



**GALAPAGOS**  
CONSERVANCY

*Saving one of the world's great treasures*

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# ANNUAL REPORT 2015





**W**ith the support and encouragement of our donors and friends, Galapagos Conservancy continues to build coalitions of institutions and individuals dedicated to the long-term conservation of the Galapagos Islands. As you will read in this year's annual report, our work lies along two very important axes – wildlife and ecosystem conservation and enhancing efforts to build a sustainable society. One cannot exist without the other in the Galapagos Archipelago – a place of extraordinary natural beauty that is also home to thousands of residents. Their livelihood depends on an economic system that provides meaningful and dignified work, while also enhancing and protecting this priceless biological jewel.

We collaborate with our partners to address these two realities. Our work with local municipalities, institutions, and non-profit organizations seeks to build competence and skills within these communities while at the same time addressing priority projects. These range from encouraging sustainable or “bio-agriculture” farming to helping a local NGO equip a playground and learning center with tools for children with developmental disabilities.

Equally part of the Galapagos community is the work we continue to undertake in partnership with the Ministry of Environment to enhance the skills of all Galapagos teachers, not only to satisfy the Ministry's high standards for formal education, but also to provide alternative teaching methodologies which help students pose questions, solve problems, and dig deeper into the core curriculum in ingenious ways. In addition to being immensely satisfied at the very successful initial trainings and workshops, we are also having a great deal of fun! The learning environment created by the teachers' enhanced interactions with students, and the trainer/teacher dynamic is electrifying! One teacher reported that she had fallen in love with teaching again. Satisfying indeed.

We cannot report on 2015 without talking tortoises. The work initiated in 2012 by a coalition of international scientists from many disciplines gathered to answer the question as to whether the archipelago could truly be “re-tortoisied” resulted in a resounding “Yes.” And from that point onward, with the solid engagement of the Galapagos National Park Directorate and the Ministry of Environment, we have moved at more than a tortoise's pace in the development of the Giant Tortoise Restoration Initiative. As you will read, the release of tortoises onto Santa Fe, an island that had been without tortoises for 150 years, is the beginning of a long and very exciting archipelago-wide initiative that will not only restore tortoise populations extinct in the wild, but also will focus on improving tortoise breeding efforts, creating public outreach and education, and placing the iconic tortoise back where s/he belongs – as an unparalleled ecosystem engineer.

I certainly hope you feel a strong sense of accomplishment as you read these pages. These initiatives would not be possible without the understanding and support of our donors who, for more than 30 years, have held this work in high esteem and have allowed us to make a small but important contribution to protecting the Galapagos Islands.

As always, our deepest thanks.

Johannah E. Barry, President

## SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY

**GC's Sustainable Society Program** is based on the premise that long-term protection of the Galapagos Islands requires an education system that prepares citizens to be good stewards of the Archipelago, an economic system that is compatible with biodiversity conservation, and a strong civil society dedicated to and engaged in Galapagos conservation.

Our primary work, the **Education for Sustainability Program**, is carried out in collaboration with the Ecuadorian Ministry of Education, local non-profit organizations, and the demonstration school, Tomás de Berlanga, to create educational reform with a focus on establishing examples of best practices classrooms and professional development for Galapagos teachers and administrators.



EDUCATION



COMMUNITY

Additionally, we support municipal governments and local cooperatives in their efforts to create viable economic opportunities which enhance and sustain the extraordinary biodiversity of Galapagos:

**The Santa Cruz Municipal Rehabilitation Center** specializes in early stimulation treatment for approximately 65 young children (6 years and under) with Down's syndrome, cerebral palsy, and autism. In December 2015, GC and the Galapagos Xpedition Fund provided support for basic equipment needed for regular therapy, such as medicine balls, balance bars, jigsaws, and musical instruments. The equipment purchased through this project will also benefit patients of the Santa Cruz Hospital's trauma unit, which currently serves a daily average of 20 patients.

**The Santa Cruz-based Galapagos Artisanal Fisheries Cooperative (COPROPAG)** was founded in 1993 to help improve product quality and to strengthen the sustainability of the local artisanal fishing industry, the second largest local industry in Galapagos after tourism. Support in 2015 will help COPROPAG achieve the international "green" certification needed to obtain an export license. Project activities included mechanical improvements to the ice plant to improve the purity of the ice, technical assistance to complete environmental and socio-economic impact studies, and the documentation associated with the international certification process.



