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ICFC is Canada's leading charity for
conserving nature in the tropics
and other priority areas worldwide

Amazon Conservation Association

Celebrating Ten Years . . .

Number of countries ICFC has worked in: **23**

Total spent on programs: **\$10,203,067**

Additional amounts in ICFC's conservation trust funds: **\$3,526,374**

Total projects undertaken: **37**

Total land acquisitions: **8**

ICFC project locations



Message from the Chairman and Founding Directors

As we write this, ICFC has reached the milestone of its first decade of operation.

In these ten years we have learned a lot. We have found that our initial assumptions were correct: there are many more opportunities for effective conservation in the tropics than we can take advantage of, and working with experienced local partners is the best way to go. We have learned that conservation can succeed in the face of adversity. We've learned a lot about how conservation can best be done. We have learned that there are incredibly dedicated, intrepid, smart people doing conservation in the countries where we work. We feel so fortunate to have such people as our field partners.

We have also learned, quite frankly, that growing support for international conservation within Canada is not easy. This makes us all the more grateful to those of you who have supported our work, some of you since our earliest days.

We are optimistic for the next decade, in part because of our track record and in part thanks to having hired as ICFC's first Executive Director someone who is a perfect fit for our organization and a joy to work with. We warmly welcome Molly Bartlett and two wonderful program staffers who joined us in 2016: Scott Hecker and Carlos Garcia.

John McWilliams
ICFC Board Chairman

Anne Lambert
Founding Director

Tom Welch
CFO and Founding Director



Río Gallegos, Argentina, photo by Scott Hecker

Message from the Executive Director

It is a real pleasure to join the ICFC team this year as they celebrate – in typical low-key fashion of course – their 10th year of direct conservation action.

Looking back at ICFC's first annual report, it is inspiring to see how far we have come. Our 2007-2008 report documented ICFC's first two years of work, funding 4 projects in just 3 countries, with the help of just a handful of donors and a very small budget. Over the following ten years ICFC's impact has grown substantively and geographically to 37 projects in 23 countries. And yet the mission and approach have stayed the same: to go "where nature needs us most" with a small team, and a smart, transparent and targeted approach.

While I can't take credit for any of this good work, I do hope to spread the word about it. ICFC has a proven model that really works: go to geographies where critical ecosystems are threatened or a species is on the brink, find local partners who are doing conservation right, and work with those partners to secure land or protect land that is already secured. There are thousands of these groups around the globe. Even modest sums of money can help them have a huge impact.

In this report, you will see that our projects fall under general themes: land conservation, threatened species protection, shorebird protection and marine conservation. We have tried to explain the urgency of each. We also celebrate some of our conservation heroes, people who are working on the front lines in sometimes difficult and dangerous conditions. We'll tell you of other remarkable people in future reports and newsletters. I believe that they and we are fighting for the future of the planet. I hope you will be with us in this fight!

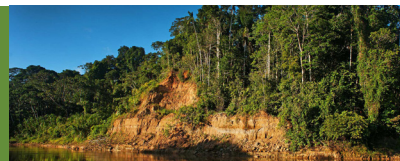
Molly Bartlett
Executive Director



Cerro Chucantí, Panama, ADOPTA

Program area:

Land Conservation



Land protection—through public parks, private reserves, or legal restrictions on land use—is a cornerstone of conservation and a key element of ICFC’s arsenal.

So, how does an organization the size of ICFC maximize its impact? We can’t go out and purchase a million hectares. But we can do a lot! Here’s how:

First, biodiversity “hotspots” in the tropics sustain a large proportion of species (see box below), hence efforts can be focused there.

natural areas are not all equal...

Second, conserved land must protect ecosystems that are large enough to be self-sustaining long term. An isolated island of habitat supports fewer species than a similar sized area that’s part of a larger area of habitat, according to the theory of island biogeography.

Third, healthy intact ecosystems such as old growth forests are favoured for biodiversity conservation over degraded habitats (but note that allowing degraded forests to regenerate is a great way to sequester carbon).

So, ICFC has focused on protecting huge landscape-scale areas of land or small but important areas that have proximity to sufficient habitat for ecological sustainability. In some cases we consider establishing corridors to link areas of habitat.

Through 2016, ICFC participated in six land acquisitions (with two more in early 2017). All involved sites of high importance for threatened species. Some involved a threatened ecosystem—savanna in one case and forests in the others. ICFC’s Reserve Fund for Land Securement enables rapid action when opportunities arise and represents a great way for donors to contribute.

We have also seized opportunities to protect ecosystems on a massive scale, through working with the Kayapó in the Amazon and by securing protection of the Los Amigos Conservation Concession in Peru. Here the lands have legal protected status and all that is needed is added protections. This can be highly cost effective, and with your support we will look for more such opportunities.

Finally, we’re also investing in *preventing* deforestation. Here it’s harder to prove cause and effect with outcomes, but we believe this work in the Andean Amazon is extremely good value.

¹ Jenkins, C.N. et al. 2013. Global patterns of terrestrial vertebrate diversity and conservation. PNAS July 9, 2013 vol. 110 no. 28

Biodiversity hotspots

Just 8.2% of the world’s land area is home to 93% of all species of vertebrates (mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians). Amphibians, which include frogs and salamanders, are an especially threatened taxon. A mere 2.2% of the world’s land area contains the entire known ranges for half the world’s amphibian species.¹

NEW— Panama: Land acquisition for Cerro Chucantí reserve

Conservation need

Located in the Province of Darién and within the Tumbes-Chocó-Magdalena Biodiversity Hotspot, Cerro Chucantí is an isolated massif in southern Panama that rises from sea level to 1,439 m in elevation and sustains a diverse montane cloud forest ecosystem. Cerro Chucantí is home to many range-restricted or endemic species, including the Critically Endangered Colombian spider monkey, the Endangered great green macaw, Baird’s tapir, giant anteater, harpy eagle, great curassow, and the Panamanian climbing rat. Remarkably, more than twenty new species have been found there *so far* since the area’s discovery in 2003. The main threat is the conversion of forest to pasture land for cattle.

