

Newsletter

Neotropical Primate Conservation



Welcome back and Happy New Year 2008!

NPC is starting the year with several projects in full swing and a number of other projects about to start. Read on to see what we've been up too and what our plans are. Don't forget to check the website for more information.

www.neoprimate.org

Yellow Tailed Woolly Monkeys in Peru

We have been in Peru for two months now and the project is progressing well. We have held meetings with all five communities and have secured permission from all residents as well as local and national government. The community of La Esperanza has kindly donated us office and living space, which we decorated with an appropriately simian motif. Since the opening of the office many more people have been coming to find out more about the project.



Left: Female yellow tailed woolly monkey.

NPC is committed to capacity building in the countries we work in, therefore we sent a call for prospective volunteers to Peruvian student groups and have had a fantastic response. The project will pay for all transport and living costs, which will enable many students to gain valuable experience early on in their careers.

On the 20th of December we found a group of yellow tailed woolly monkeys in an area of forest very near La Esperanza, we had not found groups living this close to people in the past and it provides an opportunity to develop eco-tourism in the area. The authorities of La Esperanza contacted the owners of this land and they seem to be interested in protecting it. During November and December we also found the little known Andean night monkey (*Aotus miconax*), and believe that they are quite common in the area, being able to survive in small patches of disturbed forest.

Reforestation

Our first native species tree nursery was built on the 22nd of December and marks the start of our reforestation work in the five villages of La Esperanza, Santa Rosa, Miraflores, La Florida and La Perla del Imasa. About 30 people turned out to help in weeding and digging the beds, clearing the area and constructing a fence.

Thanks to this amazing turn out we were able to build a much larger nursery than we planned, with enough space for about 10,000 seedlings! We will build the next nursery in the village of Santa Rosa on the 5th of January and the other three soon afterwards. It is very important to get the nurseries up and running, as the cedar trees, the main timber source for the area, are in flower and will soon be seeding.



Building the first tree nursery in La Esperanza

As the schools in the area are on holiday for the next couple of months we will be organizing days for the children to come and help in the nursery and learn about the importance of forests and ecosystems.



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Newsletter

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Sustainable development

Thanks to a kind donation from the organization Brit - Olam, we were able to give medicines to the local health centres to be freely distributed to the poorest families.

We were visited by Wagner Guzman of IIAP (Instituto de Investigacion de la Amazonia Peruana), who came to La Esperanza and gave a presentation to the authorities of the five communities in which he explained the benefits of land protection.



Wagner Guzman giving a talk to the authorities of La Esperanza

Antonio Cervan Picon, a local eco-tourism operator came to La Esperanza with Wagner Guzman and talked to the authorities about the possibility of developing eco-tourism in the area. He will return in the New Year to do a survey of possible attractions to help to develop tourism. When he returns he will also give a series of talks about eco-tourism to the villagers.

Ana Mariscal, an Ecuadorian botanist working for the National Herbarium Ecuador, visited the project for a week. She gave a talk about the importance of reforestation and the dangers of deforestation using examples from her many years of experience in Ecuador.

Education

NPC has teamed up with the Brigade de Fauna Silvestre (BFS) to provide environmental education in local schools and colleges. The director of the BFS, Raul Bello Santa Cruz, came to volunteer in the project in November and is now developing a curriculum for the coming year.



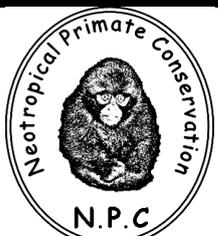
Children come to the office to learn about the environment

Free English classes started on the 18th of December. There is so much interest that we have had to use the local school for these lessons and even then we have had to split the group in two.

As a thank you to the community for all their help we arranged two afternoons of free hot chocolate and Christmas cake, one for our English students and one for the rest of the community.



Christmas party for English students



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Yunkawasi - National Education Project

Yunkawasi, a Peruvian NGO which focuses on environmental education, is developing with our support, a national education program which aims to draw attention to the conservation of Peruvian primates for the younger generation. This project involves the creation of teams of student volunteers, who will visit schools throughout the country to develop conservation oriented activities with school children.

More than sixty students have already registered to take part in this project. The Ministerio de Educacion (Ministry of Education) as well as INRENA (National Natural Resources Institute) are supporting the project. Training of volunteers starts this month in Lima and will be continued in various cities nationwide. We are now fundraising for the second phase of the project which will begin in April.

This will take the form of a national writing competition for school children of stories and legends to do with monkeys in Peruvian culture; we will also be running a regional painting competition. The out come of these will be collected and published in a book together with basic information about primate ecology and conservation in Peru.

Yunkawasi ran a similar project last year using traditional myths and legends about water as a platform for introducing water conservation and sanitation into the national curriculum. The project was a great success nationally. You can view the book produced through this project at:

http://www.wsp.org/filez/pubs/321200745148_CUENTOSfinal.pdf

The printing and free distribution of the book will be very costly and so can only be accomplished if we are able to raise enough funds, so please consider making a donation to support this project, to either Yunkawasi or through NPC. Please mark all donations made through the NPC website with "Yunkawasi".

IV Peruvian Congress of Ecology

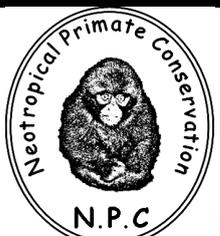
Fanny Cornejo presented details of the project and previous studies that she and NPC had made on the Yellow Tailed Woolly Monkey at the IV Peruvian Congress of Ecology in Arequipa on the 19th – 23rd of November. The Congress was attended by many scientists and students and the project was received with much interest.



Fanny Cornejo presenting the project in Arequipa

Thank you(s)

NPC would like to thank all the people who have given us there support in the past. We would especially like to acknowledge the support we have received in the last few months from the Primate Society of Great Britain, Primate Conservation inc, the International Primate Protection League, iiap, BSF, Yunkawasi, IdeaWild and Born Free Foundation.



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