

March 2017 Newsletter

Dear supporters and friends,

ICFC welcomes Molly Bartlett as Executive Director

Our strong (and small) team at ICFC just got stronger! We are delighted to welcome Molly Bartlett, who as Executive Director will lead and represent ICFC, building on our accomplishments and, with our Board of Directors, charting our future path.



Before starting with ICFC in January, Molly worked at the Clinton Foundation to develop avoided deforestation, reforestation and landscape restoration projects for climate resilience and biodiversity conservation in East Africa. Molly has a Master's degree in biology and a law degree and brings to ICFC a passion for biodiversity conservation. As she says, "We currently have a unique opportunity to preserve the planet's rapidly diminishing biodiversity before it is too late. ICFC takes a no-nonsense, focused approach to this and I'm thrilled to be part of the team."

ICFC founders Anne Lambert and Tom Welch will remain on the Board for the time being and both are still involved in day-to-day operations, Tom as our CFO and Anne with programs and communications. Project management and development are ably conducted by Barbara Zimmerman, Scott Hecker and Carlos Garcia, with an assist by Carmen Lishman who is juggling roles as a new mother, speech pathologist and ICFC Associate. Laurie Havinga is our indispensable Administator. Our extended team includes Susan Canney (Mali elephants), Patricia Gonzalez (in Argentina), and our esteemed advisors and members.

Land acquisition in Ecuador: ICFC is supporting the expansion of a private reserve in one of the world's great biodiversity hotspots. Owned by our partner Fundación Jocotoco, Río Canandé Reserve protects old growth forest in the Ecuadorian Chocó region. The region has been identified by BirdLife International as an Endemic Bird Area due to its high number of restricted-range species. Richer communities of amphibians and reptiles in the Neotropics are found only in the upper Amazon basin. The reserve also protects the Critically Endangered brown-headed spider monkey and the largest population of one of the rarest endemic tree species in Ecuador.

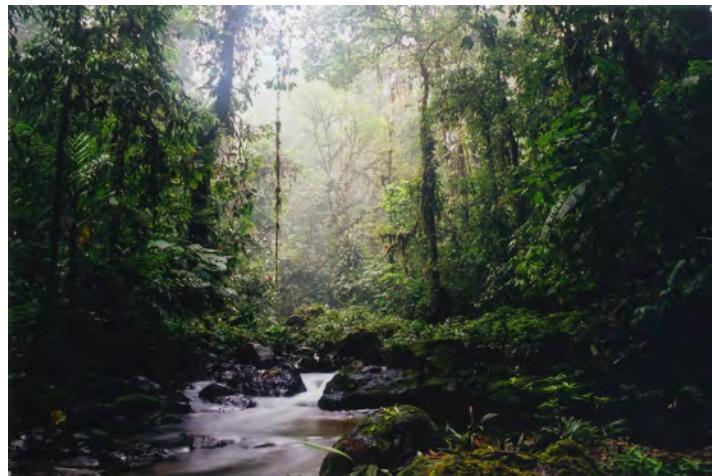


Lemon glass frog, Rio Canande, Ecuador.
Photo: Lucas M. Bustamante-Enríquez

"The Chocó rainforest in Ecuador is one of the most threatened and most species-rich habitats in the world. Deforestation in this region is so rapid that I am convinced that all species restricted to the Chocó are more threatened than acknowledged by the IUCN. With the help of ICFC we will save the Río Canandé watershed and thereby establish a buffer area for the last large tract of Chocó rainforest. This project will significantly improve the conservation status of many threatened species." – Martin Schaefer, Executive Director of Fundación Jocotoco.

The biological diversity and natural beauty found in Canandé serves as a great backdrop for both scientific research and public enjoyment. Fundación Jocotoco will continue to protect the reserve and promote public education, sustainable ecotourism and research.

Jocotoco, ICFC, Rainforest Trust and others will continue to pursue conservation in this region through strategic land acquisitions. To learn more or to donate to our Reserve Fund for Land Securement, visit our website.



