



# ESPERANZA VERDE

## nature conservation - Peru



Newsletter No. 7, December 2014

*A new update from Esperanza Verde. A lot of time has passed and we have achieved many things in this beautiful setting in the Peruvian jungle.*

### The latest news!

In the last newsletter we mentioned we were in the last stages of the paperwork to become an official rescue centre. Although we did not receive the formal notification at that time we received many animals from the government. But finally in November **we received the official papers!** Our long term volunteer, Iain, made a joke that day about the likelihood of receiving animals the very next day. And so it happened; the arrival of 3673 baby yellow-spotted river turtles. They had been confiscated at a private house in Pucallpa, where they were held to be sold (most likely for the pet industry). Some children saw the turtles in a nearby location to their school and warned the police, good job!

The turtles were around one week old, and the amount suggests that about 100 nests were robbed. They arrived in 3 big plastic boxes with water, so first thing we had to do is get them all out, as the ones on the bottom were already drowning.

We spread them all out in the living room of the volunteer-house. It was a saddening sight, to get them out and find so many dead on the bottom, knowing they drowned being pushed down by others gasping for air. We found 310 turtles dead upon arrival.

Most of the rest were happily moving about, or trying to get to water, which is what they would do first thing after coming out of the nest. We were able to release most of them in the river on the same day. The weaker ones (48) we kept under observation for a while and when they were eating well we brought them to our reptile enclosure with the big pond.



Arrival and release of yellow-spotted river turtles

### What has been built?



Manager house

We are on our way to finishing the manager house, but with all the animals arriving in these last months there were often other, more important, things to do. The first and second floor are done, and a start has been made with the windows of wire mesh.

We also levelled out the area for the clinic, ordered the first materials, and collected a lot of sand (for cement), so the preparations are almost done. We hope to start building soon. All in all we are really busy with a lot of constructions, big and small.

We never know how a day here turns out, so sometimes constructions are delayed. Mostly the reason will be an animal, or sometimes many, in need of our care and then all hands are on deck for this.

The moment we heard the Ministry was confiscating and had no place to go with the animals, we decided to stop all big constructions and prepare. So we built 2 new quarantine cages and rearranged or repaired others to be able to accommodate all of the potential new animals.

And that was a good thing.....read on!



New cage





## New animals

Since the last newsletter we received more animals in need:



Cassandra, tree porcupine

- **Cassandra**, a tree porcupine, was brought in by a local villager. She had a severed tail and a broken front leg. We operated her tail and kept her in a small cage for some time so her leg would recover. She had a rough beginning at first: being wild and being enclosed in a small cage. But after a few weeks of close observation we could release her into a bigger enclosure, where she could train her muscles again. She was very eager to get out, and after seeing she was fine, and strong, we released her at night. We have not heard of her since, and assume that is a very good thing. She was wild and stayed wild! We just helped her on her way again.

- **Lilo**, an American opossum, was caught by a local in Curimana. The mother was killed, so we raised him and could recently release him. He stayed nice and wild, hissing at everybody who came close. Since his release we have seen him a couple of times at night.



Lilo, American opossum



Shambito, saddleback tamarin

- **Shambito**, a young male saddleback tamarin was given to us by a family from Pucallpa. He joined Alessi, the tamarin confiscated by the Ministry (see below) soon after his arrival. After some time they were released. They spend most of the day jumping around in the trees and go back into their cage at night to cuddle up together in their sleeping-box.

- A **white-winged parakeet**, caught and tied up by a local child was entrusted to Kayla. Upon arrival we noticed the foot had started swelling up from being tied up on a string. We took the string off and waited 4 days before his release. He was a wild one, recently caught, with all feathers still in tact. He went off quickly, as he did not like one a bit being around people.

## Animals confiscated by the Environmental Ministry in Pucallpa:



Arrival and released squirrel monkeys

The Environmental ministry in Pucallpa completed various confiscations in the black market as well as in private homes. Most of these animals we found in a very bad condition. Some even died during transport, and some died shortly after arrival. People, especially dealers in animals, often don't take care of them at all. They hardly feed them if at all, don't provide them with water, and keep them in very small cages, often with different species mixed together. Tortoises with monkeys, or in Cushna's case, a kinkajou (who is nocturnal) with monkeys, are but some of the recent examples.





In these last months we received the following animals:

- **Two scarlet macaws**
- **Two blue and yellow macaws**
- **12 Aratingas**, of which 5 died shortly after arrival
- **1 orange-winged parrot**
- **1 blue headed parrot**
- **1 meally parrot**

All parrots, mentioned above, were taken to the aviary, after they fulfilled the quarantine period, with the necessary medications.