AGRICULTURE



LOCAL ECONOMY

- Clockwise from left:* 1) A mother and her daughter utilize several of the community improvement efforts GC has played a role in implementing. © GC Archives  
 2) Trainers teach Galapagos teachers new methods of classroom instruction. © Jonathan Drake, T2TI  
 3) A fisher filets fish at an open-air market on Santa Cruz. © GC Archives  
 4) A local farmer harvests green beans from a green house on Santa Cruz. © GC Archives

**The Ministry of Agriculture, Farming, and Fisheries** has developed a Bio-agriculture Plan designed to improve the quality and availability of local agricultural products. The goal is to improve the economic viability of the local agricultural sector and, in the process, reduce the impacts of invasive pests in agricultural areas and decrease local dependency on agricultural products imported from the mainland — one of the greatest sources of introduced species. Support from GC and the Galapagos Xpedition Fund provided basic equipment needed to improve the collection, preparation, and delivery of produce to consumers (scales, delivery crates, refrigeration, etc.). It also enabled two key members of local cooperatives to attend a workshop on mainland Ecuador that aims to train agricultural groups in management and leadership.

## TORTOISES



**I**n *Wildlife and Ecosystem Conservation*, we seek to protect, conserve, and restore healthy, balanced plant and animal communities to a condition similar to that prior to the arrival of humans, and establish management strategies to ensure the future sustainability of these communities.

Our primary focus continues to be the **Giant Tortoise Restoration Initiative**, carried out in collaboration with the Galapagos National Park Directorate (GNPD) and a talented group of international scientists. Over a 10-year period, the project will restore tortoise populations, including those considered “extinct in the wild,” through a combination of *in situ* management, breeding and rearing young tortoises where appropriate, and repopulating islands where tortoises are extinct through the use of an analog (closely-related) species. The initiative’s focus also includes evaluating habitat conditions and restoration where necessary and improving education and outreach in service of giant tortoise conservation.

In June 2015, 201 young **Española tortoises** were released on **Santa Fe Island** to begin the process of reengineering the landscape and reestablishing a population of tortoises on an island that had not seen them in more than a century. Thirty-eight tortoises were equipped with radio tags, and a recent return trip confirmed the health and survival of all of the pioneer tortoises.

In November 2015, an **expedition to Wolf Volcano** succeeded in finding a large number of saddleback tortoises, those with the shell shape that corresponds to both Pinta and Florana tortoises. The field crew collected 32 adult tortoises and blood samples from 148 tortoises of similar shape and size. Geneticists at Yale University are currently analyzing all samples with the goal of creating a breeding program for both Pinta and Floreana tortoises.



## SANTA FE ISLAND

**Top:** A lone tortoise stands atop Wolf Volcano during a November 2015 expedition to collect hybrid tortoises with Pinta and Floreana ancestry.

© Paul M. Gibbons

**Middle:** Rangers from the Galapagos National Park release young tortoises on Santa Fe Island in June 2015.

© GNPD

**Below:** Tortoises on Wolf Volcano are found gathering in a wet area in the highlands.

© Paul M. Gibbons



## WOLF VOLCANO

# WILDLIFE & ECOSYSTEM CONSERVATION



We also work closely with the Charles Darwin Foundation (CDF), local and international NGOs, Ecuadorian governmental agencies, and various individual scientists from both US and Ecuadorian universities to protect both terrestrial and marine communities, and to establish effective science-based management strategies to ensure the sustainability of these communities in perpetuity.

In all of our work, we support the development of effective and efficient knowledge management systems that are accessible and user-friendly. We are committed to developing enhanced capacity within all institutions in all fields at the local level.



In a major advancement toward understanding the scale and impact of **marine invasive species** in the Galapagos Islands, 11 taxonomic experts from the United States, England, the Netherlands, Portugal, and Italy joined the CDF marine invasive species team and conducted two identification workshops in 2015. Preliminary results show a list of nearly 50 new non-native species recorded through the Galapagos Marine Reserve, and more species are still to be identified.

