

A close-up photograph of a large tortoise, likely a Galapagos tortoise, resting in a lush green field. The tortoise's head is raised, and its eyes are visible. Its shell is dark and textured, and its legs are covered in scutes. The background is a dense field of green grass and foliage.

# RAINFOREST TRUST®

VOLUME VII: 2017

**1.2 MILLION ACRES PURCHASED  
& PROTECTED IN 2017**



# Esteemed Biodiversity Scientist Joins Rainforest Trust Board

Rainforest Trust is honored to announce the election of Dr. E.O. Wilson to its Board of Directors this fall. Dr. Wilson is known as the “father of biodiversity” for being the first scientist to publish the term in 1988. In his most recent book, *Half-Earth*, Dr. Wilson states, “In order to stave off the mass extinction of species, including our own, we must move swiftly to preserve the biodiversity of our planet.” He calls on humanity to set aside half of the planet for nature. This is right in line with Rainforest Trust’s mission to purchase and protect threatened tropical habitats and save endangered wildlife.

“Dr. Wilson is widely considered the most esteemed conservation biologist alive,” said Rainforest Trust CEO Dr. Paul Salaman. “We share a common vision with Dr. Wilson of protecting the most important areas for biodiversity, and we are really proud that he has chosen to support Rainforest Trust financially for many years.”

“Rainforest Trust has my highest respect and in my opinion deserves support for its reserve-creating projects which have exceptional merit of being based upon biological research of high quality, exact mapping and clear statements of what support will accomplish. The program is a model of what international conservation efforts should be,” Dr. Wilson said.



In addition to his conservation work, Dr. Wilson is a world-renowned myrmecologist (an entomologist who specializes in the study of ants), whose love for bugs began as a small child. In his memoir, he explained his professional choosing: “Most children have a bug period. I never grew out of mine.” Although officially retired, Dr. Wilson remains very active in the conservation sector. He is Professor Emeritus and Honorary Curator in Entomology at Harvard University and now joins Rainforest Trust as a member of the Board of Directors.



**RAINFOREST  
TRUST®**

We purchase and protect threatened tropical habitats to save endangered wildlife through local partnerships and community engagement.

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Galápagos Tortoise

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# Message from the CEO

Dear Rainforest Friends,

A little over a year ago, Rainforest Trust boldly embraced a challenge to change the world. And what a ride it has been! Since its launch last year, the SAVES Challenge has revitalized global efforts and attention to create strategic new protected areas for the most threatened tropical habitats and species that all too often have no other protection.

In the last few months alone, Rainforest Trust and our partners have made tremendous advances to save species, care for communities and protect our planet by purchasing and protecting nearly 200,000 acres of tropical habitat (bringing our total for the year to over 1.2 million acres). The following pages chronicle our most recent success stories that were made possible because of your matching support.

The Endangered Kaempfer's Woodpecker was until recently believed to be extinct, but now has a place of refuge in Brazil. Learn more about this incredible story on page 8.

A nature preserve was established in Mexico, creating a much-needed additional protected area for the Bolson Tortoise, the largest tortoise in North America. This story can be found on page 12.

In Ecuador, the Río Canandé Reserve was expanded to afford greater protection for the Critically Endangered Canandé Magnolia tree (known only from this reserve) and one of the world's rarest primates, the Brown-headed Spider Monkey. We discuss this project on page 21.



The rediscovered Kaempfer's Woodpecker in a Rainforest Trust-supported site.

And our largest land purchase ever was completed in Australia, with the over 44,000-acre Caloola property that now protects the Endangered Northern Quoll (a carnivorous marsupial) and ensures a permanent connection for a network of protected areas spanning over 700,000 acres. For more information about this purchase, please visit page 10.

In just a few weeks, we will begin Rainforest Trust's 30th anniversary year-long celebration. Looking back over the history of our work, we realized our impact went much further than the species we endeavor to save by safeguarding habitat around the world. Communities benefit and thrive through the long-term relationships we build with our local partners to develop and sustain protected areas. The forests and landscapes we protect benefit the planet by capturing carbon, creating oxygen, filtering water, regulating weather systems and providing countless other ecosystem services. We all benefit from a healthy, biodiverse planet. (To read more about how we are saving species, supporting communities and protecting our planet, please visit page 16.)

2017 has been a year of great progress toward our SAVES Challenge goal of protecting 50 million acres by 2020. Throughout 45 countries, we have already safeguarded 18 million acres and are currently working to protect an additional 19 million acres, including new projects in Malaysia (page 29) and the Galápagos Islands (page 27).

We have been able to achieve these incredible successes with your generous support. Together, let's continue this vital mission to save species, care for communities and protect our planet.

Dr. Paul Salaman, CEO

A handwritten signature of Dr. Paul Salaman in black ink.

## Dr. Paul Salaman, CEO

At the age of eight, Paul met Sir David Attenborough and became enthralled by international wildlife conservation. As a teenager, he managed a nature reserve in London and traveled across the tropics visiting rainforests. A graduate of Oxford University, Paul has discovered four bird species new to science over the last 20 years and joined Rainforest Trust in 2008.





# Global Reach Expanded Through the SAVES Challenge

In September 2016, Rainforest Trust launched the \$100 million SAVES Challenge, thanks to a match from a generous conservation donor. Our challenge is to raise the \$50 million match and strategically safeguard 50 million acres by the year 2020 through the creation of protected areas.

Since the launch of this ambitious conservation initiative, Rainforest Trust has already committed \$38,889,401 in the creation of new protected areas worldwide. Rainforest Trust has helped safeguard 18 million acres in 45 countries since 1988, and this year alone we have protected over 1.2 million acres. The incredible dedication of over 110 partners,





# SAVES CHALLENGE

SAFEGUARDING AREAS VITAL TO ENDANGERED SPECIES

the investment of communities in preserving their environments and the continued assistance from supporters like you through the SAVES Challenge will enable us to continue saving the world's most threatened habitats and species in the coming years.

"The challenge is to respond to the urgency of saving the last great wildlife habitats on Earth," said Rainforest Trust CEO Dr. Paul Salaman. "We need to act now to ensure these areas are protected while they still exist. We are determined to do so through the SAVES Challenge, and we invite all conservationists and philanthropists to join us."



**18 MILLION**  
ACRES PROTECTED

**19 MILLION**  
ACRES IN PROGRESS

**13 MILLION**  
ACRES PLANNED

Image Source: Reto Stockli, NASA Earth



# Land Purchase Protects Endangered Megapodes in Palau

**This vital habitat for Endangered Micronesian Scrubfowls (also known as Megapodes) is now protected for the first time as the Forest of Hope, the first private land converted to a protected area on the island of Peleliu.**

Rainforest Trust's local partner Palau Conservation Society purchased 6.84 acres of private land on the island of Peleliu to establish the first protected section of the Forest of Hope reserve this June. The reserve is the first private land converted to a protected area on Peleliu, and it protects a vital foraging area for the Endangered Micronesian Scrubfowl, known locally as the Micronesian Megapode. The site also contains a famous WWII memorial, as it is notoriously the location of the longest and bloodiest battle of the Pacific war.

**The reserve is the first private land converted to a protected area on Peleliu, and it protects a vital foraging area for the Endangered Micronesian Scrubfowl, known locally as the Micronesian Megapode.**

Peleliu has the most diverse avifauna in Palau, with populations of Micronesian Megapodes, Palau Ground-doves, Giant White-eyes and Micronesian Imperial Pigeons. The Endangered Micronesian Megapode, endemic to Palau and the Northern Mariana Islands, is often a shy and secretive bird. It buries its eggs in large mounds where incubation takes place through the heat of the sun on sandy beaches or geothermal activity within the forest. It faces threats from human disturbance of nest mounds, one of the largest reasons the species is facing declines in the archipelago country. Other significant threats include the introduction of invasive species such as rats (which dig up and eat the eggs from the nest mounds), sea level rise from climate change and extreme weather events. The new protected area will help provide these endangered birds a place of refuge on the island.

This 6.84-acre purchase is just the beginning of Rainforest Trust's efforts in Palau. Rainforest Trust is working with its local partner to purchase several more private properties totaling 76 acres on both the island of Peleliu and the island of Kayangel, where there is an even larger population of the Endangered Micronesian Megapode. Together,

the newly protected areas will safeguard approximately 20 percent of Palau's total nesting sites of the Micronesian Megapode and will be incorporated into Palau's National Protected Areas Network.

*With the support of our many generous friends around the world and the SAVES Challenge, this project is a success. A special thank you to Harvey and Heidi Bookman for their leadership gift.*



Endangered Micronesian Megapodes are still threatened in other areas in Palau.



The new protected area creates a safe habitat for the Endangered Micronesian Megapode.



# New Land Purchase Safeguards Endemic Maleos in Sulawesi

**A new 316-acre land purchase is now protecting nesting sites and coastal habitat for the iconic Endangered Maleo, all as part of a planned 47,328-acre protected area.**

Indonesia's Sulawesi island, located within Wallacea - an archipelago straddling the boundaries of Asia and Australia - contains a mix of biodiversity from both continents, as well as its own completely unique species, including the Endangered Maleo. As one of Asia's most iconic birds, the Maleo builds mounds to incubate its eggs through volcanic and solar-heated sand in large colonial nesting grounds, a natural spectacle that leaves the eggs exceptionally vulnerable to harvesting. While not breeding in their localized colonies, Maleos reside in lowland rainforest foothills, making deforestation an additional threat facing the endemic species. With a nearly 90 percent decline in population size since 1950, it is estimated that fewer than 5,000 of these birds remain in the wild.

