

Dear supporters and friends,

As 2014 winds down, we have much to tell you! Here, we'll give a few highlights of our year and report an exciting new initiative that we've been working on. And, of course, we must ask for your continued support, as you make our conservation successes possible.

Project updates

Our **Kayapo Conservation Program** has faced heightened challenges this year from illegal goldmining and logging just inside the boundaries of Kayapo lands. Enforcement is ramping up to meet this challenge and we are boosting our surveillance capacity. The development of sustainable, culturally compatible economic activities has made further progress this year, and we are very pleased to observe the skillful management of our partner Kayapo NGOs.

By working with local partners, we make conservation efforts more effective and build greater support for conservation.

Meanwhile, in Africa, **Mali Elephant Project** coordinator Dr. Susan Canney reports "making extraordinary progress" despite large challenges. She notes the value of having gained the trust of the local communities, who perceive the project as having stayed with them through thick and thin, helping them to cope through the Islamic insurgency, while maintaining habitat for both elephants and humans. Our system of community-based resource management is working well, as are the forest and anti-poaching brigades.

In Indonesia, our **Sulawesi Project** has launched a new maleo conservation initiative in a second village, which, as with Taima village, will have local residents guarding maleos during the nesting period and recording breeding data. Plans are underway for a pilot project to rear indigenous wild silkmoths to augment household income and ensure the preservation of a pristine rainforest area at the heart of the Tompotika peninsula.

Tropical conservation is not a dull enterprise. From the ICFC-supported **Los Amigos Conservation Concession** in Peru came the news that uncontacted indigenous people living in voluntary isolation



Kayapo girl © Cristina Mittermeier

had penetrated further into the Concession and actually fired arrows at one of our park guards. This heightens the importance of the Concession and may also reflect its return to a pristine condition.

The first six months of our project to **Minimize Impacts From Resource and Infrastructure Development in the Andean Amazon** were highly productive (and led to front page news in Peru), with gains too numerous to list here -- see our website!

Welcome Michelle!

ICFC welcomes **Michelle Colero**, our new Managing Director, Development, whose passion for conservation is paired with a can-do attitude. Michelle is keen to get to know our supporters and she will play a key role in expanding our support base and programs. ICFC remains a lean-and-not-mean machine that benefits from the diverse talents of our staff, many of whom have "day jobs". We'll introduce each of them in upcoming newsletters.



Feature Article: CONSERVING CANADA'S MIGRATORY BIRDS IN THEIR WINTER HOMES

Much of ICFC's work has focused on threatened ecosystems and species endemic to high priority regions in the tropics. But we are also concerned about the welfare of Canada's migratory species—birds, monarch butterflies, whales, sea turtles—that spend part of the year in Central and South America and the Caribbean. Many of our bird species, shorebirds especially, have experienced large population declines in recent decades, and wintering and stop-over areas are often the “weak link”. According to Environment Canada, the populations of Canada's bird species that winter in South America have declined by 53% on average from 1970 to 2010.

And so this year, we set out to find opportunities for direct conservation action to reduce threats at wintering areas and stopover sites of Canada's birds. We talked to colleagues, many in South America, about the threats in their region and opportunities to address them. The end result: we have a short list of excellent prospective projects. Most involve shorebirds. With landbirds, we will proceed with a small project to restore habitat for Common Nighthawks (and other species) at Rincón Santa María reserve in northern Argentina; other projects await funding. And see below on a related conservation victory.

No other group in Canada is helping to purchase land to protect our migrants where they winter. Help us take action by donating today at www.ICFCanada.org.

A New Reserve in the Colombian Andes Helps Protect Migrant Landbirds



The Serranía de Perijá is still relatively unexplored by modern researchers with new species of orchids (and other taxa) being discovered.

We are delighted to announce the creation of a new reserve, to which ICFC and our NGO colleague Rainforest Trust were core contributors. The 1152-ha Serranía de Perijá Reserve represents one of the most critical high elevation areas with largely intact montane forest and treeless páramo with many rare and endemic species.

Situated in northernmost South America, the area is known to be a vital pathway into South America for Neotropical migrants arriving in South America and an important wintering area for Cerulean Warbler, Canada Warbler, and Olive-sided Flycatcher.



The Red Knot is a migratory shorebird that travels up to 20,000 km twice a year between its breeding grounds on the high Arctic tundra and its southern non-breeding sites. The *rufa* subspecies makes an 8000-km nonstop flight from Bahía San Antonio, Argentina to the United States in just 8-10 days as part of its longer migration. “B-95”, shown here, was banded in Argentina in 1995 and is still alive, meaning this 30-gram bird has flown over 515,000 km (farther than from the Earth to the moon) in its lifetime!

“It's great to hear that ICFC is initiating a program that will focus specifically on the conservation needs of shorebirds in Latin America. It is abundantly clear that there are many problems and issues needing to be addressed, at sites spanning the tropics to Patagonia. ICFC can count on the full support of, and collaboration with, Rainforest Trust in their efforts.”

