



The Hummingbird Conservancy is very excited about our first issue of Hummer Dairy. We want to keep you informed about our goals, how we have invested your donations and what we have and hope to accomplish. We hope you enjoy our first issue and invite our readers to send us your thoughts and comments.



## I National Hummingbird Banding Workshop

During March 7-9 in Cali, Colombia with the assistance of 12 field scientists, three hummingbird World expert instructors, Tom Wood and Sheri Williamson from [SABO](#), and Gary Stiles from [Universidad Nacional](#), Colombia, provided researchers with very important knowledge and first hand field experience on hummingbird banding or marking. During three days of intensive training the instructors pointed out the key most critical aspects: the great care in the preparation of the bands, and the responsibility and ethics researchers must have when banding to avoid harming the birds.

## Fundraisers in Dallas and Los Angeles

During March, THC raised over \$9000 for its Conservation Communities initiative. We are very grateful to Daryl Richardson, owner of the Dallas World Aquarium, and Geoffry White, well known LA Psychologist, for providing their time, space and opportunity to Luis Mazariegos to present our initiative. We thank all donors and the compassion of Geoffry and Daryl who understand the impact local communities have in the conservation of tropical rainforests and the implications for our planet's future.

## Success in the Serranía del Pinche – Colombia



The expeditions to Serrania del Pinche in April and November of 2006 ended in great success. A **new hummingbird species for science was discovered** and an important range extension for the critically endangered Colorful Puffleg was established. Also, 408 bird species were reported, 38 of which are endangered. Due to the importance of this ecosystem, THC has started to work with local communities to protect the area. Through our Conservation Communities initiative we have started working with local schools and community leaders (see page 3).

## RAP Expedition to Serranía de San Lucas - Colombia

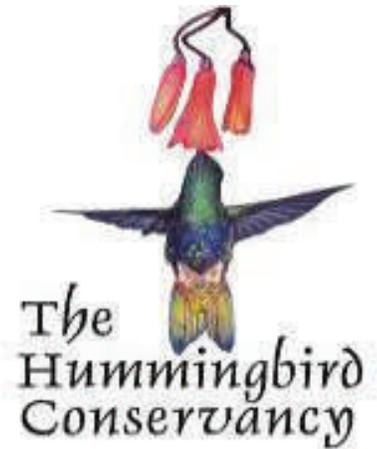


The Serranía de San Lucas has been one of the inaccessible places in Colombia to carry on studies of fauna and flora. Its biological importance is undeniable and it is a high priority to obtain information on its biological diversity and to identify areas for conservation. THC has established an agreement with a local community for the creation of a natural reserve and to continue researching the area.

During December, a Rapid Assessment Program (RAP) expedition was carried out to north region of the unexplored Serrania de San Lucas. This is the first of several expeditions planned for 2007. We found accessible forest in very good conditions indicated also by the presence of six species of primates, two of them in the endangered list. There were 173 species of birds registered with 55 of them being mist netted. A total of 61 bird families were accounted for. On of the most important goals achieved was a cooperation agreement between THC and the community of Nuevo Oriente to establish a monitoring station and to begin a zoning plan for its area of influence. The work being carried on with the local school and community, which already is part of our Conservation Communities initiative, will in the short run mean the creation of a new natural reserve (see page 3).

### New Members

We want to give a warm welcome to our new members of the Hummingbird Conservancy who joined our endangered species conservation efforts in the neotropics.



We want to make a special mention to our new Topaz and Sapphire members:

Daryl Richardson—Topaz

Geoffry White—Topaz

Muriel Horacek—Sapphire

[www.hummingbirdconservancy.org](http://www.hummingbirdconservancy.org)

## A brighter future for Henry



We arrived in Nuevo Oriente as the day ended with the sun setting in the horizon. After traversing half of Colombia by air, bus, a four hour boat ride on the Magdalena and Cauca rivers followed by another 4 hours of trekking we were now in the foothills of the unexplored Serranía de San Lucas, a biological treasure for any scientist as only a handful, half a century before, had been able to explore. Due to its political instability the Serranía had remained a mystery until now.

