Earlier this month, the Oncilla Conservation team headed to the Talamanca Mountains for a very important field expedition. The objective is clear, to study and monitor the populations of wild mice and other small mammals, the Oncilla’s favorite prey.

“I hiked several kilometers up the mountain from 1500 to 2000 meters above sea level for a week straight, carrying the weight of 60 Sherman traps and equipment, enduring mosquito bites, being eaten by red squirrels and other insects that love to get in your eyes as you walk. Despite this, I remembered why I love what I do so much.”

- José Daniel Ramírez Fernández Coordinator and researcher of Oncilla Conservation.

A total of 20 captures of 3 different species of mice were made, with Peromyscus nudipes being the most abundant. In addition, camera traps were set up to help us better understand habitat use by small cats, and to associate this with the data on small mammals found in these expeditions. In fact, data from a station located southeast of the Talamanca Range indicate 11 records of oncilla. Who knows what surprises we will have at the end of this study!

Traveling north in the Guanacaste Mountain Range, the Nai Conservation team, with the Jicaro Danto restoration project, conducted new expeditions in the northern sector of Miravalles National Park. Fresh samples were obtained for analysis of the genetic status of the population of this endangered tree species. These exploratory tours have a reach beyond their objective since we continue to find pleasant surprises, thanks to the observation by one of our interns of a little known and difficult to observe frog. More details in our next publications.
LEADING THE WAY TO COEXISTENCE IN HAND WITH THE COMMUNITY

It is possible to coexist with tapirs! Two tapirs, one male and one female, were coming every night for the first two weeks of February to eat in a small farmer’s bean field. He himself contacted the Nai Conservation team expressing his deep fear and frustration for his crops.

"That a farmer in crisis felt the confidence to contact us to address the tapir conflict speaks volumes about the credibility of CR wildlife foundation. We are an organization that listens from empathy and acts quickly.”
Sofía Pastor-Parajeles Coordinator of operations and planning for coexistence.

Responding to the call, the team went directly to evaluate the case and after negotiating with the farmer, an electric fence covering a perimeter of 500 m was installed.

This case has been a challenge from every perspective, but the goal was achieved.

For the time being, preventive measures based on electric fencing have worked 100% in all cases that have been addressed.

There is also good news for the conservation of Tlalocohyla celeste. This month concrete actions were initiated to mitigate threats due to erosion and deterioration of the 8 hectare wetland edge in Tapir Valley, the only habitat of our small and unique frog. For this we proceeded with the placement of 2 floating platforms at key points in the wetland in order to continue studying and learning about the species without disturbing their home.
COLLABORATION TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS

In early February, a part of the CRWF team participated in the anniversary of La Amistad International Park where they shared time with officials and key actors in the area, strengthening the bonds of collaboration. As part of the same activity, support was provided to the Salitre, Cabagra and Ujarrás indigenous territories for the incorporation of technological tools such as SMART to optimize their monitoring of natural resources. This opened up opportunities for collaboration with resource guards in these territories and thus increased the protection of the forests and their wild inhabitants. But collaboration has no borders, and that is why the person in charge of SMART and patrolling, Jimmy Barrantes, visited Geoversity’s project in Panama where he shared and collaborated with patrols in indigenous territories in the Mamoní Valley Reserve.

"It is great to share and contribute to the conservation efforts developed by other people in different parts of the world. I had the opportunity to learn and share experiences with indigenous territories that have organized themselves to protect their resources through SMART patrols. Despite the distance, the motivations and threats are very similar to those faced by communities in the Costa Rican territory with wildlife protection."

-Jimmy Barrantes.
Citizen Science

Leaders of Vida entre Volcanes organized the first nature walk of the year. Nineteen people from the community of Bijagua participated, eager to learn and observe everything that lives in their forests. 53 new observations were made and 10 new biodiversity records were reported. These data add up to a list of 9004 observations and report of 2045 species in the entire Tenorio Miravalles Biological Corridor. The community’s constant motivation and participation facilitates actions for conservation and coexistence with local wildlife.

THERE IS STILL HOPE, YOU CAN SEE EXTINCTION, BUT YOU ALSO CAN GET TO KNOW A NEW SPECIES

In January we visited Monteverde to meet Don Eladio Cruz (last person to see the golden toad), this time in February we invited him and his niece Daniela Quesada (coordinator of Mi Ocotea) to meet the valley tapir frog, *T. celeste*.

"The reunion with the people of Monteverde, creating a space to exchange experiences and learn from each other to continue fighting against the loss of biodiversity. Having three legendary people in Costa Rican amphibian conservation was a very gratifying moment. It brought together three key points that demonstrate the complexity of amphibian conservation: extinction, discovery and resurgence. Don Eladio Cruz being the person who knew and saw the Golden Toad for the last time. Donald Varela being the first person who paid attention to a new species of frog and fought against academic arrogance. And Juan Gabriel Abarca being the person who rediscovered a population of a species that was considered extinct Holdridge’s Toad, *Incilius holdridgei."

-Valeria Aspinall, coordinator of Tlaloc Conservation.
CR WILDLIFE
Work to ensure the prevalence of wildlife and its habitat through interdisciplinary and community-based stable conservation initiatives that promote coexistence and improve decision-making.

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