

Like a lot of people around the world, we here at ARCAS were happy to see the election of Barack Obama in the US, but we are also very apprehensive about the global financial crisis, waiting for the other shoe to drop. So far, we haven't been very much affected. The donor environment has been difficult for years, and our volunteer program continues to be our lifeline, accounting for over 50% of our income and helping to cover the monthly payroll of over 20 people. The Peten program continues to establish itself, nearly attaining financial self-sustainability while increasingly serving as a local resource for in situ wildlife conservation in Peten. The Cerro Alux program has expanded to include five municipalities with the aim of conserving this the largest protected area in Guatemala City and the source of much of its drinking water. In Hawaii, we were able to set another record for the number of sea turtle eggs rescued at a hatchery in Guatemala, we documented the first nesting of a green sea turtle on the Pacific coast of Guatemala and participated in a workshop that discovered that neighboring El Salvador is the most important nesting site for the East Pacific Hawksbill sea turtle.



Something that not many people get to see anymore: a wild-nesting scarlet macaw. See page 4 for more. (Foto: Don Brightsmith)



Inauguration of the El Salado Private Nature Reserve on May 31 with the reforestation of over 2,000 native trees and the participation of nearly 80 local residents, ARCAS staff, JICA volunteers and representatives of the British NGO AMBIOS. See page 9.

PETEN

RESCUE CENTER

The ARCAS Rescue Center in Peten was established in 1990, and through a lot of sweat and tears, setbacks and opportunities exploited, it has been able to grow and develop to the point where it is now generally recognized as the largest and most technically advanced rescue center in the Americas if not the world. Many rescue centers in other parts of the world dedicate themselves to only one type of animal (felines, raptors, etc.); whereas the ARCAS Rescue Center handles over 40 different species. While the number of animals received at the Center has not grown significantly since it was established (usually between 200-600 per year) it is important to remember that each animal requires individual, long-term care. Spider monkeys, for example, take over 6 years to truly rehabilitate.

The ARCAS Rescue Center is increasingly seen as a model for other rescue centers in the region and Fernando Martinez and other staff members are called on to share their expertise at regional conferences on wildlife rescue and rehabilitation, administration and strategic planning. With the Humane Society and utilizing funding from the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA), ARCAS has held regular workshops in rescue center management, hosting Latin American participants interested in opening up rescue centers in their own countries.

Given the success of the Rescue Center, and ARCAS's nearly 20 years of experience in wildlife rescue and rehabilitation, ARCAS is a keystone in the development of any anti-wildlife trafficking strategy in the region. With HSI/CAFTA support, ARCAS has carried out public awareness campaigns on the plight of the scarlet macaw, the sea turtle and the illegal wildlife trade in general, including newspaper advertisements, press releases and radio spots. In November, 2008, Colum Muccio participated in a workshop in Argentina sponsored by the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) on wildlife trafficking. ARCAS has always had the long-term goal of contributing to the establishment of a regional anti-wildlife trafficking and rescue center network, and though this goal is still a long way off, there is at least now more movement in that direction in neighboring countries.

Although it is recognized as a model, there is still much to be done at the ARCAS Rescue Center to improve its wildlife rehabilitation and release techniques, and to fully exploit the center's potential as an environmental education tool and as a base of support for in situ wildlife conservation activities in the Maya Biosphere Reserve. Although the Rescue Center is by and large consolidated as an institution, the threats to the biodiversity of the surrounding Maya Biosphere Reserve remain great and enormous challenges remain.

Check out <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?sid=a506011a77288351cef8b575f6ee82dd&gid=2256707810> for the latest news and fotos about the rescue center



Baby monkeys have a physical need to be cuddled for a certain period each day. Here, a volunteer serves as a surrogate mother for a howler monkey. Monkeys can take up to 6 years to fully rehabilitate and be ready for release.



