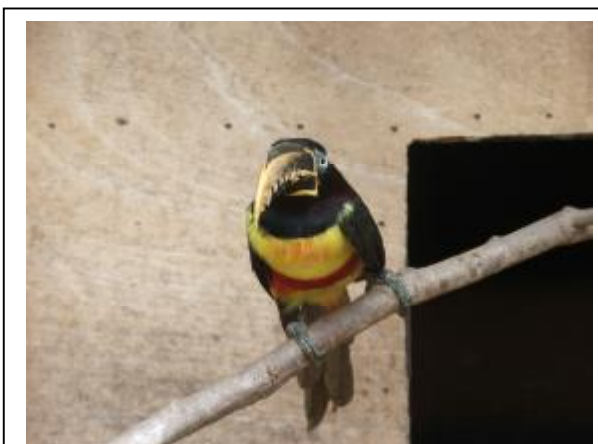
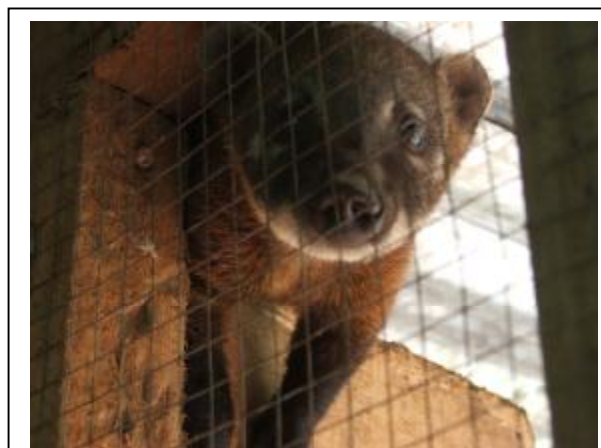


Like a lot of the animals we release the Yellow crowned parrots have stayed around the lodge area so far, but like every animal we have released they gradually begin to increase their range as their strength and confidence increases. The first few months they spend close to us gives us a good chance to keep track on their progress, make sure they are improving and give them some help if needed.

Along with all the new arrivals at Taricaya, we have also had a good number of releases.

Along with the Sloth we have also released 2 different species of bird, the first to leave (although they are still frequently seen around the lodge) were our pair of Scarlet Macaws, Macaws are the birds which require the most amount of time to recover cut feathers and weak flight muscles, so this pair have been in captivity for almost 2 years now, but finally seeing them flying around the lodge, perching on high branches and stealing the brazil nuts they can find in the brazil nut shell pathways has been amazing!

Now we have the pair together and can see that they are getting along fine, we are extremely confident that we will be able to release them back in to the wild in the future. All we have to do is keep them until Maria grows up a bit, which could be up to a year from now, The Coati should be about the same too...



Next up we have a species that I have never seen up close before, always through a pair of binoculars which is never my favourite thing to do! Our Chestnut-eared Aracari has, like almost all our animals, come from someone in Puerto Maldonado as an unwanted pet.

This means, like almost all the birds we receive, that the flight feathers have been cut, so we have to look after the animal until the feathers re-grow, which can take anywhere from 3 months (for small birds) to 1 year (for birds like Macaws) Fortunately we have the care for birds down to an art, so we usually have no problems at all keeping them healthy until release day and then we very rarely have a problem once they are released. So look forward to seeing another photo of this guy in 6 months time when he's looking healthy and hopefully flying away to his new home!

And finally for this month, we have another companion for one of our long stay birds, another Red and Green Macaw to keep our existing one company. As I've mentioned above, Macaws have the longest stay out of most animals we take in, with their feathers taking up to a year to drop and re-grow and then for them to have enough practice at flying to be able to fly a short distance once released. Once they are in an open environment they are then able to practice more and more until they are capable of flying huge distances without problems, if of course they decide they want to leave at all!



