What an amazing start to March! Our Jicaro danto restoration team was full of energy as we embarked on 7 field expeditions throughout the Guanacaste Mountain range, in search of the special Jicaro Danto tree populations. It was a thrilling adventure as surprises came up! The most successful expedition by far was in the Caribbean sector of Rincon de la Vieja National Park. We couldn’t believe our luck when we stumbled upon what we believe to be the healthiest *Parmentiera valerii* population yet! And as if that wasn’t exciting enough, we saw tapir tracks everywhere we went. We cannot deny that where tapirs are, Jicaro danto populations thrive!

Another amazing and surprising expedition was our collaboration with the Mi Ocotea Project in Cacao Volcano. Not only did we find a healthy Jicaro danto population, but we were thrilled to discover a huge population of *Ocotea monteverdensis* (a tree that was believed to only occur in tiny patches in Monteverde). Two endangered and endemic tree species coexisting in the same forest. We are truly amazed by the incredible biodiversity of this region.

“This month has allowed me to meet many people with great enthusiasm and love for nature. Meeting Freddy in Cacao Volcano and sharing time with Daniela Quesada Cruz from Mi Ocotea motivate me to continue with the work of conservation and research.”

Donald Varela-Soto
Jicaro danto restoration project coordinator.

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But the adventures didn’t stop there. Our Tlaloc and Nai conservation team made a second trip to the top of the Tenorio Volcano crater, where we collected the 14 camera trap data that were placed back in October 2022. And as always, we were on the lookout for fascinating amphibians to study and protect.

"Nature is where I find my greatest reward, working alongside a team of passionate friends who share the same goal of protecting our planet. It’s easy to forget the power of our collective motivation, but being in the field with these inspiring individuals reminded me of why we do what we do. With diverse objectives that intertwine in organic ways, we learned from each other and grew together, solidifying our commitment to conservation."

Valeria Aspinall, Tlaloc conservation coordinator

Great news from the highlands! The Skue project from Oncilla Conservation, has completed the prey sampling for the dry season. A total of 36 mice of 5 different species were captured. These data will be analyzed to determine if there is any correlation between prey diversity and abundance and the presence of small cats in the altitudinal gradient. This valuable information will help us better understand the ecology of these elusive and vulnerable felines and develop more effective conservation strategies.

Keep an eye out for more updates on our amazing discoveries in these projects’ expeditions!

LEADING THE WAY TO COEXISTENCE IN HAND WITH THE COMMUNITY!

We received some troubling news recently. A tapir with a rope around its neck was spotted wandering through properties at the foothills of the Tenorio Volcano. It’s unclear why the tapir has a rope around its neck, but we knew we had to take action quickly. So, together with SINAC, Vida entre Volcanes, and some community members, we undertook an arduous search for the tapir. Our team worked tirelessly to find and intercede but, unfortunately, the tapir has yet to be found. The search continues.

This event highlights the importance of our collaring project and the work we’re doing with local communities to prevent situations like these from happening in the future. We’re deeply committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of people and wildlife in the region, and we’ll continue to work towards this goal.

All the way into the highlands, Oncilla Conservation is taking its mission to new heights by expanding its outreach and impact to other communities. Their latest initiative involves mapping key stakeholders in the community of San Gerardo, where they plan to work directly with locals to achieve their conservation goals. By forging partnerships with the community, Oncilla Conservation hopes to make an even greater impact in the conservation of Costa Rica’s smallest wildcat.

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COLLABORATION TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS

A meeting was made between the Tenorio-Miravalles Smart patrol brigade, local police, and SINAC members to discuss ways to prevent and mitigate crimes in the local private properties forests. We believe that this joint effort will benefit the entire region, and we look forward to continuing to work together towards a safer and more sustainable future.

“Solutions are found by working together. The recent meeting, we held on March 2, with the Tenorio-Miravalles patrol brigade was a testimony to that with the participation of officials from the security forces and SINAC, together, we made a commitment to strengthen surveillance actions and work with neighboring properties to create a network of support.”

Jimmy Barrantes CRWF SMART patrol officer.

EDUCATION FOR THE PRESENT AND FUTURE!

What an exciting event! Dr. Jorge Rojas, Nai Conservation Coordinator, led a workshop for wildlife veterinarians to share about our radio collars and photo-trapping projects. It was an amazing opportunity to exchange knowledge and expertise with wildlife veterinary colleagues. We’re thrilled to inform you that the workshop was such a success, and we look forward to future collaborations, internships, and more! The feedback we received from the group was overwhelmingly positive, and it’s always so rewarding to share our passion for conservation with like-minded individuals. We can’t wait to see what the future holds for this project and the amazing partnerships we are building along the way!
Oncilla conservation gave an informative talk at the Mastatal School in Puriscal. The focus of the talk was on Costa Rica’s wild small cats, their natural history, the threats they face, and their crucial importance to the ecosystem. The event was well-attended and sparked a lot of interest among the kids.

On the Caribbean side, exciting news from Seacow Conservation! We are thrilled to announce that we are expanding our education program, Club Manati, to local high schools in Barra del Colorado. This program’s aim is to create a generation of leaders who are passionate about protecting the manatee and their habitat. The Club Manati program includes interactive activities, games, and presentations that make learning about manatees a fun and engaging act.

“Sharing with children about wild animals is always very rewarding. The curiosity and the impression they get from questions that to us seem simple due to everyday life, reignites our curiosity, a fundamental principle of science and experimental design.”

Oncilla coordinator, José Daniel Ramírez Fernández

We are grateful to have the opportunity to work with local schools and look forward to reaching even more students in the future. Stay tuned for updates on our progress!
CITIZEN SCIENCE

The placement of signs to prevent boat collisions with manatees has resulted in increased sightings reports of these beloved creatures in the area. Thanks to the signs, community members are more aware and frequently report manatee sightings in the lagoons. This is a game-changer as it feeds into our bioacoustic data, based on citizen observations of manatees’ behavior and activity. By now we have received an astounding 16 new sighting and activity reports since February! This is a major improvement compared to our previous average of only 25-32 reports per year.

COMMUNICATION FOR CONSERVATION

We have accomplished so much over the years specially in 2022. If you want to learn more about our amazing work, make sure to check out the 2022 IMPACT report for a summary of our team’s achievements and milestones. In the report, you can expect to find detailed information about the progress made towards our conservation goals, as well as updates on the different projects and initiatives undertaken by our team. From our community work to our key wildlife monitoring data collection, the report covers it all! It’s sure to be an inspiring read and a great way to see the positive impact we’ve made for preserving wildlife and promote coexistence.
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.

BE PART OF THE ACTION!
Contact us to learn how to participate and support CRWF’s conservation actions across Costa Rica.

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