ANIMALS RESCUED BY ARCAS, 2008
Animals recieved in Peten and Guatemala City

		PETEN	GUATE	TOTAL
BIRDS/Aves		157	401	558
Red-fronted Parrot/Loro Frente Roja	<i>Amazona autumnales</i>	58	1	59
White-fronted Parrot/Loro Frente Blanca	<i>Amazona albifrons</i>	48	2	50
White-crowned Parrot/Cotorra Cabeza Blanca	<i>Pionus senilus</i>	12	0	12
Scarlet Macaw/Guacamaya Roja	<i>Ara macao</i>	11	3	14
Mealy Parrot/Loro Cabeza Azul	<i>Amazona farinosa</i>	9	0	9
Orange-fronted conure/Perica guayabera	<i>Aratinga canicularis</i>	0	1	1
Keel-billed Toucan/Tucán real	<i>Ranphastus sulfuratus</i>	0	1	1
Aztec Parakeet/Perica Azteca	<i>Aratinga aztec</i>	7	0	7
Yellow-naped amazon/Loro cabeza amarilla	<i>Amazona oratrix</i>	2	0	2
Central American Pygmy Owl/ Buho pigmeo	<i>Glaucidium griseiceps</i>	1	0	1
Pygmy owl/Tecolote	<i>Asio clamator</i>	0	2	2
Road hawk/Gavilán del camino	<i>Buteo magnirostris</i>	0	1	1
Great curassow/Faisan	<i>Crax rubra</i>	5	0	5
Dove/Paloma	<i>Columbina Sp</i>	1	0	1
Plumbeous Kite/Gavilan Plomizo	<i>Ictinia plumbea</i>	1	0	1
Brown-Hooded Parrot/Perica Cabeza parda	<i>P haematotis</i>	1	0	1
Duck/Pato		1	0	1
Barn Owl/Lechuza de Campanario	<i>Tito alba</i>	0	1	1
Colima Pygmy-Owl/ Aurorita	<i>Glaucidium palmarum</i>	0	1	1
Hummingbird/Colibri	<i>Fam. Trochilinae</i>	0	1	1
Turkey/Chompipe	<i>Meleagris gallopavo</i>	0	1	1
Various migratory birds/Variedad de aves migratorios(See "Happy Pets", page 12)	<i>Orden Paseriformes</i>	0	386	386
MAMMALS/Mamiferos		62	36	98
Coatimundi/Pizote	<i>Nasua narica</i>	10	2	12
Geoffrey's Spider Monkey/Mono araña	<i>Ateles geoffroyi</i>	17	4	21
Howler Monkey/Mono Saraguate	<i>Alouatta pigra</i>	9	1	10
Howler Monkey/Mono saraguate	<i>Auloatta paliatta</i>	1	0	1
Paca/Tepezcuintle	<i>Agouti paca</i>	1	0	1
Grey squirrel/Ardilla	<i>Sciurus sp</i>	0	7	7
Nine-banded armadillo/Armadillos	<i>Dasytus novemcinctus</i>	2	3	5
Raccoon/Mapache	<i>Procyon Lotor</i>	1	0	1
Grey Fox/Zorra griz	<i>Urocyon cineroargenteus</i>	1	5	6
Margay/Tigrillo	<i>Leopardus wiedii</i>	2	1	3
Kinkajou/Micoleón	<i>Potos flavus</i>	4	0	4
Ocelot/Ocelote	<i>Leopardus pardalis</i>	4	0	4
Cottontail rabbit/Conejo	<i>Sylvilagus floridanus</i>	0	12	12
Cobayo/Guinea pig		0	1	1
Central American Agouti/Cotuza	<i>D punctata</i>	2	0	2
Brocket deer/Cabruto	<i>Mazama americana</i>	1	0	1
White Tailed Deer/Venado Cola Blanca	<i>Odocoileus virginianus</i>	5	0	5
Mountain lion/Puma	<i>Puma Concolor</i>	1	0	1
Collared peccary/Coche de Monte	<i>T tajacu</i>	1	0	1
REPTILES/Reptiles		20	25	45
Boa/mazacuata	<i>Boa constrictor</i>	2	0	2
Iguana/Iguana	<i>Iguana iguana</i>	7	6	13
Red-eared slider turtle/Tortuga verde	<i>Trachemys scripta grey</i>	0	8	8
Mud turtle/Tortuga casquito	<i>Kinosternum sp</i>	0	5	5
Mesoamerican Slider/Tortuga Jicotea	<i>Trachemys scripta</i>	3	0	3
Moreleti's Crocodile/Cocodrilo moreleti	<i>Crocodylus moreleti</i>	6	0	6
Furrowed wood turtle/Tortuga de tierra	<i>Rhinoclemmys areolata</i>	2	0	2
Black iguana/Iguana de roca	<i>Ctenosaura similis</i>	0	2	2
Spectacled caiman/Caimán	<i>Caiman crocodilus fuscus</i>	0	4	4
TOTAL		239	462	701

MACAWS WITHOUT BORDERS



One of the most endangered species in the Mayan Forest is the scarlet macaw. Early settlers reported large flocks not only in Peten but in other parts of the country. Today, per-country estimates are 103 in Belize, 137 in Mexico and 159 in Guatemala (Wildlife Conservation Society, [WCS], 2008). This is truly a critically-endangered population, especially considering that the scarlet macaw's historic range stretches from the southern US to southern Brazil, and includes a Pacific coast population that has nearly been extirpated in Central America.

In 2000, conservationists, originally from Guatemala and then later from Belize and Mexico, came together to form the Macaws Without Borders or Guacamayas Sin Fronteras (GSF) consortium. Since then, funding cuts have resulted in the withdrawal of several of the original members of the consortium and no cross-border collaboration is taking place, but GSF Guatemala continues strong with the consistent participation of WCS, ARCAS and ARCAS's government counterpart, the National Council of Protected Areas (CONAP).



Given the increasingly critical status of the macaw in the region, in March 2008, ARCAS collaborated with a WCS-organized workshop which hosted macaw experts from the U.S., El Salvador, Peru and Guatemala with the aim of formulating a strategy to save the remaining Mayan macaws. This new GSF strategy includes:

- A joint ARCAS/WCS wild nest monitoring and protection program at the El Peru archeological site. El Peru lies within the Laguna del Tigre National Park and is the most important remaining nesting site in Guatemala. The program will include the monitoring of chick growth, nest protection against human

and natural predation and the rescue of injured birds or birds confiscated from traffickers. In the future, possible activities include supplemental feeding of chicks in wild nests and the evaluation of diet via crop sampling.

