

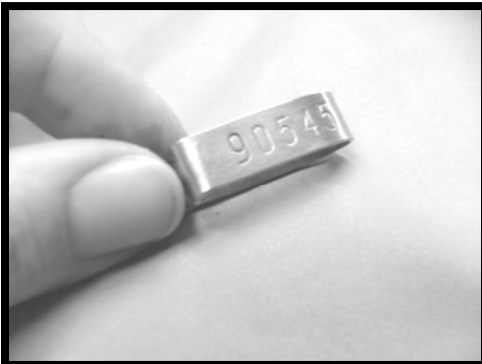
# RAPHIA

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## SEA TURTLE MONITORING PROGRAM AT CAÑO PALMA REACHES THE SECOND STEP!

As you may already know, Caño Palma, with the help of York University, has developed a beach monitoring program for sea turtles, focusing on the following species: *Chelonia mydas* (Green turtle), *Carretta Carretta* (Loggerhead turtle), *Dermochelys coriacea* (Leatherback turtle), *Eretmochelys imbricata* (Hawksbill turtle).

During the last two years we have been working to develop the program and create relationships with the community and other local partners.



Attaching a tag to a sea turtle flipper

The results of this program are surprising. We found that many of our reptile friends are in great danger due to the rate of illegal harvest of their nest and eggs! In 2004, the poaching rate was 57% for Green turtles, and in 2005 it was 55%. For the Leatherback our rate for 2005 sits at 55% and for Hawksbill turtles a frightening 90%. This means that we have over half of our nests raided every year leaving little room for the chance of survival...

In 2006 it will be a special year for the sea turtles. We have been working hard on protocols with the Caribbean Conservation Corporation

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### HELP US TO BE MORE ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY!

We are now able to offer an electronic version of Raphia, and we'd like to encourage as many of our readers as possible to receive our newsletter in PDF format. If you are interested in receiving Raphia electronically, please forward your name and email address to [mstone@sympatico.ca](mailto:mstone@sympatico.ca), or contact the COTERC office at 905-831-8809. You will need Adobe Reader to open the document.

## SPECIAL THANKS

A special thanks of gratitude goes out to Warner Bros from the COTERC Board of Directors for their recent kind donation of \$200.00. These funds provide us with an opportunity to work on projects that otherwise might not be possible.

As a reminder to those considering financial support, we are able to supply a charitable tax donation receipt to those who request it. This is just one of the many incentives to support such a worthwhile cause.

## SEA TURTLE MONITORING PROGRAM CONT'D



([www.cccturtle.org](http://www.cccturtle.org)) and are pleased to announce that we will begin tagging the sea turtles.

But what does that mean?! We have been approved to become apart of a worldwide effort in tracking and monitoring sea turtles. We begin with the Leatherbacks, and training and assistance with purchasing materials will be provided by the CCC. We will be monitoring the beaches at night (applying the tags, measuring the turtles, counting eggs and hiding the tracks) as well as during the day (counting the total for the night and erasing the tracks).

If you or anyone you know is interested in participating in the monitoring program, which runs from March through to November, contact the COTERC office at [info@coterc.org](mailto:info@coterc.org) (Canada) or [canopalm@racs.co.cr](mailto:canopalm@racs.co.cr) (Costa Rica). We can send you the necessary information and you can become part of the team that is fighting to save this critically endangered animal!

## EUCHRE NIGHT MARCH 2006



**THE WINNERS: Helen Hougesen, Jennifer Steadman, Bob Petrillo, Gary Murakami**

It was another fun night as participants played a number of challenging games of Euchre. After all expenses were accounted for we were able to raise \$480.25 for COTERC, which will allow us to continue with our education and conservation work. A note of thanks goes to all our volunteers who participated in making this a fun night, and especially to the Toronto Zoo who donated the space in the Atrium for the event.

We'll be looking at booking another date soon, and plan to include additional games for those who are not Euchre players. Keep yourself updated by checking the events tab on our web site for upcoming events.

Thanks to our volunteers Tom & Fran Mason, Barry & Colette McKee, Pam Evett, and Gary Murakami, and special thanks to Cal White for supplying the Atrium at the Zoo.