**Top:** Green sea turtles and other animals of the Galapagos Marine Reserve will benefit from the efforts to research and prevent the arrival of new marine invasive species.

© Michael J. Haber

**Lower:** Charlotte Causton and her research team at the Charles Darwin Foundation have been tirelessly searching for the answer to controlling Galapagos' most destructive invasive species, the parasitic fly *Philornis downsi*.

© CDF

In 2015, the **Philornis working group**, now made up of 15 institutions from 8 countries, studied a number of potential short-term options for protecting land birds from the parasitic fly *P. downsi*, such as using avian-safe insecticides in nests of threatened birds and mass-trapping using pheromones or food attractants. Pheromones produced by male flies and yeast compounds both show promise as attractants. Long-term strategies under consideration by the *Philornis* working group include biological control using natural enemies and sterile male releases. So far, four species of parasitoids have been found attacking *P. downsi* in the vicinity of the mainland city of Guayaquil, which is the likely source of introduction of *P. downsi* to the Galapagos Islands. Releases of sterile male *P. downsi* (commonly known as Sterile Insect Technique) may be another control option if the Charles Darwin Research Station is able to improve upon its success of rearing *P. downsi* in the absence of its bird host.

## MISSION

To advance and support the conservation of the unique biodiversity and ecosystems of Galapagos through directed research, conservation management, informed public policy, and building a sustainable society

## VISION

Galapagos Conservancy works to ensure a balance between human society and nature that will protect and enhance the unique ecosystems of the Galapagos Archipelago. We value innovative science and conservation management that constantly strives to add knowledge and context to the world's understanding of biodiversity conservation. We envision a healthy and engaged society within Galapagos that actively cares for and respects the sustainable and thoughtful use of local resources.

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## 2015 BOARD MEETINGS

Washington, DC, May 30, 2015  
Washington, DC, Nov. 14, 2015  
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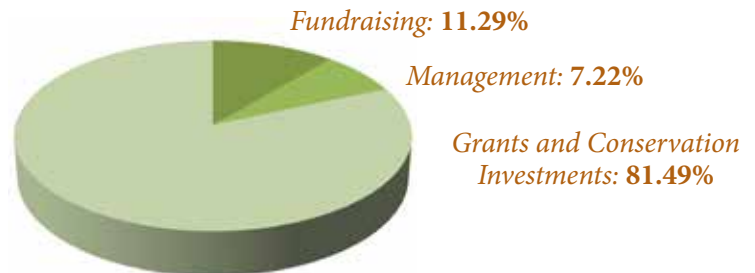
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# GALAPAGOS CONSERVANCY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Fiscal year beginning April 1, 2015 and ending March 31, 2016  
(with comparative totals for FY 2015)

	FY 2016	FY 2015
<b>REVENUE AND OTHER SUPPORT</b>		
Contributions & Membership	\$3,054,476	\$2,497,000
Sales	16,104	25,996
Investment Income	(173,013)	219,162
<b>Total Revenue and Support:</b>	<b>2,897,567</b>	<b>2,742,158</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
<i>Grants Out:</i>		
Ecosystem Restoration	710,094	299,270
Sustainable Society	776,754	229,430
Strategic Partnerships	1,295,748	724,298
Allocated Program Costs	176,357	751,410
<b>TOTAL Grants Out:</b>	<b>2,958,953</b>	<b>2,004,408</b>
Costs of Goods Sold	<b>9,225</b>	<b>16,950</b>
<i>Support Services:</i>		
Management and General	262,982	207,479
Fundraising	411,127	484,660
<b>TOTAL Support Expenses:</b>	<b>674,109</b>	<b>692,139</b>
<b>Total Operating Expenses:</b>	<b>3,642,287</b>	<b>2,713,497</b>
Operating (loss) Income	(744,720)	28,661
<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$5,186,257</b>	<b>\$5,930,977</b>

## OPERATING EXPENSES



We are grateful for the financial support provided by our 11,000 members whose generosity is at the core of our conservation investments. Below, we recognize our Ambassadors, who made annual gifts of \$1,000 or more. Legacy gifts are marked by (L).

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