- The expansion of the ARCAS and Avarios Mariano (AM) captive breeding programs with the aim of possibly augmenting natural populations with these offspring;
- Environmental education activities carried out in communities which most directly influence macaw nesting;
- Habitat preservation (Fire control, land invasions, logging...);
- Prevention of poaching;
- Population censuses;
- Continued predator control, including repellents for Africanized bees, and improved artificial nest box designs against forest falcons;
- Increased understanding of habitat use, including possible microchipping and tracking.

As part of this effort, researchers from Columbia University and the American Museum of Natural History conducted genetic analyses of the macaws in the ARCAS and AM captive breeding programs and found that some of these birds were from the southern Central America genotype and are thus not suitable for release in the MBR. These birds will be removed from the ARCAS captive

YEAR	ACTIVE NEST	CHICKS FLEDGED
2004	4	3
2005	4	5
2006	4	5
2007	4	6
2008	6	4
TOTAL		23

ARCAS scarlet macaw captive breeding program: chicks fledged per year.



breeding program. Please let us know if you'd like a copy of the proceedings for this workshop.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: ARCAS is looking for long-term volunteers with avian conservation experience to assist in macaw nest monitoring and environmental education in El Peru. Volunteers should be able to commit to a minimum of three months and have tree climbing and Spanish-speaking abilities.

JAGUARS WITHOUT BORDERS



Kum Ku was originally brought to the Rescue Center as a cub in 2005 by archeological workers who found him abandoned near the Tikal ruins. Unfortunately, jaguars cannot be successfully rehabilitated and released back into the wild, the main reason for this being that captive-raised jaguars have lost their natural fear of humans.



Alejandro Morales giving an explanation to workshop participants during a tour of the Rescue Center.

In the past, ARCAS most often dealt with cases of jaguars hunted for their pelt, or cubs captured for sale in the illegal pet trade. More recently, as the agricultural and cattle-raising frontier has spread north from Rio Dulce into Peten, cases of problem jaguars attacking livestock have increased as have case of jaguars being hit by cars..

ARCAS has been collaborating with WCS, CONAP and Defensores de la Naturaleza in a project to mitigate conflicts between carnivores (principally jaguars) and domestic animals. Under this project, darting equipment and a capture cage has been purchased, and visits have been conducted to farms that have experienced problems with jaguars. A farm has been identified, and plans to install electric fencing and other mitigation equipment have been drawn up so that the farm can be used as a model for other farms. Also as part of this project, ARCAS has collaborated in the capture and sampling of jaguars in the Maya Biosphere Reserve.

NETWORKING AND POLICY REFORM

ARCAS continues to take part in lobbying and policy reform activities in Guatemala. Since 2008, Miriam Monterroso has served as the representative of the National Association of Environmental NGOs (ASOREMA) on the governing Council of CONAP. In 2009, ARCAS assumed the presidency of the Guatemalan Committee of the IUCN and as part of this function, Miriam took part in the IUCN Congress in Barcelona in September. Participation in these committees is very time-consuming and difficult, but can also lead to important change on a political level. Among the issues that ARCAS has worked on in this context is a law to regulate oil exploration in protected areas, the situation of lawlessness in Peten and Laguna del Tigre, and forestry concessions.

In January, 2009, Colum Muccio participated in the Zoos Committing to Conservation Conference (ZACC) in Houston, Texas. The conference brought together nearly 200 attendees representing 135 organization from 27 countries, all working on in situ wildlife conservation projects. One of the unifying themes of the conference was the importance of sustainable community development in the success of any conservation effort, not only in developing countries but also in the north. At the conference, ARCAS was awarded the Heidelberg Zoo Conservation Award for its scarlet macaw conservation work. ZACC aims to encourage zoos around the world to increase their support for in situ wildlife conservation. If you'd like to help, contact your local zoo and ask them what they are doing to support conservation projects or visit <http://www.houstonzoo.org/zacc/>



HAWAII

The Hawaii Program continues to grow and evolve and 2008 saw some gains but also setbacks. The ARCAS hatcheries continue to be leaders in sea turtle conservation and research in Guatemala. This year at the Hawaii Hatchery we were able to set yet another egg-collection record, collecting a total of 38,042 sea turtle eggs, including 96 green and 75 leatherback eggs. As in years past, very detailed crawl count, hatchery and sea turtle stranding data was gathered. Despite these accomplishments at the Hawaii Hatchery, things in El Rosario did not go so well and due to a lack of community support and Sponsor-a-Nest funds, only 3,417 olive ridley eggs were collected. In 2009, we will concentrate on doing a better job in El Rosario. Continuing its well-documented decline towards almost certain extinction in the Pacific, only one leatherback was reported to have nested in Hawaii in 2008!

