

WFN WHITLEY FUND FOR NATURE



WFN identifies and funds some of the world's most dynamic leaders of effective grassroots conservation. Each year, a new group of leaders are recognised through the **Whitley Award**, a prestigious prize worth £30,000 in project funding over one year.

2011 WHITLEY AWARD WINNERS

GOLD WINNER Rachel Graham BELIZE

Saving sharks: marine conservation through community outreach and participatory research.



Hotlin Ompusunggu INDONESIA

Dentistry and deforestation: local community health through forest stewardship, Gunung Palung National Park.

Jana Bedek CROATIA

Subterranean conservation of the lost cave systems of the Dinaric Arc.



Igor Prokofyev RUSSIA

People and bats: Russia's first community-led bat conservation movement.

Luis Rivera ARGENTINA & BOLIVIA

Threatened parrots as flagships for Southern Yungas forests.



Elena Bykova UZBEKISTAN

Community action for disappearing saiga antelopes of the Ustyurt Plateau.

Ramana Athreya INDIA

Forging alliances with Himalayan tribal communities for wildlife sanctuary management, Arunachal Pradesh.



Dear Friends,

2012 marks the 10th successive year that donations from the Friends of WFN have raised enough to be able to fund a Whitley Award. This is a reflection of your generous and dedicated support, for which we are very grateful. In these past 10 years, the Whitley Award donated by the Friends of WFN has helped to fund inspiring conservation leaders from all over the world, securing brighter futures for endangered wildlife from sea turtles to snakes, and from



bats to elephants. The donations from the Friends of WFN not only allow us to offer a one-off Whitley Award of £30,000, but a significant amount also goes towards supporting Continuation Funding grants that enable our most successful winners to build on their Whitley Award projects.

With your support, the Friends winners continue to make a real

difference to conservation. For example, 2010 Whitley Award winner, Diego Amorocho, has implemented the largest sea turtle satellite tracking program in the South-Eastern Pacific. He has also relocated 70% of turtle nests on beaches within Gorgona National Park, Colombia, in order to protect eggs from poaching and damage. 2010 Continuation Funding recipient, Liu Yi, who has also been supported by the Friends of WFN, has worked with thousands of local volunteers to plant over 300,000 mangrove trees and restore important coastal habitat in South East China.

The success of WFN and the winners we fund would not be possible without the enthusiastic support of our Friends and major donors – Thank you!

Catherine Faulks

Catherine Faulks

Chair of the Friends of Whitley Fund for Nature

Welcome to Alexandra

We are delighted to announce the arrival of Alexandra Domberger! WFN Director, Georgina and her husband, Daniel, welcomed their first child into the world on 15th September 2011. Congratulations!

Hello to Danni Parks

Danni joined the WFN team in August 2011 to help to cover Georgina’s maternity leave. Danni holds a Masters in Conservation Science from Imperial College London and has experience working for a number of conservation charities, including Earthwatch and the British Ecological Society. While Georgina is away, Danni will support the team in communications, fundraising and events.



Move to new office

In June 2011 WFN HQ moved to new premises - just a stone’s throw away from our Founder, Edward Whitley in W11. Our new address and contact details can be found on page 8.

£10 million for conservation

We are delighted to announce that we have now received over £10 million in donations since the charity began 19 years ago! Thank you to our generous donors whose support has enabled WFN to fund the work of over 130 conservation leaders in 60 different countries benefitting both people and wildlife.



Congratulations to George Duffield

WFN would like to congratulate Whitley Award donor George Duffield (pictured third from right, above), who produced the revolutionary documentary ‘The End of the Line’, on winning the Puma Creative Impact Award. The Award is the first of its kind and recognised the film – which highlights the problem of over fishing – as having the most significant positive impact on society.