Rainforest Trust's local partner, WCS-Indonesia, has been working diligently on developing new conservation efforts to protect the Maleo and its specialized habitats in northern Sulawesi since 2001. With Rainforest Trust assistance, the local partner has protected an additional 316 acres of nesting sites and coastal habitat. This new purchase will contribute to the overall project, which will form a 47,328-acre protected area of nesting sites, coastal habitat, forest conservation area and agroforestry buffer zone. It will also form a protected corridor by linking to the 709,477-acre Bogani Nani Wartabone National Park, which is the largest nature reserve in Sulawesi and supports over 65 percent of the mammal species and 38 percent of the bird species present on the island.

"The Mataindo-Torosik corridor is one of the only remaining intact stretches of coastal forest in Sulawesi. When I visited the site this summer it was immediately clear how important the area is for threatened forest-dwelling biodiversity," said Rainforest Trust Director of Biodiversity

**"The Mataindo-Torosik corridor is one of the only remaining intact stretches of coastal forest in Sulawesi...it was immediately clear how important the area is for threatened forest-dwelling biodiversity."**

Conservation Dr. Bert Harris. "I am thrilled that Rainforest Trust is involved in the protection of this key site."

Some of the other threatened species to benefit from these new protections include the Spectral Tarsier, Lowland Anoa, Gorontalo Macaque and Blue-faced Rail. Additionally, Endangered Green Turtles and Vulnerable Leatherback Sea Turtles nest on the beaches alongside the Maleos.

*Thanks to our many generous friends around the world and the SAVES Challenge, this project is a success. A special thank you to Luanne Lemmer and Rainforest Trust Vice Chair Dr. Eric Veach, Chris Otabal, Charles and Jacqueline Probst, John and Fleur Rilett, Dr. Urs-Peter Stäuble and Lawrence Thompson for their leadership support.*



**Endangered Green Turtles** rely on the new protected area for nesting.



**The Endangered Maleo** digs nests in sand to use solar heat to keep its eggs warm.



# First Protection for the Rediscovered Kaempfer's Woodpecker in Brazil

**The Kaempfer's Woodpecker, once thought extinct, now has its first protected habitat through a 593-acre land purchase in central Brazil's Cerrado biome, the world's most biodiverse tropical savanna.**

The Cerrado biome of central Brazil is the world's most biodiverse tropical savanna. Due to its high agricultural potential, it is also one of the most threatened biodiversity hotspots in the world: 80 percent of its original area is already gone, and protected areas safeguard only 3 percent of the remaining habitat.

In the Araguaia Valley of central Brazil, moist lowland Cerrado woodland comes into direct contact with Amazonian flooded forest, resulting in very high levels of biodiversity. Within this imperiled landscape lives the Endangered Kaempfer's Woodpecker, originally discovered 80 years ago but then thought to be extinct until it was rediscovered in the region in 2006. Its habitat consists of bamboo thickets, semi-open Cerrado and successional areas on the edge of dense Cerrado woodland. This woodpecker depends on the Cerrado landscape as it forages on ants within the bamboo thickets. While their range is relatively large, scientists believe the overall population is extremely small and the birds occur only in scattered patches of Cerrado habitat interspersed with bamboo. This landscape also



**The rediscovered Kaempfer's Woodpecker** spotted in the new protected area.



supports Endangered Giant Otters that prefer large, slow-moving rivers and lakes with high fish densities.

Unfortunately, only the Amazonian part of this region is protected through Cantão State Park and Araguaia National Park. The Cerrado portion of the Cantão ecosystem is comprised of private lands undergoing rapid deforestation, which provide the vast majority of Brazil's annual soybean harvest. High land costs and Brazil's economic dependence on agricultural exports make establishing government protected areas unfeasible and politically challenging, leaving private conservation areas as the only viable alternative.

"The Cerrado is one of the most precious habitats in Brazil and it is being lost to soybean production. Safeguarding this habitat and creating the first refuge for this spectacular Endangered woodpecker is a great relief for both the landscape and species," Rainforest Trust CEO Dr. Paul Salaman said.

Rainforest Trust and local partner Instituto Araguaia sought to conserve a portion of the Araguaia Valley through the purchase of a 593-acre private property that encompasses Kaempfer's Woodpecker habitat next to Cantão State Park. The new reserve, called Canto do Obrieni, has exceptional levels of biodiversity for Central Brazil and provides





**"The Cerrado is one of the most precious habitats in Brazil and it is being lost to soybean production. Safeguarding this habitat and creating the first refuge for this spectacular Endangered woodpecker is a great relief for both the landscape and species."**

habitat for both of the Endangered species that live in the region: the Giant Otter and Kaempfer's Woodpecker.

The property also supports seven Vulnerable species: the Lowland Tapir, White-lipped Peccary, Marsh Deer, Giant Anteater, Giant Armadillo, Bananal Antbird and Chestnut-bellied Guan. Within the 2 mile-wide buffer zone of Cantão State Park, there are 435 species of birds, 298 species of fish and an abundance of megafauna. In addition to Endangered and Vulnerable species, this area is also home to imperiled Black Caimans, Jaguars, Arapaima fish and the newly-discovered Araguaia River Dolphin.

The new reserve will be registered with the federal government as a private nature reserve (RPPN) to add an extra layer of protection for the property and serve as an example for other landowners interested in establishing reserves on their own properties in the future. In addition to purchasing this key property and establishing an RPPN, the long-term goal is to launch a landscape-scale initiative to work with landowners to establish a network of private reserves across approximately 5,000 acres.

*With the support of our many generous friends around the world and the SAVES Challenge, this project is a success. A special thank you to Jazmyn McDonald, Beverly Spector and Ken Lipson for their leadership gifts.*



**Endangered Giant Otters** live in territorial groups averaging 2-12 individuals.



**Blue-and-yellow Macaws** can live up to 35 years in the wild.



**Panoramic view** of the combined biome with rainforest and Cerrado habitats meeting in the right corner.



# Rainforest Trust's Largest Land Purchase Creates Australian Conservation Corridor

**The purchase of the 44,726-acre Caloola property is the largest land purchase to date for Rainforest Trust. It also created a key, permanent connection among a vast network of protected areas that spans over 700,000 acres.**

For almost 30 years, Rainforest Trust has been the leader in the purchase and protection of private lands across the tropics for threatened species. The vast majority of these private lands are relatively small holdings, but the property known as Caloola Station, on the Cape York Peninsula of Australia, is nearly 45,000 acres. This property is almost entirely undisturbed and uniquely pristine habitat with a stronghold population of Endangered Northern Quolls, but until recently was on the verge of being sold to developers.

On October 31, Rainforest Trust supported its Australian partner South Endeavour Trust in the purchase of the 44,726-acre Caloola property, preventing the degradation and deforestation of this vital site. Located at the junction of the Wet Tropics, Cape York and Einasleigh Uplands bioregions, Caloola strategically connects these with two key wildlife corridors. It contains 28 regional ecosystems, 20 of which have little or no representation in the Australian protected area network. Furthermore, water for Cooktown is sourced from the Annan River that runs beside the Caloola property.

"This is a historic land purchase for Rainforest Trust and a monumentally important acquisition for wildlife conservation," said Rainforest Trust CEO Dr. Paul Salaman. "The Caloola property is strategically situated at the crossroads of Australia's most biodiverse regions – the Daintree and Cape York tropical forests to the Great Barrier Reef – and now ensures a permanent connection among a vast network of protected areas that spans over 700,000 acres."

The presence of a very significant population of Northern Quolls has been confirmed on the Caloola property. The Northern Quoll is listed as Endangered by IUCN and has been negatively impacted by habitat destruction and the invasive Cane Toad, as the toads are poisonous to

**"The Caloola property is strategically situated at the crossroads of Australia's most biodiverse regions - the Daintree and Cape York tropical forests to the Great Barrier Reef - and now ensures a permanent connection among a vast network of protected areas that spans over 700,000 acres."**

the quolls if consumed. The Northern Quoll population on Caloola seems to be one of the few populations that is not attempting to feed on the highly toxic Cane Toad. The protection of Caloola provides a place of refuge for this amazing marsupial.

With at least five different types of rainforest, the site also provides important habitat for the Buff-breasted Buttonquail, Black-footed Tree-rat, Red Goshawk, a range of tropical bats including the Ghost Bat and Semon's Leaf-nosed Bat, as well as the Bennett's Tree Kangaroo. It also has important populations of the threatened Cooktown Orchid and Cooktown Fan Palm.

Before being secured for conservation, the major threats to the Caloola property came from its proximity to the coast (just 4 miles away) and to Cooktown (about 5 miles), as it is in a prime location for residential or agriculture development. Any road construction or development could



The newly protected Caloola Nature Refuge connects key wildlife corridors.





have caused major disturbances, as weed invasions – a major concern in Australia – are closely linked to vehicle movements. Such development would likely have also increased the amount of sediment coming off the property, further increasing the threat to the Great Barrier Reef.

“We are absolutely delighted to be partnering with Rainforest Trust on this incredibly important purchase, as without the organization’s support, Caloola and its values would have been lost for all time,” said Tim Hughes, Director of South Endeavour Trust. “Being so close to Cooktown and the coast, paired with some spectacular views of the Annan River Gorge and the Great Barrier Reef, it was inevitable that the property would have been developed if not protected now.”

Rainforest Trust and South Endeavour Trust have also worked together to secure the Misty Mountain Wildlife Corridor, a 173.5-acre property which links a wildlife corridor to help complete a nearly 3 million-acre rainforest mosaic in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area.

