

**Golondrinas Foundation wishes you as our friends, volunteers and collaborators harmony and happiness for this Christmas and a new year full of health, love and peace!**

**This is our Christmas present to you..... Our activities report for the year 2004....**

## **1.- SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATIONS**

The year started in January with a presentation by our president on a conference organised by the Polish University Jaguellonica of Polish and the Polish Honorary Consulate in Guayaquil. The presentation was focused on the results of a scientific investigation done by researchers of this University in the Golondrinas Cloudforest on butterflies, and the importance of conserving this area of Ecuador because of its rich biodiversity.

The Ecuadorian Ministry of Environment has identified around 106 AICAS: areas prioritised for conservation at national level. The area of our nature reserve has been named officially: **El Ángel-Cerro Golondrinas- EC036**. Presently a research is being done by the Ecuadorian Ornithological Corporation (CECIA) on Migration of Birds. The bird inventory of the area prepared by Golondrinas Foundation is being used for this purpose and much more will be known on what birds have migrated from other areas into our reserve. From a biodiversity perspective the results of the research will be highly interesting as well.

## **2.- CLOUDFOREST CONSERVATION**

During 2004 the so-called "linderación" of our reserve Cerro Golondrinas has been coordinated by a group of organisations we have collaborated with very closely over the past years: the Altropico Foundation, the Randi-Randi Group, Awa Federation, ECOLEX, communities from Chical, Maldonado , Goaltal, Jijon y Caamaño, the Catholic University and public entities such as the Environment Ministry and the Provincial Council of Carchi, Espejo Municipal, Mira Municipal and others more. All these organisations have united to identify the perimeters of the "Bosque Protector Golondrinas".

This was done in 22 days of arduous hard work within the reserve by representatives of all the above mentioned organisations and the people of the neighbouring village of Las Juntas. The result is a map with the correct perimeters of the reserve that everyone agrees with and has been formally recognised by the Ecuadorian Environment Ministry. Our reserve is now incorporated officially in an area of approximately 15 to 16 thousand hectares of protected forest by the government, the community and Golondrinas Foundation.

## **3.- FIELD WORK**

### **3-1 Demonstration farm Peña Negra**

Besides the maintenance of the demonstration farm, a lot of different species have been produced on the farm. At the same time we have worked hard on the construction of more production areas where traditional crops can be reproduced such as corn, beans, cassava, pineapple, citric, grafts and other varieties.

With the participation of students of the Agricultural Faculty of the Central University a program has been established for the **reproduction of small vegetable orchards**. The students worked on the reproduction of seeds, preparation and design of the orchard applying sustainable agricultural techniques. This work is an excellent example to be used in the training for farmers and the environmental education program for the school children.

### **3-1.1 Papaya**

As part of his bachelor thesis in Forestry, our loyal collaborator Luis Padilla, is implementing a study related to the production of **Papaya**. On the demonstration farm of Peña Negra a 1000 plants have been planted using organic systems. We are all very curious how the plantation of this fruit will develop!

### **3-1.2 Vetiver**

Like previous years, on Peña Negra a great amount of Vetiver plants are available for donation to farmers in the area, always in coordination with the necessary technical assistance. Another part of the plants are used on the farm itself: for the reconstruction of the roof, for the protection of seed beds, and so forth. What is left over is destined to be sold: this year around 2000 plants to a road construction company for the application in coastal areas with soil erosion problems.

### **3-1.3 Medicinal Orchard**

In the months of July and October with the help of Ms. Lynsey Sardell a Medicinal Orchard was built in Peña Negra. She also helped producing a small "Basic Guide for the use of plants and herbs" that will be disseminated among the women groups that have been established. One of the groups, "Grupo Artesanal Raíces Negras" from neighbouring village San Juan de Lachas received further training on natural medicine.

### **3-1.4 Reconstruction of Tree Nursery**

The Tree Nursery at Peña Negra was totally refurbished this year with native materials. The Tree Nurseries' main objective maintains to be plant reproduction, for reforestation purposes, donations to farmers and sale to commercial companies.

## **3-2 In Santa Rosa**

In Santa Rosa the following activities have been continued:

- Cultivation of around **1000 plants of naranjilla**, for demonstration purposes of organic farming to local farmers;
- Preparation and design of **vegetable orchard**, also for demonstration purposes, but also for more in-depth knowledge of what species are adaptable to Santa Rosa as well as for own consumption;
- Preparation of **organic compost source**, for the production of organic fertiliser;
- Design and elaboration of an auto guided track at 30 minutes of Santa Rosa, called the **Sendero las Llanas**;
- Maintenance and clearing of the path from Santa Rosa to El Corazon;
- Improvement of infrastructure: finalisation of the kitchen and dining room, offering a more comfortable facility for volunteers and visitors. The final goal of the house at Santa Rosa is to become a Training Centre for Environmental Issues, Scientific Research and Eco-tourism; The house in the neighboring community of Las Juntas was also refurbished.

