

Rainforest Biodiversity Group

Newsletter 28

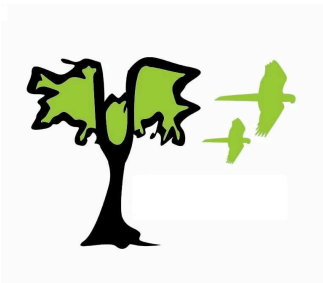
Volume 5, #3

Fall/ Winter 2006

HELLO ALL,

We want to use this newsletter as a way to get all of our current and former members, supporters and donors up to date on where our organization currently is and also as a membership renewal notice. There was a long stretch of time in 2005 where our organization was very inactive, but we have made some changes and gotten a boost from the US Fish and Wildlife Service to sustain our efforts in Costa Rica. We are back in action and this is what is happening with the Rainforest Biodiversity Group.

- As most of you know one large change we made was changing the name of our organization. What was once Friends of the Great Green Macaw (FGGM) is **now Rainforest Biodiversity Group (RBG)**. Please make a note of the change. Also with the new name we have a modified our mission statement. The mission of RBG is to protect biological diversity, including migratory bird species, through the protection of habitat for the Great Green Macaw and through the creation of local conservation initiatives.
- The big, big news with RBG is of course the obtaining of the US Fish and Wildlife Service Neotropical Migratory Bird Act Grant. **We have been awarded \$50,000**, to create and implement the **Costa Rican Bird Route: Section San Juan – La Selva**. This project will create of the first, if not the first, Birding Trail in Central America. With this project we look to **create six new biological reserves**. Each new reserve would protect at least 100 hectares of tropical forest and wetland habitat. Thus, this new project would **protect an additional 600 hectares or 1350 additional acres** of tropical forest.
- With the funds awarded to us by the USFWS, we have **hired three professionals to implement the Bird Route**. Our very own Andrew Rothman will be the Project Director and will work from the U.S. We have hired Guisselle Monge Arias of the Tropical Science Center to be our Project Coordinator in Costa Rica. Guisselle is the Co-Chair of the San Juan- La Selva Biologcial Corridor Executive Committee, and was the long time Project Director of the Great Green Macaw Research Project. We have hired Dartmouth and Yale graduate Jon Kohl as the consultant and advisor to the project. Jon was a Peace Corp volunteer in Costa



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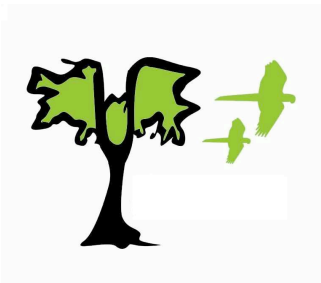
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Rica, has consulted for FERMATA, Inc and spent 7 years working for RARE Center for Tropical Conservation in Guatemala and Honduras developing ecotourism and tourism training programs.

- In a **new approach to conservation**, the Bird Route will provide an incentive package to private landowners to encourage them to create new reserves and protect the forests on their property. For protecting their forests private landowners will receive economic support from visiting bird watchers and nature enthusiasts. They will also receive environmental service payments for protecting their forests through the Costa Rican government. By **providing an economic benefit for forest protection, we can reduce the destruction of the rainforest**, and maintain important forest patches to improve habitat connectivity within the San Juan-La Selva Biological Corridor. Furthermore, RBG will enroll each new reserve into the Costa Rican Private Reserve

Network, will promote each new site as part of the Costa Rican Bird Route Marketing Plan, will create a basic land management plan for each new property, and will help will initial biodiversity surveys of the new reserves. In addition, neighboring existing reserves and lodges will provide technical and operational support to the new reserves.

- Also for 2006 we have a **new Board of Directors**. **Andrew Rothman** has resumed duties as the President of RBG. We also welcome **Bill Volkert**, from the WI Dept. of Natural Resources back to our board as Vice President. **Russell Rothman** of Russell Bensman Marketing remains our treasurer. The newest member of our board is **Jennifer Ewald**. Jen, a UW- Madison graduate and Master's recipient has a daughter who is Costa Rican, and thus has spent a lot of time in Costa Rica. She has been active with our organization before, and it is a pleasure to have her on board. Literally. **Carl Leopold**, son of Aldo, yes *that* Aldo Leopold, remains on our Advisory Board, as does long time supporter and conservationist **Bobbie Webster**.



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- In Costa Rica, the Amigos de la Lapa Verde Association has continued to raise money and protect nest trees. According to Association President Alexander Martinez, **6 Great Green Macaw nest trees have been adopted** for protection and have received plaques designating the tree as protected. In addition, **RBG gave \$200** in prize money to the 5th Annual Bi-National Macaw Festival to support nest protection by other landowners who have Great Green Macaw nests sent on their properties.
- Our website has finally been updated. This year with the help of our new Secretary we will be putting updates on the Bird Route Project on the website as they happen. To check out the changes, and check back with us for updates often. www.greatgreenmacaw.org

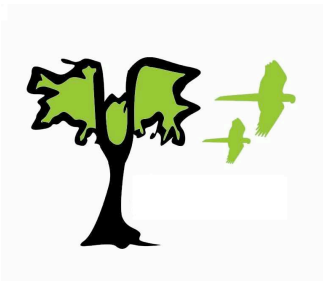
MEMBER SUPPORT:

With our new employees and our new project “The Costa Rican Bird Route”, the opportunity for you to help protect the Great Green Macaw, the Rainforest and the Biodiversity of world is greater than ever. We have received funds to implement the project, but we lack funds to complete the basic functions of our organization. We need your support to maintain our organization, everything from envelopes and postage, to web-hosting and accounting fees. To date, in 2006, we have received just 5 memberships* and 1 donation* for a total of just \$250 of incoming funds. No organization can survive on this. We are working to develop to hard income for the organization, but until we do we need your help to keep us going.

Memberships are just \$25, and if you're a student they are just \$10. It is with your support we have been able to accomplish what we have so far. It is also with your support that we will be able to fulfill our mission and ensure the successful implementation of the Costa Rican Bird Route.

Memberships and Donations can be sent to:

Rainforest Biodiversity Group
2984 Triverton Pike Dr
Madison, WI 53711



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Thanks for your help!!

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