- **1 Short tailed parrot**, a beautiful parrot, which died unfortunately several weeks after his arrival
- **6 cobalt-winged parakeets**
- **39 white-winged parakeets**, 9 died in the first weeks after arrival
- **3 Tui parakeets**

After a quarantine period and a period of hand-feeding the babies among the parakeets, we could place them all in a bigger cage outside. We divided them into two cages: the flying ones and the ones which still have to grow back their feathers, as most came with cut feathers, or plucked feathers. We hope to be able to release the group which can fly in the coming months.

- **1 Matamata**, named Splinter, after some research we got him a good surrounding to feed on fish and grow. This is a funny looking turtle and requires very special care.
- **15 yellow-foot tortoises**, 1 died, 1 escaped. Some are receiving treatment for fungus on the shells, and some were put together with Rincay and Pepito.
- **1 Six tubercled riverturtle**, died shortly after arrival
- **6 Yellow-spotted riverturtles**
- **3673 baby Yellow-spotted riverturtles**, 3299 were released, 326 died (most already dead upon arrival, and few died in the days after), and 48 are now in the reptile enclosure (at the moment still also inhabited by the peccaries).
- **3 adult spider monkeys (1 female, 2 males)**. The female, Yanay, came together with the young male, Rimaq. They were found in a cage along the road towards Pucallpa. The other male, Lucio, was a circus monkey, used to make photos with. They are all three together in a cage. They are very tame and would be to dangerous to us to have roaming free around. Releasing them would also bring them in great risk of being hunted if they would wander further into the forest.
- **1 saddleback tamarin**, Alessi, a adult female. She is very tame which probably accounts for the problems she is having with the wild group. But given time we think she will be just fine, and for now she is taking care of little Shambito.
- **8 squirrel monkeys**, 1 died shortly after arrival. He had a skull fracture. The rest were released after some months and joined some of the wild squirrel monkeys in the area. They show up sometimes to enjoy the food we lay out on the monkey tables. On arrival they had to be washed as they were covered in dirt. They were all very skinny and most had no hair around their waist because they were tied up with ropes. Seeing them outside with their fur growing back, hanging out with the wild ones, makes this work so worthwhile.



Scarlet macaw : Mebi



Parakeet hand-feeding



Meally, short-tailed, blue headed parrot



Splinter, mata mata



Spider monkeys Lucio and Yanay



Tamarins Alessi and Shambito





Nikita, brown capuchin

- **A brown capuchin (young female), Nikita.** She was confiscated on the black market. Still very wild, but also very young and thus in need of milk, we kept her first in a small cage at the house to get her used to milk again. Then she was moved to a bigger cage outside. Of course we used Mica, our big momma of all the monkeys and also a brown capuchin, to get Nikita introduced to everyone. She now is outside and is growing stronger every day. And of course she has Mica around at all times to help her out, e.g. against our bully Willow, a woolly monkey.

## What is going on with the 'old' animals?

**Pepe**, (tayra, released), is still seen from time to time. He does not come close and seems to handle himself well in the jungle.

**Tika**, (coati, released), seemed to have been gone missing for several months, and we were getting worried. We know she lost her second baby of last year, as one day it was found laying dead on the ground. We don't know what happened to the third, but hopefully it survived and joined a group. End of November this year she showed up looking fat again (pregnant!). We think she has joined a wild group, and came back to make her nest again on the same spot as last year. She seems more shy, and so far only showed her face once. We are all really happy she is doing this well!



Rincay in 2011 and in 2014

**Rincay**, (tapir), has been with us since June 2011. He is doing well and is still enjoying the company of **Pepito**, a tortoise. The pair recently gained some more company, 4 tortoises, which we received from the government.

**Quintisha and Xena**, (collared peccaries) are doing very well. We will soon start building a new enclosure for them, as their current enclosure was intended for reptiles. Some turtles are already in the big pond, and as soon as Quintisha and Xena are in their new enclosure, we can put the tortoises, we received some months ago from the government, in there as well.



Elmo, two-toed sloth

**Elmo**, the two-toed sloth, is still here, but some days he is nowhere to be found! So far the longest time he has been gone was two days, but on most days, we can find him sleeping in his box. In the late afternoon he comes out to receive his daily portion of vegetables.

**Asiri** (night-monkey) we released after 3 months here. We heard her several times in the weeks after release, and fed her for some time on an outside table. We hope she is doing fine.

**Chami**, (white-fronted capuchin), even with all the intensive care we provided, unfortunately did not get better. We decided to euthanize her. It was a very sad day for all of us, especially not having been able to find out what was 'eating' her from inside out.