BRAZIL – Forest restoration links vital habitat

In December 2011, following 10 years of work by 2002 Gold Award winner **Laury Cullen** and his NGO, IPE, restoration of the last 93 hectares of a 700 hectare link between the two main remnants of Atlantic Forest in Pontal do Paranapanema was completed. In total, 1.4 million trees have been planted, with the help of local land owners, trained by IPE in sustainable agriculture, using seedlings from community nurseries. The link is vital to the conservation of threatened species in the region, including black lion tamarins, jaguars and ocelots. Laury explains, “*One of the problems for the survival of these species is habitat loss and the link is an important means of facilitating dispersal between protected areas, both for food and breeding*”.

www.ipe.org.br

NEWS CONSERVATION

2011/12

The efforts of Whitley Award winners continue to have a measurable impact around the world.

LATIN AMERICA – New strategy for bat conservation

Throughout 2011 and into 2012, Whitley Award winners, **Luis Aguirre** (Bolivia, 2007) and **Rodrigo Medellín** (Mexico, 2004), joined forces to build capacity for bat conservation across Latin America. Together they have led multinational courses and symposia in bat research and conservation management techniques in Bolivia and Peru, reaching 30 students from 15 countries. As Executives of the Latin American Bat Conservation Network (RELCOM), Luis and Rodrigo have led development of a new concept for managing and conserving bats – Important Bat Conservation Areas (or Áreas Importantes para la Conservación de Murciélagos – AICOMs). This is a new tool for bat conservation that RELCOM are developing in Latin America. Backed by scientific research, they are engaging governments to adopt this concept, which supports locally-led conservation in Protected Areas. In January 2012, the pair, along with RELCOM colleagues, met with the board of the US based NGO, Bat Conservation International, to discuss future collaboration and expansion of their successful work to be applied to bat populations around the globe. Luis has already been invited to Africa to share his expertise in bat conservation and the set up of AICOMs.

www.yearofthebat.org



GUATEMALA – Government approves sustainable hunting and first environmental education programme

2008 Whitley Award winner, **Marleny Rosales-Meda**, has gained legal approval for a new sustainable hunting region in Guatemala. The new region has amended hunting and protected area laws, and considers the needs of both indigenous Mayan-Q'eqchi' communities and the conservation of native wild species to ensure sustainability over the long term. Its designation is based on 10 years of research into resource use and 3 years of monitoring traditionally hunted species in the region. In addition, the environmental education program developed by Marleny and her NGO, ORCONDECO, has become the country's first to be officially certified by government. The program has so far reached 2,210 students and more than 60 teachers from 56 education establishments in three regions. Thanks to Marleny, Mayan-Q'eqchi' communities now have the tools to build a sustainable future for themselves and local wildlife. www.orcondeco.org



TURKEY – First conservation corridor established

Thanks to work carried out by 2008 Gold Award winner, **Cagan Sekercioglu**, and his NGO, KuzeyDoga, the Turkish government have approved creation of the country's first wildlife corridor. The protected area will connect Kars' Sarikamis-Allahuekber National Park to the extensive forests of the Black Sea and Georgian Caucasus. Confirmed in December 2011, the corridor covers 23,500 hectares and extends for 82 kilometres, safeguarding habitat for large carnivores, such as brown bears, helping to connect isolated populations and reduce human-wildlife conflict. Linking with forests in Georgia, the corridor will also promote transboundary conservation in the region. www.kuzeydoga.org



ASIA – Advances in snow leopard conservation

Progress is being made in the field of big cat conservation due to the hard work of snow leopard expert, **Charudutt Mishra** and his team at Project Snow Leopard. After winning the Whitley Gold Award in 2005, Charu has gone on to become one of the world's leading conservationists for his work to protect endangered snow leopards across Asia. In October 2011, plans to strengthen snow leopard conservation in India's Upper Spiti Landscape became the first to be completed and approved by a state government under Project Snow Leopard. In addition, Charu established two new conservation NGO's in Pakistan and Kazakhstan, and gained approval of a 6,600 square kilometer Protected Area to secure vital habitat in Mongolia. By building capacity for conservation across countries Charu is aiding snow leopard recovery with huge success. Over the last 3 years alone, he has been able to radio-collar an unprecedented 14 snow leopards to find out more about the movements of these elusive animals. www.snowleopard.org