SEA TURTLE EGGS RESCUED, 2008	
HAWAII HATCHERY	38,042
Green sea turtle eggs	96
Leatherback eggs	75
Olive ridley eggs	37,871
EL ROSARIO HATCHERY	3,471
TOTAL RESCUED BY ARCAS	41,513

First documented nesting of a Pacific green turtle in Guatemala



The big news in Hawaii this year was the first recorded nesting of a Pacific green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas agassizi*) in Guatemala! The nest of 96 egg was laid near the village of Hawaii on August 9th, the eggs were transferred to the Hawaii hatchery, and on October 1st 65 hatchlings (left) emerged and were released into the sea. Photographs, videos and DNA samples were taken and a press release was disseminated. Although there are resident green turtles in the Pozo del Nance mangrove lagoon 50 kms west of Hawaii, the nearest nesting sites for Pacific greens are far to the north in Mexico, making this nesting in Guatemala truly unusual.

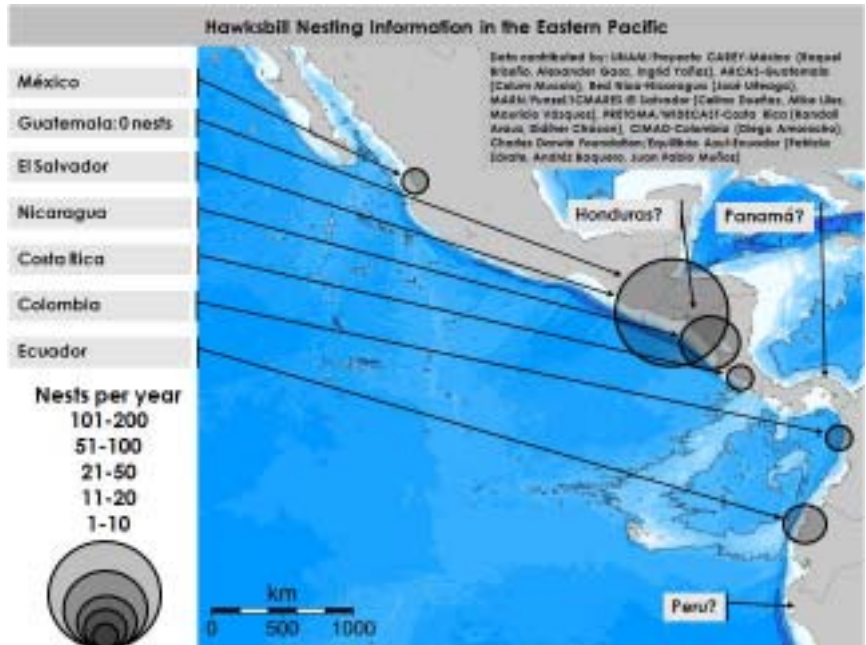
The success of the ARCAS hatcheries depends on the positive energy of its volunteers (right). Sea turtle conservation is night work, and volunteers form patrols of 2-4 people and take shifts of four hours walking the beach in search of nesting sea turtles, releasing hatchlings and collecting data.



HAWKSBILL IN EL SALVADOR; ICAPOI

In July, ARCAS administrative director Colum Muccio participated in a workshop in El Salvador that brought together sea turtle biologists from throughout Latin America with the goal of establishing the Eastern Pacific Hawksbill Initiative (ICAPO) and gathering data on the Eastern Pacific Hawksbill sea turtle. This subspecies is one of the most highly endangered populations of sea turtles in the world, and one of which next to nothing is known.

Participants from Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Colombia, Ecuador y the US presented data on hawksbill nesting and ocean observation in their respective countries, and to the surprise of all participants, it was found that El Salvador was by far the most important nesting site in the Americas. According to the information presented, approximately 67% of all nesting and 50% of all open-ocean observations of hawksbills in the Americas were reported for El Salvador! While most other countries reported tens- or less than ten nests per year, El Salvador reported hundreds. This



During the ICAPO workshop, Pajarita, this East Pacific Hawksbill, was captured, fitted with a satellite transmitter and released. If you want to see where Pajarita has travelled, visit www.seaturtle.org/tracking

discovery is especially surprising given that El Salvador is the smallest, most densely populated country in Latin America whose coastline is severely degraded. Much work needs to be done to protect this population of hawksbills, a task complicated by serious socioeconomic problems in the country. Apparently, researchers cannot access certain beaches because of the presence of gangs, and in certain areas local fishermen still carry out the environmentally damaging and physically dangerous practice of dynamite fishing.