### 3-3 **Technical Area: Functioning of the Generator**

- The Hydroelectric Generator in Santa Rosa has been working for one year without interruption. The very user-friendly generator was demonstrated to all visitors passing by Santa Rosa, showing them a successful alternative use of natural resources;
- Thanks to the media the existence and utilisation of the Generator have been widely spread; in so doing inviting interested communities to visit the project and providing them with information on how to implement similar initiatives.

### **4.- ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION**

In the past years we have focused our environmental education programme on children and youth, but the training courses for farmers and the nutrition courses for women have been equally successful. Thanks to a number of volunteers with different backgrounds and skills we have been able to broaden the scope of our education programme:

- From February to April the environmental education classes for children took place in the communities of Guallupe and San Jerónimo. Amongst the volunteers was Ms. Violence Orbei who taught the children about natural resources;
- In the first week of March 200 children from schools in Guallupe, El Limonal, San Juan de Lachas, San Jerónimo and Cuajara visited the demonstration farm Peña Negra on different tours. Volunteers and practitioners from the Catholic and Central University next to collaborators of the Golondrinas Foundation showed the children the great variety of fruits, the importance of trees, how plants are reproduced, etc.;
- Classes were held on the preparation of the organic compost source in the orchard of the primary school in Guallupe;
- Because of the positive accomplishment of our Ecological Wall Paintings project, foreign volunteers helped design and make a beautiful painting with important environmental messages at the primary school of San Juan de Lachas;
- In July and August a Summer Course was organized for the children of the communities of Guallupe, Limonal and San Juan de Lachas, doing different things, all related to the environment such as: handicraft, games, group dynamics, dance, painting, etc.;
- Together with the local schools of Guallupe, San Juan de Lachas, El Limonal, San Jerónimo and Cuajara, Golondrinas Foundation has established a class calendar for the school year 2004-2005 to help with both Environmental Education and English classes. English-speaking volunteers help teaching the English classes;
- In the last months of 2004 activities focusing on the recycling of litter have been organised: through experiments with both organic and non-organic litter examples are being made to the communities on how to recycle litter;
- In the primary school of San Juan de Lachas a collage and painting competition on nature was organised. The paintings and collages produced were used as illustrations in the magazine "**LA RED(A)CCION**".
- The English classes taught by English-speaking volunteers were very popular among children of both primary and secondary schools in the neighbouring communities.

## **5.- VOLUNTEERS**

Again this year, the volunteers who have helped us in different activities have contributed greatly to the successes of the Foundation. Although the presence of foreign volunteers will always be a mayor support to the Foundation's achievements, the focus has been broadened towards Ecuadorian students of different educational backgrounds and institutes who wish to attain practical experience. Thanks to a presentation of the Foundation's work at the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences of the Central University, a total of 30 students have done their practices between February-March and August-September this year.

From other Universities all over the country an increased number of students have collaborated with the different programs the Foundation offers, especially in the elaboration of scientific studies and theses about the biodiversity of the region.

## **6.- MAGAZINE "LA RE(D)ACCION"**

Thanks to the initiative of journalist Carolin Monin, and with the assistance of Simone Gesser and volunteers of SCI, World Challenge, and more volunteers a magazine has been prepared, designed and produced named "LA RE(D)ACCION". The magazine aims at collecting different points of view of participants of the Golondrinas Foundation network.

Making the magazine has been a very rich experience for the entire organisation, since it was the first time different opinions and needs of teachers, volunteers, women groups, farmers, health centre workers, etc. were observed in such a frank way. Several articles of the magazine are added to the annual report. You can visit this magazine in the next address:

[http://www.masingue.com/Docs/Link%20Re\(d\)accion.htm](http://www.masingue.com/Docs/Link%20Re(d)accion.htm);  
<http://www.masingue.com/Docs/toda%20La%20Re d accion.pdf>

## **7.- SOCIAL ASPECTS**

### **7-1 Tree Day**

Every year since 1997 Golondrinas Foundation celebrates Tree Day: to show the tree our gratefulness for its essential role in nature, its goodness to mankind but also the different functions we can give to the tree. This year, a symbolic plantation of 100 trees was realised in the surroundings of the community of San Jerónimo. The trees will be looked after by the children. Tree Day is celebrated with them, their families, teachers and also the authorities of the community.

