



SWM SUSTAINABLE WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME

GUYANA

newsletter

Issue 8 - January - October 2021

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WHAT'S INSIDE?

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WELCOME

We are now entering the fourth year of the Sustainable Wildlife Management (SWM) Programme's work in Guyana. Despite the many challenges posed by the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, our focus remains the same, to achieve conservation and sustainable management of wildlife and to promote livelihoods that are aligned with local aspirations.

During the last six months, and thanks to our very efficient and incredibly motivated local partners, we have launched and completed many studies and initiatives. These include preparing our human-carnivore co-existence study; completing an arapaima stock assessment in the Rupununi River; facilitating the adoption of wildlife resource guidelines in South Rupununi villages; supporting the establishment of a community-led giant anteater safe zone; coordinating a community management plan for the red siskin; and initiating traditional knowledge classes with children in South Rupununi.

We hope you enjoy this latest issue of the SWM Programme-Guyana newsletter. There is much to celebrate and much to do. Keep safe, and please visit the Guyana Wildlife and Conservation Management Commission managed Sustainable Wildlife Management – Programme Guyana Facebook page for featured stories and videos.

Nathalie Van Vliet
SWM Programme site coordinator in Guyana

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Reducing human–carnivore conflict through participatory research

- SWM-Guyana is working with the Rupununi Livestock Producers Association to increase understanding of the co-existence of livestock and wildlife. A total of seven communities and four private ranches are included in this study.
- We carried out eight workshops on participatory mapping to show instances of livestock predation by carnivores.
- We fitted 30 cows with GPS collars to allow us to track the cattle.
- We conducted 147 semi-structured interviews in villages to understand how people feel about and react to carnivore attacks to livestock.
- The preliminary results show that jaguars, humans (rustlers), pumas, savannah hawks and crab-eating foxes are the top five species that could pose a threat to livestock.

Fisheries management: 89% of households go fishing daily or weekly and about 50 kg of fish are consumed per person per year

- SWM continues to support the North Rupununi District Development Board (NRDDDB) in the implementation of their fisheries management plan.
- An arapaima survey was conducted between March and April in collaboration with the Fisheries Department of the Ministry of Agriculture.
- Local experts and trained arapaima counters led by Mr Elvis Joseph surveyed 152 ponds in the Rupununi, Rewa and Essequibo Rivers and counted a total of 2 521 arapaima (including juveniles).
- The results show a decline in arapaima abundance in all areas from 2013 to 2021. This indicates that more conservation and enforcement efforts by all stakeholders are needed to recover arapaima populations.

Wildlife management: Villages are discussing hunting guidelines

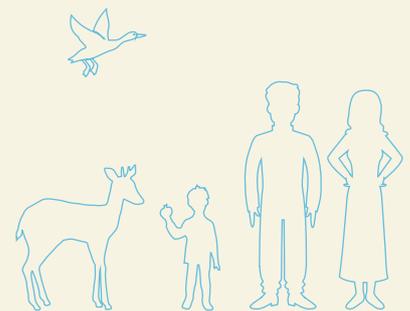
- SWM in partnership with the Wapichan Wiizi Wildlife Committee from the South Rupununi District Council continues to support the adoption of wildlife resource guidelines in village rules in eight South Rupununi villages.
- General hunting and fishing guidelines have been developed by the Wapichan Wiizi.

Wildlife monitoring: Management plans for community-based conservation management zones are being developed

- South Rupununi Conservation Society (SRCS) has recorded the presence of 35 giant anteaters in Katoonarib using camera traps. This has resulted in the development of a community-led giant anteater safe zone in Katoonarib.
- SRCS has identified six new red siskin sites this year. A community wildlife management area for the conservation of the red siskin and other vulnerable species is being discussed by six villages in the South Rupununi.
- SRCS and Caiman House have surveyed 18 beaches and identified 178 river turtle nests. In Caiman house, 567 eggs hatched, corresponding to a hatching rate of 56 percent. Hatchling survival rate was 85 percent, meaning that 483 juveniles were successfully released to the river.