What we’re doing

Three properties totaling 105 hectares were purchased with funding from ICFC and Rainforest Trust to expand Cerro Chucantí reserve. Thanks to a generous donor, we made a downpayment on a fourth property of 64 ha. ICFC will continue to work with ADOPTA, which owns and manages



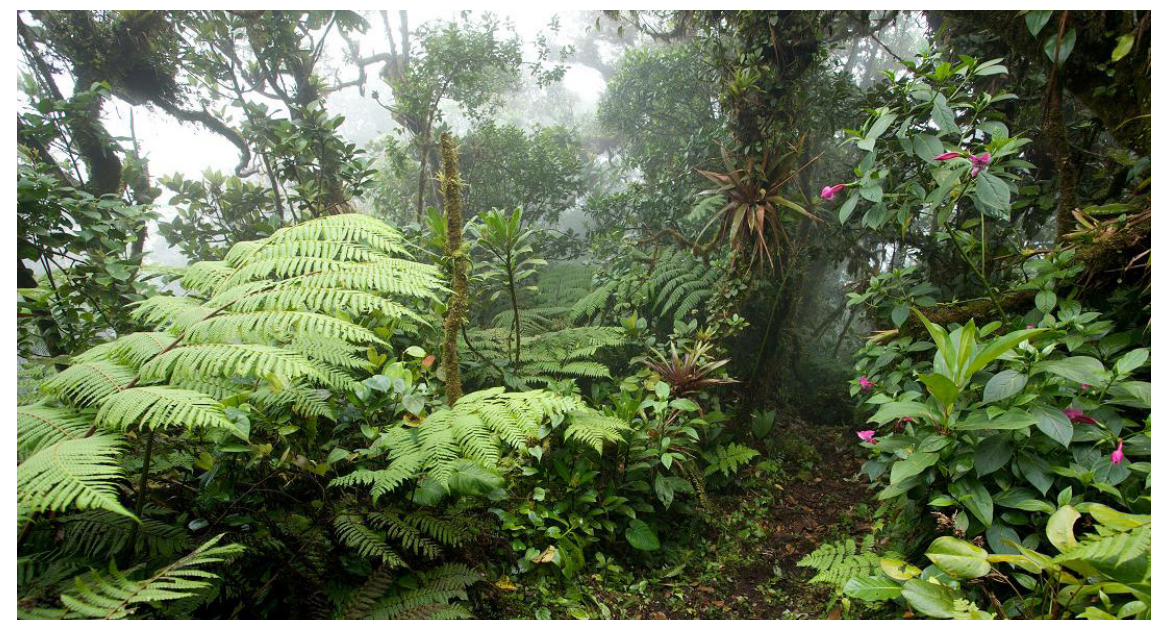
Ocellated antbird by Miguel Siu

the reserve. Excitingly, we have begun discussions with the Panama environment ministry concerning the creation of a new large public protected area alongside our reserve.

Funding to date: \$91,750

Size of area: 594 hectares

Field partner: Asociación Adopta el Bosque Panamá (ADOPTA)



Trail in Cerro Chucantí cloud forest. Photo by Anand Varma

Brazil: Protecting Kayapó lands in the Amazon

Conservation need

The Kayapó territories, occupied by 8,000+ Kayapó people, are vast enough to protect healthy populations of all native species. This huge block of forest also plays an important role in generating rainfall and mitigating climate change. Yet without the Kayapó, this forest would be gone. The Kayapó have fiercely protected their land for generations, but face increased pressure.

What we're doing

We have prevented widespread invasions of Kayapó lands by illegal loggers, goldminers and ranchers by providing increased surveillance and communications capability to allow the Kayapó to control the almost 2,500-km border. We have helped develop culturally compatible economic activities that reduce the pressure to accept cash for unsustainable activities.

2016 Highlights

Economic development: The northeastern Kayapó harvested 86 tons of Brazil nuts, providing significant income for about 3,000 Kayapo living in 20 communities. A Kayapó cooperative began production of shelled vacuum packed Brazil nuts — the first step toward commercializing this industry internationally. UK cosmetics retailer Lush is buying the Kayapó's cumaru nut harvest, helping to diversify the Kayapó's growing sustainable economy. Communities made progress in the production and sale of quality handicrafts, which are being marketed successfully in fairs and high-end stores in Rio de Janeiro. Kayapó communities on Rio Xingu plan to follow Kendjam's lead in setting up a fly fishing camp in partnership with Untamed Angling.

Surveillance: The Kayapó continue to struggle to maintain the integrity of their lands. Between 2012 and 2015, the northeastern Kayapó lost a large area to goldmining after an invasion by over 1,000 goldminers equipped with heavy-duty

excavators. The northwestern Kayapó are dealing with invasions by illegal loggers at two locales. Able to hide equipment and personnel down a network of roads at a moment's notice, loggers are difficult to remove in a single operation. The strategy is to build strong deterrence by maintaining a campaign of arrests and destruction of valuable equipment by government forces; we hope this will end logging in 2017. In 2016, the Kayapó began a major effort to regain control of some 200 kilometers of Xingu river from invading commercial fishermen who were degrading rich fish stocks. This year they will set up a guard post to control entry to the Xingu river on their land. Despite these challenges, most Kayapó territory continues to hold strong with a strengthened surveillance program that was bolstered last year by the services of GIS and territorial surveillance experts.

Advocacy: The Kayapó marched in solidarity with other indigenous peoples in two national mobilizations for indigenous rights in Brasília. The Brazilian congress is threatening to weaken indigenous land rights. Protests on the steps of Congress gain national media attention and are one of the few options indigenous people have to fight back effectively.



These are not leaves but butterflies! Photo by Jorge Alberto Solórzano-Filho

Timeframe: ongoing since 2007

Cumulative funding to date: \$4,080,244

Size of area: Enormous! 11 million hectares – 30% larger than the island of Ireland

Field partners: Associação Floresta Protegida, Instituto Kabu, and Instituto Raoni



The Kayapó with their body paint, adornments and coordinated war chants and dances are considered by the indigenous movement in Brazil to be essential participants in protests in defense of indigenous land rights. Photo by John Meisner



Photo by John Meisner

Peru: From alerts to action in the Andean Amazon

Conservation need

One of the most biodiverse regions on the planet, the Andean Amazon has until recently been protected by its remoteness from the extensive deforestation and land invasions spreading westward across the Amazon basin. Now, however, the region's forest ecosystems are under threat. Key to addressing this is disseminating to government authorities and the public precise information about where and why deforestation is occurring.

