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ETHNOBIOLOGY IN ASIA:

LIVELIHOOD AND POTENTIAL CONSERVATION ROLES OF WILD EDIBLE HERBS

Contributed by ISE member R.P. Harisha



Traditional communal area resources are mostly described as open access resources and are frequently associated with over-utilization and poor management of the natural resources therein. Yet it is those 'unproductive and impoverished lands' that support and supply diverse sources of important biological resources from which local people benefit.

Over 80% of poor rural households are known to depend on Wild Edible Herbs (WEHs) in Indian forest fringe areas. As a result, the daily usage of WEHs is a significant, yet underestimated component of livelihoods, biodiversity, land use and land cover. This underestimation results from the lack of monetization of the consumption of these resources at the household level, and the lack of formal markets, and hence they are not captured in national level accounting. However, they may account for a considerable proportion of the total biodiversity in natural and subsistence ecosystems.

Of the over 15000 (33.1%) higher plant species in Indian tropical forest, a wide range of them are harvested for WEH purposes. In particular, dozens of plants are used as wild food plants; harvested from and around arable fields, scrub wood lands, wetlands, and homesteads. Several families of plants are used, with the genera *Amaranthus*, *Cleome*, *Solanum* and *Dioscoria* being the most conspicuous.

The amount of wild edible plants consumed in forest fringe areas of India are known to range from 12 to over 130 kg per household per year, with a single household using as many as 25 species. However, not much information exists on the cultivation and domestication of most of these wild edible plants. *(continued on page 2)*

FROM THE EDITORIAL TEAM

This issue features articles from India and China, updates from past recipients of the ISE Darrell Posey Fellowship awards, conference and workshop reports, and special announcements from the ISE.

If you are interested in contributing material for a future issue of the newsletter, please see the [guidelines](#) on the ISE website.

We invite your feedback, suggestions, and submissions.

With warm regards,



Leslie Main Johnson,
ISE Newsletter Editor



Natasha Duarte,
ISE Coordinator

ETHNOBIOLOGY IN ASIA:

LIVELIHOOD AND POTENTIAL CONSERVATION ROLES OF WILD EDIBLE HERBS (CONTINUED)

Contributed by ISE member R.P. Harisha



Mr. Shivanna belongs to Soliga community; he is living in Keernahola village place where our Community based Conservation Center (CCC) located. He is holding *Heliotropium strigosum* (Kogge gida in Kannada) belongs to Boraginaceae family. He has been using leaf of this plant for curing ear pain and related problems.

The socio-economic status of individual households (e.g., Wealth, gender of household head, location of community and culture) could potentially influence the use of wild edible plants. In the Malai Madeshwara Hills Reserve Forest of Southern India, the mean consumption frequency of wild edible plants per household and per capita was higher for poorer households than the richer households.

In spite of the importance of wild edible herbs in the complex livelihood network that involves extraction from marginal lands and agro-ecosystems, their economic and land restoration potentials are little known. Therefore, the assessment of the value of lesser-known but useful plant species must tally their contributions to biodiversity and

conservation and the environment in which they occur.

The biggest challenges facing the conservation of wild edible species, just as several other species, is cultivating them ex-situ, domestication, and the management practices associated with them. Conservation benefits of herbaceous species may be through their ability to adapt and provide ground cover with the potential to minimize soil erosion.

They may also contribute to improving the humus content of the soil through their root systems, and be ploughed to provide green manure in organic viticulture. Regrettably, herbaceous species well adapted to their local environments are often classified as weeds; they face replacement with more costly non-endemic species to meet soil and water conservation

needs, which has long term repercussions for local species diversity and endemism.



They are belong to Soliga community from Anehola village; they are documenting wild edible plants in the forest. He is holding fruits of *Dimocarpus longan* (*Gudagan jagadi*) belong to family *Sapindaceae* which are edible.



The author and tribal people are having seasoned tuber (*Dioscoria pentaphylla*) for lunch during wild edible plants survey in middle of the forest.

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ETHNOBIOLOGY IN ASIA:

THE ROOT BRIDGES OF CHERRAPUNJI: CENTURIES-OLD BRIDGES, GROWN FROM TANGLED ROOTS

Reproduced with permission from [Atlas Obscura](#)



The living bridges of Cherrapunji, India are made from the roots of the *Ficus elastica* tree. This tree produces a series of secondary roots from higher up its trunk and can comfortably perch atop huge boulders along the riverbanks, or even in the middle of the rivers themselves.

Cherrapunji is credited with being the wettest place on earth, and The War-Khasis, a tribe in Meghalaya, long ago noticed this tree and saw in its powerful roots an opportunity to easily cross the area's many rivers. Now, whenever and wherever the need arises, they simply grow their bridges.

In order to make a rubber tree's roots grow in the right direction - say, over a river - the Khasis use betel nut trunks, sliced down the middle and hollowed out, to create root-guidance systems. The thin, tender roots of the rubber tree, prevented from fanning out by the betel nut trunks, grow straight out. When they reach the other side of the river, they're allowed to take root in the soil. Given enough time, a sturdy, living bridge is produced.

The root bridges, some of which are over a hundred feet long, take ten to fifteen years to become fully functional, but they're extraordinarily strong - strong enough that some of

them can support the weight of fifty or more people at a time.

Because they are alive and still growing, the bridges actually gain strength over time - and some of the ancient root bridges used daily by the people of the villages around Cherrapunji may be well over five hundred years old.



One special root bridge, believed to be the only one of its kind in the world, is actually two bridges stacked one over the other and has come to be known as the "Umshiang Double-Decker Root Bridge."

These bridges were re-discovered by Denis P. Rayen of the Cherrapunji Holiday Resort. Due to his efforts to promote interest in the bridges, the local population has been alerted to their potential worth and kept them from being destroyed in favor of steel ones. What's more, a new root bridge is currently being grown and should be ready for use within a decade.

To see more photos, please visit [Atlas Obscura](#)



ETHNOBIOLOGY IN ASIA:

Hlib Jiangl Naox Niex

Contributed by ISE Member Amy Eisenberg

While serving as an International Expert in Hunan Province of southwest China at the Research Institute of Anthropology and Ethnology, Jishou University in impoverished Xiangxi Autonomous Minority Prefecture, Maid Wux, my Hmong graduate student took us to her high mountain village of Hlib Jiangl in the rural reaches of Guizhou Province to celebrate Naox Niex, the Hmong New Year in November.

We shared some wonderful days in her beautiful village, where the air is cool and fresh and the water is sweet. Hlib Jiangl is a remote mountain village with handsome wooden Hmong traditional houses where golden corn and millet are hung to dry beneath the eaves.

Cascading terraces of diversified agriculture cover the mountainous landscape of this peaceful, highly organized and clean Hmong settlement. Hmong is Maid Wux' first language and this beautiful and endangered local language is spoken fluently and daily in Hlib Jiangl, which is comprised of more than one thousand residents. Hmong people informed us that there are more than 160 dialects of their language spoken in China.

The Hmong of Hlib Jiangl are very kind, gracious, genuine and generous people who welcomed us with sweet songs and fed us

rice wine.

Pounded glutinous rice cakes are prepared and shared with guests for this very special occasion and Maid Wux' mother stored many large cakes in the granary of their house. Glutinous rice cakes are delicious and very filling.



Naox Niex: glutinous rice cakes (sticky rice), traditionally made and eaten during the new year.

We were invited to a number of homes for diverse and lavish feasts of soups, meats and vegetables. The Hmong use the medicinal, fragrant and refreshing buds, fruits and seeds of *Zat zaid jiangl*, *Litsea mollis* Hemsley in the Lauraceae for flavoring soups and other dishes.

