



# The Hum...

Las Gralarias Foundation Inc. Newsletter

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## Señor Tim's Tales

by Tim Krynak, President

This is the time of the year I think about bird migration. Migration is predictable, but unpredictable as well. Every year we anticipate what should arrive, but unexpected discoveries are always a special reward. These surprises are exciting, but also can reveal much about birds that we may take for granted. Why are they here, is this normal or just an accident, will this trend continue? In Ohio, we have a rapidly changing landscape. There is urban sprawl taking forest, but farmland is slowly reverting back to forest. Some waterways are becoming cleaner, but invasive species are competing with native flora and fauna. How do these changes effect bird migration?

In Ecuador, some of the same changes are occurring. There is urban sprawl, but their waterways are not becoming cleaner and most farms are not reverting back to forest. Erosion and pollution are a big problem and forests are being converted into farms. Of course these affect some of the same birds now passing though Ohio.

I just recently returned from Ecuador and each time I visit Reserva Las Gralarias I'm amazed at the rate trees are retuning to what was once pasture. It is encouraging, and with the regeneration animals that depend on trees are also returning. More and more birds visit closer to the guest house and a different community of insects are appearing attracted to the lights at night. These changes are an important reminder that our conservation efforts are working.

Returning to Quito for a late departure I spent some time in the local mall. This by far is not my favorite activity; however, I noticed that the entire mall was turned into a recycling display! Banners, exhibits, signs, recycling containers and other information could not be missed. It was encouraging to see a large scale effort and would be a good example for malls in the United States to follow.



I seem have jumped around topics quite a bit in this article, but the message is that conservation takes all forms from smallest to large scale efforts. Our efforts to purchase and regenerate forest are just as important as the education effort encouraging recycling. These types of efforts are necessary in both hemispheres, as the birds I anticipate arriving in Ohio are also being anticipated on Reserva Las Gralarias and other reserves along the way.

Thank you, thank you, and thank you to everyone that has assisted in our effort. I ask for continued support, but more importantly ask for you to share our goals with family and friends. For those that would like to see our efforts first hand we are offering a members trip next June. Check our or website for additional information. This is another way to join our efforts and have a first hand experience of the wonders of the cloud forests that you are helping protect.

## Calendar of Events

- October 6th  
LGF: Conservation in the Clouds:  
Cleveland Aquarium Society  
Cleveland Metroparks Zoo
- October 10th  
"Colors of Green" festival  
Camp Ledgewood  
Girl Scouts



## Board Member Bios:

# Edward Krynak and Mary Ann Beauchemin

Ed Krynak is currently a graduate student at Grand Valley State University in Michigan studying aquatic ecology. Ed has a Bachelors of Science degree in Natural Resources from Ohio State University and a Masters of Arts in Teaching from Kent State University.

Before attending GVSU, Ed was a park naturalist for Lake Metroparks in northern Ohio and more recently a high school science teacher for Gateway School in Caldwell County, North Carolina just a short drive from the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Ed's interest in biology has taken him from Alaska, where he working on a project studying salmon, all the way south to the Equator where he volunteers at Reserva Las Galarias.

Ed's hobbies include canoeing, camping, biking, hiking, reading and birding.



Mary Ann Beauchemin is currently the Senior Naturalist & Teacher Workshop Coordinator for the Nature Discovery Center in Bellaire Texas, where she has worked since 1988. Over the years she has taught classes there to interested students of all ages, from 3 yrs though adults. Mary Ann is also currently in charge of a program there to remove non-native invasive plants from the park and increase the

biodiversity of native plant species.

Mary Ann has a Masters of Science degree in Outdoor Education with an emphasis in Biology from Southern Oregon University. She has worked as a naturalist and environmental educator for 30 years at various nature centers and other organizations including the Houston Arboretum & Nature Center, the Austin Nature Center, the Sunriver Nature Center (Oregon) and the Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area.

Mary Ann has been married to Gary Gray, geologist, birder and husband extraordinaire, for 27 years. They have 2 fantastic grown-up kids, Caitlin and Evan, who are both bird watchers and nature enthusiasts!

In her "spare time", Mary Ann volunteers with non-native invasive plant removal and native replacement at several Houston Audubon Sanctuaries. She has spent a lot of time in the last two years volunteering to rescue Gulf Coast native prairie plants before the prairies are torn up for development. She uses these rescued plants to create "pocket prairie" gardens in different public places to help educate Houstonians about native plants, local history, biodiversity and vanishing habitats. She enjoys bird watching, botanizing, gardening for birds & butterflies, studying insects, and trying to learn something new every day! She is looking forward to being part of the Las Galarias Foundation team.