But our first treasure did not come in the way of a bird or frog, it was the family of Doña Emma with her husband, Don Uribe, who opened up their hearts to give us a warm welcome as if they knew us for a long time. Behind them came Henry and Jose their son's, who's eyes were wide opened as we unpacked all our gear and wondering why we had brought so many things.

As we finished setting up our tents Doña Emma invited us into their home to have some coffee. A one bedroom hut constructed with some wood having a living room kitchen. As we explained what had brought us to their homeland, the bed room "door" opened and out came another member of the family. It was the grandfather, the conqueror of this lands 65 years ago while in his twenties. Survivor of snake bites and malaria we could only dream of the adventures this man had lived. The barking of four family companions announced the arrival of yet another family member, an uncle who had been working in the rice fields we had passed 4 hours before, bringing a 50 pound sack of rice to mill on his shoulders.

We had a very long day ahead of us and the roosters made sure we got a wake up call at 4 am sharp. We had to leave before dawn to reach our study site and be ready for the early morning bird activity. It came as no surprise that Henry was up and ready as he usually left home at 5 am for his 3 hour hike to school. This routine had given him the chance to observe and witness many of the inhabitants of this natural world. He became our "body guard" for the following days helping us find birds we sought and telling us about their local names and habits. His gear: a pair of sandals, 20/20 vision, a superb ear and an innocent smile; both eyeteeth missing by the lack of oral hygiene.





Henry is only ten years old but holds hundreds of year's of hopes and dreams in his mind. Though he has yet to decide what he wants to be when he grows up, his dad, a hard working farmer, has insisted to Henry that he needs to study so that he can look for a better future. There are not many opportunities in this land at the moment. His dad is afraid his sons will fall into the easy way out scheme of gold mining or collecting coca leaves. Jobs that have only brought violence and misery to other villages south of the Serranía. For now, Henry is proud in showing us his pig and chickens he has cared for, and he is now static that someone can appreciate the knowledge he has amassed at his young age. In return, we hope to show Henry, his family and community that they have an immense richness in their backyard and that Nuevo Oriente's future should be full of new dreams.



The sixty families at Nuevo Oriente are an infinite rain of histories, adventures and legends. Every night we would listen to the stories of people wanting to share their dreams, hopes and frustrations. These guardians of the rainforest, administrators of much needed oxygen, governors of creeks and rivers, accept their living conditions but wish the local government would remember them more often than just on election years. Though their needs are many, our main concern is the health and education of the children living here. During our short one week visit, this community quickly won our hearts and we decided they should become part of our Conservation Communities initiative.



It was very hard to leave this paradise and wave Henry and his family good-bye, hoping to see his eyes again in the future. And it was sooner than expected as we found him running to catch up with us to escort us during our next leg. This good-bye lasted for three hours as he again enlightened us with his knowledge until reaching the swamp where he would head back home. Again our souls were saddened by this goodbye as we climbed the motorcycles that took us to Puerto Pajon for our boat ride. As we waited for our "chalupa" by the river, Henry appeared on a bike one last time. He had pedaled for miles to let Marcela know he would miss her and that he looked forward to our return.

We needed no further proof that this one individual would be worth our efforts of helping this community have a brighter future. Behind Henry's eyes lies the illusion of our next visit, a look in need of much attention and support to fulfill his dreams and those of Nuevo Oriente.

## Conservation Communities Initiative



Through our Conservation Communities' environmental education, formation and communication programs we have seen many lives changed for the better and have enjoyed great success in the past year. After our successful project with the San Miguel community in the department of Cauca during 2006 in the construction of a new school facility, we have selected two new local communities, El Naranjal and Nuevo Oriente, in the Serrania del Pinche and Serrania de San Lucas, respectively, to begin the improvement of the local schools and provide children with adequate study conditions and implements. We will influence over 60 families which have direct impact over 50,000 acres of rainforest.

The Hummingbird Conservancy wants to improve the education, health and well being of children and families living in isolated communities having direct impact over high priority conservation areas. Our goal is to change the life of a child, to change a family, to change a whole community, to impact the planet.



Children of the Nuevo Oriente community with Marcela Vargas, THC's environmental education leader.

**Each year the Hummingbird Conservancy continues to advance in its mission of conserving hummingbirds and their habitat through the integration of research, environmental education with the active participation of the community and the establishment of natural reserves.**