The globose fruits turn blue-black upon maturity and are used in Hmong culinary preparations. *Litsea mollis* is a deciduous shrub or small tree that grows up to 4 m tall. Its leaves are alternate and the young branchlets are covered with pubescence. This species grows in moist thickets or broad-leaved forests on mountain slopes between 600-2800 m.

The branches, leaves and fruits of

Litsea mollis are processed for its aromatic oil, whose main chemical constituents are citral and geraniol, which are used as food flavorings, cosmetics and spices. *Litsea* seeds also contain oil and are applied as a main ingredient in soaps.

The roots, fruits and seeds of this plant are all used medicinally. The seed oil is taken for stomach ailments, and the fruits are employed for treating colds, as an anodyne and antiemetic, and for regulating the flow of vital energy. *Litsea* imparts a light and citrus-like flavor to food, which is very pleasing to the palate and soothing for digestion. *Zat zaid jiangl* is an important wild plant of the region for the Hmong people of Hlib Jiangl.

A central wooden totem pole or post with detailed relief carvings is central to every Hmong village. Blood is smeared on this post in Hlib Jiangl as a sacrifice for Naox Niex - the New Year.

Hmong grandmothers in Hlib Jiangl spin cotton and weave garments and tapestries of cotton fiber in the village square for Naox Niex. Hmong clothing is intricately embroidered with representations of animals and plants of the region.

Intergenerational designs were developed long ago by great grandmothers and their elders, who gave the significant motifs to their children. The offspring have

ETHNOBIOLOGY IN ASIA:

Hlib Jiangl Naox Niex (CONTINUED)

Contributed by ISE Member Amy Eisenberg

kept these images alive and were inspired to build upon them and create other patterns.

Today, these dynamic and detailed depictions live, and adorn the garments of young Hmong women who will then pass them down to their children.

Hmong elders of Hlib Jiangl are strong, healthy and extremely hearty women whose traditional indigenous knowledge is highly respected and valued. The young watched their elders weaving and spinning with great interest. We hope that the Hmong youth will glean these specialized techniques that have been intergenerational for many centuries.

Indigofera tinctoria L. is a plant in the Fabaceae that produces a natural blue-black colorant that is widely used to dye detailed Hmong batik works. *Gossypium* L. in the Malvaceae is grown in nearby fields for spinning and weaving cloth that is dyed blue-black with *Indigofera*. Hmong silversmiths create intricate ancestral designs in their silverwork that are representative of their history, stories, teachings and natural environment. Magnificent silver headdresses adorn young Hmong women in their finely embroidered traditional clothing.

Naox Niex is celebrated in Hmong villages throughout Guizhou Province. We traveled to Leishan

and Kai Li to share the elaborate and colorful performances of Hmong music and dance. The men played and danced rhythmically and gracefully with their bamboo lusheng and manto bass instruments. Thousands of Hmong people came from many villages of the region to perform and appreciate the richness, meaning and diversity of their traditions. We traveled to Nanhua, a small and beautiful Hmong mountain village in Guizhou to share the Naox Niex performances. A large sacred tree stands in the central circle of every Hmong village. The divine tree is the ancestor of the Hmong



Blood is smeared on this post in Hlib Jiangl as a sacrifice for Naox Niex - the New Year.

people and sacrifices are offered to this tree.

My Hmong graduate student, Hoxsolwangd, has been researching and documenting endangered Hmong languages for more than a decade and has made significant contributions in the field of linguistics. Hmong students of China and I established an international cross-cultural relationship with the Hmong Cultural Center in the USA.

Hmong people are very poor in the autonomous regions of China and rural to urban migration is widespread. The gap between the rich and poor ever widens. Timber companies have cheated Hmong villagers by taking their forest resources. There are many vital needs that are not being met and local governments are not effectively assisting Hmong peoples and their impoverished villages in southwest China.

Gender inequity is an unfortunate reality in these areas and girls have lagged behind with regard to basic education, which their families were required to pay for. If unaffordable, young girls did not attend school but helped with work at home.

Poverty and inequity are violations of human rights. There are many homeless elders and children and developmentally disabled in the autonomous regions of China. I strongly

ETHNOBIOLOGY IN ASIA:
HLIB JIANGL NAOX NIEX (CONTINUED)
Contributed by ISE Member Amy Eisenberg



Nanhua Village: Drum pole

believe that the local governments are failing the Hmong people who pick through garbage heaps looking for food to eat and recyclables to sell.

We resided in a mid-subtropical montane climatic zone in the Wuling Mountains of Xiangxi Autonomous Minority Prefecture, where it snows and freezes in the winter, however my ethnic minority graduate students did not have heat or hot water in their dormitories, which lack basic life necessities. Some have children living in their dorms without these vital utilities.

I contacted various international organizations and the Chinese government for assistance. If China can host international tourists for the Olympics, then I sincerely maintain that with transparency and right motivation, China can provide better living conditions for the ethnic minority peoples of the most populated nation in our world.



Naox Niex, the Hmong New Year in Hlib Jiangl Village of Guizhou Province, China

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 Photography by John Amato, RN; [jamato8@yahoo.com](mailto:jamoto8@yahoo.com).

A FOCUS ON THE ISE DARRELL POSEY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM:
NO NEED FOR SHAME

Contributed by Jenne de Beer, ISE Field Fellow 2009-2011

Negrito Cultural Revival & Empowerment Initiative (Philippines)

As reported earlier on the ISE website, a successful "Mam-eh"¹ Aeta Cultural Revival Festival cum Development Forum took place last April in Bgy. Sta. Juliana, Tarlac. The forest foods² themed event was not only great fun, but also a huge morale booster - for those who participated, and also eventually resonating far beyond.

For the last couple of months and still at time of writing, I have been in full preparation for a similar event for this coming February with Ati and Ayta (former) hunter gatherers in the Visayas, covering the islands of Panay, Negros, Boracay and Sibuyan. This Festival/ Development Forum will be hosted by an Ati PO, the 'Malay Highlander Association' in Aklan, Panay.

Meanwhile, a special featuring the Mam-eh festival in the NBTA newsletter³, on release, became an instant hit and subsequently turned into a helpful tool for explaining the larger idea behind the initiative in first contacts with communities, officials and others.

The reaction of an Ayta chieftain in the thickly forested mountains above Cadiz, Negros Occidental, was typical. After carefully studying the pictures and after

A FOCUS ON THE ISE DARRELL POSEY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM: NO NEED FOR SHAME (CONTINUED)

Contributed by Jenne de Beer, ISE Field Fellow 2009-2011

captions were explained, he exclaimed “*See, there is no need for us to be ashamed!*”.



A happy side event will be the first ever (!) exhibition on the cultures and ways of life of the Visayan Negritos, which will open immediately after the Aklan festival in the Negros History Museum in Bacolod. And the top organic restaurant in the same city is ‘in’ to organize a ‘Wild Food’ event at about the same time.

(This, after the chef tasted some *Collybia albuminosa*, delicious mushrooms growing exclusively on termite mounds and which I brought fresh from the Cadiz mountains.)

Further scheduled for 2012 is a series of exchange visits and one of these exchanges will specifically involve traditional midwives.

During activities and consultations over the last two years, I could not fail to notice that among Negrito leaders, a vastly disproportional number is made up of traditional midwives or hilots.

They also appear among the most knowledgeable, not only related to childbirth and health issues, but also in other fields.

And finally, much encouraged by NCIP⁴ Commissioner Conchina Calzado, the first Agta Dumagat ever appointed to the position, steps are already being taken (including fund raising) in preparation of a large scale national event assembling all the countries’ Negrito groups, which is tentatively scheduled for National IP Month (October, 2012).