# Los Exploradores

By Tim Krynak

On our last visit to Ecuador we had the opportunity to visit the children of Escuela Rio Tumbez and Los Exploradores Nature Club. When we arrived the students were participating an educational presentation from UNICEF. After this presentation we conducted a session of "Tadpole Trivia" an activity to teach about amphibians and conservation. Following Tadpole Trivia we passed out binoculars that have been donated for this purpose and headed outside to see what birds could be found around the school. It was amazing to see how good these children were getting with their binoculars and the excitement of locating birds. We had a great walk and were able to see; Pacific Hornereo, Blue-and-white Swallows, Black and Turkey Vultures, Rufous-collared Sparrows, Blue-gray Tanager, Lemon-rumped Tanager, and several Tropical Kingbirds. We nearly have enough binoculars for every student, but the ones that did not receive a pair were given insect nets to try and capture butterflies and other insects. With determination they were able to chase down several butterflies and a few moths as well. I like to think that one day some of these children will be future guides traveling all over Ecuador sharing their fantastic bird fauna to tourists from around the world. Maybe one day one student will be a scientist helping to describe and unravel some of the mysteries that make Ecuador so unique. You just never know....

Here are a few photos from our visit and we are already looking forward to visiting with these children again.



# A Little Moss Between Your Toes is a Good Thing!

by Katherine Krynak

Standing on the new Oso Verde Trail at Reserva Las Galarías, smelling the greenness of the forest, feeling the clouds literally touching my skin and listening to the magical flute-like voice of an Andean Solitaire, I realized that each of us is so much a part of this ecosystem that if we stood still we would look down and see the delicate aqua green moss starting to colonize our bodies. Allow me to explain. Supporters of Las Galarías Foundation not only became part of this ecosystem in their acre by acre contributions, but because they give a little of themselves to something bigger than themselves. Many of our supporters have never been on the trails of RLG, but yet, I truly believe that their souls have. You have all become part of something much bigger than the dollars donated, YOU are LGF. Even during these tough economic times, all of you have made a contribution of yourselves to help protect and serve an extremely fragile ecosystem and because of this, not only have we had the opportunity to purchase additional lands, we have begun to intimately study the life found there and discoveries are being made that could one day blow the top off what we thought we knew.



Today, as we continue to look for additional lands to acquire and we expand our research of the flora and fauna of this misty world, we are also concentrating efforts to establish research station to serve as a hub of scientific discovery. Some may think that I'm going a little overboard calling our grassroots efforts to build a research station a hub of scientific discovery, but I honestly believe that is really what this is going to be. YOU and the LGF researchers are making this happen. There is so much to learn and to teach people about, and we need a proper station to bring in students and researchers. In November, we will be starting our Las Galarías Foundation membership Drive. Please keep LGF in your mind while thinking about what the perfect holiday gift to give to your loved ones. Together we will realize our dreams of groundbreaking science in the name of conservation in the cloud forest of Ecuador!

## Species Profile: Giant Antpitta

By Hannah Koppelberger



Reserva Las Galarías was named for a genus of ant birds called *Grallaria*, more commonly known as the antpitta. Five species of antpittas are found on the reserve, one of which is the Giant Antpitta (*Grallaria gigantea*). It is a beautiful, squat bird with long legs, a brown back, and an orange-brown chest with brown stripes. They feed by hopping along the forest floor and pounding their heavy beak into the soil to capture their prey. Their diet is thought to be primarily earthworms, beetle larvae, and slugs. Their haunting calls and whistles are most often heard during the early morning hours. They are very shy birds who use camouflage and stealth to escape predators. This makes them a very challenging for bird watchers, except for those who are lucky enough to visit Angel Paz's Refugio Paz de las Aves, located near RLG, where a local farmer has habituated several antpittas to come to his call and the promise of a free meal. The Giant Antpitta is currently classified as "Vulnerable" on the IUCN Redlist due to loss of habitat for agricultural use.

