

FROM THE EDITOR



These are exciting times in the tapir world. A potentially new species has been described (Cozzuol *et al.* 2013 *Journal of Mammalogy*), named *Tapirus kabomani*, and the TSG is now tasked with the job of deciding if and how to fit this new species into its mission to conserve tapirs and their habitat. The issue will be debated at this year's Sixth International Tapir Symposium to be held in Campo Grande, Brazil. The Newsletter will also be publishing a special issue on the topic, reporting the outcome of special panel of experts convened to produce recommendations to the TSG. In the spirit of fairness and to foster an open debate, we will also be publishing a reply by the authors of the description of *Tapirus kabomani*, in which they get an opportunity to counter the panel's recommendations. The debate is intense and worth following. Ultimately, we are grappling with a fundamental question in biology. What is a species? The answer is seldom straightforward, and should be considered carefully. The special report will be published during the Symposium.

As mentioned above, the tapir world is gearing up to its (now traditional, we are up to number 6) International Tapir Symposium. This year it will be held at the gateway to the Pantanal, one of the world's largest and most biodiverse wetlands. Campo Grande is the current base of operations of the TSG's chair, Dr. Patrícia Medici, who is currently developing an intense field research programme on tapir behavior and ecology in the Pantanal. If the location was not

enough of an incentive to attend the meeting, the list of abstracts should be. I have had the privileged of heading the review panel for presentations. We are in for a special treat, with a great number of exciting presentations. The programme will include our traditional species-centric sessions, but also a couple topic-specific sessions --- in particular, a conservation medicine specific session, which is a Tapir Symposium first! Finally, if that is not enough, this will be a once in a three-year cycle unique opportunity to hangout with some of the most awesome people I have ever had the privilege to work, collaborate, and share an ice cold beer with. There is no denying it. Tapir researchers and admirers are simply the best!

So, if you haven't booked your place yet, there is still time --- just visit <http://www.tapirs.org/symposium/>.

While these are all exciting events and happenings, our Newsletter still carries some excitement of its own. In this issue, you will find two interesting reviews in the Research Spotlight. Diego Lizcano takes a look at how we count tapirs, reviewing a paper by TSG's Mathias Tobler and colleagues. Klaus-Peter Koepfli and Budhan Pukazhenthii take a foray into how science can help prevent wildlife trafficking, a pernicious and important problem in the conservation of all species, including tapirs. In terms of original contributions, we have two short reports demonstrating that tapirs and Andean bears are not friends and that Amazonian oil drilling is a potential threat to tapirs. On a happier note, we have a report of tapirs being sighted in places they haven't been sighted in decades; an investigation into the protective properties of mother tapir's milk; and, an estimate Baird's tapir population density in Colombia – the very southern edge of its distribution!

I hope you enjoy this issue. I look forward to seeing many of you in November.

All the best.

Anders Gonçalves da Silva
Editor