

Kate Stokes Memorial Trust Newsletter, 31 December 2021



Kate Stokes

Dear Friends,

As for so many, 2021 has been even more challenging than 2020 for environmental organisations around the world. But there is always hope on the horizon, with occasional reports of success and triumphs.

One such event that lifted the spirits of the Trustees was the Tusk Award for Conservation in Africa 2021 with two of the three finalists being closely connected with the Trust. The Tusk Award winner, Julie Hanta Razafimanahaka received the Kate Stokes

Memorial Award with her team in 2020, and her fellow nominee Dr Caleb Ofori-Boateng has also been involved with Kate Stokes Award-winning teams. Our congratulations to them both.

This is the Trust's sixteenth year. There have been no recent changes to our organisation and we are confident of the financial stability of the Trust.

We are extremely grateful to the supporters of the Trust, whose contributions continue to help fund teams of enthusiastic young environmentalists

to conserve threatened biodiversity and inspire and educate their local communities.



Julie Hanta Razafimanahaka accepting her Tusk Award from HRH The Duke of Cambridge

Trust Annual Review

In May, the Trustees met virtually to consider applications for the 2021 Award. Ten projects submitted met the criteria for the Award. After deliberation the Award was offered to, and accepted by, Edna Leticia Gonzalez-Bernal of

Oaxaca, Mexico for her team's project "Reconnecting with nature: attitude change towards conservation of the cloud forest herpetofauna in a Chinantec community". Edna's first report appears overleaf.

It is heart-warming to once again have received so many well considered applications for the Award, demonstrating the determination and dedication of young conservationists in so many parts of the world. We hope to receive another excellent batch of applications next year for the 2022 Award.

The Trust AGM, deferred in the hope of an in-person meeting, will be held in the New Year. Sadly, it seems likely to be virtual again. The Trust's finances and investments are

secure. There are sufficient reserves to fund both the 2022 and 2023 Awards. The continuing support of family, friends and other donors, is greatly appreciated by the Trustees and gives us much hope for the future and security of the Trust for many years to come.

As ever, the Trust is indebted to the Conservation Leadership Programme for its constant and continuing advice, encouragement and support.



A new logo and frog conservation in Mexico

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Trustees: Sue & Antony Stokes, Marianne Carter, Andy Brock-Doyle, Stuart Paterson | Special Advisor: Robyn Dalzen

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2021 Winner: Reconnecting with nature in a Chinantec community in Mexico

As in many places in the world, COVID-19 has changed the dynamics of rural communities in Mexico. In La Esperanza, located 75 km from Oaxaca city, recent covid cases have arisen even though the first vaccination doses have been administered. Consequently, local authorities have decided to cancel group activities and close the community entrance to external people, forcing us to postpone the activities that necessitated direct interaction with the local people.

However, we received authorization to gather material needed for the

different workshops, and the amphibian festival. We were allowed to enter the nearby forest and streams (keeping our camp outside the community) to take photographs and record frog vocalizations and videos that will be used in group activities planned for 2022. In addition, following all the safety measures, we have placed some posters inside the community to arouse curiosity about amphibians and our planned activities. We will let you know about their effect once we are allowed to interact with the local people.

Our team has designed the logo that will represent our activities and that has been printed in the outreach materials both in Chinantec and Spanish. We are also very excited to share with you that we are in the process of designing the first sketch of the “herpetofauna conservation mural” in collaboration with Ana, the artist who will paint it.

We plan to return to La Esperanza next February and continue with our work according to calendar adjustments.



Celebrating the Tusk Award in front of the new visitor centre, Mangabe, Madagascar



Dried Taxus mairei leaves, Nepal

2020 Project: Building a home for people and Biodiversity in Mangabe Reserve, Madagascar

In June 2021, construction of an information centre started for people to learn about nature and other aspects of life in Mangabe village. The building was completed in September 2021 and we are now waiting for the equipment for the centre to be delivered in February 2022.

The Kate Stokes Memorial Award helped Madagasikara Voakajy secure additional funding to run educational events at the information centre in 2022, improve the work planned in Mangabe village and build two new centres at two other villages.

2019 Project Update: Taxus mairei in Nepal

Reshu's post-project report illustrates the importance of continuing

funding and project support everywhere: Our team has identified the need for future research and have explored sources for future funding. As such, we have applied for a CLP follow-up grant to support the long-term conservation via restoration of *Taxus mairei* as well as the EDGE Fellowship to explore the identification issues of *T. mairei* and its implications to conservation. We are also lobbying the Government of Nepal, especially the local level authorities to help them incorporate *Taxus* conservation in their work plan.