Dr. Robert S. Ridgely
Author, *Birds of South America*
President, Rainforest Trust



The Golden-winged Warbler, Canada Warbler, and Cerulean Warbler, all breed in Canada, but spend most of their lives in the tropics!

ICFC Shorebird Conservation Initiative

One of the great wildlife spectacles of the world is the sight of hundreds of thousands of shorebirds congregating at rich feeding areas to fuel up before undertaking extreme long-distance migration. Canada's Arctic-breeding shorebirds fly to wintering and stopover sites in South America, some as far as Tierra del Fuego, a distance six times further than a Canadian snowbird's trip from Toronto to Florida!

But shorebirds need our help. Worldwide there are about 240 species of shorebirds and 60% of those are in perilous decline. What actions need to be taken? Problems include the loss of coastal habitats important as resting and feeding areas for shorebirds; disturbance of birds by the beach-loving public; and, in some regions, illegal hunting. Our projects—the ones we will start with are in Argentina, Chile, and Suriname—tackle these issues in ways that have already been proven to work.

ICFC is hoping, to raise \$100,000 for this Initiative and we need your help. This amount, combined with funds already in hand, will allow us to proceed with priority work.



ICFC Associates Patricia González from Argentina (left) and Dr. Allan Baker, Senior Curator of Ornithology and head of the Natural History Department at the Royal Ontario Museum (middle) at work in the field studying Red Knots. Their research led to the awareness of the acute decline of the species and they are helping ICFC develop effective shorebird conservation programs in South America.

ICFC Wish List: Funds Needed

What?! You need a tractor for conservation??

Yup. For firebreaks. Fire is a normal part of the tropical savanna ecology, but much of Bolivia's Beni Savanna now burns each year, whereas under natural conditions only 5-10% burns annually. The diverse species of the savanna thrive when there is a more natural mix of grass areas that have not burned for varying intervals

Hence the need for firebreaks at Barba Azul reserve. The reserve is owned and managed by our local partner, Asociación Armonía, and protects the Critically Endangered Blue-throated Macaw and other distinctive species of the savanna such as the Maned Wolf (right) and Giant Anteater (see the new mammal video on our website!). This past year, ICFC and others contributed to a land acquisition that doubled the size of this important reserve (to 11,000 hectares).



What's needed is a tractor to dig a trench and build an adjacent bank. The water in the trench maintains the firebreak and the berm can be used for an access trail for animals, reserve personnel and tourists. The tractor will also be used (even in the wet season when roads are impassible) to bring in equipment and building materials for the reserve. And it can be rented out to neighbouring ranchers, which increases local goodwill.

Will you help us purchase a tractor for Barba Azul reserve?

Fire Ecology 101

"A 1st year grass has no thatch but is tall. It looks like a nice savanna, but we noticed that most of the species do not use the grass. By the 2nd year, further thatch build-up (a thick mat of dead grasses, etc.; in fire management culture this is called 'fuel') creates protection for small mammals, and more micro habitats for arthropods. You can see a beautiful ecological chain, where there are more bugs, hence more rodents, and then more predators like Maned Wolf, Harrier hawks, etc. And the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th year savanna is botanically richer, with many of the later successional savanna plants coming in. The difference between the two savannas is like comparing winter to summer."

Bennett Hennessey,
Executive Director, Asociación Armonía

Other needs (contributions at any level welcome!)

The Need (See details at: ICFCanad.org/wish.shtml)	Amount needed
28 Brazil nut driers, Tacana program, Bolivia*	\$500/each
Reserve guard, Río Sarstún, Guatemala	\$4500
Reserve management and protection at Serranía de Perijá, Colombia	\$15,000
Reserve management and protection at Barba Azul reserve, Bolivia	\$15,000
Mali Elephant Project: badly needed replacements for two vehicles for the anti-poaching unit	\$45,000 each
Additional priority shorebird conservation	\$5000 - \$100,000

* About those Brazil nut driers...



Our partner in Bolivia, Amazon Conservation Association and its Bolivian sister organization, is supporting the development of a commercial Brazil nut industry among the Tacana indigenous people, which strengthens their claim to their extensive ancestral lands (making biodiversity more secure) and provides badly needed income. In 2013, ICFC provided bridge financing for the project. We also invested \$30,000 to purchase materials to build 60 payoles – sheds (or “driers”) that allow for drying and storage of harvested Brazil nuts. Wood and labour for the driers was provided by the Tacana, and in the end these hard-working people produced 72 (not 60) driers. Driers prevent 15% spoilage, resulting in savings of \$30,000 per year (for 60 driers) – a healthy return on investment. A further 58 driers are needed, of which 28 are not yet funded.

Your help with any these projects will be much appreciated. Donate by mail or online at ICFCanada.org. Thanks!