What we're doing

This project has developed an innovative monitoring system called MAAP (Monitoring of the Andean Amazon Program) that analyzes remote sensing data and identifies deforestation hotspots in "near real-time". MAAP bulletins are widely distributed to Peruvian government officials, the media and the public, bringing irrefutable evidence of illegal logging, clearing for oil palm and cacao plantations, road development and illegal mining.

In the 100-km slice from Cuzco to Manú in Peru, you can find more than 10% of the global total avifauna and more than 10% of the known butterfly fauna.

2016 Highlights

MAAP articles drew attention to a gold mining invasion in Tambopata national reserve and deforestation for papaya in southern Peru and for cattle pasture in the central Peruvian Amazon. One generated a baseline map for gold mining deforestation and another gave proof of clearing of primary forest for large-scale oil palm.

Timeframe: ongoing since 2013

Cumulative funding to date: \$217,318

Field partners: Amazon Conservation Association and Asociación para la Conservación de la Cuenca Amazónica (ACCA)



Rio Los Amigos by Walter Wust

Peru: Los Amigos Conservation Concession

Conservation need

Bordering world famous Manú National Park, the Los Amigos watershed forms part of a 8-million-hectare block of protected wilderness in southeastern Peru. The landscape is a mosaic of habitats, including palm swamps, bamboo thickets, oxbow lakes and primary forest. Wildlife is abundant, including 12 globally threatened species, giant otters, harpy eagles, spider monkeys and jaguars and 13 species of primates. To counter threats from illegal goldmining, logging, poaching and clearing for agriculture, the Los Amigos Conservation Concession (LACC) was created in 2001. Beyond its 146,000 hectares, LACC protects a vast remote area that includes a reserve for indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation, safeguarding this vulnerable group from invaders.

What we're doing

In 2011, ICFC established a trust fund to endow positions for LACC concession guards who carry out patrols to keep out illegal goldminers and loggers, do biological monitoring and provide support for researchers and field courses.

Among other things, LACC safeguards uncontacted indigenous people in voluntary isolation who inhabit adjacent primary forest.

2016 Highlights

Patrols detected two incidences of illegal logging in LACC and an adjacent forest concession. Such information is provided to national and regional authorities including the environmental prosecutors' office, with whom ACCA works closely. Patrols and signage provide an effective deterrent: since its inception in 2001 LACC has almost completely avoided the large-scale deforestation besetting the surrounding region.

Timeframe: ongoing since 2011

Cumulative disbursements to date: \$325,806

Trust Fund value: \$1.49 million, year-end 2016

Size of area: 146,000 hectares

Field partners: Amazon Conservation Association and Asociación para la Conservación Amazónica



Amazon kingfisher, photo courtesy ACA

Ecuador: Fundación Jocotoco Reserves

Conservation need

Fundación Jocotoco is protecting Ecuador's rich biodiversity in the ten reserves that it owns and manages. The reserves are recognized as Important Bird Areas, harbour more than 110 species of amphibians and reptiles, and are home to rare mammals such as spectacled bear, woolly and Baird's tapirs, puma, and jaguar. In recent decades Ecuador has experienced widespread forest conversion for pasture and other agriculture, accelerated by road construction.

Buenaventura reserve protects about two-thirds of the world population of the Endangered El Oro parakeet.



Ghost glass frog courtesy Fundación Jocotoco
LUCAS BUSTAMANTE | WWW.TROPICALHEMPING.COM



El Oro parakeet, photo by Doug Wechsler

What we're doing

In 2016 ICFC supported the positions of rangers at Antisanilla and Yanacocha reserves. These are "do everything" positions: guarding and monitoring, maintenance of fences and trails, construction of infrastructure, hosting tourists and maintaining relations with local communities and officials. ICFC, along with American Bird Conservancy and the March Conservation Fund, supported a new hummingbird garden for Buenaventura reserve.

2016 Highlights

Buenaventura's new hummingbird garden represents a good source of tourist revenue for Fundación Jocotoco and will help spread a culture of conservation and appreciation for nature in a region undergoing large-scale deforestation. At Yanacocha the guard house was renovated and at Antisanilla a condor viewing station was built and wetland restoration undertaken.

Timeframe: 2015-2016

Funding to date: \$29,798

Size of area: 8,200 hectares (3 reserves)

Field partner: Fundación Jocotoco

Bolivia: Barba Azul Nature Reserve

Conservation need

The Beni Savanna, an area twice the size of Portugal in remote northern Bolivia, is almost entirely ranched and much of its grassland habitat is burnt every year for cattle. In the heart of the Beni, Barba Azul reserve is an oasis for wildlife. The seasonally inundated savanna and palm forested islands of Barba Azul provide a safe haven for the Critically Endangered blue-throated macaw, jaguars, pumas, maned wolves, ocelots, giant anteaters, black howler monkeys, and 288 species of birds.

What we're doing

ICFC supported land acquisition for Barba Azul reserve in 2013, helped finance a tractor needed for firebreak construction and supports management activities at the reserve on an ongoing basis.

In the heart of the Beni Savanna, Barba Azul reserve is an oasis for wildlife.

2016 Highlights

A record-high count of 118 blue-throated macaws was made in September at the main roost in the reserve and the number of juveniles signaled successful reproduction. 1,450 buff-breasted sandpipers also represent a new high. In one of the driest dry seasons in years, the reserve's firebreaks proved effective in preventing the main foraging area from getting burned. Forest islands that provide roosting and foraging habitat for the blue-throated macaw were reforested and fenced to encourage natural regeneration of native trees.

Timeframe: 2010-2011 & 2014 onwards

Cumulative funding to date: \$95,971

Size of area: 11,000 hectares

Field partner: Asociación Armonía



Blue-throated macaws by S.K. Herzog

Costa Rica: Parataxonomists at Area de Conservación Guanacaste

Conservation need and what we're doing

Encompassing dry lowland forest, higher elevation rain forest, cloud forest, and a marine sector, Area de Conservación Guanacaste is considered a world model for restoration and management of a large protected area. ICFC is growing its trust fund that endows positions for parataxonomists, who are hired from the local community to protect the park and conduct scientific research.

