

WELCOME _____ to FIELDNEWS

We have just celebrated our one year anniversary and thought that the beginning of 2007 was the perfect time to update people on what we are up to. As part of our support for expeditions we are building a network of likeminded people who can share ideas and information. FIELDNEWS will be part of this and as well as telling you what we are up to ourselves it will provide interesting tit bits on the latest Tropical Forest news, conservation activities going on out in Borneo, other training opportunities and so on. We'd love to include news about our clients and the expeditions you have been up to so please send us stuff for the next issue. Cheers *Dom*



Sumatran Rhino Hope

SOS Rhino is a non-profit, international foundation dedicated to preserving the five rhinoceros species in their natural habitats. Fieldskills have been providing support to their project in Borneo to protect the Sumatran Rhino with free first aid and GPS courses for their staff. We have also chosen them as our nominated charity for this year, to which we'll give 1% of our profits. With less than 300 of the rhinos thought to survive in the wild in Sabah and Sumatra their condition is critical. However this year has seen some good news with the first video footage captured and tracks of a baby rhino found by SOS rhino staff this summer. For more about SOS Rhino see www.sosrhino.org.

TRAINING PARTNERSHIP: Global Canopy Program

GCP (www.globalcanopy.org) runs courses to give people the skills and inspiration to explore the rainforest canopy - one of last frontiers in exploration and scientific discovery. Fieldskills and GCP are working together to help students develop rain forest research projects. Next year Fieldskills will run their Tropical Forest Safety Courses each weekend preceding the GCP canopy access course in Oxford to allow clients to take advantage of two great training opportunities at the same time. We believe that this offers a truly unique package of tropical forest training and hope that this collaboration will expand opportunities for safe and successful expeditions to the forest.

TRAINING

This year we have trained over 200 people in tropical forest safety including expedition leaders from Adventureworks, BSES and Brathay, University teams from Plymouth, Sheffield and Aberdeen and research assistants at the Danum Valley Research Centre.

TROPICAL FOREST SAFETY COURSES:

For next year we have **five UK open course dates** from March - Sept 07.

NEW COURSES:

We are also launching: 'Get into Expedition Leading' and 'Leading & Planning expeditions'.

For full details on all these courses go to www.fieldskills.com.

News from our clients... Guatemala...

Three members of a Brathay leader team joined our May course and in July 2006, they took a team of twelve young people to the rainforest of Petén in Northern Guatemala. The group trekked over sixty kilometres through the Maya Biosphere Reserve visiting the ancient Mayan temple cities of El Zotz and Tikal. In addition, the group worked with the local NGO, Volunteer Petén, on community projects; helping to renovate a local school and restore trails and a suspension bridge in the forest of the community-owned ecological park. Elliott Lorimer, the main leader commented, "The course proved invaluable and was excellent preparation for the expedition leader team".

You can find out more about Brathay at www.brathayexploration.org.uk

Borneo...

Fieldskills supported a team of five from the University of Aberdeen who went to Danum Valley in June 2006. They carried out two scientific projects within the forest canopy. It was a challenging experience, combining the logistics of selecting, rigging and climbing trees and the scientific sampling required for the projects. The team said the effort was well worth it as the projects were successfully completed and it was a truly amazing experience being able to enter the magical world that exists within the forest canopy.

On the plane on the way back from Costa Rica this summer I even bumped into a client who I had trained earlier in the summer returning from a successful expedition with her team... it's a small world. Dom

