

Project Update: June 2003

Last summer with help of around 60 volunteers and the Rufford Small Grant we planted 1,500 seedlings in our enclosures at Los Gigantes. Some of the first trees we planted 5 years ago are 1.5 meters tall and produced their first seeds, so for the first time during our project, we were able to collect seeds from our own trees!

We also travelled to 8 different areas to collect seeds for this year's seedling production including a trip to "El Hueco" which is the only large (almost 5 hectares) remaining *Polylepis australis* old growth forest that we know of. Thanks to the funds from the RSG, the students Eugenia Menoyo and Carla Coutiers are doing their graduation research project studying whether *Polylepis* trees are associated to mycorrhiza and studying the influence of cattle and competing plants on *Polylepis* germination and establishment. Professor Luis Volkmann is preparing an Educational kit with booklets, slides, manuals and educational games related to the Sierras Grandes conservation as part of the preparation for the two day workshops at the rural schools in the area. For those travelling or planning to visit the Cordoba mountains in Argentina and that wish to participate in our volunteer groups, we need help on the following dates: Saturday and Sunday 19 and 20 of July, measuring seedlings and fixing trails; Saturday and Sunday 2 and 3 of August: measuring seedlings and fence construction; 13 and 14 of September: revegetation of erosion edges, seed planting experiments and fence construction; 18 and 19 of October: revegetation of erosion edges, putting sign posts up; 22 and 23 of November: Planting of *Polylepis* seedlings. January 3 to 11 2004: planting seedlings and seed collection.

During 2002 we published three papers on *Polylepis* ecology or reforestation methods (1 in English and 2 in Spanish). The RSG funded the publishing costs of two of them. They may be requested to drenison@com.uncor.edu and the titles are: - Renison, D., A. Cingolani y D. Schinner. 2002. Optimising restoration of *Polylepis australis* forests through reforestation: When, where and how to transplant seedlings to the mountains? *Ecotropica* 8: 219-224.- Renison, D. y A. M. Cingolani. 2002. Optimización del crecimiento del tabaquillo (*Polylepis australis*, Rosaceae): selección de las mejores Plantas semilleras. *AgriScientia*. 19: 63-66. - Renison, D., A. M. Cingolani y R. Suarez. 2002. Efectos del fuego sobre un bosquecillo de *Polylepis australis* (Rosaceae) en las montañas de Córdoba, Argentina. *Revista Chilena de Historia Natural* 75: 719-727.