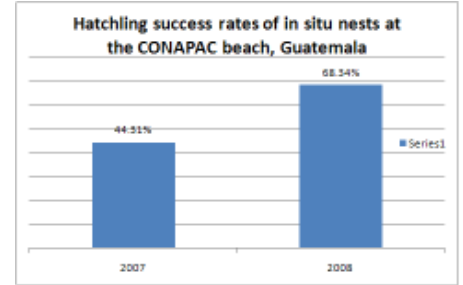
For photos of the workshop and other ICAPO activities visit: <http://drop.io/ephawksbill>



IN SITU STUDY

For the second year in a row, ARCAS collaborated with the Pacific Naval Command (CONAPAC) to carry out this pioneer in situ study of olive ridley sea turtle nesting. The CONAPAC beach is the only fully protected beach on the Pacific coast of Guatemala and offers a unique opportunity to study natural nesting. Taking advantage of this protected status, ARCAS volunteers

took GPS measurements of and left in their natural state 10 olive ridley nests. Once these nests hatched, they were excavated to determine what percentage of hatchlings successfully emerged and returned to the sea. Unlike 2007, which saw heavy predation by stray dogs and crabs, the average nesting success rate for 2008 was 68.34%, a surprisingly high rate compared to other parts of the world. The average incubation period for these in situ nests was 46.55 days, several days shorter than at the Hawaii Hatchery. This in situ information is important in formulating a sea turtle conservation strategy in Guatemala. In the future, if certain beaches were able to control human and animal predators, they could consider leaving nests in situ and avoid the negative aspects of relying solely on hatcheries.



Olive Ridley nesting on the CONAPAC beach.
Foto: Will Vincent, Naomi Campbell

COMMUNDO WATCHTOWER



The Dutch NGO Commundo organized several ecotours to the Hawaii and Peten projects in 2008. These ecotours were supported by the Dutch government's Xplore program which aims to foster cross-cultural understanding and asks participants in the program, on returning home, to give presentations or in some other way educate the Dutch public about issues facing Guatemalans and Guatemalan wildlife.

One of this year's Commundo group was put to work building a watchtower at the Parque Hawaii, a task that made everyone understand what it must have been like to be a slave building the temples of Tikal. The watchtower will be of great help in monitoring nesting sea turtles and migrating marine mammals and birds.

STRATEGIC PLANNING SEMINAR

Arcas held its Annual Strategic Planning Seminar at the Hawaii Parque February 5-7, 2009. Attending, the meeting, top to bottom, left to right, were Peace Corps Volunteer Theo Varns, Luisa Ortiz, Colum Muccio, VIA Germany volunteer Marc Andre Muckoff, Alejandro Morales, Miriam Monterroso, Manuel Gonzalez, JICA volunteer Ako Ito, CENFOTUR Peru volunteer Zulma Zuñiga, Fernando Martinez, VIA volunteer, Pablo Dohms, Bety Yanes and Oda Ericastilla. (Eduardo hiding behind the pillar to the left)



EL SALADO FARM - LAND PURCHASE FOR NATURE

With the support of the Netherlands Committee of the IUCN, the Disney Wildlife Conservation Fund and the Wildlife Land Trust, in December 2007 ARCAS was able to purchase the 25 hectare El Salado Farm. The farm is located roughly 1 km from the Hawaii Parque on the northern fringe of the Chiquimulilla Canal and is approximately 1/3 mangrove and 2/3 farmland (currently being reforested to its original dry tropical forest) and includes a pre-Mayan archeological site.

ARCAS formed a support group of 20 local farmers who have been given temporary rights to plant corn and sesame in exchange for help in the demarcation, reforestation and protection of the land. With the financial support of the Alianzas Program of the MesoAmerican Office of the World Conservation Union (IUCN), on May 31 ARCAS organized the inauguration and reforestation of the El Salado Farm which included the participation of nearly 80 people, including representatives of the support group, youth groups, representatives of the Japanese volunteer program JICA, the British NGO AMBIOS (Dr. Rob Nunny and friends) and representatives of the Alianzas Program. The climate for the reforestation was excellent, cool, rainy and almost no mosquitos (a miracle!) thanks to the effect of Storm Tropical Alma, and we were able to plant almost 2,000 native seedlings.

The El Salado farm should be fully reforested in the next two years, and ARCAS is in the process of raising funds to create the infrastructure necessary to be able to host birdwatchers and other ecotouristic activities that will give local residents economic alternatives to the damaging extractive practices of the past. Interpretive trails and exhibits will be created in order to carry out environmental education activities, and research will be carried out to monitor the health of the mangrove and dry forest ecosystems taking special care to monitor the effects of the encroaching sugar cane farms to the north.

See <http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?pid=5938303&l=f66c9&id=654505623> for the latest photos of the farm and Hawaii.



A visit to El Salado, during the rainy season, by the Commundo Group from the Netherlands (above).

The volcanic chain in the background



A participant in the May reforestation (right) planting a cedar tree.

One of the same trees, a Matiliscuate, 8 months later (below).



One-year old reforested red mangrove trees (right).



CERRO ALUX



Entrance to the Senderos de Alux Park, at 2,400 meters, nearly at the level of a cloud forest.

ARCAS continues collaborating with CONAP and other groups in the conservation of the Cordillera Alux Watershed Protection Reserve, at 5000+ hectares, the largest protected area in the Guatemala City metropolitan zone, and the source of a large part of the drinking water, oxygen and green space for the city. During the last three years, ARCAS has been supporting the Senderos de Alux Park, a 66 acre ecological park within the reserve administered by the San Lucas Municipality. There, it has built environmental education trails, a small museum, a birdblind, bathroom facilities and educational exhibits, and has carried out educational activities in area schools, offered training to park guards and carried out educational field trips with local students. In 2009, ARCAS initiated a new project that will expand these same activities from the Senderos Park to the entire Cordillera Alux Reserve with the overall aim of encouraging the collaboration of the five municipalities of the area and supporting CONAP in the implementation of the Master Plan for the Reserve. The Reserve is experiencing incredible pressures from the expansion of housing developments, from illegal logging for firewood and hunting but there is also significant support from local residents to save this last green space in the metropolitan area.