Timeframe: ongoing since 2011

Cumulative spending to date: \$202,244

Trust Fund value: \$2,039,296, year-end 2016

Size of area: 163,000 hectares

Field partner: Guanacaste Dry Forest Conservation Fund



Parataxonomists have carried out comprehensive research on all life stages of Lepidoptera at ACG, as illustrated by these caterpillars. Photo courtesy GDFCF



Primary forest at ACG. Photo courtesy GDFCF

Program area:

Threatened Species



Most of ICFC's work focuses on tropical ecosystems rather than particular species, although nearly all our land and marine conservation projects protect habitat for threatened species.

We also have several projects in which a threatened species or population is the primary focus. These are all cases in which we are confident that we're not fighting a losing battle: we know what the problems are and have solutions. In every case, the needed actions are not costly, and the outcomes, so far, have been good.

Species-centric projects bring benefits to other species and to ecosystems. For example, our work in Bangladesh and Myanmar to end illegal hunting of the Critically Endangered spoon-billed sandpiper is reducing mortality among the large numbers of other shorebirds sharing coastal wintering sites there.

Sixth Mass Extinction?

Paleontologists use the term mass extinction for periods when the Earth loses more than three-quarters of its species in a geologically short interval, as has happened five times in the past. In recent centuries hundreds of vertebrate species have gone extinct, a rate more than 100 times the "background" extinction rate. Some scientists believe that this represents an incipient sixth mass extinction – one that can still be largely averted through intensified conservation efforts.



Camera traps capture rarely seen animals like this jaguar at Playa Nancita, Area de Conservación Guanacaste in Costa Rica . Photo by Luis Fonseca López

Indonesia: Imperiled wildlife in Sulawesi

Conservation need

Sulawesi is a renowned global biodiversity hotspot with numerous species found nowhere else. One of Sulawesi’s most fascinating creatures is the maleo, an endangered megapode bird that buries its eggs a meter deep in the sand and relies on solar or geothermal heat for their incubation. Rampant harvesting of eggs for sale as luxury items has decimated maleos and is also impacting sea turtles. Fruit bats, important for forest regeneration as seed dispersers and pollinators, are under hunting pressure for the bushmeat trade.

What we’re doing

This project is securing communal breeding grounds for the maleo and for three threatened species of sea turtles (green, hawksbill, and olive Ridley). We are also protecting key roosting sites for thousands of fruit bats and have launched a new outreach program for the anoa and babirusa, two of Sulawesi’s most threatened mammals. Our approach combines direct action to deter poaching with community education and collaboration with government authorities.

We boast the world’s only increasing population of the maleo bird.

2016 Highlights

This year marked a new record high for the maleo bird’s recovery: 67 birds were counted at one time on the communal nesting ground. Our partner AITo held the Second International Maleo and Sea Turtle Festival. Like a traveling circus, the festival was held in six different villages with *everyone*—thousands of villagers—taking part to celebrate conservation.

Timeframe: ongoing since 2010
Cumulative funding to date: \$641,001
Size of area: 250,000 hectares (2,500 km²)
Field partner: Alliance for Tompotika Conservation (AITo)



Maleos digging out their nest. Photo by Kevin Schafer

Argentina: Preventing extinction of the hooded grebe

Conservation need

Not discovered by science until 1974, the hooded grebe nests around the lakes and crystalline lagoons of the Patagonian plateaus. In 2011 it was declared Critically Endangered, the highest category of concern for a species. The global population hovers around 1,000 individuals, having declined for decades, chiefly due to introduced mink and trout at its nesting areas and increased predation by kelp gulls, a native species whose population has increased.

This project has halted the decline of the critically endangered hooded grebe.

What we’re doing

Guardians are assigned to each breeding colony to reduce predation by American mink and kelp gulls. Mink trapping has been highly effective. Winter surveys are conducted in the three

primary Atlantic estuaries and threats to grebes identified and addressed. A regulation has been passed banning the introduction of trout on the Buenos Aires plateau and a trout removal experiment has begun on the Strobel plateau, but the introduced salmonid problem is challenging. A multi-faceted awareness program has brought the hooded grebe and its conservation needs to public notice.

2016 Highlights

Winter surveys yielded a total count of 1,050 birds (adults and juveniles). In the 2016 breeding season, 753 adults and 187 juveniles were recorded at 13 colonies on Strobel and Buenos Aires plateaus. Results since 2009 indicate that the population decline has halted. What we hope for in the future is a recovery to a higher population level.

Timeframe: ongoing since 2012
Cumulative funding to date: \$244,251
Field partner: Asociación Ambiente Sur



Hooded grebe, photo courtesy Asociación Ambiente Sur

Mali Elephant Project

A joint project of ICFC and WILD Foundation

Conservation need

Mali's elephant population owes its survival to this project, in which a pioneering community-based resource management system was developed by Dr. Susan Canney, WILD Foundation, and, since 2010, ICFC.

What we're doing

The project's grassroots approach brings together communities led by elders and clan leaders to enact rules for management of natural resources in a way that respects elephants. Patrols of young men (*Brigades de Surveillance*) work alongside government foresters to enforce rules, guard elephant habitat, and deter poaching.

2016 Highlights

The security situation worsened in 2016, with increased attacks by jihadists and armed groups, and while elephant poaching was down from 2015, it remained a grave problem. The project

continues to play a central role in mobilizing anti-poaching activities involving the Malian army, the natural resources department (DNEF) and the United Nations. Crucially, this year we selected Chengeta Wildlife to deliver elite in-operations training to the anti-poaching unit. This has turned the tide on poaching.

Our 672-strong surveillance brigades monitored elephants, assisted anti-poaching efforts, secured the radio communications system, and created 503 km of firebreaks. We fostered sustainable economic activities by training 237 women in good livestock practices and the cultivation of vetiver grass, among other things.