# Foundation Update

## by Tim and Katherine Krynak

"Time's fun when you're having flies" ..... a little herper humor, but seriously, this year has been flying by and because of contributions from so many, Las Galarias Foundation has been able to continue our strong efforts in the field of cloud forest conservation. Field research programs seem to be multiplying very quickly at Reserva Las Galarias: ongoing bird banding programs, and avian behavioral studies, small and large mammal studies, micro moth studies, and the amphibian monitoring program continues to uncover new and exciting discoveries. In addition, the LGF climate monitoring program successfully downloaded it's first data from the HOBO Weather Station! We expect the research program will continue to expand due to interest in the academic community. We are also pleased to be collaborating on grant proposals to bring an amazing amphibian biologist to RLG to study amphibians for his sabbatical! More information on this exciting adventure coming soon!



LGF educational programming at Escuela Rio Tumbez (see the Los Exploradores story on page 3 ) as well as our educational programming in Ohio continues to instill the passion needed to preserve the biodiversity of this world. A perfect example of our efforts in educating children about biological conservation and environmental stewardship is the Incarnate Word Nature Club of which Tim has been visiting now for 3 years. IWA has said that Tim inspired the club to take action in their own "backyard" resulting in a nature garden at the school and an environmental audit of their school's waste or "garbage". This Audit has helped to alter the habits of individuals at the school for the good of the environment and a video was created documenting the process which could help others follow their lead! In thanks to Tim for his work with the IWA Nature Club, the club purchased another infra-red camera to help LGF monitor the mammals on RLG. IWA had donated the first camera two years ago and we have caught some amazing images. Thanks IWA!



In other news, our Facebook Cause has grown to 88 supporters, and we have started to Tweet on Twitter as well! Our membership drive will begin it's kickoff campaign this November for the 2010 calendar year. We are hoping that this drive will help us raise the funds needed to continue construction of the RLG Research Station.

We are also excited to begin a new friendship with the Girl Scouts of America. On October 10th we will be at camp Ledgewood for the "Colors of Green" festival. This will hopefully be the first of many programs with this wonderful organization!

Finally, we would like to officially welcome our newest board members: Ed and Mary Ann. Their enthusiasm and efforts are sure to propel us beyond our current dreams and goals! We are so excited to have you on our team!



Don't forget the we are offering a "Member's Trip to Ecuador in June 2010. Check out the website for a detailed itinerary , dates and cost for this fantastic trip.

# Wisps from the Cloud Forest

By Jane Lyons



## Our Reforestation Efforts – Part 2

This is the time of year that we begin to notice the results from our previous years' plantings. For the past 7 years we have been regenerating the formerly pastured areas at Reserva Las Gralarias with native species of trees and shrubs found on the reserve. Often seedlings appear in the middle of a trail, and those we dig up, bring to our greenhouse and grow until they are ready to be transplanted. Some of the main trees we transplant are two species of *Croton*, a genus in the Euphorbiaceae family, locally known as “Drago” and “Yacasén”.



Seedlings collected from trails



These *Croton* trees are fast-growing native species that reach heights of 30-40 meters. Tiny seedlings sprout readily in disturbed areas and with a little care are soon ready to be transplanted. These are fairly long-lived trees, some 20-30 years, and are beautiful and very popular trees for birds to perch and feed in. They also help shade out the old pasture grass, filter the air and rain, and help reduce the effects of pounding rains on the soil. As adult trees they always have a few very large, showy orange leaves. They are one of the main components of our successful reforestation program at Las Gralarias.



Young Croton tree in former pasture

A young “Yacasén” tree Another key component of our reforestation efforts are two species of shrubby *Baccharis* plants, of the Astereae family, known locally as “Chilca Negra” and “Chilca Blanca”

These large, fast-growing shrubs are very attractive to small birds, especially hummingbirds, and also to nectar-feeding insects. They also help shade out the pasture grass and are extremely prolific, growing in every area where there is a bit of soil in the sun. We transplant the seedlings and also plant growing stems and to date we have planted hundreds of them in the previously-pastured areas, including at the new field station site. The “Chilcas” have become one of our favorite and most dependable plants to grow in the initial stages of reforestation.



Seedling “Yacasén” planted in former pasture

These super pioneer species of trees and shrubs are extremely important in our second stage of reforestation. They work magic in dominating the old pasture grasses and that allows other native species to take hold. They attract birds which then plant an additional variety of seeds that fall within their feces from perches in the trees. Without these helpful pioneer species we would have a much harder time growing the various giant hardwoods that are so critically important for the long-term health of the reserve and its inhabitants. Our amazing hardwoods will be the subject of a future report.