2011 WHITLEY AWARD WINNERS

WHITLEY GOLD AWARD

donated by WWF-UK and winner of the Whitley Award
donated by the George Duffield Charitable Trust

Rachel Graham, BELIZE

Saving sharks: marine conservation through community outreach and participatory research



As the Director of the **Wildlife Conservation Society's** Gulf and Caribbean Sharks and Rays Program, Rachel was selected as the 2011 Whitley Gold Award winner and received a total of £60,000 in project funding in recognition of her efforts to conserve sharks in Belize. Each year thousands of sharks are killed for their fins by commercial fishers or accidentally caught

as by-catch, causing some species to become locally extinct. This is bad news for Belizean people, as without sharks ocean ecosystems can become unbalanced with knock-on effects for fisheries production and tourism. Rachel is working with local authorities to recover populations by putting in place the country's first National Action Plan for Sharks. Supported by a research and education program the team are changing negative perceptions about sharks and raising awareness about the importance of their conservation to both food and livelihood security.



The Whitley Award donated by Goldman Sachs
Hotlin Ompusunggu, INDONESIA

Dentistry and deforestation: local community health through forest stewardship, Gunung Palung National Park



Hotlin and her team at **Alam Sehat Lestari** work to protect tropical rainforest in Gunung Palung National Park, South-Western Borneo. Home to the critically endangered orang-utan and under threat from illegal logging fuelled by poverty, urgent action is needed to save this species and its ever decreasing habitat. Here, she is working with local

communities to reduce illegal activity through innovative healthcare incentives. Families who agree to stop logging enjoy discounted healthcare but no-one is turned away.

To lessen reliance on logging as a source of income, Hotlin is exploring alternative livelihoods and training teams of 'Forest Guardians' to monitor deforestation and restore natural habitat. In this way, she is reducing poverty whilst removing the need to destroy the forest.



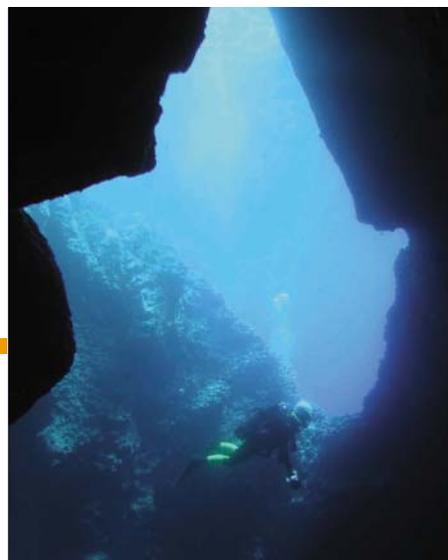
The Whitley Award donated by the Shears Foundation

Jana Bedek, CROATIA
Subterranean conservation of the lost cave systems of the Dinaric Arc



The first subterranean project to win a Whitley Award, Jana has been recognised for her work to conserve the underground ecosystems of the Dinaric Arc Eco-region. This vast network of caves is home to a plethora of unique species, with more being found on almost every expedition. It also represents Europe's

largest underground river system, providing clean water to thousands of people. However, pollution, development and water extraction threaten to devastate this ecosystem. Jana and her team at the **Croatian Biospeleological Society** are collaborating with scientists in neighbouring countries to coordinate conservation and raise awareness. In addition, she is surveying cave fauna to put together a case for legal protection and prevent species being lost before they are even discovered.



