

Update on Post-Tsunami Relief Efforts on the Juan Fernández Islands



Peter Hodum co-directs the Juan Fernández Islands Conservancy (JFIC), an Oikonos project. In our spring 2010 newsletter Peter wrote about his ongoing pink-footed shearwater satellite tracking project based on the Juan Fernandez Islands, Chile, and the effects of the tsunami on the community there. We asked him to update us on relief efforts.

On 27 February 2010, a powerful tsunami struck the Juan Fernández Islands, devastating the small island community on the main island of Robinson Crusoe. Immediately following the tsunami, Oikonos established a charitable fund and began to seek donations to contribute to community reconstruction. Through the generosity of colleagues, collaborators, businesses, family and friends, hundreds of donations were received. Thus far, funds have been used to support reconstruction efforts, including hiring local residents to organize initial cleanup efforts immediately following the disaster, restoring the community's



Photo by Peter Hodum

Juan Fernandez Islands fishermen with donated buoys to be used in their artisanal lobster fishery.

cemetery and providing educational resources for the school that was destroyed in the tsunami. In addition, in a collaborative effort with several Pacific Northwest fishing associations, a complementary fund was established to help the artisanal fishing community of the islands recover their significant losses of material and equipment. Through this effort, every boat was able to begin the fishing season in Sept. 2010. Although reconstruction is ongoing and the Chilean government is providing good support, a number of projects identified by the local community as priorities are currently unfunded. Thus, Oikonos remains committed to continuing to raise funds for the Juan Fernández community as there are important needs that remain unmet.



Photo by Peter Hodum

An appreciative lobster fisherman who received new equipment.

PTTs for School Program Winners!

Congratulations to the 2011 winners of our PTTs for Schools Program. We are pleased to award a total of 15 transmitters to four research groups spanning several continents. The recipients have the choice of any of our current models. Thus, we have a wide range of taxa represented, including bats, birds and sharks.



Photo by RSPB

The RSPB has allowed over 20,000 students up-close encounters with birds of prey.

Fiona Corner and Stuart Benn will be working with 4-12 year olds at the Maryburgh Primary School to track Red Kites with 22g Argos/GPS PTTs in the Scottish highlands. Their organization, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, has a long-standing record for successful

conservation programs and has delivered outdoor learning experiences to over 20,000 school age children.

Using X-Tags, Edd and Annabelle Brooks will be working with 16 year old science students to track Caribbean reef sharks at The Island School in Eleuthera, The Bahamas. The Island School is a unique program that brings together students from schools in US, Canada and The Bahamas to face challenging situations in a non-traditional educational environment. Environmental education and science are major components in the students' curriculum at The Island School.



Photo by The Island School

Edd and Annabelle Brooks with their shark class.

Billie Roberts from Griffith University and the students from Maclean High School will be using a specially modified version of our 9.5g PTT to track grey-headed flying foxes in eastern Australia. This threatened species has been subject to urban development of roost areas and has become a source of conflict within the community. Billie's organization, the Maclean Flying-Fox Working Group, hopes to foster co-existence between humans and flying foxes encouraging their conservation in this area.



Photo by Billie Roberts

The grey-headed flying fox community on the Maclean High School grounds.

Maximiliano Adrián Galmes and local students will be tracking a pair of Crowned Solitary Eagles and their fledgling in Central Argentina with 70g Argos/GPS PTTs. They also plan to distribute informational pamphlets and make educational videos about the Crowned Solitary Eagle since it is a poorly understood species with a false reputation for disturbing livestock.



CECARA has been conducting research on the ecology and conservation of the Crowned Eagle since 1999.

Good luck to all our winners and we look forward to working with you in the coming year!