

## **Final Report**

### **Title: Birds of the Cordoba Hills (Argentina).Study for Conservation and Environment Education**

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The following three activities were carried out in the project.

A- **Workshops** of environmental education in the schools of the area and conferences with the local inhabitants of the Cordoba Hills.

Didactic material was produced and issued to children who are in their last years of primary education "Carolina travels" is a story written and illustrated by Javier Heredia and Luis Volkmann.

- The migration of swallows from northern South America to Cordoba hills was studied with this story.
- The environmental problems that these swallows encounter upon their return to their mating and breeding areas are told and studied with this story, such as deforestation of forest and woodlands.
- The urban growth, which is one of the most important problems in the area, is producing great changes.
- The introduction and planting of exotic vegetation (trees, flowers) is second reason for the loss of biodiversity in the area.
- The changes in the climate, that affect our planet and our work.
- In the story, the food chain, explained with examples of flora and fauna was also taken into account.

As planned, workshops were given in ten schools in the towns of La Falda, La Cumbre, Villa Giardino, Capilla del Monte and Huerta Grande, as well as rural schools in the "Sierras Grandes" ( the big range of hills).

**Community Conferences**, these were given to local people of the above mentioned towns. For these we used a didactic brochures designed by Luis Volkmann titled "Aves y Problemas Ambientales en las Sierras de Cordoba" (birds and environmental problems in the Cordoba hills) which was distributed among those who attended after having projected slides.

The success of the project has been proved by the immense interest shown by all those who turned up.

B- **A guide on Birds of the Cordoba Hills**, including 250 species, was published. The text and drawings belonging to Javier Heredia.

The guide was distributed in schools, libraries, city councils and Non Governmental Organisations that are connected or interested in biodiversity conservation. It is the first time that this kind of work has been done in the province of Cordoba and therefore it was widely accepted.

1000 guides which have already been distributed and a re-edition of the guide “Aves de las Sierras de Cordoba” encourages to continue working in the conservation of nature studying habits of birds

**C-A study** was carried out on the feeding habits and behaviour of the Andean Condor, trying to evaluate and determinate the impact that human activity exerts on the Andean Condor communities.

Before this, volunteers were trained in the field in the handling of forms in order to obtain true results. This training caused unexpected expences.

The use of sheep as carrion in order to attract the Andean Condor and register date was not enough since other scavengers such as foxes, Southern crested-Caracara and Black Vulture quickly took care of the carrion.

The cost of the sheep, the transport to the field of study where they were sacrificed and the payment to volunteers was higher than expected.

The use of dead cows and horses as carrion will be more adecuate and useful in the future several experiments were carried out in the “Quebrada del Condorito” National Park using sheep as carrion but not all were successful due to the above mentioned problems, therefore the recollection of date was less than expected.

The constant inflation in Argentina was another reason why this part of the project did not reach the excellence we expected.

The outings to the field the test and the knowledge acquired from unexpected situations, encourage us to continue with this project and complete it as planned.

Our next step is to continue in the search for funds in order to extend and expand this project.

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