Cerro Alux is a birdwatcher's paradise. ARCAS has hosted birdwatching tours to the reserve as well as supported research carried out by university students to monitor the flora, fauna and insects of the area. At right, a torquise-chinned motmot and a Wilson's warbler. Above, a giant millipede.



VOLUNTEERS

ARCAS and the conservation and community development activities it supports depend more and more on its volunteer and ecotourism program. In 2008, 483 volunteers from 28 different countries contributed 8,463 days of work and nearly \$125,000 representing roughly half of ARCAS's total income. In addition, volunteers participating in the homestay and community-based tourism program in Hawaii contributed roughly \$30,000 directly to the local economy.

ARCAS continues to benefit from the support of NGOs and volunteer-sending organizations around the world, including the VIA e. V group of Germany which sent us Pablo Dohms and Marc Andre Muckoff who are working for one year in El Rosario as a social service alternative to their military service. The Igo Mango volunteer program of the British NGO Ambios sent us John Canning who single-handedly rescued almost 7,000 sea turtle eggs, earning him the distinction of our 2008 Parlama Hero of the Year! Ako Itou, a Japanese government JICA volunteer, is coordinating ecotourism and gender activities in Hawaii for two years. Zulma Zuñiga of the Peruvian tourist training center, CENFOTUR, is assisting in ecotourism activities in Hawaii. ARCAS also continues to receive volunteers from the Commundo, Real Gap, Volunteers Adventures, Global Experience, Original Volunteers and World School volunteer-sending organization.

Many thanks also to our volunteer webdesigner, Sabine, in Germany, as well as our volunteer translator, Gabriela Bilbao, in Argentina.

More and more, groups of university students from the US and Europe are contacting us to organize volunteer vacations which combine work at ARCAS projects with visits to more conventional touristic sites such as the Tikal ruins, Antigua, the Pacaya Volcano and Lake Atitlan.



COUNTRY	# VOLS	DAYS
Germany	64	2299
England	112	1753
USA	74	832
Holland	48	683
Denmark	24	517
Switzerland	9	426
Guatemala	52	369
Spain	15	213
Sweden	9	199
Austria	8	175
Norway	4	170
France	7	167
Peru	2	105
Canada	9	101
Italy	5	74
Scotland	2	68
Ireland	5	58
Israel	8	52
Australia	7	50
New Zealand	4	43
Poland	3	31
Greece	1	20
El Salvador	2	19
Costa Rica	2	14
Honduras	2	8
Belgium	1	7
Finland	1	7
Mexico	1	3
TOTAL	481	8463

In 2008-9, ARCAS hosted ecotours from the University of Virginia, Eckerd College and the College of Charleston. These tours allow young people to experience the complexities of doing conservation work in a developing country and promote cross-cultural exchange. Working directly with ARCAS also allows them to avoid the high commissions charged by many travel agencies.

To these and all the other ARCAS volunteers, our many, many thanks for helping us accomplish what we have with so few resources.



HAPPY PETS?

On April 11, 2008, the Office of Crimes against the Environment of the Public Ministry, the National Council of Protected Areas (CONAP) and ARCAS collaborated to confiscate 389 wild animals from the “Mascota Feliz” (Happy Pet) pet store in Chimaltenango, 60 kms from Guatemala City on the Interamerican Highway. Most of the animals confiscated were songbirds extracted from the wild but also included several squirrels and foxes. Bird species included pine siskins, rose-breasted grosbeaks, indigo buntings, brown-backed solitaires, woodpeckers, flickers and ruddy ground doves. The majority of these birds were trapped in the highlands as they migrated north for the summer.



The conditions in which the animals were found were very bad, living in cramped cages and exhibiting altered behavior due to their captivity. The animals were transferred to ARCAS’s offices in Guatemala City while the legal process was carried out as the owner of the store faced criminal charges and in the Guatemalan justice system physical evidence in any trial must be held until a verdict is reached. However, trials in Guatemala usually take years to complete and given the state of the animals, CONAP and ARCAS requested the judge for approval for a judicial “recognition” to be carried out and for the animals to be released. On May 15th, the judge finally approved the animals’ release and they were set free in Cerro Alux to continue their northward migration. For videos of the release, please search Youtube for: Animal release Cerro Alux

This confiscation was a joint effort carried out by the three institutions mentioned above, involving a long period of surveillance and legal proceedings, and is one of the few cases where the trafficker was actually sentenced to jail. Our many thanks to the Public Ministry and CONAP!



