

## 2nd Rufford Small Grant: 46463-2 - Rebecca Louise Smith

### The Hooded Capuchins Last Chance: Restoring the Atlantic Forest and Inspiring Conservation Heroes.

Project Update: August 2025

#### Objective One: Economically-Beneficial Reforestation of the Atlantic Forest.

Due to adverse weather conditions causing a late start we only managed to plant 3,500 of the 15,000 saplings that we were aiming for in Mberu Pirapo'i before the arrival of the winter. However, during September and October we will aim to continue planting in Mberu Pirapo'i and begin with Potrero Guaraní. As of August 2025, 96% of the saplings planting in May have survived though growth has been slow due to the extremely cold weather.



Figure 1: Reforestation with the school children of Mberu Pirapo'i.

#### Objective Two: Ensuring Reforestation Sustainability

The first tree nursery has been successfully installed in Mberu Pirapo'i and has been combined with a vegetable patch to provide food for the school. The first training session was conducted in May, led by Jorge Ayala (the PLT Education Director). Community member Roberto Brizuela is responsible for the maintenance of the nursery and the collection of native seeds.



Figure 2: Building of the tree nursery and training session with Roberto Brizuela in Mberu Pirapo'i.

### Objective Three: Improving natural science education in Itapúa

Schools visits began in May and were conducted in June and some of the August lessons have been completed. Eleven Mbya Guaraní schools and one Makâ school are involved. It takes 5 days to visit all 12 schools and if there is rain then classes must be rescheduled as the communities become inaccessible. Classes so far have focused on the national learning

objects “the five senses”, “cells” and food webs. We also strengthened ties with all communities by supporting their Día del Niño events.



Figure 3: Participatory education lessons (including the teachers) in 11 Mbya Guaraní and 1 Makâ schools in Itapúa department, Paraguay.

#### Objective Four: Monitoring of Extractive Activities on the remaining Forest

Eight camera traps have been installed in the forest of Arroyo Moroti Mbya Guaraní indigenous community. These will be checked at the end of September, moved if necessary and the cards and batteries changed. The cameras were installed with the support of community members Leoncio Chaparro and Felicano Chaparro. The traps were sprayed with Calvin Klein Obsession For Men, a perfume that has been shown to attract felines. We are hoping that if there are still jaguar in the area that this will attract them to the cameras. There are currently 41 cameras installed in the Nueva Gambach property at the southern tip of San Rafael.



Figure 4: Setting camera traps in “Area Designated to Become a National Park” San Rafael.



Figure 5: Camera trap images from Nueva Gambach, August 2025: Southern tamandua (*Tamandua tetradactyla*), Tayra (*Eira barbara*), Jaguarundi (*Herpailurus yagouaroundi*), Oncilla (Southern Tiger Cat) (*Leopardus guttulus*) and Grey Brocket Deer (*Subulo gouazoubira*).

#### September – December Plan.

For as many weeks as the weather allows we will continue to plant native trees and yerba mate saplings with both Mberu Pirapo'i and Potrero Guarani. The tree nursery will be installed in Potrero Guarani in October. School lessons will continue to be conducted each month until the exams in late November. Camera traps in Nueva Gambach will be checked monthly.

#### Rufford Supported Publications

A manuscript on the home ranges of the hooded capuchin in the Atlantic Forest will be submitted by mid-September and the data from our previous years camera trapping in Nueva Gambach is currently being analysed.