

Project Update: March 2014

Observations

We have made observations on the Amazon River close to the city of Iquitos with seven outings in March 2014 (1st, 7th, 8th, 22nd, 24th, 28th and 29th), a total of 126 river dolphins were counted, mainly grey dolphins *Sotalia fluviatilis* (81). A total of 20 different volunteers have participated till now with an average of 5 per outing. Next outing is planned for 4th April 2014 then we will try to keep at least two outings per week. It was difficult to keep the outings in March 2014 due to bad weather conditions (raining and flooded season ending end of April 2014).

Education

Unfortunately our projector is dead and we had to buy a new one, but with the help of WDC we have received an additional budget. We have organised two presentations, one in the street during an event and one in a primary school with all levels (4-5-6) at the same time. We keep the same planning as last year and it was a success. The children love the 'plosh plosh' song, the origami and the tale. We were accompanied by volunteers from the CEECA (Cerclo de Estudios Ecologicos Amazonia) who would like to develop a muppets show in the future (probably during the tale). Next conferences on 8th, 9th, 10th and 15th of April 2014.

In the first presentation we will include photos of dead dolphins used as bait in Brazil (from and with authorization of Verónica Iriarte http://www.rufford.org/rsg/projects/verónica_iriarte), we hope it will have a positive impact on the young mentality.

Meetings

Weekly meetings are ongoing every Monday (3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th and 31st March 2014) to discuss about the observations and to prepare the education programme. We are also discussing about miscellaneous topics (events, last publications, etc). An average of 11 volunteers are participating with a peak at 15 on 17th March.

Conferences

On 14th March 2014 - Ir David Bonnet (USA), Underwater Acoustic Specialist - "*Inia geoffrensis*, evolution, the threats, the existing technics to record them and theories about their sounds". With a total of 43 participants it's a great success for Solinia and the Rufford Foundation.

Next conference planned end of April 2014 with Fernando Trujillo (river dolphins expert from Columbia) or Enzo Aliaga-Rossel (river dolphins expert from Bolivia) if they are available. If not, Daniel Dietz who is guide in Antarctic will speak about his experience and compare with his life in the Amazon rainforest.

Others

Solinia has actively participated to the "hour of the planet" (WWF) in Iquitos with banners and volunteers. Also we are collaborating with the regional government for the organisation of a workshop to create a regional action plan for the conservation and protection of aquatic mammals (planned end of April 2014).