This event is scheduled to coincide with celebrations to commemorate “15 years IPRA”.

¹Sharing in the Aeta local dialect.

²More on the food aspect in the Workshop Report on page 19 of this Newsletter, in: ‘On forest foods, a festival and community empowerment’, reproduced from the CFA Newsletter No. 54, September 2011.

³Newsletter of the [NTFP Task Force](#) (Philippines) Issue 20, August 2011.

⁴Philippines National Commission for Indigenous Peoples

No Honey, No Money! (Indonesia)

A different type of event, though also concerning a beautiful forest food, took place last September in Ujung Kulon National Park, Indonesia.

The Madhu Duniya¹ (MD), a large

gathering of *Apis dorsata* honey collectors from several countries in South and Southeast Asia, is set to provide a culturally appropriate platform for the sharing of expertise and experiences among peers.

Only once before such a gathering had taken place, four years ago in Andhra Pradesh, India, and indeed there was much to share as many (mostly positive) developments have taken place since in the steadily expanding MD network.

During a related symposium on “Forest Honey, Health and Nutrition”, in the botanical garden of Bogor and with top experts involved, the superior health benefits of *A. dorsata* and *Trigona spp.* honey, pollen and propolis were extensively discussed².



All of the above, already accomplished or just set in motion, are direct outcomes of the privilege I have had – thanks to the ISE Darrell Posey Fellowship – to, firstly, spend ample time with the Negrito hunter gatherers of the Philippines.

A FOCUS ON THE ISE DARRELL POSEY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM: NO NEED FOR SHAME (CONTINUED)

Contributed by Jenne de Beer, ISE Field Fellow 2009-2011

Secondly, and likewise, the fellowship has enabled me to contribute to building a larger and more assertive community-based forest honey network in Asia. In recognition of the latter contribution, the participants in the Ujung Kulon meeting (again!) awarded this ISE Darrell Posey Field Fellow with a special “Dorsata Queen Bee” Award.

Finally, I am most grateful to the many who volunteered to assist me whenever they could in these ventures!



The poster, prepared for the Madhu Duniya and which visualizes recent developments as well as some of the themes that took central stage at the event.

¹Honey World in (originally) Sanskrit/Farsi.

²See further “Healing with Honey” at: www.ntfp.org

“VIDEO EN LAS COMUNIDADES” (ECUADORIAN AMAZONIA)

Contributed by Didier Lacaze, CODEAMA ~ ISE Small Grant Recipient 2009-2011

The use of video among indigenous people in Amazonia is well documented (Turner, 1991) and has proven an appropriate and useful tool to support inter-communal and cultural communication.

Learning to use a camera and edit short films about the history, culture and life of their people creates possibilities for a renewed encounter between the young and the elders, among others. The adoption of this aspect of modern technology bears a novel meaning in the mind of the new generations to reevaluate their cultural legacy.

Our primary goal is to use video in support of the revitalization of ancestral medicine in Ecuadorian Amazonia. Audiovisual material



allows making information on healthcare more accessible to oral cultures and communities providing easy identification of medicinal plant species and practical information on how

they can be cultivated or harvested and turned into herbal remedies to treat the most common ailments and illnesses in the village, among other possibilities. Video is also useful to help local people become more aware of the social and ecological determinants of the health situation in their territory, and empower them to make decisions on in the face of those new challenges.

Examples of films made and in process:

1) “*Gathering of Indigenous Health workers*”, featuring group discussions around intercultural healthcare and practical demonstrations of herbal remedies during a training workshop in a Shiwiar village.

A FOCUS ON THE ISE DARRELL POSEY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM: "VIDEO EN LAS COMUNIDADES" (CONTINUED)

Contributed by Didier Lacaze, CODEAMA ~ ISE Small Grant Recipient 2009-2011

2) *"Plants for Health: herbal remedies for diarrheal diseases, respiratory infections and intestinal parasites"*. The film shows how the plants may be cultivated, harvested and prepared to treat some of the most common health problems in the village.



3) *"Cultivation and conservation of medicinal plants and herbal medicine making in rural and indigenous areas"*, provides information on different techniques for sustainable harvesting and agro-ecological cultivation of medicinal plants.

4) *"Ayahuasca – Source of Indigenous Wisdom"*, a documentary meant to better inform professional health agents working in indigenous areas on one of the central pillars of ancestral medicine in Ecuadorian Amazonia.

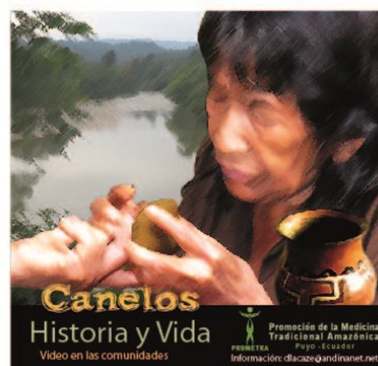
The films are distributed to local indigenous communities and organizations and through the Departments of Intercultural

healthcare of the Health Ministry in Ecuador.

The Small Grant we received from the ISE gave us the opportunity to introduce video making among a group of Amazonian Kichwa people, in the Pastaza province, in Ecuador. It supported the purchase of video equipment, the training of a young Canelos-Kichwa leader in the use of video camera and editing techniques, and the distribution of edited videos to local villages and institutions.

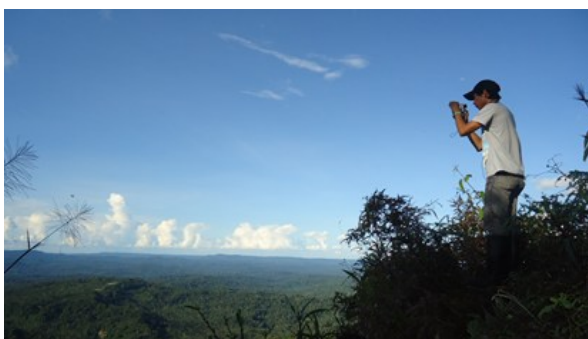
Luis Fernando Canelos (23), from the village of Canelos (Pastaza), produced a short film on the history and life of his people: "Canelos: Historia y Vida". The film was made for the descendants of a group of Canelos-Kichwa who were taken away by the Spanish rubber baron Máximo Rodríguez to extract rubber in the southeastern jungles of Peru in the early 1900s.

These people never returned to



their home and settled in the state of Madre de Dios. Last May, the film was taken to the village of Puerto Arturo, one of the two settlements displaced Kichwa now live in Peru, an hour upstream from the jungle town of Puerto Maldonado, on the Madre de Dios River. The images of the video had a profound emotional and cultural impact on the Canelos-Kichwa of Puerto Arturo.

We are grateful to the ISE for its generous support in facilitating this activation process of cultural revival and social empowerment through video in Ecuadorian Amazonia.



Luis Fernando Canelos filming panoramic view over the Bobonaza Valley in the province of Pastaza (Ecuador), where his village of Canelos lies.

A FOCUS ON THE ISE DARRELL POSEY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM: THE DARRELL POSEY ARCHIVE, PITT RIVERS MUSEUM, UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

Contributed by ISE members Elaine Elisabethsky and Kristina Plenderleith

Darrell Posey was an anthropologist and ethnobiologist who lived with the Kayapó Indians of Brazil in the 1970s and 1980s.