Timeframe: ongoing since 2010

Cumulative spending to date: \$2,141,756

Size of area: 33,534 km² (size of Vancouver Island)

Field partner: WILD Foundation



Women planting vetiver grass, which is used as an alternative to charcoal for energy. Photo by Idrissa Ganame

Mali's "desert elephants" make the longest annual migration in Africa. In this arid region, competition is high for access to water and forage among pastoralists, elephants and "prestige cattle herds" (owned by wealthy city dwellers). Yet much can be done to reduce conflicts and align human and elephant interests. Photo by Carlton Ward



Called "the gentle army" by local people, Mali's anti-poaching unit received elite training from Chengeta Wildlife, who employ an intelligence-driven approach combining investigative skills, tracking skills, and the nurturing of sympathetic sources in local communities. Photo by Nigel Kuhn

NEW - Vietnam & Cambodia: Sarus crane

Conservation need

The sarus crane, at 1.8 m high, is the world's tallest flying bird. Project sites support the largest flock of sarus crane, a vulnerable and declining species, in the Mekong Delta, which is also home to millions of people. Growing here is *Lepironia* grass, used by local artisans to make valuable mats, bags, and other items.

What we're doing

The project is improving the protection of two important wetlands by engaging local communities (Phu My and Anlung Pring) and strengthening their ability to market high quality handicrafts. This project is considered a model for conserving waterbirds and wetlands in other regions in Vietnam and Cambodia.

2016 Highlights

Progress was made in developing domestic and foreign markets for handicrafts. Monthly educational sessions reached hundreds of primary and secondary students who learned about cranes and conservation. Our project leader, Dr. Triet Tran, met with the director of the newly established Phu My Nature Reserve and his staff to discuss reserve management and training on wetland ecology, crane population and habitat monitoring, and outreach.

Timeframe: began in 2016

Funding to date: \$7,328

Size of area: 1,800 hectares

Field partner: International Crane Foundation



Sarus cranes at Phu My Nature Reserve in Vietnam. Photo by Pau Tang

NEW - Bangladesh & Myanmar: Help for the spoon-billed sandpiper



Photo courtesy Wader World

Conservation need

The Spoon-billed Sandpiper may be the most endangered shorebird in the world, with only 250 pairs estimated in 2014. "Spoones" breed in Russia and fly 8,000 kilometers to their primary winter grounds in Bangladesh and Myanmar. Protecting the species and other declining shorebirds from hunting is critical, as is working to secure coastal reserves along the East Asian-Australasian Flyway.

What we're doing

At major wintering areas in Bangladesh and Myanmar, we are employing local guards to protect birds from hunting; developing livelihoods in farming and fishing as an alternative to hunting; and establishing no-hunting bylaws among village conservation groups.

Timeframe: began late 2016

Field partners: Sayam Chowdhury; Bangladesh Spoon-billed Sandpiper Conservation Project; Biodiversity and Nature Conservation Association

Argentina: Rincón Santa María

Conservation need and what we're doing

This 2,500-hectare reserve in the Mesopotamian Savanna ecoregion is important for native and migratory birds, including species breeding in Canada (common nighthawk, osprey, upland sandpiper, and greater and lesser yellowlegs). This effort involves replacing invasive exotic pine and eucalyptus with native flora. In 2016, 3,256 seedlings of 33 native tree species were planted and control of invasive pines was carried out on 500 hectares.

Timeframe: ongoing since 2015

Cumulative funding to date: \$30,489

Field partner: Nestor Fariña leads a team of naturalists

Argentina: Selva de Pino Paraná

Conservation need and what we're doing

About 90% of the Atlantic Forest has been cleared or degraded by logging, driving major declines of many birds. Twenty species of globally threatened birds live alongside small-holder farmers in San Pedro province, Argentina. This project engages farmers and local youth to restore bird habitat and protect tree species needed by specialist cavity-nesting birds.

Timeframe: ongoing since 2013

Cumulative funding to date: \$25,319

Field partner: Proyecto Selva de Pino Paraná



Guardian Olga Villalba and Osvaldo Fariña stand next to a restored native tree (*Andira inermis*) in the Rincón Santa María reserve. Photo by Nestor Fariña

This poster explains the value of tree cavities for birds like the helmeted woodpecker. Photo courtesy Proyecto Selva de Pino Paraná

Program area:

Shorebird Initiative



Looking at a map of the Western Hemisphere we see at the top the vast northern landscape of North America with its tundra, prairies and boreal and temperate forests. This landscape, so obviously rich in water bodies, wetlands and seacoasts, supports the majority of North America's breeding shorebirds. But then shorebirds are famed for their ultra long-distance migrations, which brings us to what lies at the bottom of the map. The red knot, an ICFC focal species, illustrates the way in which shorebirds link ecosystems clear across the Western Hemisphere. Only the size of a robin and coincidentally the same color, a knot weighs about 100 grams and must double this weight to fly 5,000 to 8,000 km nonstop in one leg of its 30,000-km roundtrip migration between its Arctic breeding ground and its winter home in Tierra del Fuego. The challenge is to conserve the vital stopover and wintering sites at which shorebirds congregate to rest and feed on their journeys.

Nearly all of “our” breeding shorebirds spend 3/4 of the year outside North America...

In 2016 ICFC hired shorebird conservationist Scott Hecker to develop and implement a science-based strategy to protect our most endangered shorebirds at key sites in Latin America and the Caribbean. Problems there are implicated in the large population declines of some shorebird species. ICFC is now protecting red knots and other shorebirds and their habitats at two major Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN) sites in southern Argentina, Hudsonian godwits at a WHSRN site in Chile, piping plover winter habitat in the Bahamas, and migrating buff-breasted sandpipers in Bolivia. With more support, we will protect additional species such as the semipalmated sandpiper and other major shorebird wintering sites in Tierra de Fuego and Chiloé Island, Chile.

Shorebirds know no borders

Of the 50 species of shorebirds that breed in Canada and the US, 41 migrate to overwinter in countries south of the United States. For “our” shorebirds to survive they must have sites to find adequate food and rest in 48 other countries and dependent territories, just in the Western Hemisphere. (Some even migrate into the Eastern Hemisphere!)