**Scenes from Euchre Night March 1, 2006**

## OUR NEWEST COSTA RICA INTERN—ANDRES BRENES

Caño Palma is please to introduce Andres Brenes, our new Costa Rican intern for the leatherback program. Andres comes from a small town called Juan Viñas (also the town of the station manager Mario García). Andres has volunteered at the station, assisted bird researcher Steve Furino in setting up trails, and participated in the Ethnobotany program with Mario.

Andres is a childhood friend of Mario, as they attended elementary and secondary school together.

Andres will be training with the Caribbean Conservation Corporation (CCC) and will be tagging the turtles that are found nesting on the north beach.

When Andres is not working the long night hours with the turtles, he enjoys birding, listening to music and walking the Tortuguero Hill.

Andres will be staying at the station during the 2006 turtle season (March – November) to train volunteers and assist in the field coordination of the project.



### To our membership

As you might have noticed, our web site advertises a weekly bingo event held every Wednesday between 12:00 and 3:00 at the Ajax Bingo Country on Monarch Avenue. These sessions assist us in keeping our Canadian operations running and are critical to our survival. With the recent competition of casinos, the funds being raised are continuing to decline. The upcoming smoking ban to be implemented this June is also expected to have a negative impact on attendance for these events. Many of the halls offering this service to many of the registered charities have already closed due to the decrease in attendance.

I would like to encourage you, in support of our efforts, to make an attempt to attend a bingo session. Not only will you assist us in fundraising, but you will also enjoy an afternoon of fun and the possibility of a big win for yourself. You may visit their web site at [http://www.bingoplayer.ca/bpm2005\\_BINGO\\_COUNTRY\\_AJAX.htm](http://www.bingoplayer.ca/bpm2005_BINGO_COUNTRY_AJAX.htm) to review the current schedule of prizes and services offered at this location.

We would also encourage you to lobby the municipal government to reduce the license fees each charity must pay to hold these fundraising events. New funding provided by the competing casinos in the area should ensure that this will not have a negative impact on their tax base.

Thank you to everyone for your continued support of our work in education and conservation.

June Enright

## HIGH SEAS HIGH SCHOOL... 5 YEARS OF LEARNING AT CAÑO PALMA!

The end of January marked the beginning of a trip for 30 lucky students from Germany. They docked in Limon, Costa Rica and spent 6 days in the jungle of Tortuguero!

This organization from Hamburg has been coming to the station since 2001, looking for a chance to participate in activities, learn some Spanish and most importantly, get muddy!

Needless to say 2006 was no exception and we were so glad to hear that they would be stopping by again. This time they stayed across the canal at Vista al Mar and had the chance to work with COTERC and the Caño Palma Biological Station.



They arrived in the sun and that evening got an introduction to the station and what COTERC does. The next morning was a plant & Ethnobotany workshop with Mario which included a walk in the garden and a brief walk down the colibrí trail. The afternoons are always the same...soccer and the pool!!!! The next day was the Tortuguero Hill and an amphibian workshop. Paul Grant was nice enough to introduce the students to a boa constrictor that locals had brought him earlier that day. Other workshops included Conservation, Sea Turtles and Biodiversity all put on by Mario, Jana & Paul.

On two occasions the students were challenged by the workers of the nearby hotel Turtle Beach Lodge to a soccer match. The workers walked the 2 miles of beach to lose 6-1 to the Germans, and the following day we all went to Turtle Beach and lost 0-1! It was good fun and a great chance for the students to meet some of the neighbours.



This year they were lucky, as for the past two years the High Seas High School has seen nothing but rain for most of their trip!! The leader Jan Henke would also like to express his thanks to COTERC and the station staff for making each experience memorable, fun and educational.

## DONATION HELPS MOVE PROJECT AT CAÑO PALMA TO THE NEXT STEP!

The staff at the Caño Palma Biological Station would like to send out a special thanks to the owners Tom & Beverly Lachenman and managers Michelle Suttle, Frank & Laura Tapanti of Turtle Beach Lodge ([www.turtlebeachlodge.com](http://www.turtlebeachlodge.com)).