Attaching a GPS collar to a bull at a ranch in the Rupununi as part of the human-carnivore conflict study



Red siskin studied as part of the red siskin monitoring program in South Rupununi

Environmental education: Wildlife clubs are active and traditional knowledge classes have been implemented despite COVID-19

- The NRDDB wildlife club recorded 19 terrestrial species with their camera traps. Rodents, such as the agouti and paca, were the most abundant, but they also captured the white-lipped peccary, giant armadillo, red-brocket deer, tapir, coati and oncilla. Giant anteater and the crab-eating fox were also detected at forest edges.
- SRCS completed 60 traditional knowledge classes in eight communities where a total of 240 students participated! Students learnt basket weaving, cotton spinning, leather craft, wood craft, local languages, storytelling and arrow making.



Kids learning how to build a basket as part of the traditional knowledge classes

Sustainable livestock rearing: Local poultry production is on the rise in the region

- The Rupununi Livestock Producers' Association continues to support the production and accessibility of affordable protein in communities. Through the establishment of the Livestock Hub in Lethem, they have so far supplied 17 000 chicks and 48 000 kg of chicken feed to farmers.
- Two new Livestock Hub coordinators have been hired in Karasabai and Aishalton.
- The local feed challenge was implemented in seven villages where ten households were given seven chicks each along with 6 kg of feed.

Impacts of fire on wildlife

- In coordination with SRCS and the Royal University of Holloway, SWM continues to monitor the impacts of fire within Shulinab.
- A fire team of four people monitors transects, collecting data on the impacts of fire on wildlife and plants. The team travels to ten different locations twice monthly.
- Additionally, the fire team has 'eyes in the sky' with a drone operator monitoring the visual changes along each transect during each season.
- Our preliminary data suggests that fire may affect the bird community through long-term alteration of habitat features. For mammals, only savannah species were detected on burn scars, but further research will indicate whether fire impacts mammal distribution.



The fire monitoring team marking their transects

Wildmeat and Wildlife Trade Study: Is wildmeat on the menu?

- SWM has continued to monitor wild meat selling points in Region 9 and the coast to understand market chains, structures, volumes and buyer preferences.
- Did you know that up to 677 tonnes of wild meat are sold per year by about 60 traders on the Coast?

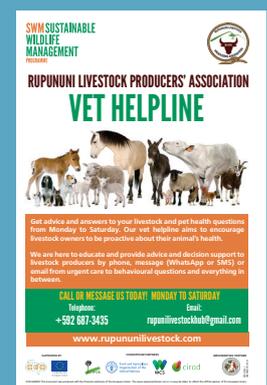
PUBLISHED



Video:
How to make a traditional arrow in Guyana
<https://youtu.be/U13TaVvjO6g>



Keep the Rupununi wild posters:
<http://www.fao.org/3/cb5815en/cb5815en.pdf>
<http://www.fao.org/3/cb5817en/cb5817en.pdf>
<http://www.fao.org/3/cb5832en/cb5832en.pdf>
<http://www.fao.org/3/cb5833en/cb5833en.pdf>



Rupununi Livestock Producers Association vet helpline poster:
<http://www.fao.org/3/cb4969en/cb4969en.pdf>

FROM THE FIELD

“LOCAL MEAT YOU JUST CAN’T BEAT!”

The RLPA local feed challenge



HIGHLIGHTS

The Rupununi Livestock Producers Association have successfully launched a local feed challenge in seven communities.

SWM Programme-led human-wildlife conflict activities have begun.

The SRCS has begun traditional knowledge classes in eight communities with over 240 students participating so far!

SWM PROGRAMME

The activities in Guyana are part of the SWM Programme, an initiative of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States, which is funded by the European Union with co-funding from the French Facility for Global Environment (FFEM) and the French Development Agency (AFD). The SWM Programme mobilizes an international group of partner organizations with experience and expertise in wildlife conservation, food security and policy development. It is implemented through a consortium partnership, which includes the Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and the French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD). Activities are being implemented in 15 participating countries, namely Botswana, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Gabon, Guyana, Madagascar, Mali, Namibia, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Congo, Senegal, Sudan, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

MEET OUR TEAM

Meet **Eian Gray**. Commonly known as “Bly” in the Rupununi, Eian is the Field Logistics Coordinator for the South Rupununi Conservation Society (SRCS), a partner organisation for SWM-Guyana. Eian joined the SRCS as a cadet ranger and took part in numerous field trips to gain the necessary experience to become a senior ranger before he secured his current position. Eian is responsible for overseeing all the red siskin rangers and for communicating with the communities that SRCS works with. Eian’s aim is to become a “naturalist tour guide”, given his knowledge and passion for the wildlife and environment in the Rupununi.



A brighter future for people and wildlife



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