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# Children's Tropical Forests News

## HORFIELD C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL continued

Glad you enjoyed it and thank you also for your wonderful contribution to saving the Rincon Rainforest in Costa Rica.

I was working on the name the teddy bear stall - we only had a few names, so we took a clipboard and went around asking people. It was quite fun really. I personally think the three people on the ice cream stall worked the hardest out of everybody.'

'If it wasn't for Children's Tropical Rainforest UK, we wouldn't have had all that fun yesterday.'

Leah

With my friend Rosie we raised £18 on our stall selling books for all ages.

On the 'ring toss' there was a lot of laughter from little toddlers and older children. At the white elephant stall, Luke and David sold loads and the face paint people put loads of detail on other people. The atmosphere was excellent. It was really loud and busy.

My stall was next to the clothes stall that Simone was working on and I was next to another bookstall Lucy and Harry were working on.

The ice cream stall sold loads - they ran out!

Jessica B

On Wednesday 25th June, Year 5 organised a Rainforest Sale with an amazing variety of stalls. One of the stalls was the Jewellery I ran with Isabel Sempill and Naomi Groves. All of the bracelets were homemade, and we sold all except one. Before setting up the stalls, we advertised this exciting event by designing and making posters.

Half way through, Mrs Green announced that all of the products would be half price - and that way we sold more.

We displayed the jewellery on pinboards, but first of all had trouble propping them up. So we borrowed some boxes from the book stall to prop them up.

I made 40 bracelets for the rainforest sale which raised a total of £15. I was very pleased with the total we raised.

Jess K



## IN FOCUS

In the second regular contribution Robert Jolliffe brings 'In Focus' one of the many important species to be found in our rainforest projects.

With its strange, prehensile nose and heavy build the enigmatic Tapir looks like a cross between a Llama, a Cow and an Ant-eater. It is in fact more closely related to the Rhino and the Zebra, belonging to the Perissodactyla order (odd toed ungulates).

Tapirs, of which there are four distinct species (Mountain, Brazilian, Malayan and Baird's), stand about 3ft tall and are between 6ft-8ft in length. They weigh between 300lbs (the smallest and rarest Mountain Tapir) and 800lbs (the larger Asian Malayan Tapir). Tapirs typically produce a single offspring and gestate for approximately 13 months, a fact which goes some way to explaining their shy and secretive disposition. The average lifespan for a Tapir is 20-25 years, reaching maturity in 3 years.

Tapirs tend to be nocturnal, solitary creatures with a love for dense cover and water. They are also strong and agile runners, evading or deterring predators by snapping and biting or escaping into water. They like to bathe, and make long treks to pools and rivers. Generally territorial, the males fight viciously with well developed teeth for the attentions of females.

Tapirs are herbivorous, feeding on grasses, aquatic vegetation, leaves, buds, and the fruits of low-growing shrubs. On rare occasions they have been known to come into conflict with man when they cause damage to corn fields and other crops.

Of the four species, two occur within CTF project areas (Brazilian and Baird's). The Brazilian or Lowland Tapir is the rare inhabitant of the wet grasslands and swamps of South America's lowland rainforests and is the most likely species to be observed at Uwasu Rainforest Reserve. Baird's or 'Mountain Cow', as it has been dubbed by the rural populations of Central America occurs in the Riverine Rainforest of Central America and Northern South America and is the species which occurs in the Jatun Sacha, Bilsa, and Monteverde project areas.

Tapirs have few natural predators other than the Jaguar and Mountain Lion. The biggest threat to this delightful Ungulate is Man and his continued encroachment into the Tapir's natural habitats.

By supporting CTF projects you will ensure that this shy and enigmatic mammal will continue to be able to swim, climb and forage for generations to come.



Children's Tropical Forests UK  
25 Broadway, Peterborough PE1 1SQ  
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Volume 9  
April 2004

Editor: Roger Littlewood

## An OBE for Oddie

Warmest congratulations to our Patron, Bill Oddie, on being awarded an OBE for his services to conservation in the latest Queen's honours list.

