

Newsletter

May 2015



Long term chimpanzee survey

Kaly Bindia, who has worked as a research assistant with a PANAF survey in Senegal, helped to set up a trail camera monitoring program around the villages of Beli and Pataque. Kaly works with IBAP on the sites that can only be reached by motorbike. IBAP staff and CVV members of Beli and Pataque have been trained in handling trail cameras because both groups play an important role in this monitoring program. Cameras have to be checked at least once a month and sometimes replaced to other sites because of bush fires. CVV members, as experts in the field, work together with expat volunteers and students, who do the computer work needed for the analysis of collected images. Our aim is to monitor changes in biodiversity over the years in the whole Boé. Therefore the program will slowly expand to other villages with CVV's.



Alternative income generation for women

While last year we started developing a small botanical garden around Casa Daridibó by planting fruit trees and trees used by chimpanzees, this year a new initiative has been started. The space around the tourist camp that belongs to Fonda Huuwa is used for horticulture. Chimbo and Fonda Huuwa decided together on the rules for the women that got permission to plant vegetables. The water tank built next to Casa Daridibó provides enough water for the camp site and for irrigation of the botanical garden and the vegetable beds of the women. During a small period water use had to be rationed, but most of the time water supply was enough. The vegetable gardens provide alternative income generation possibilities for women, and at the same time mean a more varied meal for the local people, volunteers and tourists.

Ebola information sessions

At the end of April the Ebola outbreak in neighbouring Guinea Conakry was still not fully under control. Official border controls are strict and take time, which makes people choose illegal but more simple way to cross borders. The Boé in the dry season offers opportunities to do so. Many of our CVV's work in areas near the border with Guinea, therefore it is important for them to know about Ebola and learn how to prevent becoming infected. When we visited CVV's we gave awareness training on the Ebola virus. We explained the dangers, the do's and don'ts.





Identity cards

Members of the Village Vigilance Committees (CVV's) received special CVV identity cards. The cards enable CVV members to identify themselves to outsiders while executing their patrol tasks. It reminds everyone of their authority. At the same time wearing an identity card means also great responsibility. CVV members should behave as an example to everyone: they do not hunt, do not cut big trees, do not cause bush fires or other harm to nature and do not leave harmful waste in nature. Their task is to monitor chimpanzee populations in their surroundings, denounce and discourage poaching, and evaluate damage done by chimpanzees to crops.

Important Bird and Biodiversity Area (IBA)

Chimbo contacted Birdlife International during the World Parks Congress in Sydney Australia, because we think that the Boé area has the potential to become an IBA. IBAs are given their status by Birdlife International. IBAs are needed to ensure the survival of viable populations of most of the world's bird species. They hold a large and representative proportion of other biodiversity too. In a previous newsletter we wrote about João Guilherme's bird inventory in the Boé. A Belgian volunteer, Brecht Coppens is at the moment executing part of the additional bird research needed to become accepted as an IBA. Birdlife International has offered to ask Miguel Lecoq, an ornithologist working in Guinea Bissau to help Brecht. Katharina Kühnert, a German student (University of Göttingen), studies from March – July the differences in bird diversity between 4 different habitats. A first joint field trip of Brecht, Katharina and Miguel has already confirmed our opinion.

Ecotourism in the Boé

Student Mellisa Rizos (Breda University of Applied Sciences) wrote a marketing plan needed to develop ecotourism in the Boé. The main question of her research was *'Which possibilities does Chimbo have to attract the right target group for their new product, eco-volunteering trips, in order*



to become a more flourishing organisation?' Mellisa concluded that Chimbo has a lot to offer to eco volunteers and Chimbo distinguishes itself by its product that allows eco-volunteers to participate in research aimed at chimpanzee conservation. Chimbo should now evolve from a product oriented organization to a marketing oriented organization, starting with the improvement of its website by adding information about the product, experiences from other volunteers and photographs.



Weather station

Since December 2014, Chimbo and Daridibó have their own Dutch weather station in Beli, next to Casa Daridibó. Up till 2014 we had to do with a simple thermometer and rain collecting devise. For our new multi-annual monitoring and research program better and structural information about the weather in the Boé is needed. The station measures temperature, humidity, rain, wind (speed and direction), etc. We already learned more in detail about the rainfall. The first thunderstorm arrived on the 27th of April, the first drops on the 28th. The weather station measured 21 mm on the first day of rain this year (the 2nd of May)!