Red knots in April at Bahía de San Antonio, Argentina. Photo by Patricia González

Argentina: Protecting Bahía de San Antonio red knots

Conservation need

The bay of San Antonio is one of only a few major migratory stopovers for the red knot in Argentina. Although designated as a coastal marine protected area and an international level WHSRN site, shorebirds depending on this site are subject to increasing human disturbance and the threat of inappropriate development. These beaches and mudflats are especially important for the *rufa* subspecies of red knot. The site also supports hundreds of pairs of nesting oystercatchers, plovers, and other species, and is a haul-out area for South American sea lions.

What we're doing

Working closely with the province of Río Negro, our focus is on increasing the capacity and effectiveness of rangers to protect shorebirds

from the direct impact of beach recreation, particularly that from ATVs, surf kites, and unleashed pets. We also work hand in hand with the municipality and province on other aspects of protection.

2016 Highlights

Improved protection measures (more rangers, training, uniforms, signage) reduced disturbance markedly from 2015 to 2016. For the first time our guards were deputized by the Province with enforcement powers. Rangers gave talks to visitors and at schools, reaching more than 600 students and over 5,500 other people.

Timeframe: ongoing since 2015

Cumulative funding to date: \$168,203

Size of area: 6,500 hectares

Field partner: Fundación Inalafquen



Red knots feeding on a tidal flat, photo by Patricia González

Argentina: Río Gallegos estuary

Conservation need

At Río Gallegos, two major rivers converge to form an estuary that supports tens of thousands of migratory and resident shorebirds. There are significant numbers of Hudsonian godwit, white-rumped sandpiper, Magellanic plover, and Magellanic oystercatcher. It is also the most important wintering site for the Critically Endangered hooded grebe. Action is needed to address impacts from the growing human population of Río Gallegos.



What we're doing

Working with the municipality and the Province of Santa Cruz, we are employing guardians to protect shorebirds from illegal fishing activity, waste disposal, ranching, and coastal development.

2016 Highlights

An increased staff of guardians reduced threats to shorebirds, especially from illegal fishing. Guardians patrolled the reserve almost daily to assess threats and enforce regulations, and built a small mobile ranger station from a shipping container.

Timeframe: ongoing since 2015

Cumulative funding to date: \$115,820

Size of area: 4,300 hectares

Field partner: Asociación Ambiente Sur

Left: New ranger station. Photo by Scott Hecker
Below: Magellanic oystercatchers and godwits.
Photo courtesy Asociación Ambiente Sur



Chile: Maullín coastal wetlands

Conservation need

The Maullín coastal wetlands attract significant numbers of Hudsonian godwits and whimbrels and large numbers of other shorebirds and waterfowl. The wetlands, which range from freshwater to brackish to marine, are being impacted by unregulated recreational activities and livestock trampling.

What we're doing

We are doing the groundwork needed to create a 970-hectare municipal protected area consisting of three sites that provide feeding and resting habitat for Neotropical migrant shorebirds and other species. This involves developing a management plan, addressing threats, creating public awareness and helping local communities develop birding tourism.

2016 Highlights

Two wetlands have been designated as municipal coastal reserves, and the WHRSN designated five wetlands as a Site of Regional Importance. Progress was made on a management plan, and completed are three bird observation platforms, signage, and printed and online information materials, including a field guide.



Humedal Laguna Quenuir in Chile. Photo by Scott Hecker



Certificate designating the Maullín wetlands as a Site of Regional Importance in the Western Hemispheric Shorebird Reserve Network.

Timeframe: ongoing since 2015

Cumulative funding to date: \$101,151

Size of area: 970 hectares

Field partner: Conservación Marina (This project receives matching funds from the US Fish & Wildlife Service Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act program.)

NEW— Bahamas: Protection and restoration of habitat for piping plovers and other species

Conservation need

The 700 islands of the Bahamas archipelago provide wintering habitat for a majority of the Atlantic coast breeding population of piping plovers (and for 1/4 of the known global population). Many of these small islands and remote beaches provide nesting habitat for Wilson's plover, roseate tern, least tern, and other Caribbean species. Key threats are the colonization of open beach habitats by Australian (*Casuarina*) pine, human disturbance at unprotected points and inlets, and the presence of feral animals and livestock.

What we're doing

This the first effort in the Bahamas to implement on-the-ground measures to limit human-caused disturbance and control invasive Australian pine at key sites for piping plover and other waterbirds. A long-term goal is to develop local capacity for coastal stewardship.



Joulter Cays is one of the most important wintering sites for the piping plover. Photo by Margo Zdravkovic
Inset: piping plover in winter plumage. Photo by Chad Anderson

Invasive Australian pine is a major threat to beach habitat in the Bahamas.

2016 Highlights

Project personnel covered 410 kilometers on 29 islands and cays, with a crew of Bahamian and American volunteers. In all, 25 sites for at-risk shorebirds were posted, covering 320 km of shoreline. Six local Bahamian volunteer stewards were trained and six Bahamian national park staff were trained in Australian pine control.

Timeframe: began in 2016

Funding to date: \$49,159

Size of area: 410 km of shoreline on 29 islands and cays

Field partner: Conservian Coastal Bird Conservation and the Bahamas National Trust

Program area:

Marine Conservation



In praise of coral reefs

Coral reefs are home to an astounding number of species and along with coastal mangroves are vital fish nurseries and habitat.

Economic benefits from coral reefs are greater than for any other ecosystem, being estimated at almost \$350,000 per year for an average hectare of coral reef!¹

¹ de Groot et al. 2012. Global estimates of the value of ecosystems and their services in monetary terms. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecoser.2012.07.005>



Photo by Paul Ferber

NEW— Cambodia: Marine Conservation

Conservation need

Kep Bay, known for a wealth of marine biodiversity including coral reefs, seagrass beds and the iconic seahorse, was partially destroyed by illegal electric fishing and large, destructive bottom-trawlers. Many of the offending boats are from outside the local area and from Vietnam. Not only are these practices destroying the marine ecosystem but small-scale family fishing has been jeopardized.

What we're doing

Led by Paul Ferber, our partner Marine Conservation Cambodia (MCC) has sought and gained support from both the national and provincial governments in establishing marine protected areas in the bay and collaborating on enforcement. This is dangerous work. Nightly patrols chase down illegal fishing boats and make arrests. Sometimes shots are fired. Boats have gear seized and fishing crews are quickly processed through the courts, sometimes receiving jail sentences of up to two years.



