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## MIST NETTING AND BIRD BANDING PROJECT

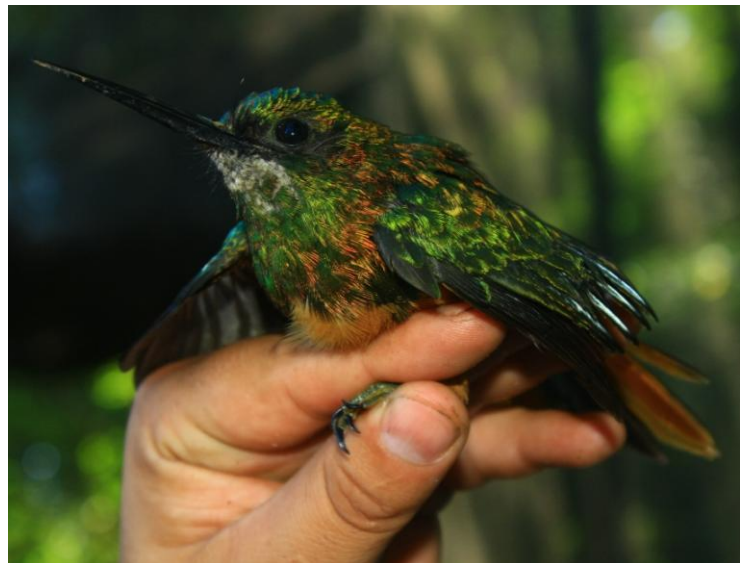
Many of you will already be familiar with Mauricio Ugarte: our ornithologist who makes regular visits to Taricaya in order to study the activity and species of birds present here. He has made huge contributions to our bird species lists in previous years and is back again this year in order to study and gather information on the migratory routes of Southern migrant birds. Despite plenty of research on the routes the birds take through North America to South America, not so much is known about the routes the birds travel on the return journey, from the south, through Argentina, Bolivia, Peru and up to Ecuador, on their way North.

As he has done previously around different areas of the reserve, he is setting up Mist Nets (walls of very fine black netting) in order to study the activity of birds moving through the reserve. The birds fly into the almost invisible netting and get caught. Mauricio, with the help of eager volunteers, check the nets at regular half hour intervals to untangle the birds, identify them, record their biometric data and place numbered bands on their legs in order to enable us to track their movement throughout the different habitats within the reserve.

From previous studies and, of course, our daily bird observations, the number of bird species identified in Taricaya stands at 434. Mauricio has already added one more (migrant) specie to that list: Lesson's Seedeater. We will let you know how the study goes next month, with the final total!



Lesson's Seedeater



Bluish-Fronted Jacamar

## BAT PROJECT

While Mauricio has been focusing on the birds, Hugo Zamora Meza, a mammalogist, has also made a return visit to Taricaya to study the species of bats found here. 51 species have already been identified. As with the birds, fine nets are set up to trap the bats as they fly through the lower under storey of the rainforest. On this visit, the nets were set up near Amazon Planet, our neighboring lodge and, with Hugo, volunteers monitored the activity during the evening, until about midnight, checking the nets at regular intervals, measuring and identifying the different species caught. There can be quite a lot of variety in shapes, sizes and patterns!



## HERPETOLOGY: PITFALL TRAPS

The swamps and muddy trails are beginning to dry now, as the year progresses. Every day there is less water in the swamps and the river and creek get lower. Towards the end of April, however, there was still a fair amount of water around, enabling the study of the different amphibians and reptile species and their activity within the reserve to continue. Daniel Neira, our resident Herpetologist, set up an alternative type of “aquatic” pitfall trap. Alongside the pitfall traps set up along Alex, Quail and Oso Bandera trails, we also put 2 sets of floating pitfall traps in the swamp near the HOB observation platform. These traps will help to identify the aquatic frogs that are resident in such swamps. Plastic drinks bottles are inserted into the sides of the bucket so that frogs, tadpoles, fish, etc, may swim in and fall down into the bucket.

It wasn't in one of these newer traps that we found two rather more surprising residents of the swamp, however. In two of the pitfall traps set up alongside the swamp we found 2 baby black caiman! After a quick check and measurement, we released them back into the swamp. They were making quite loud calls for their mother and we weren't sure we wanted her to turn up just at that point!



A baby black caiman with a suspiciously fat stomach!  
Was there a frog in here earlier....?

## NEW ARRIVALS

The Animal Rescue Centre has seen a few new arrivals this month. We now have a new adult male Margay, *Ron*, as well as a baby, named *Suertuda* (Lucky), which have been brought to us by local people. Both seem to be putting on weight and doing well. With this new adult male we hope to be able to form a reproductive pair



with the adult female Margay we already have. We will keep you updated on their progress!

We also have another very popular new arrival: *Callie*, a baby Red Howler Monkey. Previously being kept as a pet, she showed signs of poor nutrition in the colour of her fur. Usually it should be reddish, as in the name, but it had become quite blond in places. She is eating well though and so far so good. Howler Monkeys can be quite delicate and susceptible to illness through a poor diet, so fingers crossed she will do well. As she is so young, she is still quite dependent and needs company. Until the analysis and quarantine period is complete, however, she cannot yet

be put with *Muñeca*, our other young Howler Monkey, but luckily we have many willing volunteers on hand ready to do the job! We hope to complete the analysis soon, so that she does not get too overly familiar with humans.



### **BOW AND ARROW MAKING AND THE ESE'JA CULTURE**

As a break from the usual routine, volunteers had the opportunity to visit a local man, Enrique, and his family this month. Enrique has been brought up in the Ese'ja culture and many volunteers enjoyed spending a day learning how to make bows and arrows and finding out, through Enrique's unique and entertaining style, all about this culture and how they used to live.



Hi,

If you would like to send us 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 for 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](http://www.volunteer-conservation-peru.org), or you can reach us through the Projects Abroad website at [www.projects-abroad.net](http://www.projects-abroad.net).

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

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