### **7-2 "Fiesta" in the Casa de Eliza!**

On August 21 the Casa de Eliza had its 15th birthday! This little hostel in Quito was the place Golondrinas Foundation was born and still forms an important spot in the existence of the Foundation. This memorable day was celebrated with a presentation about its history and a party for friends and collaborators of the Foundation.

### **7-3 Participation in the III Fair "EXPOCOTACACHI 2004"**

On 11 and 12 of September, Golondrinas Foundation participated in the third Alternative Fair "Expo Cotacachi 2004", where several local and national initiatives were exposed of projects and programmes focusing on a sustainable, ecological and fair development of Ecuador. This was done in coordination with the handicraft women group "Raices Negras" of San Juan de Lachas.

#### **7-4 Health Centre of La Carolina**

In the month of October support was given to the Health Centre of La Carolina with the preparation of patients previous consult and educational chats on the busy days on both public health issues, as well as nutrition.

#### **7-5 National Afro-Ecuadorian Day**

This year was the first year that National Afro-Ecuadorian Day was declared to be on the first Sunday every October. Golondrinas Foundation for this event visited the community of Santa Ana in the province of Carchi, where an exposition was given of Afro-Ecuadorian expressions such as art works, hairdo, handicraft and of course food. A home movie was made of this exposition, which will be disseminated to spread the word of the importance of the recognition of black people in Ecuador, to increase self-awareness amongst this group and to fight discrimination.

#### **7.6 Christsmas Celebration in the schools**

Thankful for the help of Friends, collaborators and Golondrinas Foundation, we celebrated a Christmas program visiting with the Santa Claus in the 6 locals schools with the participation of 250 children and they talk to Santa Claus about the nature that they have in this region.

#### **8.- TOURIST PROMOTION**

In 2004 four groups of students from the University of Tourist Specialities (Universidad de Especialidades Turísticas - UCT) from Quito visited the demonstration farm Peña Negra to get better insight in the adequate handling of soils and the design of integrated faros, as well as how to use agro tourism, agro forestry and ecological farming to improve quality of life.

The Municipality of Imbabura within the Tourism Course for teachers organised a field trip to the different areas of the Project: Santa Rosa, Peña Negra, aiming at the establishment of recreational walks for the secondary schools in the Province of Imbabura. 30 teachers participated.

A new track was set out this year in the reserve thanks to our collaborators Wilter Torres and Marcelo Minda. The new track is auto guided, leads to waterfalls and is very attractive for our visitors.

To support the handicraft women group of San Juan de Lachas tourists visiting the reserve and the Foundation, are led to their handicraft shop. The handicraft for sale in the shop represents a way of rescuing the local culture.

#### **9.- PUBLICITY**

Other organisations were reached this year with the presentations of the work of Golondrinas foundation, such as Corporación de Bosques Privados, Fundacion SAEC, etc.

A new website is under construction and will become available soon in both Spanish and English. The address is: [www.fundaciongolondrinas.org](http://www.fundaciongolondrinas.org)

A series of information signs have been elaborated and set out so visitors will find us easier.

In some communities display boards as big as to protect people from both sun and rain while waiting for a bus or a ride, were put with information of the Foundation.

During the summer period ten information bill boards were designed and put in the local schools and travel agencies to spread the ecological message of the Foundation.

### **10.-ACTIVITIES FOR 2005**

For next year the following are our plans:

- Continue with the environmental education programmes for the children and English classes in the five selected schools;
- Training courses for farmers on ecological farming, Permaculture, agro forestry, including topics on the combination of crops on short and middle-long term, compost sources, biological fertilisers, erosion control, reproduction of species and grafts.
- Establish even more connections with national and international Universities to realise more scientific research and practical work within the demonstration areas of the Foundation.

We wish to thank you for your unconditional support. This is what makes us continue our struggle, our continuous efforts to improve our work, reach our goals. We hope this will not only benefit those who live in the surroundings to the Cerro Golondrinas, but every one who respects nature!

From the collaborators of the project for **Conservation of the Cerro Golondrinas cloudforest and for the Recovery of Eroded Soils Fundación Golondrinas**, we wish you a very successful 2005 and we hope we will always stay connected as the big family of Golondrinas!

Un fuerte abrazo,

Team of Fundación Golondrinas.