Canandé forest, Ecuador Photo: David Agro

Project News

Combating poaching in Mali: With their small low-value tusks Mali's desert elephants seemed immune to poaching in the past but since 2015 they have been subjected to unsustainable levels of poaching. In 2016 the project established Mali's first anti-poaching unit, and – crucially – arranged for Chengeta Wildlife to deliver advanced in-operations training to the unit. Chengeta are the perfect partner for this: they have a skilled, proactive, intelligence-driven approach employing investigative skills, tracking skills, and the ability to nurture sympathetic sources within local communities. Meanwhile, our work in protecting habitats for elephants and people continues.



Red Panda, Nepal. Photo: Christopher Robert Scharf

New project: Red Panda Community Forest Conservation in Nepal: The Red Panda, also known as the “firefox” because of its red coloring and bushy tail, has been intensely hunted throughout its range in the eastern Himalayas and is threatened with extinction. ICFC is now partnering with the Red Panda Network Nepal to train and employ community forest guardians to prevent poaching and restore degraded habitat in a 174,000-hectare community forest reserve that provides a corridor between protected areas in Nepal and India. Other imperiled species that will benefit from this work are the highly endangered Chinese Pangolin and the Himalayan Brown Bear. To learn more about this exciting new project please visit our website. (<http://icfcnada.org/our-projects/projects/nepal-red-panda-project>)

ICFC and Rainforest Trust establish joint venture agreement for global priority conservation



ICFC has long had collegial relationships with peer organizations based in the U.S. or U.K./Europe who follow a similar model of partnering with local conservation organizations and seeking the best conservation opportunities internationally. We sometimes co-fund projects – especially land acquisitions – and we share due diligence and long-term project monitoring and followup.

With Rainforest Trust we have taken this a step further. ICFC and Rainforest Trust are pleased to announce our new joint venture agreement for global priority conservation. Under the agreement, we will share information on some projects, with one or the other organization taking the lead in managing the project. Canadians wishing to support projects initiated by Rainforest Trust may do so through ICFC and Americans wishing to support ICFC initiated projects may do so through Rainforest Trust. A joint committee coordinates sharing of project information and decision making. The arrangement is a win-win for conservation, including the benefit that for some shared projects, matching funding (which Rainforest Trust now offers for many projects) is available for donations to either organization. So, for example, **your donation in support of land acquisition for Río Canandé reserve in Ecuador (see earlier story) will be matched 1:1 by an anonymous donor to Rainforest Trust.**

ICFC's Shorebird Director flies south

In October ICFC's Director of Bird Conservation, Scott Hecker, went to Chile and Argentina to meet our field partners and see our project sites, accompanied by Patricia Gonzalez. Scott gives an account of his adventures in a blog post on our website. Here's how the adventure begins:

Only when one flies in a Triple Seven from North America to South America does one fully appreciate what our long-distance migrants accomplish with only the force of their small wings and perhaps a favorable wind. Every fall they fly south nearly halfway across the hemisphere, where the Austral spring awaits their arrival. I too flew south to Santiago, Chile to begin a month's journey accompanied by ICFC Shorebird Projects Coordinator, Patricia Gonzalez. The mission was simple: this was an opportunity for us to greet and thank our many project staff for all the wonderful work they do every day to secure the southern homes of our migratory shorebirds and their resident waterbirds and to see firsthand the results of our combined efforts. Read Scott's entire blog here: <http://icfcnada.org/news-and-info/news>

Luckily for ICFC Scott is an accomplished photographer; see his related albums on his personal Flickr account.



The Rufous-chested Dotterel, closely related to plovers, breeds in southern South America. This bird was at a protected breeding site in Rio Grande, Tierra del Fuego, Argentina. Photo: Scott Hecker



Reserve guards in front of the new ranger station and bird observation platform made from a shipping container at the Rio Gallegos Provincial Reserve. Photo: Scott Hecker