*The support of our generous friends around the world, our partner South Endeavour Trust and the SAVES Challenge made this project a success. A special thank you to Luanne Lemmer and Dr. Eric Veach for their leadership gift.*



**The Annan River, a water source for Cooktown,** makes up the eastern boundary of the Caloola property.



**The Endangered Northern Quoll** has a place of refuge in the new protected area.



# Private Land Purchase Expands Protection for Endemic Bolson Tortoises

**Purchasing the privately-owned Rancho San Ignacio has established the Mexican Bolson Tortoise Preserve as a key site within the Mapimi Biosphere Reserve, protecting a globally important Bolson Tortoise population.**

Rainforest Trust and partners Habio, A.C. and the Turtle Conservancy have purchased the 43,243-acre privately-owned Rancho San Ignacio to establish the Mexican Bolson Tortoise Preserve, a key site that falls within the globally recognized Mapimi Biosphere Reserve. Its flat desert floor is punctuated by a series of small mountains and hosts a globally important Bolson Tortoise population that was under extreme threat from habitat loss, encroachment from cattle herders and industrial-scale agriculture.

Designated in 1977, the Mapimi Biosphere Reserve aimed to highlight the importance of both the Bolson Tortoise and the unique

**“The Bolson Tortoise really is an incredible species. Being able to contribute to its survival is very important to us at Rainforest Trust.”**

remnant of the Chihuahuan Desert grassland ecosystem that it occupies. The area is not only important for the Bolson Tortoise, but also 200 species of birds, 39 reptiles, 28 mammals and five amphibians. This area was among the first biosphere reserves designated by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Latin America. Unlike formal protected areas, UNESCO sites represent an area of global significance and often do not come with specific legal protection. For this reason, many biosphere reserves are provided additional legal protection. In the case of the Mapimi Biosphere Reserve, the aim was to add to the global recognition by ensuring a core, fully protected area at the center of the reserve, thereby providing a global stronghold for the tortoise.

The Bolson Tortoise is the largest tortoise species in North America and can grow to be around 18 inches in length. Based on the fossil record, its range once extended as far north as south-western Arizona and Oklahoma in the U.S., but today the most significant populations are limited to an area around the new Mexican Bolson Tortoise Preserve and broader Mapimi Biosphere Reserve. While the Bolson Tortoise population within the limits of the reserve is recovering from drastic exploitation in the mid-20th century, it is still threatened throughout the rest of its range.

“The Bolson Tortoise really is an incredible species,” said James Lewis, Rainforest Trust Director of Conservation Programs. “Being able to contribute to its survival is very important to us at Rainforest Trust. The Bolson Tortoise clearly would have had a significant impact on the ecosystems that it lived within, and hopefully we will slowly see this positive impact return as populations grow in the Mexican Bolson Tortoise Preserve and slowly spill out into the broader biosphere reserve. As is key with so many of the protected areas that Rainforest Trust helps to create, the Mexican Bolson Tortoise Preserve will be managed in such a way that ensures its long-term success by working alongside local institutions and communities.”

*The support of our generous friends around the world and the SAVES Challenge made this project a success. A special thank you to Rainforest Trust Board Member Eric Goode for his leadership gift.*



**Top: The Bolson Tortoise** is the largest tortoise in North America.

**Bottom: A Gopher Snake** spotted in the Mexican Bolson Tortoise Preserve.



# One of World's Most Threatened Turtle Species Gets New Protected Home

**Over 2,000 acres were designated by the municipal government of Mendoza as a major step toward the creation of a larger permanent protected area for the Critically Endangered Palawan Forest Turtle.**

Through the efforts of Rainforest Trust's local partner Katala Foundation, Inc. (KFI), the municipal government of Mendoza designated 2,413 acres toward establishing a new 4,552-acre permanent protected area for the Critically Endangered Palawan Forest Turtle on October 30. The turtle is among the 25 most threatened turtle species in the world. An enigmatic freshwater species endemic to the island of Palawan in the Philippines, the Palawan Forest Turtle was surrounded by more misconceptions than almost any other turtle in the region. For over 80 years, its true geographic distribution in the Philippines remained a mystery – until a recent discovery on Palawan. Unfortunately, this important discovery has spurred a collecting frenzy to supply illegal wildlife markets. The lack of reserves and parks protecting the species has exacerbated the illegal trapping of the Palawan Forest Turtle.

The range of the species is limited to the north of the island. Preliminary population surveys throughout its range indicate that it is concentrated in just two municipalities, Roxas and Taytay. Subpopulations of the Palawan Forest Turtle in Taytay are likely to be the source of most illegally caught turtles that are available in the trade. This has led to local extinction in some areas in Taytay, making Roxas a priority conservation area for the species.

The Palawan Forest Turtle depends on specific areas of lowland swamp forest habitat. The species' narrow elevational range and specific habitat requirements mean that the Palawan Forest Turtle is extremely range-restricted. In addition, almost all lowland swamp forest has been converted into rice paddy fields and little remains intact, so all suitable habitat remaining is vital for the long-term survival of the species.

This conservation site is also habitat for Endangered Palawan Pangolins and will provide a vital refuge for the species, as pangolins



A close-up view of the Palawan Forest Turtle's adorable face.

are currently the most trafficked mammal in the world.

As part of the campaign to protect over 4,000 acres of habitat for the turtle, Rainforest Trust and its local partner are also working to purchase a 26-acre private parcel, where the Palawan Forest Turtle Reserve will be established to provide another safe haven for the species. By preventing the conversion of this vital habitat to rice paddy fields and monitoring it to prohibit the illegal collection of the species, this proposed reserve is critical part of protecting the Palawan Forest Turtle.

"Saving a species from extinction often takes a multifaceted approach to conservation. Our local partner is doing an amazing job of engaging communities, the government and landowners to develop a comprehensive strategy for the Palawan Forest Turtle. We are extremely proud to be part of this effort to establish not one reserve but rather a network of protected areas that will provide a lasting safe haven for the survival of this incredible species," Rainforest Trust Director of Conservation Programs James Lewis said.

*Thanks to our many generous friends around the world and the SAVES Challenge, this project is a success. A special thank you to Luanne Lemmer and Dr. Eric Veach and the Turtle Conservancy for their leadership support.*



The new protected area safeguards the Palawan Forest Turtle from trafficking.



# Creating a Firewall of Protection Around Sierra del Divisor National Park in Peru

**Indigenous communities in the Peruvian Amazon received legal recognition of their land ownership rights that totals 428,815 acres and strengthens the buffer zone of the spectacular Sierra del Divisor National Park.**

Over the last three years, Rainforest Trust and local partner Center for the Development of an Indigenous Amazon (CEDIA) helped 16 indigenous communities in Peru gain titles to their lands, totaling more than 428,815 acres. This is part of a larger effort to title over 50 community territories that will form a firewall against colonization around the Sierra del Divisor National Park and the soon-to-be designated White Sands National Reserve. Together, these two parks and the surrounding community lands will span almost 6 million acres.

Since these communal lands will form a buffer zone around the protected areas, it is vital to have well-governed communities that practice good land management. By means of workshops and ongoing courses, communities will receive training in community organization, governance and record keeping. Rainforest Trust's partner will also help these communities create sustainable management plans for their communal properties.

"The rainforests in the Amazon of Peru have some of the highest levels of biodiversity ever recorded on the planet and are known to contain many new species to science, yet they are the most threatened forests across the entire Amazon, and only a handful of indigenous communities have been recognized and received their land," said Rainforest Trust CEO Dr. Paul Salaman. "When indigenous peoples finally secure legal rights to their land, it not only gives their communities access to state benefits such as healthcare and education, but also greatly strengthens conservation efforts, as it allows them to block mining and logging concessions on their lands."

Climbing from an immense swath of rainforest, the Sierra del Divisor Mountain Range stretches more than 600 miles along the Peru-Brazil border in the heart of the Amazon Basin. With plunging waterfalls, dormant volcanic cones, wild rivers, pristine forests and uncontacted

tribes, this largely unknown and unexplored range is one of the Amazon's last true wildernesses. The region is home to a biological community rich in rare and threatened species, including 38 mammals such as Jaguars, South American Tapirs and Red Uakari Monkeys. There are also believed to be 3,500 plant species, 300 fish species, 365 bird species and 109 amphibian species.

To safeguard this irreplaceable landscape, the 3.3 million-acre Sierra del Divisor National Park was created in 2015 through the support of Rainforest Trust, CEDIA, local indigenous communities and other supporters. The creation of this national park and its surrounding buffer zone have been part of a multi-year, multi-organizational effort to secure a conservation corridor that spans 67 million acres from the banks of the Amazon in Brazil to the snowcapped Andes of Peru. Local communities actively participate in safeguarding the national park, and are now further empowered through access to their land titles.

*Through the generous support of our friends around the world and the SAVES Challenge, this project is a success. A special thank you to Leslie Danoff and Lawrence Robbins, GreaterGood.org, Luanne Lemmer and Dr. Eric Veach, Philip May and Leslie Santos and Brett Byers for their leadership gifts.*

**"When indigenous peoples finally secure legal rights to their land, it not only gives their communities access to state benefits such as healthcare and education, but also greatly strengthens conservation efforts, as it allows them to block mining and logging concessions on their lands."**



Men of the Matsés indigenous community that live near Sierra del Divisor.



# Challenging Land Purchase Expands El Dorado Bird Reserve

**Rainforest Trust provided technical help and support to complete the complex purchase of a 344-acre property that was owned by a family of 19 to expand the El Dorado Bird Reserve in Colombia.**

El Dorado Bird Reserve, part of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta mountain range in northern Colombia, was expanded on October 6 by 344 acres through a complex and protracted private land purchase conducted by Rainforest Trust partner Corporación Alianza por la Conservación. The property was owned by a family of 19, each with an individual right that had to be signed off and compensated to complete the transaction.

Rainforest Trust provided technical help and support to complete the purchase, and its local partner Fundación ProAves will incorporate management of the new area with the rest of the reserve.

Isolated from other mountainous regions, many of the species found in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta evolved there and are not found anywhere else in the world. Boasting the highest rates of bird endemism in the world, the range is home to over 600 bird species, including more than 20 endemic species, such as the Endangered Santa Marta Parakeet and the Vulnerable Santa Marta Warbler. It also hosts a stunning diversity of rare and endemic amphibians species, including the Critically Endangered Harlequin Frog.