**Mica, Jordi, Nikita, Willow, Nakoya, Kamari and Camila**, (three brown capuchin monkeys, three woolly monkeys and a squirrel monkey), are all doing good. Willow is the most problematic one, always trying to get close to people and hanging on the windows. We try to teach him distance, but, oh is he stubborn. It would be so nice to be able to explain him he will be a lot healthier in the trees, eating leaves. He has the most health problems, especially from eating ground insects which contain a well known parasite that can be very dangerous to him. We are doing our best to keep him healthy. Kamari, the newest addition among the woolly monkeys, is great. Thanks to him, Nakoya is now spending a lot more time in the trees, as she first had only Willow as an example. Nikita is an independent monkey. She sleeps outside at night, and although a baby, she is handling her 'freedom' very well.



Nakoya and Kamari

**Igor**, the saddleback tamarin, still shows up during the day with his group. In November twins were born again so now they are a group of seven tamarins. We hoped Igor would get Alessi introduced to the group, but so far it has not been a success. We even closed him in with Alessi and Shambito for some weeks, but as soon as they were released he left them aside.



Cushna, kinkajou, first day of release

**Cushna** (kinkajou): we recently started opening her door at night. The first night she climbed around a lot in the higher canopy. She did not like to go on the ground, which is a very good sign. Later that night she was heard near the house and we brought her into the safety of her own cage again. As she is used to humans, it will take some time for her to adapt to living outside.

**Tiliku**, (dusky headed parakeet) has been joined by the smaller parakeets (most of them cobalt-winged parakeets). As Tiliku is capable of flying a bit already, he is now together with a group of 11 other parakeets who are also able to fly. We put them in a cage where they have a bit more space for training their wings. The plan is

to build a cage for them (one of many jobs that comes in between other constructions!), where it is quiet and free of monkey disturbance. This way they can be released, but still have a cage to come back to in the beginning.



Tiliku, dusky headed parakeet in the middle of white-winged parakeets

The **macaws, and amazon parrots** have been enjoying their space in the aviary. Soon after we placed them in the aviary we received more parrots. After a quarantine period, most of them were also placed in the aviary. Unfortunately 2 macaws (of the first group) died recently. **Ruiz**, the only green winged macaw, which



Ruiz, on arrival and now

arrived almost without feathers, has been getting better and better. Lina, our orange-winged parrot, recovered from her eye injury. Although she can't see with that eye, she is able to fly and handle herself (or himself) well in the aviary.

We now have 6 macaws, 4 amazon parrots, 6 aratingas and one blue-headed parrot in the aviary. The aratingas will be there until all feathers have grown, and all can fly well. Then we will be able to release them.





## Family life



Christmas with Rincay

All and all I think we can say this was a very good year for us. Although very busy at times, with all the new animals and trying to get our future house ready, it was successful in many ways. No holiday this year for us, but thanks to several volunteers who are staying for a longer time (4 months or more), we could go several times together as a family to Pucallpa. Of course we always have a long list of things to do there, but it is nice to eat out in the evening as a family sometimes.

The school again has been more a disaster than anything else. Due to lack of time I have not worked hard with Kayla at home, so during these upcoming holidays (here that will be from mid December till the beginning of March, i.e. rainy season) we will have to make up for that. But she has fun at school as well, hanging out with friends. She even got elected to be the queen of spring this year. She noticed being a queen is not always that funny, watching your friends playing while you have to sit out the entire official happening. Kayla enjoys life here as a free spirit: she is independent, and mostly finds something to do. She often joins volunteers in going to one of the plantations, getting fruits or corn etc.



Kayla, queen of spring



Marlon, ready for a day at construction

Marlon is doing fine in kindergarten, although in the beginning there were some complaints of him hitting others. After talking to the teacher, we noticed that is how the kids play sometimes. He is a busy little bee, and seeks a lot of attention, which is always available with so many volunteers around. When there is no school he mostly joins Douwe at the construction.



Kayla's Esperanza Verde

## Volunteers and work



Preparing food for all animals

With all these animals arriving we were happy that we had the help of a constant number of volunteers, between 8-10. It takes a bit more time to feed, but with more volunteers we are sure all animals are well looked after.

After all the new animals got settled in, got their check-up and medications when necessary, there was time again for constructions.

We are very lucky to have several long-term volunteers with us at the moment, Jan from Switzerland, Lauren and Iain from the UK, and recently Tobias from Germany. Lauren and Iain were here for two months in July-August (when the animals started coming), and came back in October to stay with us for 6 months. It is great having them here, as they are taking a load of work off our shoulders.