They have continuously supported COTERC throughout the years, and this year gave a donation especially for the sea turtle monitoring program to assist in buying the materials needed to begin a nocturnal monitoring program.

If you would like to support this program or any other that COTERC is involved in at the research station please contact their office at [info@coterc.org](mailto:info@coterc.org).

Thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you!



## STEEL CITY SAFARI 2006

Steel City Safari 2005 was an incredible success and we'd like to repeat our performance this year! COTERC will be there with a display booth, along with a lot of other amazing groups and organizations.

**Sunday November 12, 2006 at the Hamilton Convention Centre**

Last year we had to turn away a lot of people at the door, so if you're going to make the trip, please get your tickets in advance from Steve Featherstone at The Reptile Store at 467 King Street East, Hamilton, Ontario.

Visit his site at [www.thereptilestore.com](http://www.thereptilestore.com) for contact details.

For any questions about Steel City Safari or if you want to help, contact Steve at 905-521-9990 or [info@steelcitysafari.com](mailto:info@steelcitysafari.com)



## END OF SCHOOL YEAR IN SAN FRANCISCO



Another great school year has come to a close as the young children of San Francisco say goodbye to 2005.

This also means another year has gone by for the environmental education classes we conducted. Three students graduated and will be going on to High School in the town of Tortuguero, but we will be gaining a few new students coming from Kindergarten into grade one!

This year saw many great accomplishments for the children and teachers. First, Tom Mason & Josh Feltham, with groups from Canada, visited last February and March and brought the great donation by Bruce Wise for re-constructing the two room school. That looks terrific now! Secondly, the school trip in May to the CCC (Caribbean Conservation Corp.) in support of 'World Sea Turtle

Day' taught the ins and outs of tagging to the local children. Lastly, the building of the kindergarten class provided more space for the other two classrooms.

With the support of CO-

TERC & volunteers, the station had an end of year party for the children with a Spongebob Squarepants piñata for fun and homemade cake. The party took place on December 28<sup>th</sup> since we had been out with the recent arrival of our baby boy! The children were more than ready to play and have a party to celebrate the successful year and a new 2006! Although many children were out of town for the Christmas holidays, many still showed up for the festivities and some even brought along their younger brothers and sisters. Even a couple of the town dogs came by...

The fun began at 10am and lasted until 12:30pm. It started with the piñata, a must have at Costa Rican parties. The kids went crazy and the piñata survived several hard smashes before falling to pieces onto the floor. The mad dash for the candy

was almost instantaneous and everyone dove to the ground and emerged with hands filled with sweets! It was great to see the smiles on their triumphant little faces.

Cake was served which was made locally in Tortuguero and the kids made sure to leave no trace of it in the empty classrooms. The cake was vanilla and orange with chocolate icing that made your mouth water. Many had the chance to take a piece home to their mom or dad or a favorite brother or sister.

The last of our events for the day was the draw. Every year COTERC provides one boy and one girl with the supplies for the following school term. The winners are children who completed their homework from each class.



This year the lucky winners were Helen & Geniber, grade 2 and grade 3 students.

After the party we took them aside to confirm what they need for the next year. The requests are often the same, however we want to make sure we are not duplicating what the parents have worked so hard to provide. The items



needed were Backpacks, socks, shoes, pens & pencils, erasers, pencil sharpeners, coloring crayons, glue, notebooks and a pencil case.

We will be delivering the goods to the families the first week of February as class begins the second week.

If you would like to help the children of San Francisco or have any questions on our work in the town, please feel free to contact the COTERC office at [info@coterc.org](mailto:info@coterc.org).

Thank you,  
Jana Daigle

**COTERC T-SHIRTS AVAILABLE**

Don't forget about our new COTERC t-shirt, featuring everybody's favourite poison arrow frog!

Available in Adult sizes (S,M,L,XL) for only \$16 and child's size for \$10. Please add \$10 for shipping and handling.

Order yours today from the COTERC office at [info@coterc.org](mailto:info@coterc.org)

Or to purchase by cheque or credit card, send the order form below to:

Box 335 Pickering, Ontario L1V 2R6 (Canada)

Call 905-831-8809 for more information.