Following decades of uncontrolled colonization and agricultural



**A Santa Marta Toucanet** perched within the El Dorado Bird Reserve.

expansion, only 15 percent of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta's original vegetation remains unaltered. Principle threats include the expansion of farms, pasturelands and coffee plantations. In addition, the construction of new vacation homes poses a growing danger to forests.

"This was an extremely important property to acquire with one of the highest concentrations of endemic birds in the world. Importantly, the property has a broad altitudinal range, which is very important in regard to climate change that will affect this region tremendously. We are very grateful to our partners whose patience and persistence in negotiating paid off, and we are pleased to expand key conservation protection within the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta," said Rainforest Trust CEO Dr. Paul Salaman.

Since 2006, Rainforest Trust's partners Fundación ProAves and Corporación Alianza por la Conservación have pursued a major conservation initiative to purchase and protect a dozen privately-owned properties to establish the 2,320-acre El Dorado Bird Reserve, making a vital contribution to the conservation of Colombia's endemic fauna and flora.

*Thank you to our many generous friends around the world and the SAVES Challenge, this project is a success. A special thank you to The Biodiversity Consultancy, Conservation Alliance, Global Wildlife Conservation, GreaterGood.org, Luanne Lemmer and Dr. Eric Veach, and the Marshall-Reynolds Foundation for their leadership support.*





# Our Commitment to Protecting Species, Local Communities and Our Planet

To gauge the impact of Rainforest Trust's efforts to save the most at-risk species from extinction, support local communities in achieving more sustainable lifestyles and protect the overall health of our only planet, our experts have gone back over our nearly 30-year history as well as those areas where we are presently working to tally statistics we believe best showcase our efforts. Since 1988, our conservation work has safeguarded 18 million acres of vital tropical habitat, and we currently have projects under way to increase this total by an additional 19 million acres in the coming years. Although the size of our reserves and protected areas represents only a small fraction of our planet, the implications are staggering.

For species, we overlapped our completed and ongoing projects with the known distribution ranges of all bird, mammal and amphibian species (range data is only readily available for these taxonomic groups). Our strategically identified protected areas now provide safe havens to a great proportion of Earth's wildlife, including an estimated 46 percent of all bird species, 29 percent of all mammal species and 19 percent of all amphibian species. When considering the additional areas we are currently working to secure, these proportions leap to 60 percent of all birds, 40 percent of all mammal species and 25 percent

of all amphibian species on Earth. Not all of these species that we have protected qualify as threatened; therefore, we broke these numbers down further by using the International Union for Conservation of Nature's Critically Endangered, Endangered and Vulnerable designations. These parameters show with both current and future sites we will protect 32 percent of threatened bird species, 24 percent of threatened mammal species and 13 percent of threatened amphibian species.

Here at Rainforest Trust, we understand that protected areas thrive when they have the support of local communities. Community-protected areas are particularly important ways to safeguard vital habitats where local people are heavily dependent upon surrounding landscapes. This form of protected area is becoming increasingly popular in the conservation sector, as scientists become more aware that involving local communities in habitat protection and implementing more sustainable lifestyles leads to reduced rates of deforestation and habitat degradation. Our experts have determined that to date we have completed 55 community-protected areas, with plans to support 46 more over the coming years. This equates to over 6.6 million acres of secured community land, with more than 16.4 million additional acres in progress.

When determining Rainforest Trust's impact on our planet's overall health, we decided the two best indicators of our work are the number of trees saved and amount of carbon secured (instead of being emitted through deforestation). While it is widely thought that our tropical forests function much like the lungs of the planet, trees as individual entities could be regarded as similar to hairs on our skin, because just like human hair, they help regulate temperatures, filter out pollution and protect the surface. Amazingly, we have already protected an estimated 5.7 billion trees in 125 protected areas, and expect to protect an estimated 6.3 billion more in 84 protected areas over the next few years.

Deforestation is responsible for nearly 15 percent of all global carbon dioxide emissions each year, according to a recent article in *Nature Climate Change* by Houghton et al. This is nearly equal to emissions from the transportation sector, making forest protection an integral tool to combat climate change. By preventing deforestation, Rainforest Trust's projects prevent potential carbon dioxide emissions. Assessing the total amount of carbon protected by the forests' above-ground biomass is a difficult task, one which global experts and our own scientists are working to determine. In order to give our supporters an idea of the vast amounts of carbon we are protecting and working to protect, we conducted two case studies of carbon storage in our projects. The first is from the Sierra del Divisor project in Peru, which is nearly complete with over 5 million acres protected. Protecting these forests from logging and mining will prevent over 1 billion metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions. The second case study is from our Airo Pai Community Reserve project that we are currently working to secure in Peru's Amazon Rainforest. The area stores the equivalent of an estimated 292 million metric tons of carbon dioxide. Together, these projects will prevent deforestation-related emissions equivalent to the emissions of nearly 275 million cars in the United States in a year.



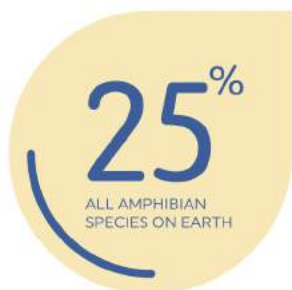
**Our strategically identified protected areas provide safe havens to a great proportion of Earth's wildlife.**

60% of all bird species are found in Rainforest Trust's protected areas.



**Our strategically identified protected areas provide safe havens to a great proportion of Earth's wildlife.**

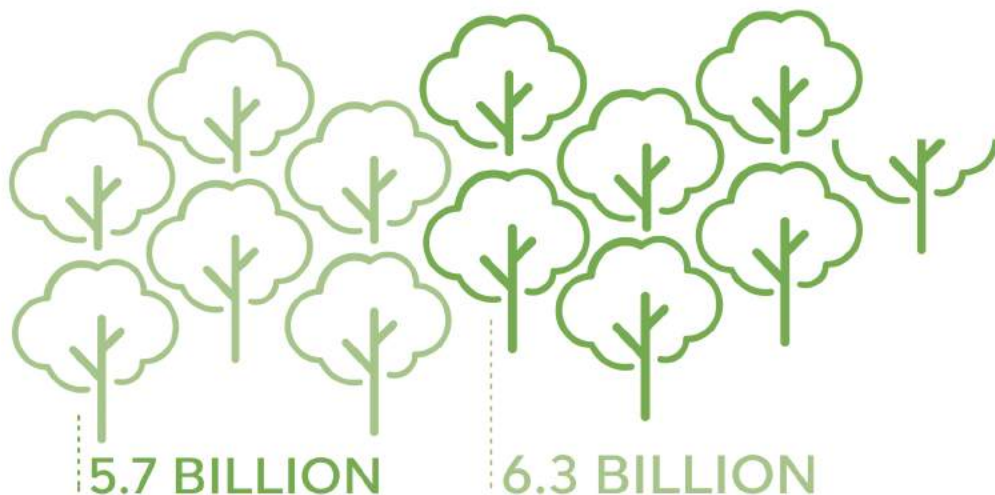
40% of all mammal species are found in Rainforest Trust's protected areas.



**Our strategically identified protected areas provide safe havens to a great proportion of Earth's wildlife.**

25% of all amphibian species are found in Rainforest Trust's protected areas.





## SIERRA DEL DIVISOR

NEARLY COMPLETE WITH OVER  
**5 MILLION ACRES PROTECTED!**

PROTECTING THESE FORESTS FROM LOGGING  
AND MINING PREVENTS OVER

**1 BILLION METRIC TONS**  
OF CARBON DIOXIDE EMISSIONS

## AIRO PAI COMMUNITY RESERVE EXPANSION

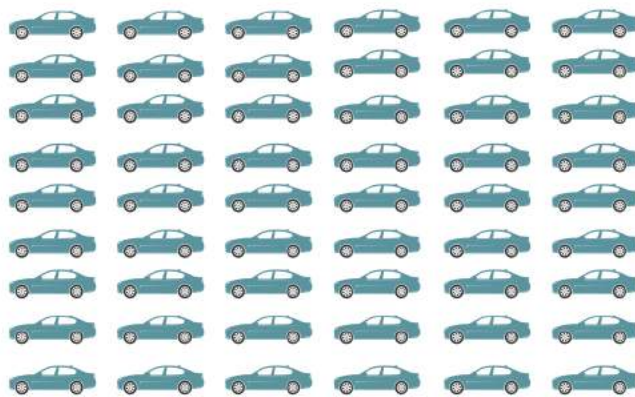
STORES THE EQUIVALENT OF AN ESTIMATED

**292 MILLION METRIC TONS CO<sub>2</sub>**

These statistics are evidence of the incredible importance of our protected areas for conserving biodiversity, strengthening the resilience of communities and protecting our planet's health. The analysis also demonstrates how Rainforest Trust's strategic conservation actions benefit the vast majority of life on Earth, while also directly addressing the world's current extinction crisis. For more information about these analyses, please visit Rainforest Trust's website.

TOGETHER, THESE 2 PROJECTS  
**WILL PREVENT DEFORESTATION-  
RELATED EMISSIONS** EQUAL TO  
THE YEARLY EMISSIONS OF NEARLY

**275 MILLION CARS  
IN THE UNITED STATES**



**COMMUNITY-BASED  
PROTECTED AREAS HAVE  
A COMBINED IMPACT OF  
OVER 23 MILLION ACRES**



# Strategic Land Purchases Establish New Cerro Amay Cloud Forest Preserve

**Rainforest Trust and its local partner are establishing the first protection for Guatemala's Cerro Amay Cloud Forest, one of the largest areas of intact forest left in all of Central America.**

Throughout 2017, Rainforest Trust has helped its local partner Fundación para el Ecodesarrollo y la Conservación (FUNDAECO) purchase six properties totaling 995 acres to establish the Cerro Amay Cloud Forest Preserve in Guatemala. Together, Rainforest Trust and FUNDAECO are strategically purchasing properties that can connect the entire network for a corridor of protection.