Seahorse, photo by Paul Ferber

2016 Highlights

The Governor was impressed—even astonished—that an international organization is showing interest in Kep Bay. This spurred him to instruct his police and officials to cooperate with MCC. Enforcement is up; corruption is reduced. MCC surveillance was greatly aided by the addition of a speedboat financed by ICFC. MCC is installing anti-dragging devices over a 100-sq-km area. These also serve as artificial reefs, providing shelter and a substrate for shellfish and other marine life. Seagrass is re-growing and seahorse populations are recovering. Small scale family fishing is now more secure. Paul Ferber is a shining example of what a dedicated and energetic individual can accomplish (see his profile on page 30).

Timeframe: Began in 2016

Funding to date: \$50,233

Field partner: Marine Conservation Cambodia

Costa Rica: ACG Marine conservation education

ICFC supports an after-school program in a fishing village bordering the Area de Conservación Guanacaste (ACG). Around 30 marine field trips took place last year, with an average of 8-10 children per trip. The Los Trogones group of young bird enthusiasts did bird monitoring from January to May. Knowledge from this program permeates from the children to their parents and community and we are seeing a steady decline in human impact on ACG's marine sector.

Timeframe: Ongoing since 2012

Cumulative funding to date: \$62,868

Field partner: Guanacaste Forest Dry Conservation Fund



Photo by María Marta Chavarria

NEW— Nicaragua: Conservation of sea turtles

The northern Pacific coast of Nicaragua is one of the most populated areas of the country and an important breeding area for several species of sea turtles. The illegal harvest of turtle eggs for human consumption is still common on the beaches in this region. In 2016, ICFC supported a community-based conservation project in the remote community of El Rosario, within the Cosigüina Nature Reserve. Community members constructed, maintained and protected a turtle hatchery with locally collected sea turtle eggs. Over 130 olive Ridley turtle nests were carefully moved to the hatchery and 10,585 turtle hatchlings safely hatched and returned to the sea (an 86% hatching rate). Local school children received education programs designed by the Nicaraguan NGO SONATI and created local signage to discourage littering and illegal harvesting of wildlife.



Photo courtesy the Alliance for Tompatika Conservation

Timeframe: Began in 2016

Funding to date: \$11,282

Field partner: local communities led by Mario Hipólito López Calderón & Ana Cristina López Lara

Featured field partners: Three extraordinary people

A soft-spoken research associate at Oxford University, zoologist **Susan Canney** seems an unlikely candidate to take on bad guys in Mali. And yet she has achieved what Vance Martin of WILD Foundation calls “nothing short of a miracle.” It began when she was asked in 2003 to analyze radio collar data for the largest elephant migration in Africa. After three years studying the migration of Mali’s desert elephants over a range the size of Switzerland, Susan forged the Mali Elephant Project (MEP), with backing from WILD. To address water shortages and habitat loss in the elephant range, MEP developed a highly effective model of elephant conservation through community engagement. The model was put to an extreme test in 2012 when



“The anti-poaching team is a unique, interagency effort and is the first time I’ve ever, anywhere, seen such a collaborative, on-the-ground force. Susan has led this effort with professional skill and commitment. What she has achieved with our partners is nothing short of a miracle.”

— Vance G. Martin, President, WILD

incursions by Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb caused the government to flee the area, leaving lawlessness and heavily armed groups in its wake. The courageous MEP field team carried on, including employing hundreds of young men in surveillance brigades. Despite being paid only in food, none of them joined the jihadists because they felt the MEP work was more “noble”. MEP recently spearheaded Mali’s first ever anti-poaching unit and spurred a new Presidential Directive that requires all

Ministries to work together to prioritize the protection of their endangered national treasure, the desert elephants. Because of the spillover benefits MEP has had in countering the jihadists, Susan now works with multiple Ministries, the Malian army and other partners striving to restore peace in the region, including UN Peacekeepers, for whom Mali is their most dangerous mission.



Paul Ferber followed an idiosyncratic path before arriving on the frontlines of marine conservation. Paul dropped out of school at 14, took a series of construction jobs, worked as a florist, landscaper and an arborist before training as a policeman for a few years in his native England. He left the UK in 2006, moving to SE Asia to follow his passion for scuba diving, becoming a master scuba instructor and teaching in Cambodia. There he became dismayed at the damage from illegal fishing trawlers which were scraping the seabed, destroying seagrass beds, clouding the water with silt and endangering seahorses and other marine life. In 2008 Paul formed Marine Conservation Cambodia (MCC) which is now based on a tiny island where Paul lives with his wife and five children. After being the driving

force behind Cambodia’s first MFMA (marine fisheries management area), Paul and MCC’s team were invited by the Cambodian government to extend their work to a new province and now spend their nights carrying out patrols to chase illegal fishing boats, working closely with local authorities to confiscate illegal equipment and enforce local fisheries laws. Although the Cambodian Ministry of Fisheries is onside—including posting an officer with an AK-47 on Paul’s chase boat—it’s a constant battle and dangerous work. Paul has been shot at with spear guns, attacked with swords and axes and one of their boats was rammed and sunk. Paul, a self-taught marine biologist, his team and international volunteers conduct biological research in and around MCC’s marine protected area and deploy anti-trawling devices. These heroic efforts are paying off: gradually, the marine ecosystem is bouncing back and Cambodia is learning from MCC what can be done. Paul is currently co-chair of the National Subcommittee on Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing, and when not chasing boats, cleaning the beaches or being dad to his 5 future conservationists, Paul spends his days developing documents to support the Royal Government of Cambodia on fisheries and conservation issues.

“Paul has enormous courage in tackling real problems with minimal resources. I hope he can find a way to stay effective while staying safe. If I had a Paul in every country where we work, my life would be much easier.”