**COTERC T-SHIRT ORDER FORM**

SIZE	QUANTITY	COST	TOTAL
ADULT SMALL		_____ + \$10 S/H	
ADULT MEDIUM		_____ + \$10 S/H	
ADULT LARGE		_____ + \$10 S/H	
ADULT XL		_____ + \$10 S/H	
CHILD		_____ + \$10 S/H	

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_ NAME ON CARD: \_\_\_\_\_

VISA  M/CARD  NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_ EXP DATE \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

## SAMI ABDELMALIK

Some of you might recognize me from this year's Tropical Treat event that COTERC hosted at the Toronto Zoo. I was invited to speak about my three-month experience in Costa Rica while working on a Sea Turtle conservation project. I found it ironic since I was a summer volunteer at the Toronto Zoo in 1999, and here I was back full circle, educating people once again at the Zoo.



I have a long history of profound dedication to wildlife and conservation. I was born in Africa, where I grew up on a hobby farm. My first pet was a baby owl that I helped nurse back to health,

and I also handfed baby doves that were abandoned by their parents. Those early interactions ignited my lifelong passion for nature's diverse creatures. Even when I moved to Canada along with my family at the age of nine, I still managed to bring a little bit of nature into my city home, including ducks, fish, rabbits, dogs and cats.

I eagerly started my first real job working at a pet store. After working there for a two-year period, I moved to another city for college. After successfully completing my college program and receiving a diploma in Ecosystem Management, I decided to venture out into the world. I joined an international youth program that based its mission on cultural awareness, community development, and hands on activism. Shortly after the six-month program ended, which included a South American volunteer placement, I was even more eager to develop my skills and learn more about my global community. I left on a personal backpacking expedition that led me on a journey to seven South American nations. This



eye-opening experience helped me land a contract job placement in the highlands of Northern Mexico, working with indigenous people on a forestry management project.

I decided to further my academic studies, and went back to school. Currently I am in my final year at York University, where I hope to receive a Degree in Environmental Management, in due time.

If you have any comments or questions please feel free to forward them via COTERC.

Sami Abdelmalik

York University Intern

Cano Palma Biological Station,  
Costa Rica 2005

### NEW RAPHIA EDITOR AND GRAPHICS DESIGNER

COTERC is pleased to welcome Jennifer Corris and Hollie Dunkley to the organization to oversee the editing and design of Raphia. Jennifer currently works at Harlequin Enterprises as their newsletter editor and has graciously agreed to take on the job of editing articles for Raphia. Hollie Dunkley is taking over the task of laying out the newsletter in preparation for printing. Hollie works as an office administrator in Oakville, Ontario, but only to pay the bills and to support her writing and classical singing habits.

The job of putting together a newsletter is time-consuming and we are grateful to both Jennifer and Hollie for volunteering to help out. Welcome!!



Sami with Jana and Mario at promotion booth in Tortuguero





RAPHIA IS THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF  
CANADIAN ORGANIZATION FOR TROPICAL  
EDUCATION & RAINFOREST CONSERVATION

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~ EDUCATION ~ RESEARCH ~  
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## HBC REWARDS COMMUNITY PROGRAM

Don't forget that you can help COTERC by donating your HBC Rewards points!

It doesn't cost you anything, you'll be helping the rainforest while you shop ~ and it's really easy!

If you have an HBC Rewards card and you wish to donate points to COTERC, choose one of the following options:

Go to [www.hbc rewards.com/community](http://www.hbc rewards.com/community) and click on Donate to a Community Group, then search for COTERC by entering our Community Organization Public ID # which is **5352662**.

Or visit the customer service desk at any Bay, Zellers or Home Outfitters.

You can also specify what percentage of future points you wish to donate to COTERC, if you wish to donate automatically with each purchase.

Any amount is greatly appreciated, and all donations go a long way toward much-needed supplies for Caño Palma Biological Station.

*Study nature,  
love nature,  
stay close to nature.  
It will never fail you.*

– Frank Lloyd Wright