His support and encouragement for CTF-UK over the years, as well as his spectacle-tweaking beam on our Appeal letters, has made a major contribution to our fund raising activities.

Well done - and thanks, Bill!



## SAVING THE RINCON RAINFOREST

The battle to save the Rincon Rainforest in North Western Costa Rica, the principal focus of our recent fund raising efforts, is not quite over.

From: Robin Jolliffe, Chairman of CTF-UK  
To: Professor Dan Janzen  
Sunday 5th October 2003

Dear Dan,

We have another \$5,000 raised for the final payment at Rincon. Hopefully it's not too late.

We are working on our next newsletter to be published in April 2004 and are thinking of continuing our Appeal in this for Rincon. Would this still be relevant.

From: Dan Janzen  
To: Robin Jolliffe  
Santa Rosa, Costa Rica.  
Thursday 9th October 2003

Dear Robin,

We are not quite done. We have another \$62,000 yet to raise so, YES, your \$5,000 will be most welcome and another (Hopefully final?) Appeal in your April 2004 Newsletter would be super welcome.

The GOOD NEWS is that there is a serious chance that the Rincon Rainforest might be incorporated into full National Park legal status and therefore fully into the (380,000 acre) Area de Conservacion Guanacosta as early as the end of 2004. Heavy duty conservation, and the only way it can be capitalized is through this international support.

AND WHAT ABOUT OUR CHILDREN'S BIOLITERACY BUS?

We just had our first major Costa Rican contribution of \$40,000 towards the \$53,000 school bus that the ACG needs to transport the 2,200 children per year for its Biological Education Program. If you know anyone who would like to buy \$13,000 of bus for bioliteracy, you know what to do. Smile at them!

Keel-billed toucan: a resident of the Caribbean slopes of the Rincon Rainforest

Patricia & Michael Fogden

Tapir - present in increasing numbers in CTF's Central and South American rainforest projects

## THE RINCON WINTER HOLIDAY RESORT

In the last issue of CTF News, and as the Rincon Rescue reaches its final phase, we promised our supporters and readers a close look at the ecology and history of the Rincon Rainforest – giving you a better idea of where the money's going.

### 5 metres of rain

In Holdridges formal forest classification scheme, Rincon is Premontane Rainforest at 900 metres down to Very Humid Rainforest at 350 metres. It is classical rainforest on volcanic foothill soils. The forests face directly into the moisture-sodden Trade Winds blowing off the Caribbean and receive 4-5 metres of rain annually (160 to 200 inches). This is between six and eight times as much rain as many areas in lowland England.

Critically, Rincon's prime mid-elevation rainforest ecosystem has been almost entirely destroyed throughout the rest of Costa Rica. It has been replaced by coffee plantations and horticultural and orchard crops. So this forest type is largely missing from the land protected by Costa Rica's sophisticated and extensive National System of Conservation Areas, which aims to keep a quarter of the whole country as conserved wildlands. And that makes Rincon even more important!

Rincon is home to at least 500 species of vertebrates (including the 309 species of birds so far recorded), 3,000 species of plants and tens of thousands of insects, mites, fungi, bacteria, nematodes, spiders and protozoans.

No detailed inventory of the Forest's biodiversity has yet been undertaken – the priority has been to get it off the timber and plantation market. But rapid survey techniques show clearly that its fauna and flora are as species-rich and unique as are those of Estacion Biologica Pililla on the Eastern side of neighbouring Volcan Orosi, which is already part of the Area de Conservacion Guanacasta. Estacion Pililla has been intensively surveyed and has the greatest insect species diversity of any site in Costa Rica.

Despite its closeness to Estacion Pililla, many of the species in the lower elevation portions of Rincon do not occur elsewhere in the ACG. Astonishingly, Rincon will add at least 30,000 additional species to the ACG when it is fully integrated into the larger Reserve.