— Amanda Vincent, PhD, Director, Project Seahorse; Professor, Univ. of British Columbia; Chair, IUCN SSC Sea-horse, Pipefish and Stickleback Specialist Group

The name and the face of Argentinian **Patricia González** seem to be known to the entire flock of ornithologists, bird conservationists, and shorebird lovers one might encounter in the Western Hemisphere, despite being no self-promoter. For over 20 years Patricia has devoted nearly all her waking hours to the cause of understanding the biology of the red knot, its migration needs, and its protection from all possible threats.

“She has the grit, the determination, and the skills. She knows her science. She was schooled the hard way, learning birds with her grandfather’s heavy binoculars and a black and white field guide.”

— Deborah Cramer, author of *The Narrow Edge: A Tiny Bird, an Ancient Crab, and an Epic Journey*

Although one might imagine that Patricia herself has grown wings since she’s been to nearly every important red knot site in the Western Hemisphere, most days she may still be found in her hometown of San Antonio Oeste in northern Patagonia. Patricia has inspired and opened doors for many students who went on to forge their own accomplishments, and has united groups



and led successful conservation battles in the Bahía de San Antonio area. Energetic and fearless, she retains a sense of wonder and joy about her work, such as when she recently reported to us higher numbers of juvenile red knots in the austral summer of 2016-2017 than she has seen in years. She noted that with some adults weighing 200 grams, they have plenty of fat to fly the 5,000 to 8,000 kilometers to their next stop, on route to their breeding ground on Canada’s northern tundra.

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES		
	2016	2015
REVENUE		
Donations	2,316,634	1,944,606
Gain/(Loss) on investment and foreign currency	158,117	342,950
NET REVENUE	2,474,751	2,287,556
EXPENSES		
Argentina: Hooded grebe	76,566	76,452
Argentina: Rincón Santa Maria	14,273	16,216
Argentina: Shorebirds, Río Gallegos	87,781	28,039
Argentina: Shorebirds, San Antonio	104,281	63,922
Argentina: Selva de Pino Paraná	5,268	9,809
Bahamas: Piping plover	49,159	-
Bangladesh & Myanmar: Spoon-billed sandpiper	257	-
Bolivia: Barba Azul nature reserve	20,251	58,039
Brazil: Kayapó Project	595,507	661,839
Cambodia: Marine conservation	50,233	-
Chile: Shorebirds, Maullín	101,107	44
Costa Rica: ACG Marine education	19,100	13,444
Costa Rica: ACG Parataxonomists	10,267	10,643
Ecuador: Fundación Jocotoco reserves	29,423	-
Guatemala: San Isidro (Yal Unin Yul Witz)	128	-
Indonesia: Sulawesi threatened species	137,063	126,191
Reserve Fund for Land Securement	160	-
Mali Elephant Project	340,645	408,536
Nicaragua: Sea turtles	11,282	-
Panama: Land acquisition for Cerro Chucanti	91,750	-
Peru: Andean Amazon	68,995	97,860
Peru: Los Amigos Conservation Concession	67,694	81,851
Vietnam & Cambodia: Sarus crane	7,328	-
Shorebird Program Coordinator	52,682	43,627
TOTAL Program Expenses	1,941,200	1,800,148
Administration and Fundraising*	408,072	379,489
TOTAL EXPENSES	2,349,272	2,179,637
EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	125,479	107,919
Fund Balances, beginning	4,348,393	4,240,474
Fund balances, ending	4,473,872	4,348,393

* 100% of Administration and Fundraising were covered by ICFC's core group of committed long-term donors.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION		
	2016	2015
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Cash	12,145	513,814
Designated Donations	101,353	23,660
Investments (securities)	337,263	30,755
Project advances	343,774	199,705
Donated Assets	-	-
Accounts Receivable	1,105	681
Prepaid Expenses	(81)	2,361
Loans Receivable	73,838	76,120
	869,397	847,096
Capital Assets		
Interest in Land*	93,152	93,152
Office Equipment, net	4,910	5,839
	98,062	98,991
Restricted Assets		
Los Amigos Cons. Conc. Trust Fund	1,487,078	1,482,701
Parataxonomist Trust Fund	2,039,296	1,949,345
	3,526,374	3,432,046
TOTAL ASSETS	4,493,833	4,378,133
LIABILITIES & FUND BALANCES		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts payable	19,962	29,739
	19,962	29,739
Fund Balances		
Unrestricted	846,144	892,688
Internally Restricted	101,353	23,660
Restricted	3,526,374	3,432,046
	4,473,871	4,348,394
TOTAL LIABILITIES & FUND BALANCES	4,493,833	4,378,133

* Represents 3 hectares and conservation easements over 2,576 hectares of land in Guatemala, and mortgages in Ecuador and Bolivia with conservation covenants.

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Donors making things happen!

Individual donors to ICFC are making some great things happen that otherwise would not. Yes, we have a stalwart group of core donors who are committed long term to covering ICFC's administrative costs plus a limited amount of core programs, but these resources only go so far and additional donations translate directly into additional conservation action.

In 2016, an ICFC donor single-handedly financed a down-payment on an important piece of land in Panama. Another

donor is covering much of the cost for a much-needed dining facility for Barba Azul reserve in Bolivia, sparking matching funding from the American Bird Conservancy and giving this the green light. The dining facility will enable increased ecotourism, which is part of the plan to develop revenue generating activities that will support the reserve long term. Other donors contributed significantly to our Reserve Fund for Land Securement, aiding our ability to act quickly on important opportunities.

Want to make something big happen? Please talk with us! We always have a wish list of things we'd like to do if we had additional resources and we'd love to discuss the possibilities.



Ferruginous pygmy owl by Jerbis Cortes

Donations at all levels result in more conservation on the ground.



Maned wolf, photo by Fabiea Meijer

What sets ICFC apart?

Our programs are varied, but all exemplify our distinct *modus operandi*:

- We engage in direct conservation action to protect ecosystems, species and wilderness, basing our work on existing science.
- Because a core group of donors covers administrative costs long term, 100% of your donation is applied to programs.
- We partner with capable in-country conservation organizations, who best understand both the sociopolitical and biological environment.
- We work to identify opportunities that represent conservation priorities, with good value in relation to cost and risk.
- We involve local communities in conservation efforts, building local support for conservation.

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Back cover: rangers at Bahía de San Antonio, Argentina, photo by Scott Hecker



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