Groundbreaking project by the Sepilok Orangutan Appeal

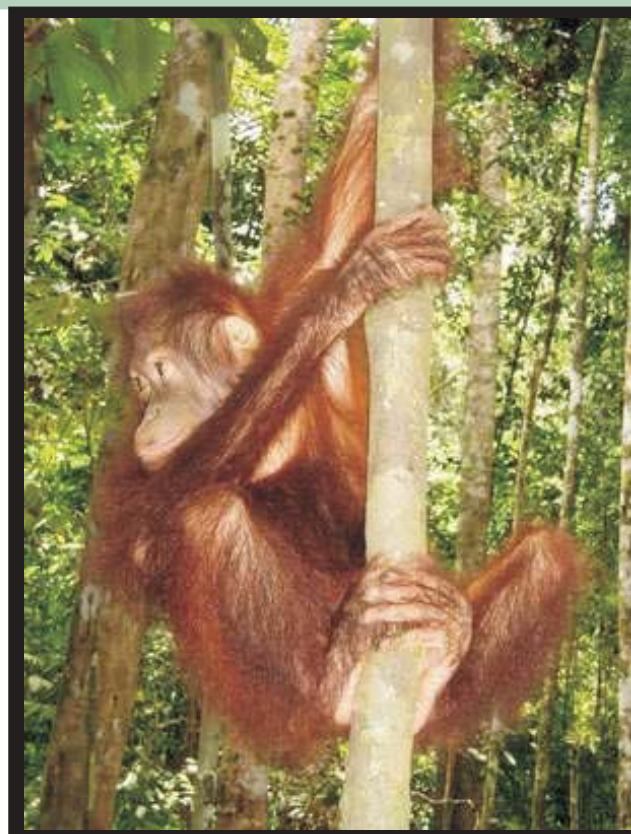
www.orangutan-appeal.org.uk

The Sepilok Orangutan Appeal are undertaking a large study to look at rehabilitated Orangutans after being released into the wild, the first study of its kind anywhere. Fieldskills have assisted with the construction and equipping of a remote research camp deep in the Tabin Wildlife Reserve in Sabah.

We have provided support to the the scientist, primatologist Sheena Hynd, and the director of the charity, Sue Sheward. Materials were flown in by helicopter to develop an eco-friendly camp that would house six to twelve scientists and assistants permanently.

The Orangutans, Toby, Brock, Suzanne and Tompong, arrived at camp by helicopter in August and the project is now well under way. They appear to love their new home too!

Fieldskills continue to work closely with the charity providing logistical support, safety consultancy and medical training as well as trying to help to raise funds and awareness to keep the project running. Most of these services are provided free of charge as part of our commitment to applied conservation in Borneo. To find out more about how the project is developing please see the Orangutan Appeals website.



Danum Valley develops new levels of Safety Management

The Danum Valley Research Centre is amongst the best tropical forest research centres in the world. For those looking for a base for research it is second to none. Fieldskills have been working with the Royal Society Project in Danum to provide training for research students. We have also recently been asked to develop the centre's excellent facilities with a safety resource implementation program. This combines first aid and emergency response training with staff, detailed risk assessment and designing a critical response protocol. The Society hopes that this enhanced level of safety, alongside the excellent facilities and research reputation and opportunities, makes it an excellent base for rainforest research. If you are interested in researching at Danum or finding out more about what happens there go to the

Royal Society website: www.royalsoc.ac.uk.

FOREST NEWS

Most of our work is based in Tropical Forests. Here are some stories which caught our interest...

The Amazon rainforest in South America relies on dust transported by winds from the Sahara desert in North Africa to replenish the nutrients and minerals in its soils. For the first time, scientists have proved that over half the dust transported to the Amazon comes from one location in the Sahara, the Bodélé depression, even though it makes up less than 1% of the Sahara. Without this supply of dust to replenish

the nutrients in its soils, the Amazon could become a wet desert.

More http://www.iop.org/News/news_8978.html

The New Scientist's web news page gives an interesting list of its top ten conservation successes and failures, which includes worrying failures such as, 'destruction of the Amazon Rain Forest' and 'the Orangutan'... *For the full list and more info:*

www.newscientist.com/article/dn9963-top-10-conservation-successes-and-failures.html

An expedition to New Guinea discovered previously unknown rare animals and plants high in the mountain rainforests there. They could only reach the remote area by helicopter, which they described as akin to finding a "Garden of Eden". *The web is full of the most enticing tales*

of the whole New Guinea area. Fieldskills have just taken on Tom Hewitt as their new commercial holiday manager. Having led a number of trips to Papua in the past, Tom is excited about getting us into this part of the world and reading this has us thinking it's a destination we'd to explore in the future ... Try www.conservation.org or just google New Guinea Expedition 2006: