

## The 2005 Whitley Award Winners

We are pleased to announce the winners as:

### WHITLEY GOLD WINNER

**Dr. Charudutt Mishra, India** People & Snow Leopards: wildlife conservation in the Himalayan high altitudes



### Romulus Whitaker, India

King cobras as flagships for the vanishing rainforests of the Western Ghats



### Dr. Hem Sagar Baral, Nepal

Conservation of endemic birds: participatory conservation in Phulchoki forest



**Andrés Novaro, Argentina** A Mega-Landscape for conservation of the threatened wildlife of Patagonia



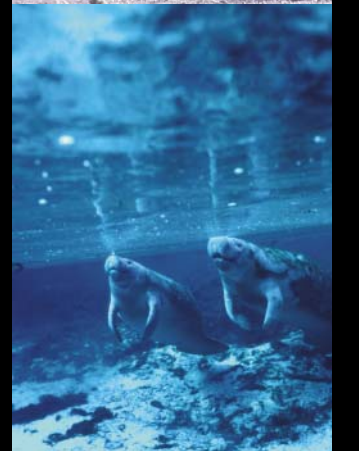
**Gonzalo Merediz-Alonso, Mexico** Community-based conservation in Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve



**Alberto Gómez-Mejía, Colombia** Saving the endangered and useful native plants of Colombia



**Didiher Chacón-Chaverri, Costa Rica** A Sea Turtle conservation program for the South Caribbean



**Nicole Auil, Belize** Strengthening the recovery of the Antillean Manatee

Sir David Attenborough congratulating the 2005 Whitley Award Winners



Please visit the Whitley Award website at [www.whitleyaward.org](http://www.whitleyaward.org) for more information and photos on all of our winners.

### Whitley Fund for Nature

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**Patron:** HRH The Princess Royal  
**Trustees:** Sir David Attenborough CH FRS, Catherine Faulks, John Laing, Edward Whitley

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## Dear Friends,

It was wonderful to see so many of you at our Awards Ceremony at the Royal Geographical Society in April. Thank you for your interest and your support. It was a tremendous evening with our Trustee Sir David Attenborough kindly being our host on the stage and The Princess Royal making the presentations.

Our Award Winners spent a week in London, during which

time they were introduced to a number of other contacts whom we hope will be useful to them including other charities, journalists, documentary makers and grant giving foundations. They made quick and firm friendships and eagerly joined into the network which we can provide. They each arrived home to extensive national press coverage and continue to stay closely in touch with us.

The real excitement of the summer was of course the birth of Louisa's second baby girl, Scarlett, and we pass our heart-felt congratulations to Rupert and Louisa.

We hope that you enjoy this quick update on our winners. Randall Arauz and Romulus Whitaker are coming over to see us in November and we are hosting a family event at London Zoo which we hope you can attend.

We look forward to seeing you then.

Edward Whitley



## Dear Friends,

The Friends of the WFN gave their third sponsored Award at the Whitley Awards Ceremony in April. This year's winner was Romulus Whitaker, a leading expert on the snakes of India. The £30,000 Award will enable Rom to build a research station in the Malnad region of Karnataka State. The station will provide facilities for the conservation of South India's rapidly declining rainforests, using the King Cobra as a flagship species.

Those of you who met Rom will have been entertained by his tales of cobras and crocodiles and will be assured that his charismatic determination will make him achieve his objective. There will be another opportunity to meet Romulus on November 13th when we will be holding a WFN Family Lecture at ZSL (see opposite page for details). We look forward to seeing you there.

The Friends have been extremely generous this year, thank you. We have already raised such a significant sum that we will be able to give The Friend's Award and some Continuation Funding in 2006.

Continuation Funding is the backbone of our work, offering long-term support to our winners so that they can concentrate their considerable energy and capacity on their conservation work rather than fundraising. I would like to see the Friends' support for this essential work continue to grow.

