



## AN UPDATE FROM OPCA

December has been a busy month for all and we hope that everyone in our community had a happy but safe Christmas and New Year's celebration. Here at OPCA we have had several reasons to celebrate. Most notably we were excited to launch our latest fundraiser Plant4Hornbills in partnership



Megan McCubbin & Chris Packham holding their new book 'Back to Nature'  
Photo credit: Megan McCubbin



A female Saola named 'Martha'. Saola are a rare species of ungulate discovered in the Annamite Mountains in 1992.  
Photo credit: William Robichaud

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with One Stop Borneo Wildlife. With the help of our supporters we are able to plant trees on a monthly basis to create wildlife corridors, connecting areas of pristine Bornean Jungle. If you are interested to find out more or support this project, then check it out on our website.

Perhaps the most exciting moment this month was our interview with TV broadcaster and author, Megan McCubbin. We caught up with Megan to talk all about her latest book Back To Nature and discuss how people can connect with nature themselves, not only to help protect our natural world, but improve our own mental and physical health.

Another exciting moment was the start of a new relationship with the Saola Foundation for Annamite Mountains Conservation. We will be teaming up in the new year to produce media that will help them reach their fundraising goal. To find out more about their amazing work, check out the interview we published chatting to the team about their incredible work.

We are looking forward to what the new year has in store for all of us, and we have many plans and projects that we are working on to be able to increase our impact and further aid the projects in our network. Let's try and make 2021 not only a positive year but a sustainable one!





## WILDLIFE RESCUE IN COSTA RICA

An update from Jack Emery at Rescue Center Costa Rica



It certainly has been a busy time here at Rescue Center Costa Rica. Over the last few weeks, we have worked tirelessly, rescuing and rehabilitating a plethora of native Costa Rican wildlife. One success story centres around **Mia, a howler monkey, who we rescued** at just a few months of age after being illegally trafficked into the exotic pet trade.

Globally, it is common practice to take animals from their natural environment and sell them illegally on the lucrative exotic pet market. Mia was found and confiscated at a home in the middle of a busy city. After dedicated work, **we have secured a bright future for her**, along with six other howler monkeys of a similar age, where they are bonding as a family group, to be released in the forests of Nosara, Costa Rica.



Rescuing Mia, the howler monkey from the exotic pet trade

Other local wildlife we actively work with are birds. Here at the rescue center, we are currently **rehabilitating an array of carnivorous birds**; from owls to hawks, who have met grisly fates at the hands of humans. Raptors, and other birds of prey, are often wrongly targeted, with the misconception that they may harm livestock. Thus, they are **persecuted relentlessly through poisoning and shooting**. We aim to educate those on the many benefits these amazing birds have, including pest control.

Unfortunately, many of these individuals here will not be released back in the wild, due to injuries such as missing limbs and eyes. Despite this, we recreate natural environments for them to develop vital hunting and social skills.

We have also been able to **rescue a Coyote, an Ocelot, and a Coati** from the exotic pet trade. Coyotes are a species of canine native to Northern and parts of Central America. Due to its adaptable behaviour, Coyotes can comfortably expand into territories inhabited by humans. Here, they can be seen as a pest and may be persecuted. Living in cramped cages for many years, they have acquired health problems meaning they cannot be released. We have been hard at work, designing wild and spacious enclosures that replicate natural environments.

**Coatis are small mammals** indigenous to the forests of Central and Southern America. We were able to rescue this one after a suspected dog attack. In the wild, they are extremely social, living in groups of up to 25 related females. In this group, guards keep lookout for any potential predators such as jaguars.

We also **rescued this beautiful ocelot** from the pet trade. You can see why people would want them as pets, with their amazing coats and endearing eyes. In the wild ocelots are predominantly fishing cats but can also chase prey up into the trees.

All of our animals will be cared for and if possible released back into the wild. Those that can't be released will be cared for in carefully designed enclosures that ensure they can live a happy life. Our work is vital to protect these animals but we couldn't do it without help. Please have a look at our **volunteer program** and find out how to help here:

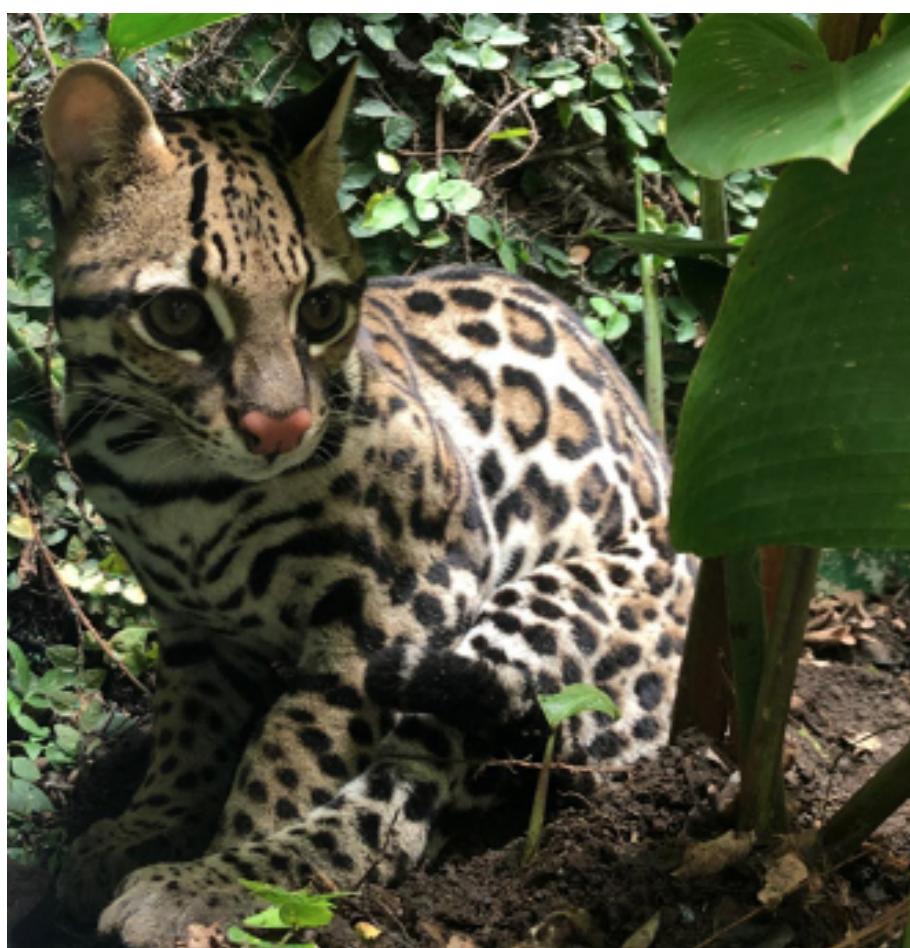
[https://www.rescuecenter.com/utilities/process/partners/redir.php?pid=19\\_179&aid=77](https://www.rescuecenter.com/utilities/process/partners/redir.php?pid=19_179&aid=77)



Spectacled Owl



Coati



Ocelot





# PROTECTING WILDLIFE THROUGH EDUCATION

An update from Tangkoko Conservation Education

For the very first time in Tangkoko Conservation Education history, in October 2020, we welcomed 5 boys and 5 girls ages 16-17 from the Negeri Senior high school in Batu Putih (a village situated at the edge of the Tangkoko forest, where our programme is based) for a **Science Camp: a week of training** at the Macaca Nigra project research station.

Throughout the 7 days, these high school students have been able to learn many different research methods. They have also **observed the Crested Macaques in the Tangkoko forest**, learnt about the local flora and fauna, and met several local conservation partners.



Science camp field trip, students observe Macaques



Students at science camp

Finally, on the 24th November, an online Symposium gathered all the Science Camp **students who shared their knowledge about biology, forest ecology** and Macaque behaviour. They also spread a positive conservation message to all viewers.

The Symposium can be watched online on our Youtube Channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jTMK1kuGS-0>.

Here are some of the message that our participants wanted to share after the camp:

"I will share the knowledge that I have acquired during the Science Camp with my friends, to tell them about the **importance of nature for our lives.**" **Rio**

"I am happy to be part of Science Camp because I have improved my knowledge and so **I can better protect wildlife** such as crested macaques! **SAVE MACACA NIGRA.**" **Frisna**

We hope that this week and Symposium have **inspired these young people** to pursue their studies or a professional path in the conservation and research!



Crested Macaques





## An update from Conservation Education Society



In the small community we work in, we have several dedicated organisations, schools and individuals that all **come together to clean our coastline**. The Conservation Education Society, based in Diani, Kenya, supervised two of these beach clean ups, recruiting volunteers from the community. Sadly, this year we were not able to bring school groups to join us, this was due to school closures and also the need to keep groups small.

On the 5th December, a small ceremony was held, to celebrate the end of the cleanup. The **Conservation Education Society received an award** for their beach cleaning efforts as well as their contribution to education. Although this year it has been difficult to engage with our local schools, in 2019 we were able to reach over 750 students. These students visited us at our Marine Education Centre to participate in our education programmes. The visits are fully funded by the Society, from transports, lunch and equipment. Furthermore, nearly 30 beach cleanups were conducted with these groups and over 33,000 items of trash were removed.