The Cerro Amay Cloud Forest is among the largest areas of intact forest left in Central America. Tropical montane cloud forest sits atop a limestone plateau pock-marked with an estimated 5,000 caves, providing a spectacular and biodiverse refuge for native wildlife and flora. The Critically Endangered Guatemala Spikethumb Frog is a cloud forest native that is likely to disappear entirely if action is not taken to save its habitat. Mammals within the preserve include the Endangered Yucatan Black Howler Monkey, Endangered Geoffroy's Spider Monkey and Jaguar. Several salamanders new to science have also been discovered in this region. The high cloud forest is dominated by massive oaks covered with orchids, bromeliads, strangler figs, bryophytes and ferns. The dense understory contains a fabulous variety of species, while mid-elevation trees are highly diverse and include the Endangered Guatemalan Walnut (*Juglans olanchana*).



**The Critically Endangered Guatemala Spikethumb Frog** is threatened by disease and habitat loss.

**The Cerro Amay Cloud Forest is among the largest areas of intact forest left in Central America.**

New road development and logging are the principal threats in the region. Since protection efforts began in the area in 2008, extensive road building and deforestation have occurred near the Cerro Amay Cloud Forest. While no logging permits or forest management plans exist for the area, loggers continue to extract cloud forest oaks at an estimated rate of three to four truckloads per week on the main access road. Rainforest Trust-funded purchases in the Cerro Amay Cloud Forest will halt further road building and logging. These land purchases support the goal of establishing a new protected area that cements the protection of the Cerro Amay Cloud Forest while attracting researchers, promoting ecotourism and implementing sustainability initiatives in the surrounding indigenous villages.

*With the generous support of our friends around the world and the SAVES Challenge, this project is a success. A special thank you to Harvey and Heidi Bookman for their leadership gift.*



**A beautiful Mountain Trogon** in the Cerro Amay Cloud Forest.





# Ecuadorean Reserve Expanded to Safeguard Cloud Forest



**An additional land purchase of 126 acres brings Río Zuñac Reserve's total size to over 2,400 acres, protecting pristine cloud forest, endangered and range-restricted orchids and other threatened species.**

Rainforest Trust's Ecuadorean partner Fundación EcoMinga has purchased a 126-acre property adjacent to the Río Zuñac Reserve in central Ecuador, bringing the reserve size to 2,424 acres. The newly acquired property consists primarily of pristine cloud forest. Because of the high rainfall and unusual geology, the reserve is rich in endangered, range-restricted plant species, especially orchids. In fact, the Río Topo-Zuñac watershed contains at least 20 species of plants found nowhere else in the world. In addition, the reserve harbors other Endangered species such as Black-and-chestnut Eagles and Mountain Tapirs, as well as Spectacled Bears and a highland population of Woolly Monkeys.

The Río Zuñac Reserve protects the lower, diverse slopes of the Cordillera Abitagua, an isolated granite East Andean front-line mountain range that is geologically distinct from the main body of the eastern Andes. Because it is the first significant mountain range that intercepts the wet winds of the Amazon Basin in the Río Pastaza watershed, there are high levels of humidity in the reserve. In contrast to the drier main body of the Andes, the unusual climate and geology of this area has led to the evolution of many locally endemic species of plants in the region, and two new species of Magnolia trees were discovered in the reserve in 2015.

"It's a great privilege to participate in the protection of a place where science is literally struggling to keep up with the new discoveries," said Dr. George Wallace, Rainforest Trust Chief Conservation Officer. "Río Zuñac's special location in the Ecuadorean Andes is truly a biodiversity hotspot."

The reserve's decade-long protection has made it a refuge for rare birds and mammals that are otherwise threatened by hunting and safeguards against encroachment by agricultural expansion and cattle ranching. Along with the reserve's expansion, Rainforest Trust's local partner continues to educate neighboring communities about the values of this protected area and provides alternatives to agricultural expansion. The organization also employs guards to protect the borders of the Río Zuñac Reserve and plans to continue purchasing land parcels in the region to ensure the lasting protection of this diverse forested area.

**"It's a great privilege to participate in the protection of a place where science is literally struggling to keep up with the new discoveries...[the site] is truly a biodiversity hotspot."**



**The Endangered Black-and-chestnut Eagle** typically builds its nest in February and March and lays eggs in April and May.

*Thanks to the support of our generous friends around the world and the SAVES Challenge that made this project a success. A special thank you to Juan Kohn for his leadership support.*



**An Endangered Black-and-chestnut Eagle** pair feasting in their nest in Río Zuñac Reserve.



# New Land Purchases Expand Narupa Reserve in Ecuador

**With the purchase of three new properties, Narupa Reserve in the Napo bioregion of northeast Ecuador has been expanded by over 345 acres.**

On October 25, Rainforest Trust's local partner Fundación Jocotoco purchased three new properties totaling over 345 acres to add to the Narupa Reserve. This reserve is located in the Napo bioregion of northeast Ecuador, one of the most biodiverse areas in the world. Just north of the Narupa Reserve, 872 species of birds have been recorded in the Sumaco-Napo-Galeras National Park, exemplifying the importance of this habitat.

The Narupa Reserve expansion consists of 60 percent old secondary forest, with the rest of the habitat being young secondary forests and abandoned pasture. The new protected area provides critical habitat for range-restricted Andean endemic bird species and Vulnerable Neotropical-Nearctic migrant bird species, especially the Cerulean Warbler. This expansion also includes important habitat for at least four species of Endangered amphibians, including the Puyo Giant Glass Frog.

Enlarging the Narupa Reserve is essential to having an area substantial enough to protect viable populations of globally threatened species from illegal logging, deforestation and the expansion of agriculture. This newly purchased area was in urgent need of protection due to easily accessible roads and high development and encroachment threats. Rainforest Trust will continue helping its local partner expand the 2,552-acre Narupa Reserve to eventually achieve strategic connectivity with the Reserva Ecológica Antisana and Sumaco-Napo-Galeras.

*Thanks to our generous friends and the SAVES Challenge for making this project a success. A special thank you to Artenschutzstiftung Zoo Karlsruhe, Gulf Coast Bird Observatory, Albert Ludwigs and the March Conservation Fund for their leadership gifts.*



**Vulnerable Coppery-chested Jacamars perched in Narupa Reserve.** These birds are endemic to the eastern slopes of the Andes.



**A Harpy Eagle** in flight in the Narupa Reserve.

**Enlarging the Narupa Reserve is essential to having an area substantial enough to protect viable populations of globally threatened species from illegal logging, deforestation and the expansion of agriculture.**



# Strategic Purchases Establish Chocó Biodiversity Corridor

**With the recent purchase of six new properties, Río Canandé Reserve was expanded by 656 acres, working toward a biodiversity corridor in Ecuador.**

Rainforest Trust and local partner Fundación Jocotoco have purchased six properties during 2017 (with the most recent taking place on October 18) for a total of 656 acres that will be added to the Río Canandé Reserve in Ecuador, a hotspot for biodiversity with one of the highest concentrations of endemic species in the world. The reserve holds the sole population of the Critically Endangered Canandé Magnolia and is home to the Critically Endangered Brown-headed Spider Monkey, one of the world's rarest primates. The area is also critical for the Mache Glass Frog and is one of the few sites where the species is found.

The Chocó region of South America contains lowland tropical rainforests and extends from Panama, through north-western Colombia and into northern Ecuador. As one of the richest and most biologically diverse forests in the world, the Río Canandé Reserve has been identified as a Key Biodiversity Area and serves as a refuge for over 350 bird species, including at least 36 Endangered Great Green Macaws that inhabit the area – perhaps the largest group in Ecuador.

“Rainforest Trust is proud to have supported the purchase of many properties at Canandé for 15 years now,” said Rainforest Trust CEO Dr. Paul Salaman. “The Canandé area is perhaps the most important surviving refuge of super-wet Chocó rainforest remaining in western Ecuador, and we aim to accelerate efforts to secure and protect what little of this unique habitat remains.”

This action is critical as it is one of the most threatened forests in the world with less than 10 percent of the original forest remaining intact. The expanding lumber and palm oil industries in the areas surrounding the reserve pose great threats to this diverse ecosystem. In addition, increased infrastructure and road expansion make the reserve more



**Habitat destruction has greatly impacted** Endangered Great Green Macaws.

**“Rainforest Trust is proud to have supported the purchase of many properties at Canandé for 15 years now.”**

vulnerable to timber extraction and agricultural expansion. Therefore, the race is on to save this vital habitat.

To ensure the protection of the reserve from these encroaching threats, Rainforest Trust is working with its longtime partner to continue purchasing critical properties that will expand the Río Canandé Reserve and enable the long-term objective of establishing an ecological corridor between Canandé and the Cotacachi-Cayapas Ecological Reserve.

*With the support of our many generous friends around the world and the SAVES Challenge, this project is a success. A special thank you to Artenschutzstiftung Zoo Karlsruhe, John Dwyer, P.E., International Conservation Fund of Canada (ICFC) and the March Conservation Fund for their leadership gifts.*



**The Endangered Mache Glass Frog** in one of the few sites where it is found.



# Reserve Expansions Are Integral Habitat Builders

**Expanding protected areas is an important part of conservation, as it helps provide permanent refuges in the face of climate change, safeguarding viable wildlife populations.**

When protected areas are strategically expanded, more optimal habitat becomes available for all species. Knowing that threatened species are already residing in the original protected area significantly strengthens the likelihood that they will also find suitable habitat in expanded areas. Also, expansions frequently result in linkages between previously established, but not connected, reserves and protected areas. These linkages can be tremendous assets for biodiversity, as they provide protective corridors where the fauna can move freely.