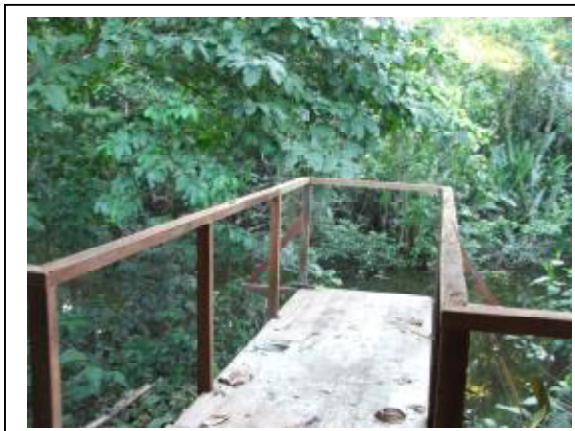
New Buildings

Over the last 2 years Taricaya has seen many changes in terms of new buildings coming up and old ones coming down. We started with all the new enclosures, then moved on to the new bungalows, then we had the new kitchen and now we have another new building from the old kitchen!

One of the problems Taricaya has always had, was where to house the staff, it used to be because Staff members would change fairly regularly, then it just became a question of space, with a total of 42 beds, minus 10 for staff members, we were always risking not having enough beds for all the volunteers (This never actually happened and even if we did have over 32 volunteers booked at one time then the staff would be the first in to tents) but over the last year we have been slowly fixing this problem, firstly with the restoration of the oldest building in Taricaya (commonly known as the Dutch block) into two spacious rooms with balcony for staff (Currently Daniel and Gigo's rooms)

Then we moved on to rescuing Rachel's block, which was on the verge of falling into the creek, by removing the second room in that block and replacing the supports we have managed to save the building, so now Rachel has a nice comfy place to live too. This has always left me with a bit of a problem...Over the course of the last 4 years, I have had a total of 10 rooms in Taricaya, spending more time in some and less in others (I think the minimum in one room was only about 1 week) But I have always

been the one who got moved from place to place to make sure the volunteers had a room to stay in, I AM NOT COMPLAINING ABOUT THIS, I'm just stating a fact. Anyway, the old kitchen which has been through more design stages than a ride at Disney world (First it was going to be a staff room – Pool table, Diving platform, Air-conditioned, Sofa's – Not really, Then it was going to be a Lab area, fully equipped with all the Lab equipment you would need to do a million things, mainly because there isn't anywhere in Puerto to do this sort of thing, and finally it was decided that we needed more staff sleeping areas, so the building has been built as 3 more rooms, with diving platform and Air-conditioning...Am I joking now?



Diving and fishing platform...Now am I joking about the air-con?



View from outside the rooms.

The new building has been fully equipped to be permanent rooms for myself, Gigo and Daniel (Who's rooms will now be turned over to Students who come to us) They are spacious, comfortable and most importantly they are as far from the Bar and Kitchen as you can possibly get, so more being kept awake until 3am with volunteers partying and singing "Danny Boy" or "Show me the way to go home" at all hours...

As well as the new buildings, we have always been exerting time, energy and money towards the animal release centre. Our newest project (which has been started and won't be finished for a while yet) is the new enclosure for Rachel (The Jaguar not the lovely member of staff). As most of you would have seen and noticed, the enclosure she currently has will not be suitable as she grows bigger. It is ok in size for now, but when she grows bigger, it will be too small, its hard to clean as we have no way of enclosing her, and it needs to be more secure for an adult Jaguar, which she will be in a year or two!

So building has begun on something bigger, stronger and easy to clean about 3m away from her current enclosure. By converting our newest enclosure (which is 3m to the left of Rachel's) we are going to be able to build her something bigger and we can incorporate a "management enclosure", which is somewhere where we can shut her in and not have any problems going into the main enclosure to clean up the bones, broken branches and anything else that she manages to get hold of. The actual changes won't take long too complete, and we hope to have the new enclosure finished in about a month. The finished article with Rachel and Rachel (Staff and Animal) will be coming along in a future newsletter as soon as possible...