The Whitley Award donated by the Garfield Weston Foundation

Igor Prokofyev, RUSSIA
People and bats: Russia's first community-led bat conservation movement



Director of the NGO **PERESVET**,

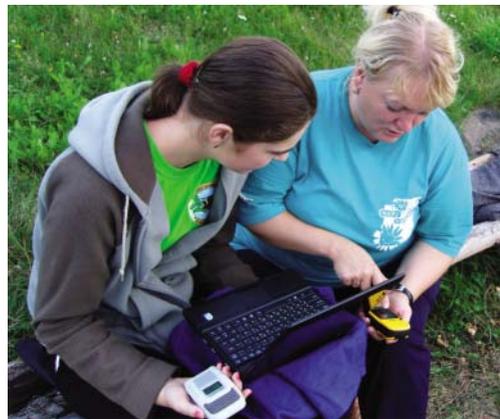
Igor is leading efforts to conserve Russia's endangered bats. Often misunderstood by people and faced with habitat loss, bats are in decline, despite their importance to farmers who benefit from the free pollination and pest control services they provide. Igor is involving local volunteers in the country's first large scale bat monitoring program to collect vital data that will guide future conservation strategy. To increase information sharing, Igor has founded Russia's first bat focussed charity, bringing together scientists, NGO's and local communities. He has also established an education centre to improve public understanding which he hopes will have a long lasting positive effect on bat conservation.

The Whitley Award donated by the William Brake Charitable Trust
Luis Rivera, ARGENTINA & BOLIVIA
Threatened parrots as flagships for Southern Yungas forests



As President of **CEBio Foundation**, Luis is

dedicated to informing conservation decision making in the Southern Yungas region of Argentina and Bolivia. Despite being home to an array of highly threatened species, these tropical montane forests are being degraded at an alarming rate. Luis and his team work to address the problem by building capacity for locally-led conservation using endangered parrots as a flagship. Previously, local people were unaware of the importance of the forest to their daily lives. Through education and training, Luis is using parrots to inspire communities in both countries to conserve the Southern Yungas's wild resources whilst working with municipal governments to gain formal protection for these birds and their habitat.



The Whitley Award donated by the Friends of WFN
Ramana Athreya, INDIA
Forging alliances with Himalayan tribal communities for wildlife sanctuary management, Arunachal Pradesh



Ramana has been recognised for his work to conserve the forests of

Arunachal Pradesh which are home to two-thirds of India's species including elephants, tigers and rare birds. As human populations have expanded, so has pressure on the forests, which are increasingly threatened by infrastructure development. By working with tribal communities to document the forest's wildlife, Ramana and his team at **EcoSystems-India** are helping to fill important knowledge gaps which will identify priority areas for conservation.

They are also establishing locally-led

organisations in five key wildlife sanctuaries, to introduce sustainable resource use and encourage ecotourism.

This grass-roots approach is successfully transferring responsibility back to local people who are increasingly proud of the forest and its species.



The Whitley Award donated by the Scottish Friends of WFN

Elena Bykova, UZBEKISTAN
Community action for disappearing saiga antelopes of the Ustyurt Plateau



Elena is fighting to save the critically endangered saiga antelope across Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan on the Ustyurt Plateau. In the last decade, populations have fallen by 95% driven by a surge in hunting and illegal trade following the collapse of the Soviet Union. Elena and her colleagues at the **Saiga Conservation Alliance** work to conserve

saiga through public engagement and by changing attitudes across the region. Key to their approach is the initiation of a participatory monitoring programme run by communities trained in ecological data collection. Ex-hunters are also helping to focus recovery efforts by identifying important saiga areas. In doing so, Elena hopes to build a model for saiga conservation upon which to base future work.



Frozen Planet event

Alastair Fothergill talk sells out for WFN fundraiser



Led by Katie Christie and Annie Newell, the WFN Friends Committee organised their first ticketed event on 31st January 2012 at the Royal Geographical Society, with a talk by Alastair Fothergill, Executive Producer of the BBC's Frozen Planet. The event, which raised money in aid of Whitley Fund for Nature, was a huge success and tickets sold out within days of going on sale.