Another significant benefit from strategic expansions comes in the face of climate change. As global average temperatures increase and changes to the planet's water cycle disrupt traditional precipitation patterns, habitats, biomes and ecosystems have the potential to change drastically. Climate change will cause shifts in species distributions worldwide, threatening their viability due to range reductions and altering their representation in current protected areas. Biodiversity hotspots might be particularly vulnerable to climate change because they hold large numbers of species with small ranges that could contract even further as species track their optimal habitat, according to a 2012 paper published by Stony Brook University researchers with Rainforest Trust CEO Dr. Paul Salaman. Therefore, when a protected area is expanded, not just in acreage but also in altitudinal range or climatic variability, it helps prolong the period over which the protected area will continue to provide vital habitat.

"Particularly in Latin America, where most of our protected area projects involve land purchase, it is frequently the case that it's simply not possible to buy all the land one would like to all at once, because it would be prohibitively expensive and/or because the properties are not all available for sale," Dr. George Wallace, Rainforest Trust Chief Conservation Officer, said. "More often, reserves and parks have to be built gradually over time to achieve our objectives of developing protected areas that are large enough to permanently protect viable populations of threatened species."

These are the reasons Rainforest Trust and its local partners strive just as hard for protected area expansions as for new protected areas. A perfect example is the REGUA Reserve in the Brazilian Atlantic Forest near Rio de Janeiro. Rainforest Trust has been supporting Brazilian partner Reserva Ecológica de Guapiaçu (REGUA) for over a decade to purchase and protect this severely threatened rainforest.

Originally spanning over 500,000 square miles, less than 10 percent of the Atlantic Forest remains. By strategically purchasing rainforest acres in Brazil's Guapiaçu Valley, REGUA has created a secure 22,466-acre reserve that provides critical protection for some of the Atlantic Forest's most threatened wildlife, including 60 mammal species such as

**"More often, reserves and parks have to be built gradually over time to achieve our objectives of developing protected areas that are large enough to permanently protect viable populations of threatened species."**

Pumas, Ocelots, Jaguarundis, Three-toed Sloths and South America's largest and rarest primate, the Endangered Southern Muriqui. However, as development pressures from Rio expand into the valley, the integrity of the local ecosystem faces mounting challenges.

Rainforest Trust's most recent efforts have resulted in the purchase of seven strategic parcels that combine for 349 acres. These purchases are part of a larger strategic plan to expand the reserve throughout the entire Guapiaçu Valley and reconnect forest fragments, creating essential wildlife corridors.



Forest and wetland view in the REGUA Reserve in Brazil.



# Zune Auction Brings in Over \$52,000 for Conservation Action Fund



Director James Gunn and actor Chris Pratt pose with the Zune.

Knowing he would write the now iconic brown Zune MP3 player into the script of Vol. 2 of the comic-turned-movie *Guardians of the Galaxy*, writer and director James Gunn purchased several of these music players prior to filming and had the entire cast sign a select few. To launch the week-long auction of one of these to benefit Rainforest Trust, Gunn broadcast live to his nearly 550,000 Facebook fans, calling Rainforest Trust “near and dear to my heart” and sharing his love of tapirs. Unbeknownst to Rainforest Trust, Gunn would go on to offer a match of up to \$12,000. Almost immediately, the Zune jumped to over \$3,000 and by the end of the auction, exceeding all expectations, sold for nearly \$14,000 to Julie Traina of San Jose, California.

*Thanks to Gunn's match and the SAVES Challenge, over \$52,000 was raised to benefit our Conservation Action Fund, which provides funding for our most urgent projects. We couldn't be more grateful to have Gunn as a supporter and advocate of our work!*

## GISHWHES Raises Over \$56,000 for Lumbasumba Conservation Area

Started in 2011 by actor Misha Collins of the CW hit show *Supernatural*, the Greatest International Scavenger Hunt the World Has Ever Seen (GISHWHES) is an annual media scavenger hunt. Teams comprised of individuals from around the globe contend to earn points by submitting photos and videos of themselves competing in various imaginative tasks set forth by Collins himself. Collins and the GISHWHES team pick a charity that will be the beneficiary of the event's proceeds, and this year they chose Rainforest Trust. The folks at GISHWHES originally set a goal of raising \$20,000 for the proposed Lumbasumba Conservation Area in Nepal, but enthusiasm from supporters shattered all expectations by bringing in over \$56,000. This generous support will ensure the protection of over 40,000 acres of vital habitat for numerous threatened species.



Vulnerable Snow Leopards are found in the Lumbasumba area.

## Why do you support Rainforest Trust?



### Cindy Starr:

“I support Rainforest Trust because it has an immediate impact on climate, species diversity, preservation of land for indigenous peoples and the employment of local residents as patrols. It's essentially a home run nonprofit that covers all bases.”



### Shazeda Khan:

“Whenever I ponder our existence on Earth, and the widespread decimation we have inflicted on our planet thus far, it all seems dismal. Donating to organizations such as Rainforest Trust has renewed my faith in the attainment of a renewable and sustainable future for all inhabitants of Earth.”



### Jonathan DiBenedetto:

“I support Rainforest Trust because I know that if we all don't support the organizations conserving our most precious natural ecosystems, our great grandchildren will find themselves on a dusty moon.”



# Newly Discovered Moths Named for Rainforest Trust Vice Chair and Wife

This November, Rainforest Trust Vice Chair Dr. Eric Veach and his wife, Luanne Lemmer, received a rare honor recognizing their work to help preserve Brazil's vanishing Atlantic Rainforest. The couple became the namesakes for two new moth species discovered in the Serra Bonita Reserve in the Atlantic Rainforest, a Rainforest Trust-supported project.

Serra Bonita's Director of Scientific Research, famed lepidopterist Dr. Vitor Becker, described the new members of the Notodontidae family — *Chlorosema lemmerae* and *Rosema veachi* — in a paper published in *Proceedings of the Entomological Society of Washington*. Dr. Becker chose the names of the moths to recognize Dr. Veach and Lemmer for their generosity in supporting the expansion of the Serra Bonita Reserve.

"This is a tremendous honor," said Dr. Veach. "Luanne and I are proud to have helped protect vital habitat for these beautiful moths and so many other threatened species in Brazil's rainforests, and to support the important work that Dr. Becker and others are doing to document unique species in the region."

Brazil's Atlantic Rainforest, considered the second most endangered biome in the world, is also one of the most biodiverse. Serra Bonita Reserve is a privately-owned conservation area dedicated to the protection and preservation of one of the ecosystem's last intact remnants. This vital conservation area protects threatened wildlife, including six rare bird species and the Yellow-breasted Capuchin, a Critically Endangered primate. At least 17 species have been discovered

**"This is a tremendous honor. [We] are proud to have helped protect vital habitat for these beautiful moths and so many other threatened species..."**

at Serra Bonita, including *Chlorosema lemmerae* and *Rosema veachi*. Rainforest Trust has worked with local partner Instituto Uiraçu to expand the reserve by 1,788 acres, and Dr. Veach and Lemmer were among the major donors who made the land purchases possible.

"We have always felt that it is important to save all the world's species, not just the cute and cuddly ones," said Lemmer. "The Serra Bonita Reserve has an incredible amount of biodiversity, and we are proud to have helped Dr. Becker in his efforts to protect and study the many new species there."

Dr. Veach received a framed image of their namesakes during a Rainforest Trust Board meeting in September.

"I was delighted to learn that these newly described moths would be named for Eric and Luanne," said Rainforest Trust CEO Dr. Paul Salaman. "It is well-deserved recognition of their invaluable support for Serra Bonita and for threatened habitats and species throughout the tropics."



**The presentation of the framed image of the newly discovered moths to Dr. Eric Veach during a Rainforest Trust Board meeting.** From top left to bottom right: Geoffrey Chen; Jeffrey Zack; Dr. Robert Ridgely; Dr. Paul Salaman; Eric Goode; Dr. George E. Wallace; John Mitchell; Larry Benjamin; Elizabeth Pitcairn; Dr. Wayt Thomas; Patricia Koval; Dr. Eric Veach; Sally Davidson; Edith McBean.



# Rainforest Trust Joins the President of Panama for Tree Planting Event

**Rainforest Trust staff and its partners met Panamanian President Juan Carlos Varela and Minister of the Environment Emilio Sempris at a national tree planting event highlighting the importance of forest conservation.**

Panamanian President Juan Carlos Varela alongside the Minister of the Environment Emilio Sempris commenced the 3rd annual national tree planting event held at Cerro Galera, Nuevo Arraijan in Panama on June 24. Thousands of volunteers and a variety of conservation groups including Rainforest Trust staff and local partner Asociación Adopta el Bosque Panamá (ADOPTA) joined the government officials in the reforestation efforts.

“Establishing a national reforestation day, and committing to reforest 1 million acres by 2025, demonstrates a clear political understanding of the importance of forest conservation,” said Rainforest Trust Director of Conservation Programs James Lewis, who attended the event.

After giving a speech about the value of forest conservation and regeneration, President Varela spoke exclusively with staff from Rainforest Trust, ADOPTA and Rainforest Trust’s Canadian partner International Conservation Fund of Canada (ICFC) about the importance of watersheds in Panama, especially those around the Panama Canal.

“Protecting the rainforests around the Panama Canal is very important, not just for the functioning of the Panama Canal but also for drinking water for the people of Panama City and Cónon,” said President Varela.