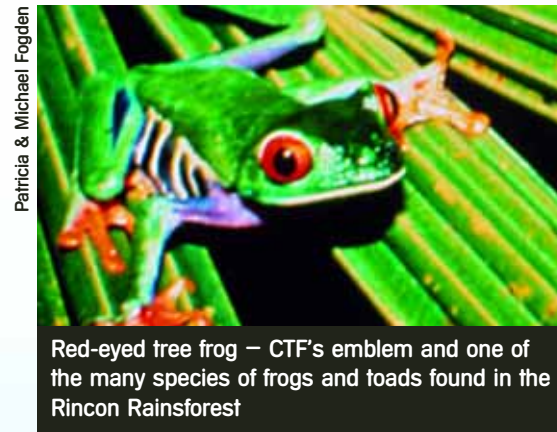
### Then the volcano erupted....

Today, the Rincon Rainforest, is a complex mosaic of gorgeous old-growth virgin forest (about 50%); restoring rainforest selectively logged 10 to 40 years ago (25%); and abandoned fields and pastures associated with the homesteads that were dotted across it (25%). This diverse mosaic of different forest successional stages is rich in animals, birds, flowers, fruits and insects.

The homesteads were created when a sprinkling of subsistence farmers and ranchers 'colonised' the area between 1960 and 1980. These people cleared some patches of forest for bean fields and pasture and harvested the best timber from some other patches. As the percentages show, much uncut virgin forest remained.

Then Volcan Rincon erupted mud and steam, the bottom fell out of the cattle market and Costa Rican Government conservation policies made timber cutting more difficult. The colonists began to move to safer urban environments. This created the present opportunity to incorporate Rincon into the Area de Conservacion Guanacasta by simply buying it from owners eager to sell, without the problem of having to relocate them.

Rincon today, despite containing the beginnings of about 60 farms, ranches and logging operations is completely unoccupied by its owners. This half-hearted colonisation was not enough, thankfully, to extinguish this very species-rich forest, though it certainly altered it. If now left in peace, the forest will continue its rapid natural restoration which began as soon as the colonists left. In two to three centuries, even the best ecologists will be hard put to determine that it once suffered this human battering.



Red-eyed tree frog – CTF's emblem and one of the many species of frogs and toads found in the Rincon Rainforest

### Biological Education Programme

When it is incorporated into the much larger Area de Conservacion Guanacasta, not only will its wildlife derive great benefit from being able to move freely in and out of this much larger conservation area – but the existing ACG Reserves will benefit as well.

As we touched on earlier, the current Reserve boundary, at a height of 900-1,000 metres is a long way from the nearest road and is difficult to patrol and warden. It's on steep and rugged terrain and it is virtually impossible to prevent poaching of animals and trees along this boundary. But, when the Rincon purchase is complete and the forest is merged with the rest of the ACG, the ACG boundary then becomes the lower edge of the Rincon Rainforest which borders on the lowland agricultural landscape with its many resident landowners.

This boundary lies near an all-weather road from Dos Rios to Gavila to Buenos Aires to Colonia Libertad that crosses flat and easily traversed terrain. Most significantly, it has been the ACG experience that such a boundary is both easy to supervise and is generally honoured by its many neighbours.

All of these neighbours are strongly influenced by the ACG's Biological Education Programme, which teaches basic biology to all 4th, 5th and 6th grade students in the 43 schools neighbouring the ACG - including those in the four towns on the road described above.

The projects and jobs created directly in the Rincon Rainforest sector will further serve to integrate it with these neighbouring communities. Indeed, in 1997, when the owners of the Rincon Rainforest collectively approached the ACG to ask if they could be bought out for inclusion in the conservation area, it was clear that some of them actually preferred to see their properties go into conservation rather than low grade agriculture.