WFN Founder, Edward Whitley, opened the evening by introducing the work of the charity and its winners, including 2010 Whitley Award winner, Pablo Borboroglu, who works to conserve endangered penguins across the Southern Hemisphere.

Since winning his Award, Pablo has established the world's first coalition for penguin conservation, and is now conducting research to promote the designation of a new Marine Protected Area in Patagonia.

Alastair then began his fascinating lecture on the making of the epic Frozen Planet series. The presentation featured clips of the series' most awe inspiring moments, with behind the scenes footage demonstrating the huge amount of time, effort and skill that goes into the making of these ground-breaking films. On the night, we were joined by many of our Friends and major donors as well as our first ever Whitley Award winner, Amanda Vincent.

After the lecture, Alastair joined guests for a drinks reception where he signed copies of his Frozen Planet book and answered the many questions put to him by fans of the series. Many thanks also go to the artist, Tanya Brett, who's wonderful display of polar themed paintings and sculptures proved hugely popular. One of her works – a large hand-crafted polar bear – was generously donated as the first prize in the evening's raffle.

In total, the event raised over £13,000 which will go towards supporting the work of the charity and our winners. Thank you to all of you who helped make this possible.

Gold Award winner, Gladys Kalema-Zikusoka, returns to London to share her success



In November we were delighted to welcome back 2009 Whitley Gold Award winner, **Gladys Kalema-Zikusoka**, who

works to conserve critically endangered mountain gorillas in Uganda. Gladys, who is a vet by training, works with her NGO, Conservation Through Public Health (CTPH), to protect threatened populations of mountain gorillas from the spread of

human disease by improving community healthcare and hygiene in the villages that border their habitat.

During a presentation to the Friends of WFN, Gladys, shared news of how her Whitley Award winning work has made an impact on both gorillas and local people alike. Thanks to her project, some 4,800 households have now been become involved and, following her success in Uganda, her unique program is now being expanded into neighbouring

Democratic Republic of Congo. Over 250 communities in DRC have already been reached, strengthening gorilla conservation across their range.



Whitley Award Winners

Players on the big stage

Apart from providing much needed project funding, the Whitley Awards help to boost profile, with past winners often attributing subsequent successes to receiving the Award. Frequently, the recognition and endorsement that comes with a Whitley Award results in winners gaining greater influence and standing with their regional or national governments, as well as internationally. As a result, our winners are increasingly able to positively influence decision making at the highest level.

In 2010, 2007 Whitley Award winner, **Sandra Bessudo**, became Colombia's very first Minister for the Environment. In her role, Sandra acts as the key advisor to the Colombian President, Juan Santos (pictured with Sandra, above), on all issues relating to environmental and sustainable development policy.

The elevation of conservation scientists to governmental positions is an encouraging trend and having decision makers with experience at the grassroots level can lead to better informed policy and management of natural resources.

This is certainly true in Peru, where we



have been delighted to learn that two Whitley Award winners have taken up key roles in government

in the past year. As a result of her work to reform marine management practices, 2006 Gold Award winner, **Patricia Majluf**, has been invited by the country's President to become the Vice-Minister of Fisheries. In the sole fisheries management position in Peru, Patricia will be responsible for setting all fisheries policies and legislation for approval by congress, aiming to introduce critical sustainability to national marine management.

Patricia's colleague, watershed conservation expert, **Ernesto Ráez-Luna**, who won a Whitley Award in 2008, was also named as the Chief Advisor to the Minister of the Environment in November 2011. Ernesto's appointment follows as a result of his influential work to secure the protection of the Peruvian Amazon watershed from unsustainable development and mining projects. In his role he will provide direct and informed guidance on decision making regarding management of Peru's natural resources.



These are truly fantastic examples of the heights to which Whitley Award winners can aspire and, in the past year, we have seen more of our winners taking up highly influential positions, and thereby ensuring their expertise is shared where it is needed around the world.