The conservation nonprofit organizations also had the opportunity to discuss with President Varela another environment in Panama that is a critical watershed for its surrounding villages: the Cerro Chucantí mountain on the border of the Darién region. In addition to providing a year-round supply of fresh water, the forests also contain numerous

**“We are excited to explore the opportunity for the potential designation of a large government protected area to provide permanent refuge for the region’s newly discovered and endangered wildlife.”**

rare animals and plants found nowhere else on Earth. There have been many discoveries of species new to science at this irreplaceable site, including salamanders, frogs, snakes and numerous vascular plants.

Despite their vital ecosystem services and incredible biodiversity, the forests in Cerro Chucantí are under significant threat from deforestation due to cattle ranching. To protect this site, ADOPTA partnered with Rainforest Trust and ICFC to expand the nature reserve by 179 acres earlier this year, bringing its total to about 1,853 acres.

“We are excited to explore the opportunity for the potential designation of a large government protected area to provide permanent refuge for the region’s newly discovered and endangered wildlife,” said Guido Berguido, the Executive Director of ADOPTA.

Lewis added, “We are looking forward to seeing how conservation efforts around Chucantí will progress in the coming years.”



Staff from Rainforest Trust and its partners meet Panamanian President Varela (center, Rainforest Trust shirt).



# Choose Your Own Adventure: 2018 Conservation Expeditions

Join us in April for a long weekend in the lush rainforests that surround Golfo Dulce in Costa Rica, where Rainforest Trust is currently working with a local partner to establish its first ever marine preserve. Home to abundant wildlife including Critically Endangered Hawksbill Turtles and Endangered Whale Sharks, Golfo Dulce is one of only four tropical fjords in the world. While there, you will have the opportunity to snorkel with rays and help scientists tag Scalloped Hammerheads that breed in the waters of Golfo Dulce.

Check off one of your bucket list locations with us in March as we travel to the Galápagos Islands and Rainforest Trust-supported reserves in Ecuador. We will begin with a trip to the Antisanilla Biological Reserve where we will keep an eye out for one of the 30 or so Andean Condors that reside on the surrounding cliffs. We will then spend a day exploring nearby Yanacocha Reserve, created to protect the elusive Critically Endangered Black-breasted Puffleg hummingbird. From there, we will fly to the easternmost Galápagos Island of San Cristóbal where we will visit the future Galápagos Nature Reserve in hopes of spotting Galápagos Petrels and Woodpecker Finches. Over the next several days we will cruise to several islands on a private boat in search of incredible wildlife unique to the Galápagos Islands.

Then in June and August, Rainforest Trust CEO Dr. Paul Salaman will lead a tour to two premier wildlife viewing locations in the Southeast Asian island of Borneo: Danum Valley and the Kinabatangan River. This trip will however begin in the Titiwangsa Mountains of Malaysia, where Rainforest Trust is working to increase protections for Malayan Tigers through the establishment of Kenyir State Park. From there, we

will travel to Borneo where we will search for Bornean Orangutans, Bornean Pygmy Elephants and Clouded Leopards, as well as a variety of birds such as Helmeted Hornbills, Bornean Ground-cuckoos and Barred Eagle-owls. We will visit reserves established with the support of Rainforest Trust, boat along the Kinabatangan River and explore the forest canopy through a treetop canopy walkway.

In September, we will take in the incredible landscape, coast and wildlife of South Africa. This nearly two-week trip will begin in Cape Town where you will have the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to swim with sharks. After several days of exploring we will board the iconic Blue Train and head north for Pretoria, taking in the spectacular scenery along the way. A trip to Soutpansberg will be highlighted with a search for Leopards before heading to the iconic Kruger National Park. We will then visit a community reserve which aims to protect the Endangered Pickersgill's Reed Frog with Rainforest Trust support.

*If interested, please contact Leslie VanSant at [info@RainforestTrust.org](mailto:info@RainforestTrust.org).*

## Conservation Expedition Inspires Rainforest Trust Supporter

Until recently, Rainforest Trust Board Member Geo Chen wasn't overly involved in conservation efforts. "I have always deeply cared about conservation and the environment, but I never found an organization that resonated enough with me to devote a significant amount of resources to support," Chen said. But he found exactly what he was looking for in Rainforest Trust.

What helped increase Chen's involvement? A conservation expedition to Borneo. As a hotbed of ecological biodiversity, Rainforest Trust is working very hard to protect many threatened species there. Since the expeditions are about experiencing what makes the on-the-ground conservation work so unique, Chen got to witness that firsthand.

"While other environmental organizations may sometimes take a confrontational mindset toward solving a problem, Rainforest Trust manages to bring together governments, researchers, local partners, international nonprofits, private companies and the indigenous community to achieve protection of rainforests...this collaborative approach to conservation is quite special," Chen said.

Chen was glad he attended the donor trip, and a few months later he was nominated to sit on the Rainforest Trust Board. Additionally, he has some advice for anyone interested in taking a similar trip. "The [Rainforest Trust] staff and local guides do a tremendous job of making sure the trip is enjoyable and educational, so you are guaranteed to have a memorable (and possibly life-changing) trip...but make sure you bring everything on the packing list because they are on there for a good reason!"

Rainforest Trust has four donor trips planned for 2018: Costa Rica, Ecuador, Borneo and South Africa. Information about these trips can be found above.



**Geo Chen** on his conservation expedition to Borneo.



# Emergency Land Purchase to Save Imperiled Endemics in the Galápagos

**Rainforest Trust is excited to announce a new project in the scientifically significant Galápagos Islands that will safeguard many remarkable species such as San Cristóbal Giant Tortoises and Galápagos Petrels.**

In 1835, Charles Darwin arrived at the Galápagos Islands and over the course of five weeks discovered an astonishing diversity of unique species found nowhere else in the world. His observations laid the groundwork for what is considered one of the most important scientific breakthroughs for mankind – the theory of evolution by natural selection.

The Galápagos Islands are home to some of the highest levels of endemism anywhere on the planet, as over 80 percent of the land birds and 95 percent of the reptiles and terrestrial mammals are endemic. While the marine areas surrounding the islands are well protected, the terrestrial areas, especially the four islands on which humans reside – including San Cristóbal – are extremely vulnerable to development threats.

Unfortunately, this means species extinction is a very real concern. The San Cristóbal Vermilion Flycatcher is the first endemic bird species of the Galápagos thought to have gone extinct, as it was last seen in 1987. One of the most iconic creatures of the Galápagos Islands is the San Cristóbal Giant Tortoise, which is considered Vulnerable by the IUCN. Much like Lonesome George (the last Pinta Tortoise from the Galápagos Island of Santa Cruz, who lost his life in 2012), these giant tortoises could become extinct if proper conservation efforts are not implemented now.

Rainforest Trust partner Fundación Jocotoco has identified a key property which holds important populations of threatened endemic species including the Woodpecker Finch (a species of Darwin's finches) and a breeding population of Critically Endangered Galápagos Petrels, both of which have experienced drastic declines in recent years. The



**The San Cristóbal Giant Tortoise's** population was recently estimated at only 6,700 individuals.

petrels burrow in the volcanic soils to nest, but are highly susceptible to the threat of habitat loss, depredation by introduced rats and feral cats, and introduced weeds. This includes non-native blackberry bushes that entangle petrels as they fly to their nests at night. Introduced trees such as guava, as well as livestock, have modified habitat and contributed to the declining populations of native flora and fauna.

To protect the vulnerable species on San Cristóbal, Rainforest Trust needs a total of \$1,752,746 (of which 50 percent has already been raised) to support its local partner's purchase of the 568-acre property



**The Endangered San Cristóbal Mockingbird** is one of the first animals Darwin saw upon his arrival.



**The Critically Endangered Galápagos Petrel** is highly affected by invasive animals, such as Black Rats.



**Size: 568 acres**      **Funds Needed: \$874,947**

**CR** Critically Endangered  
**EN** Endangered  
**VU** Vulnerable

**Key Species:** Galápagos Petrel (CR), San Cristóbal Mockingbird (EN), Woodpecker Finch (VU), San Cristóbal Giant Tortoise (VU) and many endemic plants and invertebrates

**2X THE IMPACT!**

to establish the Galápagos Nature Reserve. This will be the first private nature reserve in the archipelago. Rainforest Trust is supporting both the purchase of this property as well as the reimplementation of an eco-volunteer program, including investing in the existing infrastructure to develop basic accommodations that will attract volunteers and ensure the long-term sustainability of the protected area.

"It is astonishing that the Galápagos Islands are facing so many threats, when this area is world recognized as such an important place for our modern understanding of biodiversity. We are delighted to step in and help begin purchasing private lands and set aside strict conservation areas to save many endangered species. It is tragic to see in recent years species go extinct on the islands, including an incredible flycatcher, and this is why Rainforest Trust is acting now to prevent other species from heading in that direction," Rainforest Trust CEO Dr. Paul Salaman said.

**"It is astonishing that the Galápagos Islands are facing so many threats, when this area is world recognized as such an important place for our modern understanding of biodiversity. We are delighted to step in and help begin purchasing private lands and set aside strict conservation areas to save many endangered species."**



**Top:** Partial view of the proposed nature reserve. **Middle:** San Cristóbal Giant Tortoise eating a cactus. **Bottom:** Miconia Forest on the property.