AZACUANES

Every year during mid-October, on the Pacific coastal plain of Guatemala, the rains abruptly end and leave in their wake great flocks of migratory raptors, vultures and shorebirds heading south to escape the arctic cold. They are known locally as "azacuanes" and are a signal to campesinos that the rains have ended. Scissor-tailed flycatchers pass almost unnoticed flying close to the coast just over the tree tops. Laughing gulls and terns form V's, skimming just over the surface of the Pacific. But the most dramatic migrants are the large, mixed flocks of raptors and vultures, which, in the mornings, rise in great swirling tornadoes catching thermals off the Pacific plains, until they hit a certain altitude, when in unison, they begin planing effortlessly away. One of the longest migrants is the Swainson's Hawk which flies between Canada and California to Argentina, a total one-way trip of roughly 12,000 kilometers or 7,500 miles!



A Swainson's (below) and Broad-winged hawk (above)

In the spring of 2008, ARCAS Education Director, Manuel Gonzalez participated in a 4 month training course on migratory raptors at the Hawk Mountain Sanctuary in Pennsylvania. With the Sanctuary's support, as well as the support of Optics for the Tropics and the ABA's Birder's Exchange Program, during the month of October, he conducted a bird count of passing raptors at Ercho Park in Chiquimulilla, Santa Rosa, counting over 450,000 birds. 89% of these birds were Turkey vultures and Swainson's hawk, but also included Broad-winged, Sharp-shinned and Cooper's hawks, American kestrels and ospreys. In addition to this data collection, local student groups came to the project site to learn about and take part in the bird count.

Chiquimulilla, which is near the Hawaii project, is a strategic point in the migratory route of these raptors and other migratory birds as they are forced through a relatively narrow passage at a point where the volcanic chain comes close to the ocean.



At times, the sky looks like a highway with raptors gliding effortlessly to the south

This first stage of the project was very successful and we hope it marks the beginning of a long-term collaboration between ARCAS, Hawk Mountain and others to support migratory bird conservation efforts in the region. This is truly a natural phenomenon, but it is a phenomenon that is not yet fully appreciated nor exploited for its tourism potential by local populations.



INFORME FINANCIERO/FINANCIAL REPORT

ARCAS, 2008

INGRESOS/Income	US\$*	Q
<i>Internacional</i>		
Volunteer and Ecotourism Fees (Includes Tikal trips, airfare)	55,361	415,208
Humane Society Of United States/U.S. State Department (CAFTA)	16,705	125,288
Columbus Zoo/Zoologico de Columbus	12,000	90,000
Netherlands Committee of the UICN/UICN Holanda - El Salado	11,648	87,360
Comundo Holland, donation	11,450	85,875
UICN Proyecto Alianzas (UICN ORMA/NORAD)	8,250	61,875
Jakob Frost	2,816	21,120
Joanna Foundation	2,000	15,000
Hawk Mountain Sanctuary	600	4,500
Oakland Zoo	500	3,750
Ambios	324	2,430
Francesca Barker	228	1,707
Janice Moskowitz	200	1,500
Stuart E. Hunt & family	125	938
Lynn Smith	100	750
Northern Illinois Parrot Society	100	750
Lesley Day, Chimps Inc, Oregon, USA	100	750
SUB-TOTAL	122,506	918,799
<i>Nacional</i>		
Voluntarios Total/Volunteers Total	77,126	578,445
Voluntarios Hawaii/Volunteers Hawaii**	12,332	92,493
Voluntarios Peten/Volunteers Peten	64,793	485,950
CONAP, Peten, Sueldos guardarecursos, comida para animales/Parkguard salaries, food for animals		23,040
172,800		
FONACON, Cerro Alux Project (F/12 2,007)	17,000	127,500
CONAP, Hawaii, Sueldos para guardarecursos/Salaries for parkguards	4,076	30,571
Bufete Miriam Monterroso	3,648	27,358
Entradas CEIA/Entrance fees for the CEIA, Peten	2,795	20,965
Presentaciones en colegios/Presentations in schools, Dept. Educación	2,471	18,532
Formularios Standard	800	6,000
Miscellaneous donations	596	4,472
SUB-TOTAL	131,552	989,073
TOTAL INGRESOS/TOTAL INCOME	254,058	1,907,872
EGRESOS/Expenditures		
Guatemala: Administracion, Fundraising...	41,283	309,622
Guatemala: Departamento de Educación	12,499	93,746
Guatemala: Proyecto FONACON F/12 2,007	17,000	127,500
Petén: Centro de Rescate/Rescue Center	109,902	824,266
Petén: Educación Ambiental/Environmental education	6,091	45,679
Petén: CONAP	23,040	172,800
Hawaii: Conservación Tortugas Marinas/Sea turtle conservation	23,634	177,256
Hawaii: CONAP, Sueldos guardarecursos/Salaries for parkguards	4,076	30,571
Hawaii: Programa ALIANZAS - UICN/ORMA	8,250	61,875
Humane Society International	12,905	96,788
TOTAL EGRESOS/TOTAL EXPENDITURES	258,680	1,940,102

* Average exchange rate for 2008/Tipo de cambio promedio para 2008: \$1=Q7.50

** In addition to this direct income to ARCAS, ARCAS volunteers and ecotourists contributed \$32,000 to local communities in homestays, boat trips and other community activities