Deepak Apte, who received a Whitley Award in 2008 for his work to develop India's first network of Marine Protected Areas in Lakshadweep, was appointed a core member of a Governmental Task Force to develop policies for national marine and coastal management in India.

In November 2011, 2009 winner and pollinating insect conservationist, **Dino Martins**, from Kenya, became Technical Advisor to the UN Food and Agricultural Organisation. Dino's work highlights the importance of insects to crop pollination and, therefore, food security.

2009 Whitley Award winner, **Jittin Ritthirat**, has been named as one of Thailand's 10 most influential women and invited to act as a conservation advisor to national government.

In 2010, 2004 winner **Rodrigo Medellín** became Vice Chair of the Animals Committee for CITES – the Convention for the International Trade of Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna. In his role, Rodrigo is involved in determining how wild species are protected in terms of their collection and sale.



NEWS MORE RECOGNITION FOR OUR WINNERS

Whitley Award winners are conservation stars whose achievements are recognised the world over. Winning an award from WFN helps to boost profile and opens up new opportunities.

Following an introduction from WFN, 2005 Whitley Gold Award winner, **Charudutt Mishra's** Snow Leopard Trust has been named as winner of the **BBC World Challenge Award** for innovative social and environmental businesses. The award is worth US\$20,000 in funding to support snow leopard conservation and community income boosting initiatives in Mongolia.

2008 Gold Award winner, **Cagan Sekercioglu**, and 2009 Whitley Award winner, **Dino Martins**, have been named as

National Geographic Emerging Explorers. Recognised respectively for their efforts to protect Turkey's biodiversity and to conserve Kenya's pollinating insects, crucial to crop production and food security, Cagan and Dino received US\$10,000 in support of their work. Each year Explorers are chosen from fields as diverse as anthropology, space exploration, mountaineering, and music.

2007 winners **Erika Cuellar** (pictured above) and **Luis Aguirre** have been awarded the



Erika Cuellar

Sydney Anderson Award in recognition of their services to promote mammalogy in their country by the Bolivian Mammals Society.

2004 Award winner, **Rodrigo Medellín**, has been named as the **President Elect of the Society of Conservation Biology**.

The SCB is an international coalition of people dedicated to the study and conservation of biodiversity. In 2011, 2006 Gold Award winner, **Patricia Majluf**, received the **SCB's Distinguished Service Award**.



Help us support the work of our Winners

WFN is an independent charity that relies solely on the generosity of our donors. If you would like to **make a donation** and help support the ongoing work of amazing Whitley Award winners around the world, please email us at info@whitleyaward.org or visit www.whitleyaward.org to donate online.

£297,000 in grants to support the ongoing work of Whitley Award winners

This year WFN have awarded the following winners Continuation Funding following a rigorous re-application process. These grants enable previous winners to expand their high impact work where outstanding contributions to conservation are being made. Conservation successes such as the ones reported in this newsletter don't happen overnight, and in recognition of this we offer sustained support when funding allows.

£30,000 Gladys Kalema-Zikusoka (2009 Gold Award winner)

Water conservation and community healthcare for mountain gorilla conservation, Uganda

£60,000 Dino Martins (2009 winner)

Conserving pollinating insects to protect wild habitat and food security, Kenya

£60,000 Rodrigo Medellín (2004 winner)

National bat conservation and environmental education, Mexico

£27,000 Bohdan Prots (2007 winner)

Saving the ancient forests of the Transcarpathians, Ukraine

£60,000 German Soler (2007 winner)

Endangered shark conservation in the Eastern Tropical Pacific, Colombia

£60,000 Guo Yu Min (2007 winner)

Cranes as a flagship species for transboundary watershed and wetland management, China, Russia, Mongolia

CONTINUATION FUNDING 2011

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Whitley Fund for Nature

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