It was a time of rapid change in the Jê community and his research material recording Kayapó life at that time vividly records these changes. Darrell worked closely in the village with his shaman mentors, in particular recording their knowledge of plants and planting methods, knowledge which is irreplaceable. His collection of approximately 2,500 slides, 75 field notebooks and journals, and 30 videos, was given to the Pitt Rivers Museum, University of Oxford, by Darrell Posey's family after his death in 2001.

In Gorotire he had worked with an interdisciplinary international team of academic researchers examining all aspects of Kayapó life at a time when Amazonian groups such as the Kayapó had barely been influenced by Western culture, and when



A break in a field work at Gorotire. In the photo: Darrell, Beptopoop (a shaman and key informant to the Kayapó project), and Elaine.

Western academic study still tended to research each aspect of indigenous life separately. However, for the Kayapó their culture and lifestyle was an interlocking whole.

This loose collaboration of academics was referred to as the Kayapó Project, but their work has never fully been written up and published as a collective body of research, and yet it presents to the world a unique model for multidisciplinary projects in ethnobiology.

Since the collection was donated to the Pitt Rivers Museum the slides have been catalogued and roughly identified. Further funds are now needed in order to complete the project.

The next step is to seek the collaboration of other members of the Kayapó Project to enrich and certify the accuracy of the information associated with each image, and to bring together the different strands of research. This will then make the collection a model for ethnobiology worldwide, of interest to anthropologists, ethnobiologists, and students of minority languages and Brazilian studies.

Information supplied by Darrell's collaborators will increase its utility. With increased funding Pitt Rivers Museum will be able to supply digital copies to Brazil, probably through the Goeldi Museum where Posey spent

many years coordinating the Kayapó project, and ethnobiologists in Brazil will then be able to use the collection for teaching about the life of indigenous groups in schools and in higher education.

Progress so far:

In July 2005 Kristina Plenderleith made contact with the Head of the Pitt Rivers Museum and, with support from the ISE, Elaine Elisabethsky was able to join Kristina Plenderleith in Oxford in order to make a preliminary examination of the Archive. The following was accomplished:

- 2500 slides were looked at and described where possible and when information was relevant to the Collection (these had been classified at some stage but the information was lost);
- The notebooks were looked at and marked with general comments, making references whenever possible to the slides;
- Field note book entries and slides were cross referenced to Darrell Posey's published papers where possible;
- Boxes not yet in the Pitt Rivers collection were examined, screened for relevant material and labeled for further work. This material was then donated to the Museum;

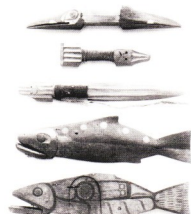
A FOCUS ON THE ISE DARRELL POSEY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM: THE DARRELL POSEY ARCHIVE, PITT RIVERS MUSEUM (CONTINUED)

Contributed by ISE members Elaine Elisabetsky and Kristina Plenderleith



Online
Museum Databases

Pitt Rivers Museum



www.prm.ox.ac.uk/databases

Pitt Rivers
MUSEUM

Online Museum Databases: Thanks to the support of the Designation Challenge Fund, the Museum's databases for its ethnographic, archaeological, and historic photograph collections are available online.
www.prm.ox.ac.uk/databases

Kayapo girl holding doll dressed in traditional beadwork, Gorotire, Brazil, 1980s.
Photographer: Darrell Posey.
Accession number: 2001.82.1447

Salmon dance wands and dagers, Haida, Northwest Coast, Canada.
Collected by Charles Harrison, 1882-1890.
Accession numbers: from collection 1891.49

© Pitt Rivers Museum, University of Oxford, 2004



Liaison with the Museum was strengthened and a project was put together for further fundraising purposes.

Progress then halted, partly because of the closure of the Pitt Rivers Museum offices during major building works, and partly because of a lack of specific funding for the project.

In October 2009, again with support from the ISE, Sandra Machado, who was the Kayapó Project research assistant, spent a couple of weeks in Porto Alegre reviewing the information which had been added in Oxford by Elaine Elisabetsky. Sandra had lived for a couple of years in Gorotire village as a research assistant to the Kayapó project, and was able to add valuable information.

The file describing the slides grew from 912 kb to 1.33Mb. This part of the work was only possible because the Pitt Rivers Museum made available a preliminary scan of the 2500 slides for Sandra Machado to inspect.

Now a further series of activities are planned:

- Information on the slides needs to be completed by showing by them to Kayapó individuals in Pará;
- Contact needs to be made with former members of the Kayapó project (Anthony Anderson, J.M.F. Camargo, William Overall, Kent Redford, Anne Gély, Warwick Kerr, Susannah Hecht, Gerhard Gottsberger, Carlos Rosario) in order to enrich information on the slides as well as having assistance with chronology and dating of slides;
- The slides need to be scanned to Museum quality for the benefit of future research;
- The notebooks need to be scanned and transcribed with Portuguese and Kayapó language entries in the notebooks translated, and a dictionary of Kayapó words compiled;
- Cross references need to be made between the slides and field notebooks and published papers, as well as to book references on Kayapó (Jê) material culture, and to precise festivals and ceremonies depicted on slides;
- Cross reference needs to be made between the Oxford collection and the Kayapó collection held in the Carnegie Museum (Pittsburgh),
- Links need to be added to the slide collection to make coherent chronological and event sequences, and to topics (as had been in the "original" key classification of the slides thought to be made under Darrell Posey's supervision)
- Establish a base for Darrell Posey's publications in one place with links to the photo collection. Darrell's copies of his publications are now in

A FOCUS ON THE ISE DARRELL POSEY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM: THE DARRELL POSEY ARCHIVE, PITT RIVERS MUSEUM (CONTINUED)

Contributed by ISE members Elaine Elisabethsky and Kristina Plenderleith

the Pitt Rivers Museum and can therefore be accessed with the slide collection and notebooks.

Potential outcomes of the collection include

- The material collected under the Kayapó project is perhaps the best known ethnobiology multidisciplinary project, some would say the model project in the discipline, and as such should be made accessible to all students and researchers in the field of ethnobiology and related disciplines;
- Generation of educational material at various levels of education (high school, undergraduate, graduate, post-graduate);
- Creation of a relational database of the Kayapó project;
- Generation of material for use in Kayapó schools and other Amerindian schools in Brazil.

ASAPP AFTER THE ISE DARRELL POSEY SMALL GRANT (2007-2011)

Contributed by Ileana Valenzuela, member of Grupo Solidario, ISE Small Grant Recipient 2005-07

Lee este artículo en español

El Grupo solidario de acción y propuesta de Petén (GSAPP)

The ASAPP is a nonprofit association formed by a small number of people, mostly community leaders (men, women, old, young, indigenous, non-indigenous, believers and non-believers), who formed El GSAPP in 2002. Its purpose was to:

A) Analyze and reflect on how they could face the threats of Plan Puebla Panama (PPP), which since 2001 has been implemented from southern Mexico to Panama. The goals of this Project are to build the necessary infrastructure in the region to attract foreign investment and facilitate selling the country's natural resources and cheap labor. This has serious impacts on the Maya Biosphere Reserve (RBM), its biodiversity, and on the life of local communities; and

B) Seek, with the broad participation of community leaders, concrete alternatives to the PPP. This involved starting a process of information analysis, reflection and debate. For this, five workshops were conducted, each one in a different community, and a final forum was held in Santa Elena. The workshops and forum were financially supported by OXFAM GB and Green Grant Fund of

the United States.

At the end of two years (2003-2004) participants reached three main conclusions:

1. We cannot wait for a solution coming from above (government or NGO). We ourselves, each one in his or her place and with our own limitations and capacities, must find and build these alternatives;
2. We cannot cope with the system or the PPP with their same logic, so it is necessary to begin to imagine, define and implement an alternative socio-economic system (production, exchange and consumption) that drives global social change;
3. In the process of building such a system it is necessary to begin to outline an alternative rural development strategy that shows the main avenues and concrete steps needed to solve social and environmental problems of the Peten.