Some of you have asked me to clarify what 'being a Friend' involves and what is expected. I don't wish to be over structured and devise rather meaningless categories, but I would like to reward your generosity and encourage you to give more! To keep it simple I propose the following; Donations of £100 and over will receive an invitation to the Awards Ceremony, newsletter and notification of young WFN events. Those who give £500 and over will be invited to a private dinner to meet the winners before the Awards Ceremony and have the opportunity to discuss their projects with them. Some of you give us much larger donations than this, which are essential to our fulfilling our target of £30,000 for the annual Award – we are extremely grateful to you. Large



donations of over £5,000 can be directed towards particular countries or projects and, as these kind donors know, we are happy to discuss these personally to ensure that they meet with expectations.

As always I welcome any comments, questions or suggestions.

Please contact me directly on

[catherinefaulks@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:catherinefaulks@tiscali.co.uk)

Catherine Faulks  
Chair of the Friends of the WFN

The Whitley Awards Ceremony 2005 saw our largest turnout yet



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**Learn about Snakes and Sharks from Whitley Award Winners at London Zoo**



Fans of snakes and sharks will have an opportunity to learn more about their favourite species on Sunday November 13th when king cobra enthusiast Romulus Whitaker and shark conservationist Randall Arauz will be giving a talk to WFN supporters

at the Zoological Society of London.

This Family Event will start at 2.00pm at the ZSL Lecture Theatre opposite London Zoo, and will be intended for older children aged ten and up, accompanied by parents. Those with snake phobias should beware - a live snake will make an appearance!!

Tickets cost £10 and must be purchased in advance from Catherine Faulks at [catherinefaulks@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:catherinefaulks@tiscali.co.uk). Discounted parking tickets are also available. For a map and further details of the event, please visit the WFN website at [www.whitleyaward.org](http://www.whitleyaward.org) and click on the link about the event on the homepage.

Icon Films

**Whitley Award Winner stars in Documentary**

Romulus Whitaker, who won the Whitley Award sponsored by The Friends of WFN in 2005, will soon star in 'The King Cobra and I', a programme made by Icon Films of Bristol for a new season of the BBC's Natural World. You can watch the film on BBC 2 at 8pm on November 9th 2005.

The film tracks Romulus on his quest to raise public appreciation of the King Cobra in India, and to find a suitable site in the Western Ghats to create the first wild sanctuary for the species, the world's largest venomous snake.

The film is written and directed by



Icon Films

India-born Harry Marshall. Harry was just five when he first watched Romulus giving a snake talk in Madras almost 40 years ago. "It's taking me a while to bring Romulus's story to the screen," he says now, "but it just goes to show that there is real value in getting the very young to engage with conservation."

**Staff News**

We are delighted to announce the arrival of a beautiful baby girl for WFN Director, Louisa Mitchell. Her baby arrived in August, and Louisa is now enjoying maternity leave. WFN is thrilled to welcome Annabel Lea, below, who has joined the team to



assist Georgina in covering the Director's work in her absence. Annabel is responsible for donor liaison and targeting new

donors at WFN until Louisa's return.

WFN also welcomes Julia Mizen, right, who has joined the team on a part time basis to assist with the financial management of the charity. An expert book keeper, Julia has a background working in the City of London and is delighted to be applying her skills to the conservation sector.



**Pan-African network to save the last wattled cranes**

Lindy Rodwell won a Whitley Award in 1999 for her work to conserve Africa's cranes. Subsequently honoured by the Rolex Awards for Enterprise in 2002, and Continuation Funding from WFN in 2003, she has devoted over a decade to cranes, and, in particular, the wattled crane - the largest and rarest of the six crane species that occur in Africa.

The wattled crane is a symbol of fidelity, royalty and power in South Africa, but it is also important as a critical measure of the health of wetland ecosystems. Standing 1.7 metres tall, these elegant birds mate for life and, like all cranes, perform an intricate courtship dance. The species is critically endangered in South Africa as a

result of habitat loss and remains at risk from shooting by farmers and illegal trade.

In 1994, Lindy founded the South African Crane Working Group, now in its eleventh year and working in partnership with the International Crane Foundation to develop a pan-African conservation network to protect wattled cranes. Lindy is combining the efforts of dedicated volunteers and experts across the eleven 'wattled crane states' of central and southern Africa to protect the wetlands on which cranes, as well as thousands of people, depend for water and food.

