

Meetings

Source: Edentata, 11(1) : 81-82

Published By: IUCN/SSC Anteater, Sloth and Armadillo Specialist Group

URL: <https://doi.org/10.1896/020.011.0117>

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NEWS

Good news: cacao agroforests may provide suitable habitat for the maned sloth *Bradypus torquatus*.

A recently published article by Camila Cassano and colleagues describes the use of a cacao agroforest by maned sloths based on field observation of wild individuals radio-tracked in the vicinity of Una Biological Reserve, southern Bahia, Brazil. The authors estimated the home range of three sloths and investigated the proportional use of cacao agroforest relative to the availability of this habitat in their home range and in the surrounding landscape. Information on tree species used as food sources by maned sloths and tree species present in cacao agroforests from southern Bahia were used to further explore the potential of this environment as habitat for the species. The results indicate that biologically rich cacao agroforests immersed in a landscape still largely composed of native forests might provide habitat for the maned sloth. This result is good news for the conservation of this endangered species, as southern Bahia is one of the most important strongholds for maned sloths and cacao agroforests represent one of the main land uses in this region. In other words, this finding suggests that the extent of habitat remaining for maned sloths in southern Bahia might be larger than expected.

Cassano, C. R., Kierulff, M. C. M. and Chiarello, A. G. In press. The cacao agroforests of the Brazilian Atlantic forest as habitat for the endangered maned sloth *Bradypus torquatus*. *Mammalian Biology*, doi:10.1016/j.mambio.2010.06.008

MEETINGS



Who's in a Hurry? Sloth Conservation and Care

First international meeting on sloth husbandry,
rehabilitation and veterinary care
Medellin, Colombia
November 26–29, 2010

We are pleased to announce the first international meeting on sloth conservation and rehabilitation. This meeting is open to all interested researchers, rehabilitators, and captive care specialists who are actively contributing to the conservation of these remarkable animals.

Objectives:

- Current status of sloth biology and veterinary care
- Awareness programs
- Sloth rehabilitation and captive husbandry
- Fund raising
- Conservation strategies

There is an urgent need among sloth rehabilitators and institutions working with sloths to meet, exchange experiences, and develop joint strategies to maximize the impact of their efforts. Our goal is to help these unique South American mammals to survive in our changing world.

Although, according to the International Red List of Threatened Species, sloths are not under immediate risk of extinction, every year thousands of hectares of tropical forests disappear, and silently, the sloths die along with them.

Sloths are frequently extracted from their natural habitat and sold as pets to tourists who are unaware of the negative impact of their action to the wild populations. Individuals that do not die due to malnutrition or inappropriate care are often handed over to the authorities for rehabilitation. In spite of the sloth's charisma, and the increasing need for specialists who can assist injured or weak individuals, few wildlife rehabilitation centers work with these cryptic animals. A varied, inclusive and progressive interna-

tional working group is expected to be formed as a result of this meeting.

The First International Meeting on Sloth Husbandry, Rehabilitation and Veterinary Care begins immediately following the Third Colombian Zoology Congress, which will take place from November 22 to 26, 2010. The meeting is organized by Tinka Plese, Member IUCN/SSC Anteater, Sloth and Armadillo Specialist Group, (unau@une.net.co) and Monique S. Pool, Chairman of the Board of The Green Heritage Fund Suriname (poolms@seasn.vbiz).

The main part of the meeting will be held on November 27 and 28, 2010 on Miraderos farm, two hours from the city of Medellin, Colombia. This farm is where three-toed sloths were successfully reintroduced for the first time.

The itinerary of the event is as follows:

Friday, November 26

Morning: Arrival to Medellin

Afternoon: Visit to Fundación UNAU's Sloth Rehabilitation center

Saturday, November 27

Early morning: Depart from Medellin to the Miraderos farm. Arrival to the main house at lunch time.

2:30–7 pm Opening ceremony, Presentations
Dinner

Sunday, November 28

8 am–1 pm Round table—discussion

1–2:30 pm Lunch

3–5 pm Visit (by horse back ride) to the reintroduction site of *Bradypus variegatus*.

6–7 pm Dinner

7–9 pm Conclusions and projections for the near future.

Monday, November 29

Early morning: Return to Medellín. Expected arrival: noon.

We encourage participants to visit the city of Medellín, a very interesting and much visited tourist site (<http://www.medellininfo.com/>).

We would be very thankful if you could confirm as soon as possible your sincere interest in participating in the First International Sloth Meeting.

The fee for the meeting is \$ US 100.

We will provide additional information on the presentations in our next announcement.

We are looking forward to meeting you in Medellin!

Slothfully yours,



Tinka Plese
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Specialist Group
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