Our trees enjoy a beautiful sunset at Las Galarias





## Foundation Wish List



- \* HOBO Weather Station
- \* pH meter
- \* Dissolved Oxygen Meter
- \* Photos from Reserva Las Galarias
- \* Recording-analyzing equipment/software for bird and frog calls
- \* Flora/Fauna Field Guides/books of Ecuador (in Spanish and English)
- \* Biology and natural science children's books for Los Exploradores (in Spanish)
- \* Generator for Research Station
- \* Funds for production of LGF T-shirts
- \* LCD projector
- \* Volunteers to present at programs/festivals on behalf of LGF
- \* Grant writer/Grant Opportunities

For more information contact Katherine Krynak at [glassfrog04@hotmail.com](mailto:glassfrog04@hotmail.com)

## Fundraising/Volunteer Opportunities

- \* We are still looking for potential donors to be added to our electronic mailing list. Please send contact information to Jo Ann Kubicki at [jak1@clevelandmetroparks.com](mailto:jak1@clevelandmetroparks.com)
- \* Matted Prints of photographs from the reserve are needed for donation gifts. Email Tim Krynak at [tkrynak@aol.com](mailto:tkrynak@aol.com) for more information. Black mats to be used for Tim's photos are also always appreciated.
- \* Volunteers needed to present programs within their communities to raise money for LGF and spread the word about our wonderful conservation initiatives.
- \* LGF is looking for a grant writer to help raise funds for the foundation's mission.
- \* If you have anyone interested in being on the distribution list to receive *The Hum...* please contact Katherine Krynak at [glassfrog04@hotmail.com](mailto:glassfrog04@hotmail.com)
- \* If you have questions or would like to contribute to LGF Inc. please send us an email.





# You Can Help!

## Support the Reserva Las Gralarias Field Research Station

[www.lasgralariasfoundation.org](http://www.lasgralariasfoundation.org)

LGF Inc. is a 501 (c) (3 )organization

Please send this card and check to:

**Las Gralarias Foundation Inc.**  
**24140 Gessner Road**  
**North Olmsted, Ohio 44070**

Or visit [www.justgive.org](http://www.justgive.org)

**I would like to help the Las Gralarias Foundation Inc. build the RLG Field Research Station by:**

Help build the station!: (\$200 or more) \_\_\_\_\_ (package includes certificate of appreciation, recognition on LGF Inc. Website, and a Spectacled bear plush toy)

Making a single donation to LGF Inc. (\$500) (\$100) (\$50) (other: \_\_\_\_\_ )

**Donor information** *(Please print)*

Name:

Address:

**This donation is made:** In Honor of \_\_\_\_\_ In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_  
Name:

**Would you like to specify which LGF program you would like to support?** *(please circle one)*

Land Acquisition

Environmental Education

Biological Research/Research Station Construction

**I would like to receive LGF Newsletter "The Hum..." via email:** Yes No

Email address:

# **Muchas Gracias!**

## **Thank you to our recent donors and volunteers!**

*Michael and JoAnn Hamm, John Kalman in Memorey of Thersa and Adam Kalman, Thomas and Claire Moore, Wayne Toven, Shirley Braund, Greater Akron Aquarium Society, Robert and Patricia Duffey, Jeff Miller, Chris O' Quinn and Incarnate Word Academy Nature Club.*

*Las Gralarias Foundation Inc.*

*24140 Gessner Rd.*

*North Olmsted, Ohio 44070*



The goal of Las Gralarias Foundation Inc. is to raise funds for projects and programs of Reserva Las Gralarias, located in the parish of Mindo, Ecuador, including the purchase of adjacent and nearby lands that will enhance protection for rare endemic birds, plants and other animals as well as supports reserve management, reforestation efforts, biological research, environmental education projects, scholarships, and appropriate tourism programs.

LAS GRALARIAS  
FOUNDATION INC.

501 (c)(3) organization

[www.lasgralariasfoundation.org](http://www.lasgralariasfoundation.org)



# The Hum...

Las Gralarias Foundation Inc. Newsletter

Las Gralarias Foundation Inc.  
**Board Members**  
**President:** Tim Krynak (Ohio)  
**Vice President:** Jane Lyons Ph.D. (Ecuador)  
**Secretary:** Katherine Krynak (Ohio)  
**Treasurer:** Jo Ann Kubicki (Ohio)  
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**Nancy Charbeneau (Texas)**  
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**Shamus Terry (Wisconsin )**  
**Edward Krynak (Michigan)**  
**Mary Ann Beauchemin (Texas)**

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