**ARCAS SUPPORTERS & COLLABORATORS/Patrocinadores & Colaboradores
(Financial or in-kind donations/ *Donaciones financieras o en especie*)**

Domestic

APPE Spanish School
Axon
Club Rotario del Este/
Eastern Rotary Club
Consejo Nacional de Areas Protegidas/*National Council of Protected Areas (CONAP)*
Fondo Nacional para la Conservacion de la Naturaleza/*National Nature Conservation Fund (FONACON)*
Formularios Standard
Mundo Guatemala
Mundo School
Municipalidad de Flores
Municipalidad de San Benito
Municipalidad de San Lucas
Pisa Technology
Programa EDC - Escuela Biologia
USAC
TACA airlines
Veterinaria San Cristobal



Janice Moskowitz, Keith Costas
Japanese Embassy in Guatemala
In Memoria of Jean Macdonald
Jimmy Wilk
Joanna Foundation (Lynn and John Regnery) in
memory of Leonie Greaves
John & Vera Hamm
Judith Lemare
Kimberly García
Leadership TST Foundation
Leonie Laurs
Lesley Day, Chimps Inc.
Martin and Moira Secrest Muccio
Movimundo Italy
Northern Illinois Parrot Society
Oakland Zoo
Oikos Sweden
Operation Centre Batman
Oregon Zoo
Palo Alto Rotary Club
Paul and Janet Robinson
Peninsula Caged Bird Society (Tad Foringer)
Programa Alianzas: UICN/ORMA - NORAD
Roger Guzlas



International

Ambios
American Society of Primatologists
Andrew Dyas
Barbara Rumer
Brevard Zoo, Beth Armstrong
Capital City Bird Society
Chicago Cage Bird Society
Cincinnati Zoo
Columbus Zoo
Commundo Holland
Disney Wildlife Conservation Fund
Donna Gary
Francesca Barker
Hawk Mountain Sanctuary
Heidelberg Zoo
Humane Society International
Jacob Frost
Janet Levy

Rotary Club International
Real Gap
Richard Flowers
Scott Helwig
Stephanie Delin
Stuart Hunt and Family
Tomoko Aoki
UICN Mesoamerican Regional Office - Proyecto Alianzas/
UICN Oficina Regional Mesoamericana - Proyecto Alianzas
UICN Comité Holandés/
UICN Netherlands Committee
U.S.A.I.D.
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Volunteer Adventures
Walt and Kaye Hayes
West Suburban Caged Bird Club
Wildlife Volunteer Association
(Paxton Family)
William Sharp Family
World Partners Adoption
Yuki Kobayashi
Zoo Conservation Outreach Group (ZCOG)



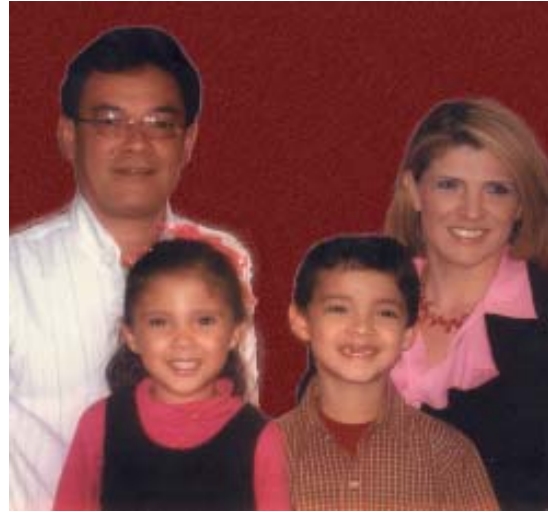


Our special thanks to TACA airlines who grants us free flights for our staff as well as for confiscated wildlife to Peten.



IN MEMORIAM

ARCAS's accomplishments this year were overshadowed by the tragic death in December of Miriam's daughter, Gabriela Chew Giron, her husband and two children. ARCAS is a family, and we were all deeply affected by this loss, but we also remember the Chew family's support for ARCAS and the knowledge that they would definitely want Miriam and us to forge on. Much as Gaby and Rolando did so much good work in the field of medicine and education in Guatemala, they would also want us to continue on with our important work in wildlife conservation and community development.



SQUEAKY IX



In 2006, ARCAS received the donation of Squeaky IX, a 30 foot sailboat from Scott Helwig, Roger Guzlas and Jimmy Wilk who sailed it down from Chicago. Since then, ARCAS has been using Squeaky to conduct marine research in the Pacific off the Guatemalan coast. Most recently, it has been collaborating with a FONACON/CONAP project to monitor populations of whales in Guatemala waters, setting baseline data for the future. During several trips, in 2008-9, ARCAS and CONAP researchers observed humpback whales migrating north with calves. Many thanks to Scott, Roger and Jimmy, as well as to Rob Nunny of AMBIOS who help in the maintenance of Squeaky, as well as the Pacific Naval Command (CONAPAC) who have given her free dockage in Puerto Quetzal.

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