As the Greek philosopher Heraclitus said, “Change is the only constant in life.” Over the last few months, we have experienced many changes in the network, from an increased global visibility with our HP partnership, the delivery of the Wildlife Picture Index Analytics System - a key tool to understand and better manage the species we monitor - to a restructuring at the Coordinating Unit in CI to streamline our operations. TEAM is entering into an exciting new stage in its evolution, where we are becoming more focused and strategic to fill the gaps in our understanding of tropical forests and the biodiversity they contain. This newsletter showcases some of the ways our work permeates and influences our partners. I hope everyone enjoys these stories, and thank you for the incredible passion you all show for TEAM.

Jorge A. Ahumada
Executive Director, TEAM Network
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Uncharted Territory: TEAM Network Manu collaborates with Field Museum Chicago
By Patricia Alvarez

I started working for the Chicago Field Museum (CFM) around 2003, translating some of the chapters of Rapid Inventory Reports from English to Spanish. In 2011, I started working with camera traps, monitoring terrestrial vertebrates in Southeastern Amazonia, as part of the TEAM Network project. We get fantastic data and pictures. It feels like we are spying on the wildlife while documenting their abundance, habitat, location, and behavior.

Last year, members of the CFM team asked me if I could place some camera traps in the Tapiche Blanco inventory. Since I had extra cameras and always wanted to participate in the inventories, I agreed.

I entered Tapiche in September with an advance team to help set up the camps and trails. It was fantastic, the advance team is great in every sense. The work is hard since they have to start everything from scratch, but very rewarding.

The first nights are tough, but the energy and good sense of humor everyone had were fantastic. I started setting up the camera traps, walking around, and just getting to “know” this type of forest that was so new to me.

The location was challenging since it gets flooded a lot and the cameras can get ruined. I set them up in a week and then waited until October when the cameras would be brought back to camp by the zoologist I had collaborated with for this expedition. When the results came in, I was surprised to see that several cameras documented the elusive short ear dog (Atelocynus microthis), an occurrence that hardly ever happens in Southeastern Amazonia! We also “captured” armadillos, agoutis, pacas and ocelots. For me, seeing the photos is one of the most rewarding moments of the job and makes everything else worth it.
Dog Days: Wild Dogs Recorded in Yanachaga
By Rodolfo Vásquez

This year, a few new faces were seen at the Yanachaga TEAM site. In addition to the first sighting of *Lagothrix cana* (Common woolly monkey) there, two bird species were seen that had not previously been recorded (members of the Falconidae and Cuculidae family).

Perhaps most exciting was the first documentation of two species of wild dog that had never been photographed in Central Selva.

Annual Open Day at Pasoh
By Christine Fletcher

Each year, the Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM) Research Station at Pasoh organises an Open Day to educate the public on the importance of tropical forests and the role that science plays in conserving it.

Activities for the open day differ every year, targeting multiple demographic groups. So far, targeted groups have included villagers and oil palm plantation workers from around the forest reserve, students in grades 6-12 from schools near the reserve as well as urban schools and undergraduates from local and international schools. The activities are tailored to suit each group. This year’s activities were designed to (i) introduce tropical forest ecology and (ii) encourage learning and sharing as a family unit.

For the first time, data from TEAM was infused into the activities. Participants were introduced to the diversity of the Pasoh reserve using images from camera traps and plant vouchers from the vegetation study. Using these materials, participants created animals with features adapted for the tropical forest, and used their five senses to describe different plant features, and re-created pugmarks (animal footprints) using plaster.

After three days of camping in the reserve, participants grew to appreciate nature and learned basic camping tips as well as independence. This experience truly brought families closer together.
Feedback from the participants at the end of the program was very encouraging – many participants were excited to learn about nature, ecology and to discover the hidden wonders of the reserve, which research projects such as TEAM helped unveil.

This year’s officiation ceremony was well attended too: guests included the Director of Forestry Department and Forest District office, custodians of the Pasoh forest; head of Pasoh 2 village, an official from the oil palm conglomerate surrounding the reserve and the Jempol Police Department.

Their inaugural presence at this event, not only reflects their new and increasing support for the activities conducted by the station, but also their interest in conserving the reserve.

Bwindi: 25 years of Research Collaboration
By Badru Mugerwa

On the 17th and 18th of July the annual research dissemination workshop was held in Ruhija, Uganda. Organized by Institute of Tropical Forest Conservation (ITFC), Uganda National parks (now Uganda Wildlife Society or UWA) and their partners, this year’s workshop was exceptional in many ways.

In addition to ITFC celebrating 25 years of partnership with UWA and several of other partners, it was also the 25 year anniversary of Mbarara University of Science and Technology’s (MUST) existence and a tribute to Professor Frederick I.B Kayanja who retired this year.

Prof. Kayanja is the founding father of ITFC and a former board member of UWA, whose concerted efforts helped Bwindi to attain its national park status. This year’s attendance was much higher than any previous years with 80 participants from all corners of the region.

The workshop attracted participants from twelve academic and conservation organizations, local government, ITFC Alumni and student interns. Prof. Kayanja led the MUST delegation that included all the Deans and Directors of the different faculties and Institutes at MUST.

A new study by Dr. Rachel Grant of Anglia Ruskin University, and co-authors Dr. Friedemann Freund of the SETI Institute and Dr. Jean-Pierre Raulin of the Centre of Radio Astronomy and Astrophysics, was published in the journal Physics and Chemistry of the Earth in March that looks at changes in animal behavior leading up to a magnitude seven earthquake in Peru in 2011. The researchers noticed a significant decline in animal activity about three weeks prior to the earthquake.

Furthermore, about five days before the earthquake, hardly any animal activity was observed. Based on these findings, the researchers believe positive airborne ions, which are produced by seismic activity leading up to an earthquake and are known to impact human and animal behavior, are responsible for the observed decline in animal activity. We hope this research will lead to the creation of a nature-based early warning system for earthquakes with the potential to save thousands of lives across the world.

Citation: Grant, R., Freund, F., Raulin, J. Changes in animal activity prior to a major (M=7) earthquake in the Peruvian Andes. Physics and Chemistry of the Earth. In press.
This year we received many great submissions for our 2nd annual camera trap photo contest. A huge thank you to everyone who participated! The competition was incredibly close but ultimately winners were selected from Caxiuana, Pasoh, Volcanoes, and Central Suriname.

Recently Published TEAM Papers

Thanks to everyone’s hard work, TEAM scientists have published or participated in data analysis resulting in three new papers this year. Huge congratulations to everyone involved! Be sure to check out the articles below:


Did we miss any other recent publications that used TEAM data? Please let us know!