

## 2007 Sea Turtle Season!

A big "hola" to you all from Parque Hawaii where we have begun the 2007 turtle season in fantastic form! The "Temporada de las Tortugas" was officially started by inaugurations for both the Hawaii and El Rosario hatcheries. Both were really well attended and included presentations from Colum Muccio (Administrative Director of Arcas), Eduardo Merida (Parque Hawaii Director), Scott Handy (Project Parlama coordinator), as well as from representatives of CONAP (the environmental protection agency) and DIPRONA (the environmental police).



Scott giving out prizes to the winners of the "turtle knowledge quiz"

## Team Parlama Karma

We started this year's season in amazing style with the help of a truly awesome group of volunteers. Enormous special thanks to team "Parlama Karma", for all their amazing efforts at Parque Hawaii during the last month. All their enthusiasm, dedication, talents and positive energies made July an incredible month to start the nesting season. Look out for the amazing Parlama Karma theme tune coming to an internet site near you soon! We will keep you posted!



Team Parlama Karma (from back left): Chisa, Insa, Armando, Dyane, Katie, Rob and Tara

## Parque Hawaii July Egg Total ..... 1,697!

Despite the fact we are still early on in the season, with between 2-4 nestings within our 8km patrol area per night, due to all the volunteers' hard walking we have been lucky enough to find seven nests over the last month! This has been backed up by a really good collaboration rate with donations and Sponsor a Nest (see later). We are also just under 700 eggs up on the July total for 2006 so hopefully well on the way to reaching our goal of 30,000 eggs this year!

## First Nests Hatch!



In the last two weeks four of our first nests have hatched! These were nests that were found by Eduardo and volunteers back in May, before the 'official start' of the nesting season, due to strong winds. It's always exciting as ever to release the first babies of the year!

## >Igomango

Due to the recent unfortunate loss of European Union EVS funding (which in the past has covered costs for Project Parlama volunteers at the sites of Hawaii, El Rosario, El Gariton and La Barrona), we are currently looking for long term volunteers to come and work at any of our 4 Pacific sites or 2 new Caribbean projects in Guatemala. Mango is a non-profit volunteer organization established by Dr Rob Nunny of Ambios. If any one is interested in learning more about becoming a Mango volunteer, please check out the web site:

[www.igomango.com](http://www.igomango.com)

## World Challenge

We have in the last three weeks received 2 groups of World Challenge expeditions from England: BVC Independent and Cockermonth. World Challenge conducts expeditions across the world, giving groups of teenagers the opportunity to travel and experience different cultures. Both groups participated in our "homestay" project in El Rosario, living with local families and learning new skills such as hammock making and fishing.

**BVC Independent** worked on constructing a life-sized leatherback sculpture for the education centre in Hawaii, painting a large turtle mural in the village of El Rosario and conducting a beach clean and games afternoon with local children.



BVC Independent group with local children after a beach clean up.

**Cockermonth 1** team constructed a new information area in PH about ancient and modern cultural turtle beliefs, as well as building a new hatchery education shelter in El Rosario, where they conducted an environmental education class about rubbish and the importance of keeping their village and beach clean.



Cockermonth1 with local children under the shelter they constructed in El Rosario.

Many thanks to both groups for the work they carried out in Parque Hawaii and El Rosario.

## Health, Harmony & Hand-Soap!

During our time back in the UK from April to June, as part of our ongoing fundraising for Sponsor a Nest we set up our "save the sea turtles" stall for two days at the Health and Harmony Festival held at Tapley Park in North Devon, England. This gave us the opportunity to talk to many interested people about our work in Guatemala and to raise money for to buy eggs. We organised a turtle raffle, sold handmade bracelets (by Sarah), turtle t-shirts, prints, toys and ceramics. [Special thanks to Ian and Rosie](#), (festival organisers) plus everyone we met at the festival for all their interest and support.



Special thanks to Scott's mum, Sue Hewitt, who made hundreds of beautiful handmade turtle-shaped soap, with 100% of all sales going towards Sponsor a Nest. Anyone interested in purchasing our "turtle soap" can contact Sue at [www.sueshearthampers.com](http://www.sueshearthampers.com)



Also thank you to all the staff and children at Kiddi Karu Nursery in Exeter for their support, and also to all our friends and family who came to our TIPSY TURTLE FUND NIGHT.

## Muchas Gracias!

## El Dormido Crisis

Many of you will be familiar with the events of 2005 and Hurricane Stan, which caused serious flooding affecting many parts of Guatemala, including the Pacific coast, where the village of El Dormido (8km from Parque Hawaii) was entirely swept away. The people there lost everything but their spirit to survive and were later given a new piece of land by the government. Unfortunately when this decision was made, the high erosion levels on the new river mouth were not taken into account. This means that only 18 months later the people of El Dormido are faced with losing their homes once again.

An attempt to halt the erosion of the river mouth earlier this year by using thousands of sandbags failed in under three weeks after they were all washed away by the strong currents. At one stage, they were losing up to 2m of beach every day.



Photograph of El Dormido taken at low tide. Since this photograph was taken two weeks ago, the house on the far right is no longer standing.

At present the river bank is about 5 metres away from the water wells and more than 3 families have already lost their homes.

Although little can be done now to save the village of El Dormido, we are currently in the process of setting up an El Dormido relief fund that will at least go a little way in supporting the people of the village to set their lives up once again, where ever that may be.

**Anyone interested in helping to support El Dormido by making a donation can send us an email through [www.sponsoranest.com](http://www.sponsoranest.com)**

## Sponsor a Nest

Even though nesting density is still quite low at the moment resulting in high egg prices (about Q33 a dozen), it still has not stopped many of our volunteers putting their hands in their pockets in order to save the turtles! Many thanks to Parlama Karma team, World Challenge, plus all other volunteers who have kindly bought nests. For everyone else who has very generously donated money to buy eggs, we are planning to start purchasing more nests when the price starts to drop in a few weeks. Keep checking out [www.sponsoranest.com](http://www.sponsoranest.com) for details of nest purchases, which will be updated for September.



## Volunteer Info Request!

Calling all previous volunteers! We are currently trying to put together a written and photographic collection of Parque Hawaii through the years. Do any of you have any good stories/memories/pictures you would like to share? We are specifically interested in photos of volunteers in action, working with local people, on the beach, around the park, having fun etc. We would also love to hear about any funny stories, experiences or fond memories you have about your time at the project.

We are still deciding on the final format for the collection, but we will keep you all up to date. Please send any photographs/information, along with your name and the time you were at Parque Hawaii to:

[sponsoranest@googlemail.com](mailto:sponsoranest@googlemail.com)

Finally.....heartfelt thanks to Bob Langton and the British Chelonia Group for the conservation grant awarded to us. This money went towards the cost of our flight tickets, enabling us to return to Guatemala and continue our work at Parque Hawaii this year.