La Asociación Solidaria de Acción y Propuesta de Petén (ASAPP)

The ISE Darrell Posey Small Grant gave us their support from 2005 to 2007. With the help from the ISE the GSAPP was legalized in March 2006 and became ASAPP so that we could proceed with the process undertaken by the GSAPP. We sought to

A FOCUS ON THE ISE DARRELL POSEY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM: ASAPP AFTER THE ISE DARRELL POSEY SMALL GRANT (CONTINUED)

Contributed by Ileana Valenzuela, member of Grupo Solidario, ISE Small Grant Recipient 2005-07

contribute toward building an alternative rural development strategy based on solidarity, complementarity, reciprocity and direct and participatory democracy, using appropriate and sustainable technologies that address in a global way the serious problems faced by these communities, their lands and their forests. We were looking to strengthen the communities' organization, autonomy and self-management so that they could become more self-sufficient, implement productive projects with sustainable technologies, better preserve the RBM and its biodiversity, foster community tourism and implement a fair trade market in the context of an alternative development strategy.

Thanks to the ISE Darrell Posey Small Grant, we were able to continue this process. We provided some introductory training on agroecology to youth groups (men and women) in the communities and continued to hold meetings for analysis, reflection and debate. These aroused considerable interest among young people who wanted to follow up and implement their own projects; however, they expected regular technical support which we could not provide due to lack of financial means. This was mainly because the ASAPP does not fit the traditional framework of "development cooperation". So

while on the one hand our structure allowed members to make their own decisions, adapting their activities to the specific circumstances, on the other hand we were limited in our actions because lack of funding.

ASAPP after the Darrell Posey Small grant

The last of the funds from the ISE Small Grant was dedicated to making a small study on the possibilities of implementing a solidarity ecological market in the north of Petén. We invited other organizations that were willing to participate in the implementation of this market and, with nine of them who responded positively, the ASAPP formed the Ecological and Solidarity Exchange Network of Petén (RISEP) and started a flea market held on the last Friday and Saturday of each month. Initially it was called a

"fair", then small market (mercadito) and finally Space of Ecological and Solidarity Exchange (EISE in Spanish).

As we had no money the *mercadito solidario* functioned based on the enthusiasm and solidarity of the organic producers, who worked together from mid-2008 until late 2010, the support of some organizations, and the voluntary work of ASAPP members. RISEP met once a month to assess the past month's flea market, plan the next and discussing different aspects of the social economy that we were trying to build. We tried to create a participatory democracy, as wide as possible, taking decisions by consensus in which everybody could take part. We did not have a leader that commanded, but instead a coordinating committee made up of five organizations responsible



Workshop reflection, analysis, discussion; Taller reflexión, análisis, debate.
(San José, 2003)

A FOCUS ON THE ISE DARRELL POSEY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM: ASAPP AFTER THE ISE DARRELL POSEY SMALL GRANT (CONTINUED)

Contributed by Ileana Valenzuela, member of Grupo Solidario, ISE Small Grant Recipient 2005-07

for implementing the decisions taken by consensus.

That was, on a very nascent and small scale, a nonlinear process in which sustainable agricultural production, solidarity exchange and responsible consumption were complemented and interacted in a global way, creating synergies and empowering producers both technically and politically to build their own future. It was a great experience that showed us that although there is no money, the farmers - when given the chance - have a great capacity for solidarity and working together, and they can be creative and constructive. The experience also showed that the holistic approach and participatory democracy, driven by the ASAPP, were welcomed by a large number of producers, who are often subordinated to processes they have not built, and marginalized so that they cannot influence decision making.

The process, however, was not easy and was followed by an impasse, creating new challenges for achieving our mid- and long-term goals. Some people belonging to organizations that were supporting us tried to take over the process to benefit their own individual organization, so as to present the *mercadito solidario* to agencies as their own without taking into account all the actors

who were involved and trying to marginalize the ASAPP. This led to a division between the members of the RISEP and our association. Some producers, however, have continued organizing and implementing small markets in the different parishes of Petén and even have a network that they continue to call RISEP. This gave us great pleasure for it shows that the work that was done was not lost. But the flea markets no longer

continues to try to rescue all forms of culture, native seeds, plants and Itza' Maya know-how.

Since 2003 several members of the community Itza' have been part of the ASAPP but although we knew the importance of their knowledge and ancestral forms of life, we had not sufficiently considered their significance in the construction of an alternative paradigm. The decision to focus our activities on them and form a savings and loan case, with



Individual producers selling at the flea market; Productores individuales vendiendo en el mercadito. (2008)

have the same spirit of solidarity, democracy and ecological production that ASAPP had tried to instill. Given this situation the Association left the RISEP and since 2010 has limited its activities to the municipalities of San Andrés and San José where it

support from the Swiss Foundation Paul Karl Feyerabend (FPKF) helped us realize that only by recovering values, plants, technologies and ancestral knowledge of indigenous peoples will it be possible for humanity to overcome the serious socio-

A FOCUS ON THE ISE DARRELL POSEY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM:

ASAPP AFTER THE ISE DARRELL POSEY SMALL GRANT (CONTINUED)

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economic, energetic, climatic and environmental crisis in which we live. So, we are making every effort for ensure Itza's culture is not lost completely: we are supporting the formation of a group of men without land, who will be trained in the ways of Itza farming; we are supporting, with all our limitations, AFEPLAMED, the women's association for the rescue of medicinal plants of San Jose, and to create an EISE for selling their products at San Andrés.

The ASAPP has always refused to participate in formal democracy because we believe that if you do not have a sufficient balance of power there are always the powerful who will make decisions to protect their interests. We are convinced that what is urgent now for creating an impact is to change the balance of power to strengthen community organization and strategies.

Nonetheless, in the elections for president, deputies and mayors of Guatemala, held from September -November 2011, a young member of the ASAPP ran for vice president of the council of a right-wing party in San José. His argument was that if the right uses the left parties to carry out their policies why could we not use the right parties to realize our goals and, above all, channel the municipality's money to the community projects that are not usually taken into account and

have no funds. We told him that the national and local governments are part of a power structure, a net of economic and political power, that will not change just because a new person arrives, and that the state machinery destroys and erases those who do not enter the ring and are not subordinate to its logic, but we could not convince him. He did not listen to our advice. He entered the election, doing a great job in all villages of the municipality of San Jose, but in the end, his group lost the election. Apparently the opposite party took people from other municipalities to vote in San Jose and won fraudulently. This confirms our belief that the correct direction is to create a new relationship of forces and not to work within the framework of bourgeois democracy, at a time when the new force is not yet established. This is especially urgent, considering how dangerous it is when Petén is in state of emergency and there is a great pressure from narcotics trafficking on all political parties and in the government. I could not reach him to find out in detail what occurred in the election, but I hope this experience will provide lessons for the future.

In late November, our General Assembly will take place and a new president of the association will be elected. The committee of

the treasury, formed this year, will be officially confirmed and next year we hope to start providing small loans to our community members, always in the overall context of building a solidarity economy.

Thanks to the ISE Darrell Posey Small Grant and all those who have contributed to and made this process possible.

El Grupo solidario de acción y propuesta de Petén

La ASAPP es una asociación no lucrativa conformada por un pequeño número de personas, principalmente líderes comunitarios (Hombres, mujeres, viejos, jóvenes, indígenas y no indígenas, creyentes y no creyentes), quienes en el 2002 formaron el GSAPP.

