

The Village View

April • 2006

GRUPO TORTUGUERO CONFERENCE ASSEMBLES WORLD EXPERTS



Grupo Tortuguero held its 8th annual conference in Loreto January 27th to 29th this year. For those of you who are not aware of this important group, Grupo Tortuguero was formed in 1999 to recover Eastern Pacific sea turtle populations.

According to research, there are five species of sea turtles that inhabit the Eastern Pacific and four are ecologically extinct¹. There are a variety of reasons for this: Sea turtle eggs are taken by poachers who sell both the eggs and turtle meat on the black market or by incidental capture in fishing nets, trawls and on long lines. While there is considerable awareness about the plight of sea turtles, there are few active projects aimed at sea turtle regeneration and the longer term creation of an environment where these turtles can flourish. Grupo Tortuguero works with everyone from researchers and politicians to commercial fishermen and environmental activist groups to ensure accurate data is gathered, shared and utilized in this overall effort.

During the annual conferences, groups who are responsible for monitoring sea turtles report their findings over the preceding year. When Grupo Tortuguero was initially formed there were only one or two groups reporting and they often weren't aware of, nor did they share in, each other's data. Now there are 28 different groups reporting from Latin America, USA, Hawaii and Indonesia. These meetings include valuable information about the health of the oceans and seas, turtle diets, mating and breeding habits and the overall health and well-being of sea turtles.

¹ When a species population is reduced to the point that it would qualify as a "minimum viable population" its contribution to these ecosystem processes is minimal. Such a species can be considered to be ecologically extinct, even if its numbers have not yet fallen to zero.

The 2006 conference saw broader sponsorship (including Loreto Bay and The Loreto Bay Foundation for a second year), increased participation and an expanded agenda and workshop schedule that included a number of youth activities. Clearly, interest and participation is growing which bodes well for the future of these ocean dwelling reptiles.

Through these meetings the inevitable issues between the non-governmental groups and authorities are resolved and important relationships and alliances are built. This level of research and cooperation forms a solid basis for the broader education of the general public.

A powerful and interactive tool in this effort of learning, sharing and conserving is that of monitoring the movement of turtles – something that can be done online (<http://www.seaturtle.org/tracking/>). One turtle of notoriety is "Zapata," who is the first tagged, wild turtle to swim all the way back to Japan from Baja California waters. It is difficult not to appreciate what an effort and achievement this is.

As in the children's classic tale of the tortoise and the hare, the effort to protect and replenish the sea turtle population requires steady, focused and determined efforts like those undertaken by Grupo Tortuguero - we encourage you to visit their web site (www.grupotortuguero.org).



Inside This Issue

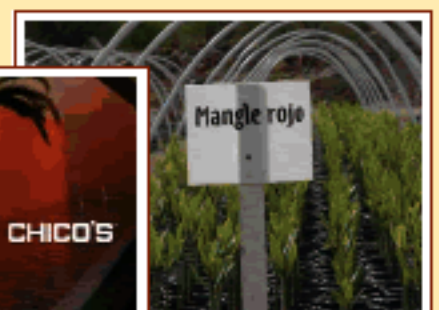
Loreto Featured in Women's Wear Magazine

Tourism Marketing Raises Loreto's Profile

Estuaries: Past and Future

Onsite Update

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The Agua Viva Estuaries: Past and Future

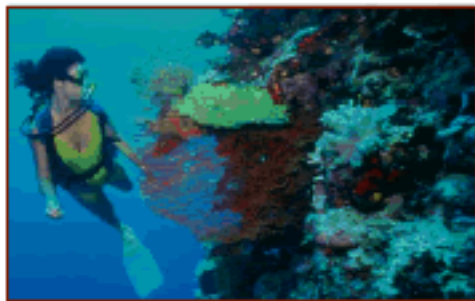


The design of Agua Viva has a basis in history. Many years ago there existed a large, fertile estuary system lined with mangroves and home to a diverse ecology. The protective network of mangrove roots offered shelter to a variety of water fowl, young fish, mussels, crabs and crustaceans.

The estuary waters were kept fresh by the ebb and flow of the sea. In the late summer months the sea water was joined by fresh water that would cascade from the hills during periodic rains. This created a rich, microbiotic environment that generated and nourished an abundance of sea life.

Approximately 200 years ago the overgrazing of upland vegetation by domestic cattle and goats began a process of estuarine siltation, where soils were gradually carried down by storm water to the estuary and eventually filled them in. This left mangrove areas reduced to a few small areas of red, black and white mangroves. As part of the research that preceded the design of Agua Viva, the Loreto Bay Company tested the soils and found they could nurture a rejuvenated estuary network.