In the fight against the loggers and the agricultural converters, the project has only lost one property. The saving of the Rincon Rainforest is at hand!

## SOUTH CRAVEN SCHOOL

### 10 years support for the First International Children's Rainforest

Consistency and continuity are watchwords in the support of major long term conservation projects.

A recent letter from Steve Higgins, Head of Environmental Studies at South Craven School, Yorkshire, to Robin Jolliffe, Chairman of CTF UK, enclosing a cheque for £60 earmarked for the Monteverde Conservation League, owners and managers of the First International Children's Rainforest in Costa Rica, says it all.

The money has recently been raised by Eastburn Primary School in response to the rainforest talks that Steve gives regularly to South Craven's ten feeder primary schools and to other secondary schools in the area.

'This amount is excellent' says Steve 'as it is only a tiny school.' Eastburn did it by setting up a tropical fruit stall.

The donation is just the most recent of many from South Craven and its linked schools over a period of ten years – and the school has always concentrated its support on the First International Children's Rainforest at Monteverde.

It all started when Steve went on a private bird watching holiday to Costa Rica in 1991, and, whilst staying in the mountain village of Monteverde, met members of the Monteverde Conservation League whose aim it is to protect the primary forest in the Tilaran Mountains.

When he came back to South Craven, he gave a series of illustrated talks which fired the imagination of many students – and fund-raising began to help purchase and protect areas of forest in Costa Rica.

During the summer term of 1993, a stunning wall mural of the Costa Rican rainforest (4m x 1m) was started by Steve and two year 9 students, Paul Dalby and Luke Shaw. And we make no apologies for reproducing it in CTF News 10 years later – we've got colour now as well!

South Craven's rainforest mural – Steve Higgins with Paul Dalby and Luke Shaw



The interest and commitment shown by the students was readily apparent – and so the idea of a working visit to the Monteverde Cloud Forest was hatched – and took place at Easter 1994. The mural, which was finished shortly after the end of the trip, was much admired and, after receiving some photographs, the Monteverde Conservation League decided to print a series of postcards featuring some of the wildlife depicted to raise funds in Costa Rica.

A further visit to Monteverde followed in Easter 1997 and then came a millennium trip in April 2000. Each trip took four students to work – and to experience the stunning diversity of wildlife in the Children's Rainforest.

Throughout this period, fund raising for forest purchase and, more recently, for research and education facilities at Monteverde, has continued unabated. Much of the South Craven fund raising is channelled through CTF-UK which is about to send a further \$2,500 to the Monteverde Conservation League – for use at the research and forest protection centres at Poco Sol and San Gerardo.

'The idea of our funds helping the San Gerardo research station is fine' commented Steve Higgins. 'After all, we helped to build it during the first South Craven trip in Easter 1994'.

## HORFIELD C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL

continued overleaf

### How to do it – rainforest fundraising

For a number of years, CTF UK has received an annual donation from Classes 11 and 12 at Horfield C.E. Primary School in Bristol from their 'Rainforest Sale'. The children – and their enthusiastic teacher, Judy Green – sent us these pictures and letters of how they do it.

They think it's an excellent way of raising both money – and awareness about rainforest conservation – that other schools might like to try. And so do we!

Classes 11 and 12,  
Horfield C.E. Primary School  
Bristol

7th August 2003

Dear Children's Tropical Forests UK,

As in previous years, we are delighted to be able to send you a donation from our annual 'Rainforest Sale'. This year it amounts to £292.59 and includes money we received from a toy car auction (£46) and pre-disco nail varnishing! (£20).

It was held in June last year in our school hall and has now become an annual event, organised by the children in Year 5 as part of the literacy/geography/art project we do on rainforests.

And this year, the children had lots of new fund-raising ideas. A number involve re-using unwanted possessions – always a good idea.

*Judy Green*

PS. I would be happy to send details to anyone who is interested in running a similar event.