Sus objetivos eran:

A) Reflexionar y analizar la forma de enfrentar las amenazas del Plan Puebla Panamá (PPP), que desde el 2001 se implementó desde el sur de México hasta Panamá, con el fin de construir en la región mesoamericana la infraestructura necesaria para atraer la inversión extranjera y vender los recursos naturales y mano de obra baratos del país. Lo que impactaría negativamente tanto a la Reserva de Biosfera Maya (RBM) y su biodiversidad como en la vida de los comunitarios;

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LA ASAPP DESPUÉS DEL DARRELL POSEY SMALL GRANT (2007-2011)

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B) Empezar un proceso de información, reflexión, análisis y debate, con la amplia participación de los líderes comunitarios, para buscar e implementar alternativas concretas al PPP. Para ello, se llevaron a cabo cinco talleres en diferentes comunidades y un foro final en Santa Elena, apoyados financieramente por OXFAM GB y el Fondo Green Grant de los Estados Unidos.

Después de dos años (2003-2004) GSAPP llegó a tres conclusiones principales:

1. No podemos esperar a que la solución nos venga de arriba (del Estado o de las ONG) sino que nosotros mismos, cada uno en el lugar en que se encuentra, somos los que tenemos que buscar y construir alternativas;
2. No se puede afrontar al sistema ni al PPP con su misma lógica, por lo que es necesario comenzar a imaginar, definir e implementar un sistema socio-económico alternativo que impulse un cambio social global;
3. En el proceso de construcción de dicho sistema es necesario comenzar a delinear una estrategia de desarrollo rural alternativo que muestre los lineamientos principales y los pasos concreto necesarios

para resolver los problemas socio-ambientales del Petén.

La Asociación Solidaria de Acción y Propuesta de Petén (ASAPP)

Con el apoyo del Darrell Posey Small Grant que nos dio su apoyo del 2005 al 2007, El GSAPP se legalizó en marzo del 2006 y se convirtió en La ASAPP. Se buscaba contribuir a construir en las comunidades de Petén un desarrollo rural alternativo, basado en la solidaridad, la complementariedad, la reciprocidad y la democracia directa y participativa, utilizando tecnologías apropiadas y sostenibles. Se buscaba también: fortalecer la organización, la autonomía y la autogestión de las comunidades para que fueran autosuficientes; implementaran proyectos productivos con tecnologías que no destruyan ni la RBM ni su biodiversidad; impulsaran el turismo comunitario e implantaran un mercado solidario en el marco de una estrategia de desarrollo alternativo.

Gracias al Darrell Posey Small Grant, for Ethnoecology and Traditional Resource Rights / Oxford Fellowship, se realizaron talleres introductorios a la agroecología con grupos de jóvenes (hombres y mujeres) en algunas comunidades y se prosiguió con las reuniones de análisis, reflexión y debate. Esto suscitó un gran interés entre los jóvenes quienes querían

comenzar a implementar sus propios proyectos, lo que no pudimos satisfacer, pues ellos esperaban un apoyo técnico regular que no podíamos proporcionarles por falta de medios financieros. Esto principalmente porque la ASAPP no entra en el marco tradicional de la "cooperación para el desarrollo" lo que, por una parte nos permite tomar nuestras propias decisiones en función de cada circunstancia particular y ser muy independientes, pero, por otra parte nos impide realizar muchas acciones por falta de dinero.

La ASAPP después del Darrell Posey Small Grant

El último dinero del Darrell Posey lo dedicamos, entonces, a finales del 2007 a un pequeño estudio sobre la implementación de un mercado solidario y ecológico con otras organizaciones de productores agrícolas ecológicos a las que invitamos a participar. Algunas respondieron en forma positiva y con ellas ASAPP conformó la Red de Intercambio Solidario y Ecológico de Petén (RISEP) e implementó un mercadito solidario y ecológico en Santa Elena todos los últimos viernes y sábados de cada mes, desde mediados del 2008 hasta finales del 2010. Para la ASAPP, el mercadito solidario, que al principio los comunitarios llamaron feria y por último Espacio de Intercambio Solidario y Ecológico (EISE), entraba en el

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marco del proceso de Economía Solidaria global que la asociación estaba impulsando. Es decir, de un proceso no lineal en el que la producción agrícola sostenible, el intercambio solidario y ecológico y el consumo responsable se vean en forma global, se complementen, creen sinergias y contribuyan a que la comunidad se organice, se capacite y se empodere, tanto técnica como políticamente, a fin de construir su propio futuro.

Fue una gran experiencia que mostró que, aunque no haya dinero, los campesinos cuando se les da la oportunidad, tienen una gran capacidad de ser solidarios y trabajar juntos, de ser creativos y constructivos. También mostró que el enfoque holístico y la democracia participativa impulsados por la ASAPP eran bien recibidos por los productores que están a menudo subordinados a procesos que ellos no han construido y marginados de la toma de decisiones. El proceso, sin embargo no fue fácil y los avances del inicio fueron seguidos por un impasse, abriendo nuevos retos a mediano y largo plazo. Algunas personas pertenecientes a las organizaciones que nos estaban apoyando trataron de apropiarse del proceso en beneficio de su propia organización, de manera a presentarlo a las agencias como suyo, sin tomar en cuenta a todos los actores que habían

participado y tratando de marginar a la ASAPP, propiciando la división entre los miembros de la RISEP y la asociación. Algunos



Doña Irma Chayax presidenta AFEPLAMED vendiendo en el mercadito; Doña Irma Chayax president selling in the flea market AFEPLAMED. (2009)

productores, sin embargo, siguieron organizándose e implementando mercaditos en diferentes parroquias de Petén e incluso mantienen una red a la que continúan llamando RISEP, lo que nos da un gran gusto pues muestra que el trabajo que se hizo no fue perdido, aunque, los mercaditos ya no se hacen con el mismo espíritu solidario, democrático y ecológico que la ASAPP había tratado de infundirles. Ante esta situación salimos de La RISEP a finales del 2009 y desde entonces hemos limitado nuestras actividades a los municipios de San Andrés y

San José donde buscamos rescatar las formas de cultivo, semillas y conocimientos Maya Itza'.

Desde el 2003 varios miembros de la comunidad Itza' han formado parte de la ASAPP. Aunque sabemos la importancia de sus conocimientos y formas de vida ancestrales no los habíamos considerado como algo esencial en el paradigma socio-económico alternativo que estamos contribuyendo a construir. La decisión de concentrar nuestras actividades y de formar una caja de ahorro y crédito comunitaria y solidaria con ellos, apoyados por la fundación suiza Paul Karl Feyerabend (FPKF), nos hizo comprender que solamente rescatando los valores, tecnologías y conocimientos ancestrales de las poblaciones indígenas será posible que la humanidad logre superar las graves crisis, socio-económica, energética, climática y ambiental que estamos viviendo. Por lo que, junto con la implementación de la caja de ahorro y crédito comunitaria y solidaria la ASAPP está haciendo todos sus esfuerzos por que la cultura Itza' no se pierda: Estamos apoyando la formación de un grupo de hombres, sin tierra, para que se capacite en agricultura Itzá, apoyamos, con todas nuestras limitaciones, a AFEPLAMED, la Asociación femenina para el rescate de plantas medicinales de

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San José y en noviembre abriremos un punto de venta, un EISE, para la venta de sus productos en San Andrés.