Along with the mangroves, clay, good soil and sand, it was determined that the historical estuaries had been home to 18 different types of sea shells, seven different species of crabs and 11 species of clams. These animals play important roles in the health of the estuarine system: as crabs dig for food, they leave holes behind, which help the mangroves take root; and as clams filter the water for food, they keep the water clean, which helps to keep the estuary free from pests, such as mosquitoes.



A comprehensive, historical analysis by engineers, biologists and historians provided a richer understanding of the soil, coastline transport (the way the water currents work in the coast line-which allows the nutrients to come in from the bay and nurture the estuary) and how humans used to live in the area by using the estuary as their main food source.

With this research, Loreto Bay was able to design an estuary to work the way it did 300 years ago, so that just as people were living on the edge then, they can do so again at The Villages of Loreto Bay. A planned, full restoration of these estuaries will guarantee the system's future ability to regenerate itself.

There are an anticipated 20,000 mangroves (7,500 are growing in pots at the Loreto Bay Agricultural Center right now) that will line this revitalized system. Each hectare (about two and a half acres) of mangrove wetlands will produce one ton of commercial fish per year. The total estuary system in The Villages of Loreto Bay will boast 40 hectares of mangrove wetlands, contributing greatly to the health of the marine habitat as well as the economic development of the local community by increasing fish stocks and drawing more tourists for whale and sea turtle watching, diving and snorkeling.



On-Site Update

The pace of construction in the Founders' Neighborhood has increased since our last update. With over 120 Village Homes under construction, homes are beginning to be turned over to their owners at an increased pace. There are 32 homes expected to have turned over by April 1. The next three groups of homes represent almost 100 homes and are beginning construction this month. Eiffel Construction from Juarez, Mexico has been contracted to build over 140 homes. They are the largest builder to date working in Loreto Bay.

In the Custom Homes division the next group of homes is now under construction and the pace of homes scheduled to begin construction is also increasing dramatically.

Both Posada Del Mercado Norte and Posada Del Mercado Sur are now out of the ground and are expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2007.

Exciting news is also taking place in construction management. Loreto Bay Company has a new Director of Construction, Rafael Gonzalez. Raf was born in Cuba, educated in the UK and brings years of experience working for some of the largest home building companies in the U.S., including Turner Construction and Lennar Homes. He also brings significant commercial experience and is an inspiring leader who was designated by Turner to be a trainer of staff across the country.



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Produced at Loreto Bay Company headquarters in Scottsdale, Arizona. For information on the next Selection Event and Sales Presentation, please contact the office near you.

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Letter from the Editor

There was nothing that dominated the past month of my life more than health. After a surgery, re-injury and almost a week on morphine I wasn't sure I'd ever swing from another chandelier.

While time is the great healer, living in a place that begs being out enjoying the warm air and natural beauty, lots of socializing, and now eating lots of fresh, organic vegetables from our Agricultural Center, I've recovered more quickly than anticipated. I've also decided that you're only as healthy as the place you are.

If you are one of our home owners be forewarned, your chandeliers are at risk.


Darlene Tait - Editor

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Photos - Staff



www.LoretoBay.com



Testimonials from home owners:

Dave Evans and Jackie Nedel, Bethesda, MD

Our overall experience with Loreto is very good. We love the rustic feel of the town and the serenity of it and we hope that doesn't change. I have found the company to be made up of aggressive team players with high energy and have become friends with the staff and couldn't be more pleased with our experience. It makes buying a home all that more appealing and a true testimony to the project. We've made friends with other home owners and they are interesting, outgoing individuals. This is the type of community we wanted to be in. That's a very strong quality of the company.

Ernie and Patty Christman, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

I love the quality of construction and understand that nothing to start in Mexico is easy. The people working on the project are great and it's well on its way and we are very happy with our decision to buy our home here. We bought it as a rental property; however, it will be greatly used by our large family. We are excited about the gardens outside the bedroom. Rob with EcoScapes is a great guy to work with.

Yvonne Catton, Realtor with the Ramona, Ca. Prudential Office

The people who work for Loreto Bay are knowledgeable, fun, and informative. When we were in Loreto, everyone took time to explain all the different aspects of the development. They were open and forthcoming to our questions and concerns and their enthusiasm for the project was very contagious. David Butterfield and Jim Grogan gave us a clear picture of their vision for the development, and at the same time gave us a sense of confidence that everything would be completed to the highest standards. We feel it will truly be a world class resort when it is completed. We are really enjoying the whole experience.