# Expanding a Key Tiger Stronghold in Malaysia

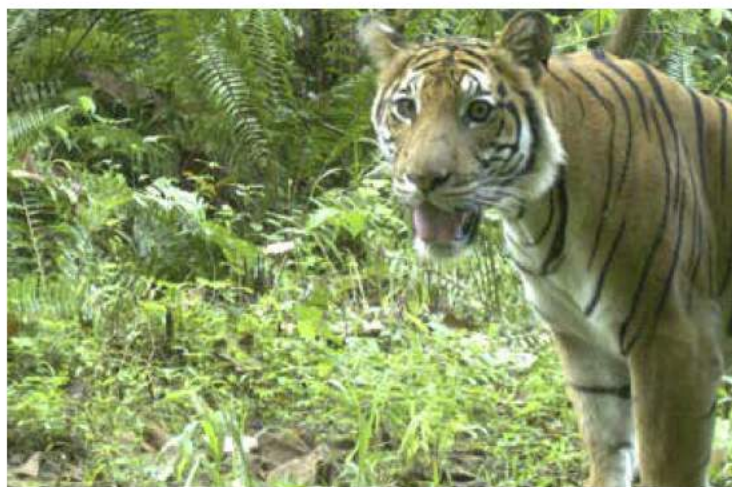
**Rainforest Trust is proud to showcase a second major project that will safeguard some of the world's most iconic species. The proposed Kenyir State Park will protect Malayan Tigers, Sunda Pangolins and Asian Elephants, to name just a few threatened animals.**

Estimated at more than 130 million years old, the last major stand of lowland dipterocarp forest on the Malay Peninsula lies within and adjacent to Taman Negara National Park, making this one of the most important protected areas in Southeast Asia. A large tract of forest adjacent to the national park remains totally unprotected and at risk from logging and conversion to rubber plantations. This is one of the last few places on mainland Southeast Asia where forming new protected areas is possible, as the majority of forests are already converted to oil palm plantations or have been given protected status.

The proposed protected area contains some of the highest species richness in Asia. This site is home to at least 43 mammal species, 18 of which are highly threatened. Six of Malaysia's eight wild cat species prowl these forests, including the Malayan Tiger, a Critically Endangered subspecies. These apex predators face tremendous pressure from poaching, fuelled by the illegal trade in their pelts and bones used in traditional medicine. Less than 250 mature individuals are

estimated to remain in peninsular Malaysia. Other mammals in this area include Critically Endangered Sunda Pangolins and Endangered species such as Asian Elephants, Asian Tapirs, Dholes and White-handed Gibbons.

Incredibly, more than 290 bird species have been documented in

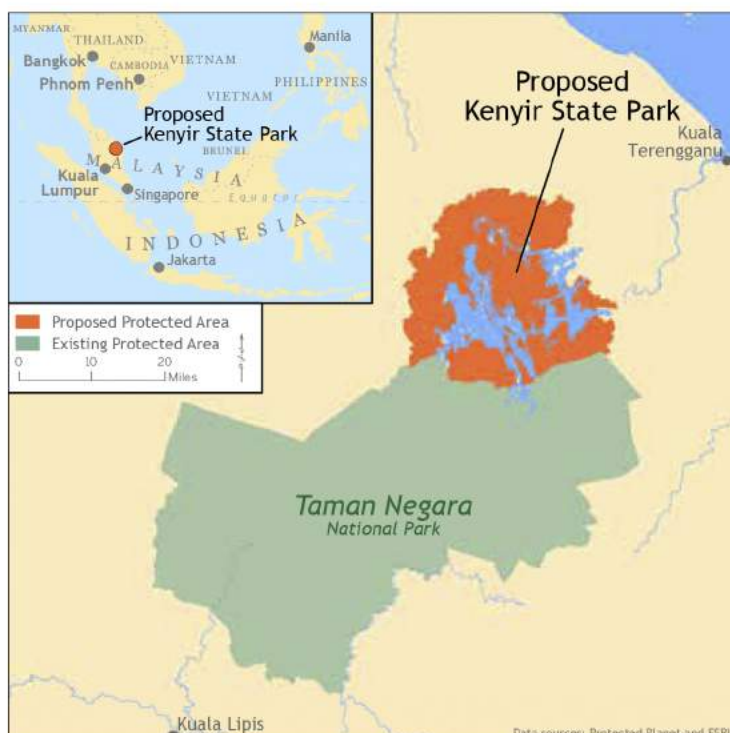


**This new protected area** will provide much needed protection for many animals, including the Malayan Tiger.

**"The importance of this area simply cannot be underestimated. This is a rare and unparalleled opportunity to protect a spectacular and imperiled tropical forest harboring what is certainly one of the planet's most awe-inspiring predators - the Malayan Tiger."**



**The Endangered Asian Tapir** is the largest of five Tapir species.





**Size: 248,927 acres      Funds Needed: \$244,868**

**Key Species:** Malayan Tiger (CR), Sunda Pangolin (CR), Helmeted Hornbill (CR), Asian Elephant (EN), Asian Tapir (EN), Dhole (EN), White-handed Gibbon (EN), Straw-headed Bulbul (EN), Yellow-breasted Bunting (EN)

**CR** Critically Endangered

**EN** Endangered

**VU** Vulnerable

**2X THE IMPACT!**

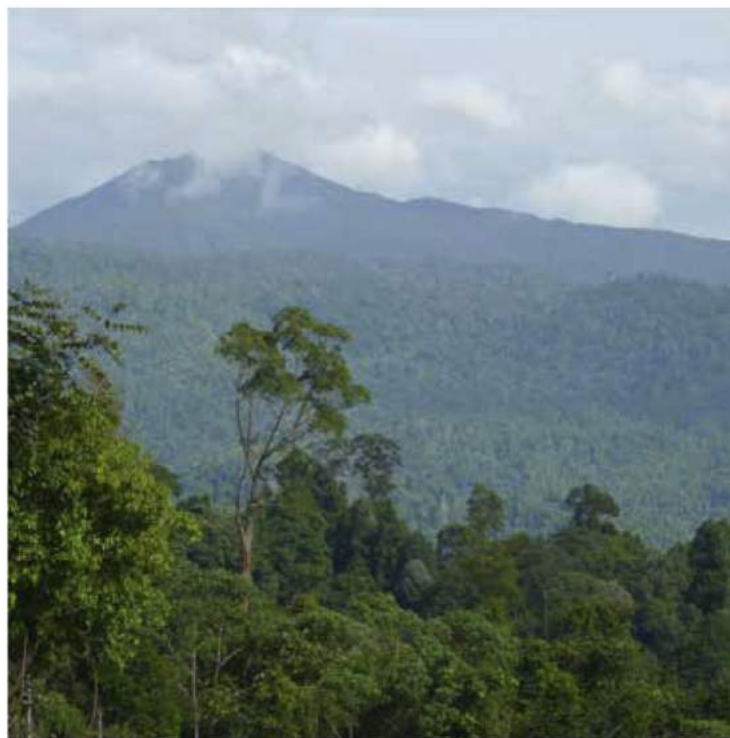
this area, 66 of which are assessed on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. This includes nine hornbill species such as the Great and the Rhinoceros Hornbills, making this area one of the richest places in Southeast Asia for these magnificent birds. In addition, the region is home to two species of the world's largest flower, the *Rafflesia*.

In order to expand protection for these iconic Asian species, Rainforest Trust has sought a total of \$2,265,930, with only 11 percent still needed. This will support local partner Rimba in securing nearly 217,251 acres of unprotected forest connected to Taman Negara National Park in the form of a new state park, with an additional 31,676 acres upgraded to state park status. Rainforest Trust's local partner suggests naming the new proposed protected area, encompassing 248,927 acres, Kenyir State Park. The site lies within a globally important Tiger Conservation Landscape and is a critical wildlife corridor in the Malaysian Central Forest Spine Master Plan for Ecological Linkages.

"The importance of this area simply cannot be underestimated," said Rainforest Trust Chief Conservation Officer Dr. George Wallace. "This is a rare and unparalleled opportunity to protect a spectacular and imperiled tropical forest harboring what is certainly one of the planet's most awe-inspiring predators – the Malayan Tiger."



**Top: A Critically Endangered Malayan Tiger** interested in camera traps.  
**Bottom: A beautiful waterfall** within the proposed protected area.



**Top: Landscape view** of the proposed protected area. **Bottom: Endangered Asian Elephants** must drink water at least once a day.



# Urgent Protection

Support the conservation work of Rainforest Trust and its partners around the world.

## Safeguarding the Lost Forest in Madagascar

The “Lost Forest” has been isolated from the eastern rainforests and western dry forests of Madagascar for hundreds of years. This secluded rainforest sits atop an extraordinary mega quartz massif unlike any other geological feature for hundreds of miles, which may contribute to its unique flora and fauna. The first expeditions in the previously unexplored area supported in part by Rainforest Trust have potentially discovered a wealth of species never before known to science. To ensure long-term protection for the region’s biodiversity, Rainforest Trust is working with a local partner to establish the 3,460-acre Lost Forest Reserve.

**Price per Acre: \$206 Urgent Need: \$185,506**



## Securing a Missing Link in the Amazon

Home to the world’s largest tropical rainforest, the Amazon is legendary for its great biodiversity that contains millions of species, many still undescribed. However, nearly 20 percent of its lush forest has been lost, removing a staggering amount of habitat needed by the area’s unique wildlife. A critical missing link in protection will be secured by Rainforest Trust and a local partner working to expand the current Airo Pai Community Reserve along with other conservation efforts, protecting more than 1.3 million acres of the mega-diverse forests of north-western Peru. This will establish a combined 7.8 million-acre tri-national corridor along the borders of Peru, Ecuador and Colombia.

**Price per Acre: \$1.11 Urgent Need: \$330,531**



## Protecting Endangered Pangolins in India

The moist deciduous forests of India’s North Western Ghats offer one of the most species-rich ecosystems in South Asia. A mountain range rising to over 8,500 feet, the Ghats intercept the wet monsoon winds off the Arabian Sea. The resulting precipitation and cooler temperatures create numerous microclimates that are necessary to shelter endangered species such as the Indian Pangolin, Dhole, Gaur and a striking variety of endemic plants. To strengthen protection of this key area, Rainforest Trust is working with a local partner to create the new Prachitgad Community Reserve. Utilizing conservation agreements, the new reserve will immediately stop unsustainable clearing of forest in the area.

**Price per Acre: \$105.75 Urgent Need: \$47,688**