En lo que concierne la incidencia política, La ASAPP ha siempre rechazado participar en las diferentes forma de democracia formal (mesas de dialogo, elecciones, etc.) pues pensamos que si no se tiene una relación de fuerzas suficiente son siempre los poderosos los que van a tomar las decisiones para defender sus intereses. Estamos convencido de que, lo que urge en este momento es cambiar la relación de fuerzas fortaleciendo la organización y la conciencia comunitarias. Sin embargo, en las elecciones para presidente de Guatemala, diputados y alcaldes municipales que acaban de tener lugar en octubre-noviembre del 2011, un joven miembro de la ASAPP se presentó como candidato a vicepresidente del consejo municipal de un partido de derecha en San José. Su argumento era que si la derecha utiliza a los partidos de izquierda para que realicen sus políticas nosotros deberíamos utilizar a la derecha para realizar nuestros objetivos y sobre todo, canalizar el dinero de la municipalidad a los proyectos comunitarios que de costumbre no se toman en cuenta y no tienen fondos.

Le explicamos que los gobiernos tanto nacionales como locales forman parte de una estructura

de poder que no va a cambiar sólo porque llega una persona nueva sino que es un entretrejo de poderes económicos y políticos, de la que la persona que no se somete es excluida. Pero, él no escucho nuestros consejos. Es el derecho de la juventud el de cometer sus propios errores y nosotros los viejos no podemos más que transmitirles nuestras experiencias y aprendizajes. En consecuencia, él se presentó a las elecciones después de un gran trabajo con la población de todas las aldeas de la municipalidad de San José pero su grupo perdió las elecciones. Aparentemente el partido contrario llevó gente de otras municipalidades a votar a San José y gano fraudulentamente, lo que confirma nuestra convicción de que la incidencia política consiste en crear una nueva relación de fuerzas y no en trabajar en el marco de la democracia burguesa, cuando esa nueva fuerza aún no está constituida. Sobre todo si consideramos lo peligroso que es, en un momento en que Petén está

en Estado de Emergencia y los narcotraficantes tienen una gran fuerza (mucho dinero) en todos los partidos y en el gobierno. No he podido hablar con él para ver que fue lo que sucedió realmente pero esperamos que esta experiencia le haya dejado muchas enseñanzas y le haya permitido contactar e identificar a jóvenes entusiastas que quieran participar al trabajo de la ASAPP, espero que pronto esté de nuevo trabajando con nosotros pues es una persona muy valiosa para la asociación.

A finales de noviembre se realizará nuestra Asamblea General y se elegirá un nuevo presidente(a) de la asociación, se confirmará oficialmente al comité de la caja de ahorro y crédito, que se formó este año, y esperamos el 2012 comenzar a dar créditos a los comunitarios, siempre en el marco global de construcción de una economía solidaria. Gracias al Darrel Posey Small Grant y a todos aquellos que han hecho posible este proceso.



Don Zacarias en su parcela; Don Zacarias on their plot. (2009)

CONFERENCE AND WORKSHOP REPORTS:

ON FOREST FOODS, A FESTIVAL AND COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

Written by Jenne de Beer, reproduced with permission from the CFA Newsletter¹

Introduction

To many indigenous communities in Asia, traditional activities such as the gathering of forest foods, hunting and fishing, are vital adjuncts to farming and together, together forming an integrated system of resource utilization, catering to elementary subsistence needs. Forest foods can be a key emergency food buffer during times of famine or seasonal scarcity. But even in less challenging times, these foods, in the form of side dishes and snacks, are able to provide valuable nutritional supplements to cultivated staples.

In fact, the nutritional value of forest food is in no way inferior to that of farm crop. On the contrary, recent research findings increasingly point to the superior health benefits of wild gathered foods. Another undeniable forte of wild gathered food is the much greater variation in taste. Furthermore, forest foods are usually free – an important consideration for families with limited cash for purchases



Time for rest and discussion after a successful foraging trip in the vicinity of Mount Pinatubo.

However, where in the past the forest could be considered a good provider, in many locations destructive developments have led to a collapse of the food's resource base. In addition, mainstream society often looks down on the consumption of wild gathered food, perceiving the practice as a sign of backwardness.

On the other hand, 'modern' processed and comparatively nutrient poor items have gradually entered tribal areas and have become significant staples of day-to-day diets. Meanwhile, the role of wild gathered foods is commonly underreported, if not outright ignored by development organizations and government agencies alike. This notwithstanding the fact, that currently "food security" (in the context of "poverty alleviation") is a regularly featured item on the international development agenda.

Finally, in and outside of forestry circles, recognition of the importance of non-timber forest products has increased considerably over the last two decades or so, though primarily in terms of the income generating potential for forest dependent communities. But also in this context, attention for subsistence aspects – including those that are nutrition related – is still lagging far behind.

CASE: The Aeta of the Philippines
In the Philippines, the different



On site preparation of wild banana juice, a most refreshing drink.

indigenous peoples with a hunter gatherer background, collectively referred to as 'Negritos' represent the country's most ancient civilization.

Few in numbers overall, small pockets are scattered over much of the country. Their distinctive cultures and forest related way of life is little appreciated in mainstream society and they have long since been marginalized, pushed aside and taken advantage off – even as compared to other indigenous peoples.

These ethnic groups, among which number the Aeta of Eastern Luzon, have an exceptionally strong relationship with the forest and many cultural traits reflect this relationship. Furthermore, their societies are highly egalitarian and decision making is

CONFERENCE AND WORKSHOP REPORTS:

ON FOREST FOODS, A FESTIVAL AND COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT (CONTINUED)

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traditionally inclusive.

Even today foods from the forest are much appreciated by the Aeta. Items include: leaf and root vegetables (the former including various species of ferns, the latter e.g. *Dioscorea esculenta* and several other *Dioscorea*), fruits and blossoms (both e.g. derived from wild banana, *Musa sp.*), palm heart ('uwud' a generic term referring to a range of palms), as well as mushrooms, bush meat (wild boar in particular), fish, crabs and other aquatic animals.

Indeed, forest foods, though nowadays a minor component volume-wise, are a healthy and enjoyable part of the Aeta diet. And, in their case, the relevant knowledge base is still largely intact, while some of the skills involved in hunting or gathering also serve as pronounced identity markers. However, in light of persistent erosive cultural pressures and in order to invigorate the food tradition, 'affirmative' counteraction is warranted. One action, along these lines, took place earlier this year in the province of Tarlac and in the framework of a larger 'Negrito cultural revival and empowerment initiative'.

During a series of informal 'mam-eh' (sharing) sessions taking place around campfires or at forest picnics, an upcoming cultural revival festival was discussed. Aeta women and men,

members of the local NGO KAKAI and the author participated in these discussions. It became apparent that the Aeta involved were very excited to share their knowledge about forest foods and it was soon decided to let the festival revolve around the subject. From there it was a short walk, and on April 28th, 2010, the first ever 'Aeta Forest Foods Festival' took place.

Over four hundred participants joined in the event, the vast majority Aeta from Tarlac, with a contingent of Aeta and Agta from four other provinces. At the festival, to which participants had brought ample specialty food items from the forests and swiddens in their respective areas, a 'gather, cook and taste' session of traditional foods took central stage. The session opened with



Sharp shooting with bow and arrow: it is a key part of the Aeta way of life.

the lightening of a cooking fire – both women and men using their respective traditional implements – and with offerings to 'Anito', environment spirits.

Apart from food preparation and actual tasting, recipes, rituals and information with respect to the ingredients were shared. In addition, survival skills, such as trap making, archery and techniques of sustainable yam digging, were demonstrated and many of the participants engaged in story telling dancing and singing, much of it related to the food served.