Iain and Lauren examining the parakeets





Halloween party at Esperanza Verde

Jan worked as a zoo-keeper in a wild-park in Switzerland and has been a great help in all work.

It makes a big difference to all the work, having people here for a longer time, as they can take a lot more responsibility, find jobs themselves to do, and can work new people in. Without the volunteers Esperanza Verde would not be able to go on. And after all the hard work it is time for a party, as we did this year with Halloween.

This year we started to arrange a new trip for volunteers. As many enjoy being on the river in one of the local canoes ('Peke peke'), we asked a local man from Bello Horizonte if it would be possible to take people to the big waterfall, 'Regalia', 1.5 hours up river. There you can enjoy a swim as well as, for the dare devils, jump from the top of the waterfall.



At the waterfall 'Regalia'

## Selva Dormida, the forest

Thanks to Manuel Krauss, his friends and family, we have been able to secure another piece of forest, of 20 ha, which bordered our land. A big part of this land was deforested for the use as a plantation. Esperanza Verde now owns about 120 hectares of rainforest.

In the beginning of the rainy season (November) we got more young trees, about 500. A lot of the new trees were planted on the new land. All volunteers have been helping with getting the trees to the places where they could be planted. Although it is hard work, many enjoy the walk through the forest, experiencing the real jungle along the way.



Shen, taking data

In November Shen, from China, arrived to do her internship here. She studies environmental engineering in Germany, and is doing an inventory of all the trees (wood-species) that we have planted over the years.

Machico knows best where to find all the trees, as he has been involved in this since the beginning. Shen and several interested volunteers take turns on walks with Machico to look for all the trees.

They take data with the GPS, as well as write down the general status of each tree (altitud, health, age) which Shen work out on the computer.

The results will follow in the next newsletter.

Volunteers join Machico on forest walks to get to know the jungle, trees and plants as well as having a chance to see some wildlife.

Night walks, guided by Douwe, are also often enjoyed, seeing the forest from a different view.



A crab during a night walk





## Future plans and how you can help

Although we will be busy for some time with the two biggest constructions, finishing the manager house, and starting the clinic, there as always is other plans in the pipeline....

We are planning to build a new cage for the peccaries, so the cage they are in now, can return to a purely reptile cage.



Baby-turtles going into the reptile pond

With possibilities of new animals arriving we are always preparing to build new enclosures quickly.



Geiler and Lisa working on a new cage

If you want to learn something about constructing houses and cages, building a clinic, taking care of different species of animals, living in the jungle, seeing some wildlife, etc., come and help out or spread the word.

If you like animals, enjoy a simpler lifestyle, and you're not afraid of getting a bit dirty sometimes, come and help out! You don't need any special skills, just your willpower and enthusiasm is enough.

You can also help us in other ways:

- Donating, not only for special projects, but also for general caretaking. We always need funding for feeding and maintenance. A contribution of 50 dollars can feed one woolly monkey for an entire month!
- Linking our web page to yours and mentioning us in blogs.
- Spreading the word around to people who might be interested in volunteering, or handing out the two flyers to people interested in coming to help out. It would be great if you could help by spreading these at universities, schools, or among friends. They are available on the website of the German association: <http://www.esperanzaverdeperu.de/>
- Become member of the German or Swiss association, and join the reunions to meet all other volunteers.
- Organizing a fundraising event at your school, work, with friends, or any other activity to raise money (e.g. for a specific project). You can always write to us if you need more information or photos to help you with this.



Lina and Pumba, orange-winged parrots

We are looking for someone or perhaps a group of friends who would be willing to **help finance the yearly salary** (or part of it) for Machico for 2016. As always he is a great asset to Esperanza Verde and knows this area and its fauna and flora very well.

## Thank you!



Working at constructions

Esperanza Verde would not be possible without all the help we have been receiving, physically, morally and financially.

**Thank you** to all the volunteers who have stayed with us and helped us in everything: **Philomene Addy-Laird, Andrea Morel, Clement Morel, Eike Jung, Helena Daem, Katja Schonbachler, Sabrina Simmen, Samantha Charlton, Hanna Metz, Isabelle Sarther, Jan Leu, Cassidy Parker, Kiki Bond, Tony Morrell, Dawn Morrell, Hanqing Shen, Tobias Seitz, Jelena Raatz, Louise Kelly, Lisa Mair, Paul Marker, Damien Buisset and Merel de Jong.**





**A special thank you** to our long-term volunteers **Iain Braid and Lauren Young**, who committed, after having been here already 2 months, for another 6 months. Thank you for getting our facebook live again and updated. And **thank you** for providing us with most of the photos for the newsletters, website and facebook.