Anyway, the finished article with Rachel and Rachel (Staff and Animal) will be coming along in a future newsletter as soon as possible...

Local News and Update

Happenings in Puerto Maldonado And Snippets Of Taricaya News!

Volunteers Leaving

Marcus Doherty, Kirsty Spaven, Thomas Disley, Nicholas Drury, Steven Mons, Alexander Goulder, Sian Ricketts.

Thank you for all your help at the reserve, we really couldn't do a lot of the work we do here with out your help.

New Volunteers IN MARCH.

Benna Keoghoe, Thomas Hadlow, Marcus Doherty, Jef Craps, Helen Bodnar, Matthew Andrzej Stefanowski.

See you all soon! Hope you'll have a fantastic experience with usJ .

TV Fame

Over the years Taricaya has made a total of 2 television appearances, one American "Living Channel" show and on Britain's "Richard and Judy". This year already we have a few interested parties contacting us about doing shows. But most importantly we have had a local TV company make a DVD about us! After watching the premier screening we quickly came to the conclusion that this would be great publicity for the rest of the world too, all we need to do is translate it to English and away we go. Now of course we need to look into costs ETC, but we may soon be able to offer you all your own Taricaya DVD to show friends and family. Stay Tuned...

JUNGLE FACT!

Instead of wind, many birds, bats and insects are the main source of spreading seeds throughout the forest floor.

House Warming...

The massive growth of Taricaya over the last few years has meant that we have had to look into our management infrastructure, along with a few changes to the amount of time certain staff spend in Puerto Maldonado (Working on Emails, Paper work for Government groups, licences ETC) Stuart also decided that he would have to move down from Cusco to Puerto Maldonado, I'm sure you will all wish him the best with his new house and his future with Taricaya.

Local Celebs...

Puerto Maldonado is a place that always has something happening, ok its not London, its not Paris and its not New York, but if you look hard enough you can always find something to do. When I was at the airport this month something weird happened, there I was waiting around for a volunteer who's flight was cancelled (Which meant I needed to wait for the second flight to see if he arrived then) The last person off the first flight seemed to have a lot of friends waiting outside, then all of them started screaming and taking photos and asking for auto-graphs... Someone famous I guessed, looking closer I couldn't tell who it might be, a singer obviously because of all the equipment that followed... But to this day I have no idea who...looked a bit like Peter Andre.

If you have any ideas of how Projects Abroad volunteers can be put to good use within the Community then please contact either Richard Munday or Stuart Timson. We are always looking for your suggestions.

www.projects-abroad.net

<http://www.volunteer-conservation-peru.org>

Also I would like to hear from some of you about what you are doing at the moment,
A few of you seem to have dropped off the map! Where are you? What are you doing? Do you have any plans to have or join a Taricaya reunion? Let us know what you are up to, we really do enjoy sitting and having a few drinks...oh and reading the emails you send us of course!

Those of you meeting up with Taricaya volunteers we really do want photos for our Reunion section in the New dining room, remember though, you need to find an interesting way to include the phrase "Projects Abroad – Reserva Ecologica Taricaya" Write it in Bananas and Papaya, find a small monkey on the road side and get him to hold a sign up for you – Make it new and interesting.

Also we'd like to know if you guys have any questions about anything? Anything about the rainforest that you want to know about and didn't learn whilst you were here? Or maybe something you've forgotten? Let us know for our new Question area of the newsletter!

So until next month, bye!!!

And remember that we also have a Taricaya website, which is full of information and updates from our own Stuart Timson, located at <http://www.volunteer-conservation-peru.org>

Richard Munday
Reserva Ecologica Taricaya
Puerto Maldonado Office
Perú
Email - richardmunday@projects-abroad.org
Phone – (0051 82) 98270 0655
MSN Messenger – rickym41@hotmail.com