The festival was followed by a one-day 'multi-sector development forum'. The forum, with Aeta leaders in charge and top echelon government officials involved, aimed at providing a platform for sharing the communities' aspirations and concerns. The open dialogue largely focused on developments affecting the security of the Aeta's ancestral domains and the natural resources therein. It was noticeable that outside guests were able to gain new appreciation for a special cultural heritage, which is inextricably linked to their forests.

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CONFERENCE AND WORKSHOP REPORTS:

ON FOREST FOODS, A FESTIVAL AND COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT (CONTINUED)

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Conclusion

In light of the enthusiastic response of participants during and after the event, it could be argued that, in combination with the intensive preparatory process, it did help invigorate the Aeta's food tradition and it visibly fostered greater pride in related skills, knowledge and customs. (See www.youtube.com.)

It also appears, considering how the activity resonated with officials, media and others, that a better understanding and more respect by outsiders for the rich cultural heritage of the Aeta (and of which forest foods are an integral part), was another remarkable achievement.



Chanting the dururo, thanking all for coming to the festival from far away.

¹Article written by Jenne de Beer, the 2009-2011 ISE Darrell Posey Field Fellow and former Executive Director of the NTFP Exchange Programme for South & Southeast. Reproduced with permission from the CFA Newsletter, No.54 September 2011 ISSN 1750-6417

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CONFERENCE AND WORKSHOP REPORTS: 2ND ISE EASTERN-EUROPEAN ETHNOBIOLOGY WORKSHOP IN HUNGARY:

“METHODOLOGIES AND METHODS IN ETHNOBIOLOGY”
Contributed by ISE members Anna Varga and Zsolt Molnár



The 2nd Eastern-European Ethnobiology Workshop was held at Királyrét in the heart of the Börzsöny Mountains, Hungary, between 13-16th October, 2011 (scientific committee: Andrea Pieroni, Ingvar Svanberg, Łukasz Łuczaj, Renata Šoukand, and Zsolt Molnár; local organizing committee: Anna Varga and Zsolt Molnár).

At the 1st EEE Workshop in Padise (Estonia) in 2010 we decided to develop a research network and to have workshops each year, and in Hungary in 2011. The 37 participants arrived from 11 countries: Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Estonia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, Sweden, and Turkey. The goal of the 2nd Workshop was not just to bring together ethnobiologists to share the latest and planned ethnobiological research in the region, but also to discuss questions regarding methodologies and methods.

On the first day each participant introduced her or his research work. Topics of the presentations

were diverse, and included ethnobotany, ethnoecology (vegetation), ethnozoology, ethnomedicine, historical studies and use of traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) in nature conservation.

On the second day we discussed methodological questions from theoretical and practical aspects. We also had a role-playing exercise that allowed participants to experience being a native informant or a researcher, respectively, through “interviews” on edible oils. This exercise showed how diverse our interviewing practices are. In the afternoon we visited the Kacár Farm where we saw an example of ethnobiology education through a traditional farming experience.

On the morning of the third day we had a brain-storming session on the use of historical data in ethnobiology, ethnobiology in education, and future prospects on joint research. Finally, part of the group went on a canoe trip on the old and blue Danube.

In the evenings we had time to get to know the culture of the participants’ countries through traditional music, food and drink, and short ethno-movies.



Additionally, we had 2 workshop trips: before the conference we visited the Hortobágy salt steppe (puszta), where we experienced the deep ethnobiological knowledge of herdsmen and enjoyed the migrating cranes, and after the conference we discovered some ethnobiology in Budapest, by visiting the Hungarian Ethnographical Museum and a big food market where we tasted different mineral waters from a natural spring in the middle of the capital.

As organizers we can say it was a great pleasure to organize this workshop in Hungary!



ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE ISE

Mary Stockdale joins the ISE Board

The ISE Board is pleased to announce the appointment of Mary Stockdale [link to bio] as the ISE Co-Chair of the **ISE Darrell Posey Fellowship for Ethnobotany and Traditional Resource Rights** with current Chair, [Sarah Laird](#).

Mary and Sarah are currently working with the 2011 Selection Committee to review the applications for the four program components (Field Fellowship, Small grants, PhD Fellowship, and Masters Fellowships) that have been generously funded by the Christensen Fund. We expect to announce the recipients in early January 2012.

Krystyna Swiderska joins the ISE Board

The ISE Board is pleased to announce the appointment of *Krystyna Swiderska* [link to bio] as the ISE Co-Director of the **ISE Global Coalition for Biological and Cultural Diversity** with current Director, [Alejandro Argumedo](#).

Among other initiatives, Alejandro and *Krystyna* are coordinating a full day workshop to be held during the 2012 ISE Congress. The workshop will include a variety of presentations on protocols used as tools to implement the UNDRIPs principles in different international agreements, relating to traditional knowledge (e.g., CBD, FAO, WTO, WIPO, WHO), followed by an afternoon of discussion around practical implementation.

Registration for the 2012 ISE Congress is open

The [online registration](#) for the 13th Congress of the International Society of Ethnobiology to be held in Montpellier, 20-25 May 2012, is now open. Please visit the page "Registration" of the congress website for further instructions about how to proceed. The various categories of registration fees are as well documented on this webpage. Please note that the online registration form is provided only in two languages: English and French.

Están abiertas las inscripciones al XIII Congreso de la Sociedad Internacional de Etnobiología, el cual tendrá lugar en Montpellier del 20 al 25 de mayo de 2012. Puede acceder a la página "Inscripción" (traducción en curso) del sitio Internet del congreso para mayor información sobre las modalidades y los costos de inscripción. El formulario de inscripción está disponible en dos idiomas: inglés y francés.

L'inscription en ligne au 13ème Congrès de la Société Internationale d'Etnobiologie, qui se tiendra à Montpellier du 20 au 25 mai 2012, est dorénavant ouverte. Prière de vous rendre sur la page "Inscription" du site Internet du congrès pour plus d'informations sur les modalités à suivre. La grille tarifaire des droits d'inscriptions est également disponible à cette même page web. Veuillez noter que le formulaire d'inscription en ligne n'est dis-

OTHER NEWS

Ethnobiologists Bookshelf

Please see the [Ethnobiologist's Bookshelf](#) on the ISE website for new items in this section.

Upcoming Events & Announcements

Please see the [News](#) page on the ISE website for upcoming events and other announcements.

Disclaimer

The views and opinions expressed in the articles in the ISE Newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the policy or position of the International Society of Ethnobiology.

ISE MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

We would like to remind you that the ISE [membership drive](#) is still taking place. Our goal is to expand our membership base while encouraging new and renewing members to actively engage in the ISE in ways that are mutually beneficial and the build capacity of the Society to achieve our goals. Beginning September 2008 and **now extended into 2011**, the ISE encourages membership fee waivers in exchange for in-kind contributions to the Society. Possible in-kind contributions include (but are not limited to) language translation, computer design/graphics, photography, editing, writing, and distribution of ISE materials (e.g., regional brochures, posters, Code of Ethics, etc.). We are very open to other suggestions for in-kind contributions and ways to encourage our members to use their interests and skills to be active in the Society.

Current membership benefits include the ISE Newsletter, the option to receive email updates on relevant conference, career, and scholarship opportunities, networking opportunities with other members world-wide, and reduced registration fees at the Congresses. Additionally, the ISE will be launching a member discussion forum in the Winter of 2011/2012, which will help our members make connections and network within the ISE community and beyond.

As we continue moving forward with these activities, the ISE welcomes your feedback, contributions and ideas on furthering our vision to promote understanding, dialogue and harmonious co-existence between humankind and the Bios for the benefit of future generations.

THE 2010-2012 ISE BOARD



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