## Beach clean



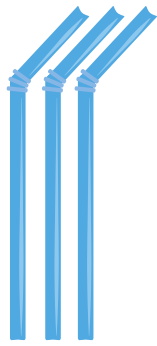
CES Teachers and students at ceremony







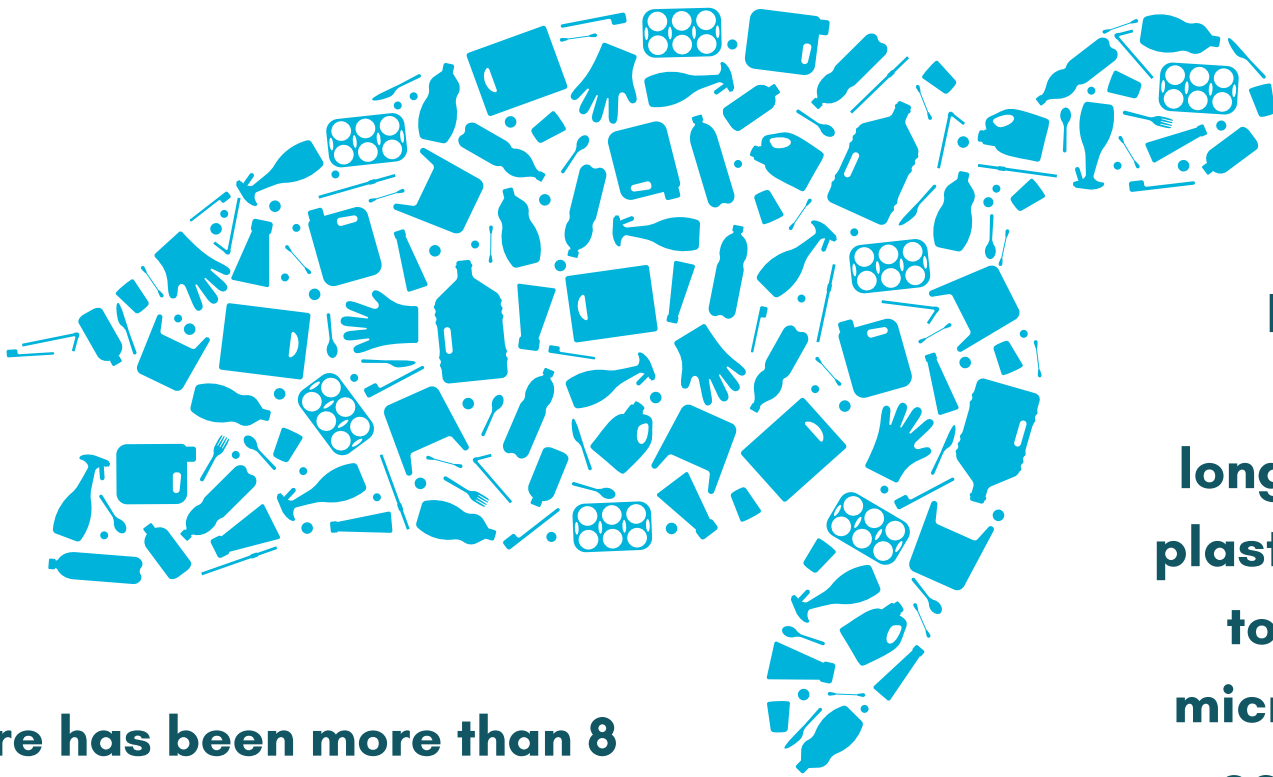
Over 300 million tons of plastic is produced EVERY YEAR, 50% of which is single use plastics.



88% of the sea's surface is polluted by plastic waste.



Sadly, 100 million marine animals die annual due to plastic waste. This could be due to entanglement or ingesting plastic, scarily this is only the animals we find, the number is likely to be a lot higher.



There has been more than 8 billion tons of plastic produced, but only 10% of this has been recycled.

Plastic is incredibly durable, and even when we cannot see it any longer, it is still there. Every piece of plastic ever manufactured still exists today. Plastic will break down into microplastics and remain in our soil, ocean and even our atmosphere!

SOLVING OUR PLASTIC PROBLEM

5 R's for Sustainable Living

REFUSE

Refuse unnecessary items such as straws and other single-use plastics

REDUCE

Reduce buying the things you cannot refuse, such as clothes

REUSE

Try to buy durable items that can be reused for many years, and buy second-hand were possible

RECYCLE

Properly recycle any plastic that you cannot refuse, reduce, or reuse

ROT

Compost any organic materials

We can all do our part to reduce the impact of plastic on our environment, it all starts with education. We all need to be informed about the problem before we can act.

We can also all make small changes in our daily lives. Remember to **REFUSE** to use single use plastics. Go for items you can **REUSE**, like metal straws, travel coffee cups and water bottles. And as a last resort, ensure you **RECYCLE** any plastics you can't **REUSE** or **REFUSE**!