**Thank you** to our permanent staff: **Machico**, working with us since the beginning in 2010, **Elena**, our cook and help with everything, with us for almost 2 years, and since June 2014 **Geiler**, helping out Douwe and Machico in everything.



Elena preparing lunch

**Thank you Dylan Lobaton Garcia**, Esperanza Verde's veterinarian and our good friend, for helping us at all times, and teaching us the Peruvian ways.

**Thank you, Martha, Noë and Catelijne** for all the hours you spent voluntarily working on the website.

**Thank you Philipp Zerbe** for being there for us at all times, as a colleague, a veterinarian and a very good friend.



Jan and Machico

**Thank you, Lauren and Yessica** for helping out with this newsletter, checking grammar, layout and translating.

**Thank you** for your donations: **Svenja Tulipani and Jodie Buswell, Phoebe Garrat, Kevin Timmermans, Philomene Addy-Laird, Eike Jung, Andrea and Clement Morel, Robert Asner, Juliane Ritz, Christian Schindler, and Nico von den Benken.**

**Thank you** for financing Machicos salary this year: **Bigna Schulthess, Men Gross, Seraina Bonorand, Anne Franzke, and Robert Asner.**

In Germany we are supported by the **German association 'Förderverein Esperanza Verde e.V.'** **Thank you Jule Ritz and Nico van den Benken** for your enthusiasm in helping and supporting us. **Thank you also to all members and donors.** You can become a member and get regular updates. You can also help them with sponsoring activities, or just get in touch with old volunteers. Membership fees and income of any PR-activities are entirely given to Esperanza Verde. Check the website: [www.esperanzaverdeperu.de](http://www.esperanzaverdeperu.de). This year the association helped Esperanza Verde in financing food for animals, and materials for the construction of the cages for the new animals.

**Thank you** to our Sponsor (through the German Association): **Gisela Röder-Arndt**

**Thank you** to our periodical donators: **Jule Ritz, Eva van Anandel, Nico von den Benken, Nadja Morff, Annelies Gerber and Trijn Mulder.**

In Switzerland we are supported by the **Swiss association "Förderverein Esperanza Verde Schweiz"**. **Thank you Philipp Zerbe, Carole Schuppisser, and Naja Morf** for all your help, support and work to get it done. **Thank you to all members and donors.** We hope we will get many new members this year to support us. Check the website: [www.esperanzaverdeperu.ch](http://www.esperanzaverdeperu.ch). This year the association helped Esperanza Verde in financing food and medicine for animals, administration costs for the licence and general maintenance of all cages and buildings.



Rafiki saying hi to Olivia





**Thank you Lukas Bischofberger** ([www.worx.li](http://www.worx.li)) for administrating the Swiss website.

**Thank you DGHT Stadtgruppe Zürich** for your continuous support in taking care of reptiles and amphibia.

**Thank you Carmen Amrein, Sabrina Birrer and Adila Choudry** for your extraordinary effort to get the certificates going and being so enthusiastic informing about EV.

**Thank you Irina Huwiler** for your brilliant and beautiful artwork supporting our message.

**Thank you to MSD Animal Health Switzerland and all the veterinarians** on the bicycle-tour for their generous donation.



Kayla and Nakoya

**Thank you Tierarztpraxis Laupeneck and Dr. Marc Schenkel** for your ongoing support.

**Thank you Dr. Morena Wernick** from [www.exoticvet.ch](http://www.exoticvet.ch) for your time, knowledge and help with our special cases.

In Holland we have a **foundation 'Esperanza Verde'**. **Thank you Sven Groenen and Anne-marie Wieringa** for the time and work you are putting in for Esperanza Verde. With the donations of the foundations we can finance most of the manager house and hope it will be finished end of February 2015. In August Welmoed van Geel-Koopman left the foundation and Olivia stepped in to take over. **Thank you Welmoed** for all your work for the foundation and your support in the last years.

We want to apologize in advance in case we forgot to mention any supporters, financially or morally. We got a lot of things done with all your help and we will continue to work hard to realize all the things we have been dreaming of...

We hope you enjoyed reading all the news from Esperanza Verde and of course we hope to see many of you here (again) in this small paradise in the Peruvian jungle.

Abrazos,  
Douwe, Olivia, Kayla and Marlon

If you want to write us a letter, send a postcard, or send us some local sweets from your country, we are always happy to receive anything.

Please don't send packages over 2kg, as it is a hassle to get them through customs here.

Esperanza Verde  
c/o Olivia Conrads/Douwe Bakker  
Apartado 85 (P.O. Box)  
Pucallpa, Peru





## Donations can go to:

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