With five regional working groups in place, a regional perspective is finally being gained through the national crane

continued over



Crowned Crane

programme, along with a greater understanding of the status and distribution of the birds. Lindy now aims to strengthen the in-country programmes with further resources and training. By building capacity and working closely with local farmers she has built trust with landowners, who now report crane sightings and assist with monitoring. Her most recent success was the development of a Wattled Crane Action Plan for Botswana.

*"In ten years, Lindy has achieved what the formal South African government conservation agencies, with larger budgets and greater resources, were unable to do: to make crane conservation a people's issue and motivate local communities to be responsible for their cranes,"* says the Endangered Wildlife Trust's president, Dr John Ledger. Learn more about Lindy's work on the WFN website.



Wattled crane juvenile

The black lion tamarin

## IPÊ to create South America's first Conservation Biology Grad Centre

**C**laudio Padua was first awarded funds from WFN in 1999 for conservation of the endangered black lion tamarin (pictured) and its equally endangered habitat, the Atlantic rainforest of São Paulo State. Threatened by habitat loss, the tamarins posed a new conservation problem; how can a forest-dwelling primate that will not cross open farmland be conserved when the rainforests in which they live survive only in isolated patches? The tamarins were in danger of becoming inbred, leading Claudio to become an early pioneer in how to manage isolated populations by carefully translocating individual animals.

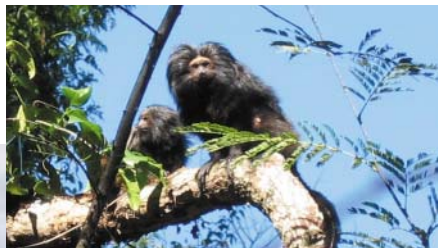
Now with Continuation Funding from WFN granted earlier this year, Claudio and his NGO 'IPÊ' are applying the lessons learned from conservation of the black lion tamarin to an equally threatened species – the black-faced lion tamarin. Also unique to Eastern Brazil, the black-faced lion tamarin was only discovered in 1991 and is known to occur only on the 14,000 ha island of Superaqui and nearby parts of the mainland. IPÊ will survey new areas for the tamarin in order to develop an informed strategy for the species. The research focuses on

ecology and behaviour and will also help raise awareness through environmental education in the local area. The project comes not a moment too soon; the species is critically endangered and in 1997 the population was estimated at no more than 260 individuals.

Claudio has other big news. IPÊ has nurtured many postgraduates over the past decade, but Claudio's principal goal has always been to found a graduate centre to accommodate the growing demand for conservation capacity building in Brazil. This July at the Society for Conservation Biology Conference in Brasilia, he was proud to announce the launch of an exciting new project to build Brazil's first postgraduate centre dedicated to conservation biology. The new facility will be a leading research institution and will provide opportunities for up to 50 postgraduates from both Brazil and wider South America each year.

WFN Manager, Georgina Ponder, attended the conference and had the opportunity to visit the site of the new facility, which is being built close to IPÊ's existing education centre in Nazare, São Paulo. The original centre was built with funds from WFN. Speaking at the conference, Claudio's wife and IPÊ partner, Suzana said *"The education centre in Nazare was where this dream of ours began. It marked the beginnings of our journey. What we are doing today in building this new postgraduate facility would not have been possible without the support of WFN."*

The centre, which is funded by Natura, a Brazilian cosmetics company, utilises the latest eco-friendly technologies such as solar panning and is located on degraded farmland (pictured). The first task of students will be to restore the forest, felled decades earlier, to the campus grounds. Building began in October and the centre will be completed in 2007. We look forward to updating you on IPÊ's progress.



### The Whitley Fund For Nature

The Whitley Fund for Nature is a UK based organisation offering a wide range of Awards and Grants for hands-on conservation work around the world. Projects must be pragmatic, sustainable, long-lasting and emphasise the benefits of wildlife and habitat conservation to local communities.

