



Omaere
Parque Etnobotánico
Puyo Ecuador

“Omaero”

Volume 1, no 2
December 2009

Welcome to the *Omaere* “Omaero”, a Newsletter for the friends of the Omaere Ethnobotanical Park in Puyo, Ecuador

Inside the “Omaero”

- Omaere & UNEP
- YouTube
- Teresa in Canada
- The Eco-Nantar Project in Morona
- Activities in the Park
- Volunteer work
- The Omaere Foundation

The United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) has launched a major worldwide tree planting campaign.

Omaere has become a partner by entering its pledge of planting 3,000 indigenous trees in local communities.

Reforestation has always been an important part of Omaere.

We will harvest the seeds of various useful or medicinal trees, such as Chambira (*Astrocaryum chambira*), Chontaduro (*Bactris gasipaes*) and Guayusa (*Ilex guayusa*), reproduce them and care for them until they are large and strong



enough to be transplanted. Transplantation will be done in Omaere and in local communities.

<http://www.unep.org/billiontreecampaign/>

Omaere video in YouTube!

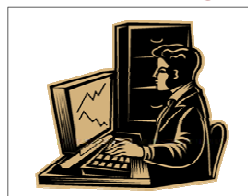
We are proud to announce that a small video of **Omaere** was uploaded to **YouTube** for the pleasure of hundreds of new viewers.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eRJHJTJI5FM>

Thanks to **Diego Escobar** and Peace Corps volunteer **Matt Bare** and for their help producing this video.

Please note that we have changed our email address.

We can now be reached at :
fundacionomaere@gmail.com



We also thank **Matt Bare** for his work on the Omaere web site.
www.fundacionomaere.org



How can you help?

Add our link to your blog or website. This will help increase our publicity.

Add our link: www.fundacionomaere.org

Search engines give higher priority to the sites that are most popular and have more links, thus leaving out the smaller, more independent organizations.

Thanks in advance for your help!

Teresa Shiki, President of Omaere visits Canada

Teresa Shiki, a Shuar traditional herbalist, is the President of the Omaere Foundation. Laurence Lebrun, co-founder and friend of Teresa, organized a volunteer program for Teresa last summer in Quebec, Canada, so that she could meet Western traditional herbalists.

Marie Provost of the *Clef des Champs*, company that manufactures traditional herbal products for the past 30 years, invited Teresa for 6 weeks (mid July to the end of August). During this period, Teresa shared her knowledge with the staff of the Clef des Champs, as well as with those of the *Jardin du Grand Portage*.

Teresa also learned a great deal about the Western traditional ways of doing things.

From planting, to preparing liquid extracts (tinctures, glycerites and salves) with fresh herbs.

She also visited *Wendake* (a historical indigenous village), *Aliksir*, *l'Armoire aux Herbes*, *the Botanical Garden of Montreal*, and the *Biodome*.

Finally, she was invited to the annual meeting of the CHIR team on Aboriginal Medicine, where she gave a lecture on Shuar traditional medicine to cure diabetes.



Follow Teresa's stay in Quebec, Canada by visiting the following web sites:

<http://www.clefdeschamps.net/>

<http://www.intermonde.net/colloides/histoire.html>

<http://www.aliksir.com>

<http://www.armoiresauxherbes.com/>

<http://www.huron-wendat.qc.ca>

<http://www2.ville.montreal.qc.ca/jardin/jardin.htm>



OMAERE ACTIVITIES

- **The Omaere Foundation held an extraordinary assembly** in May, taking advantage that one of the Canadian members was in Ecuador. During the assembly, we accepted two new members: **Carmen Ramirez Lord**, from Quito, and **Janeth Kajekai**, who lives in Puyo.
- **Members of the Foundation wish to openly thank Teresa and Chris for all their work these past years. The Omaere Park is still alive thanks to their patience and efforts. Gracias! Merci ! Thank you!**
- In the past 5 years, after recovering the Omaere Park, a new Shuar house was constructed. A small replica of a Shuar house was also built in the entrance, where guides give an introduction to new visitors, and where they currently explain about the Waorani.
 - Other houses, nurseries and trails have been repaired or rebuilt.
 - The entrance fence and gate at the entrance of the Park (about 30 meters), were replaced.

The **Omaere herbarium**, along with multiple photos, has been donated to the Catholic University in Quito. The University herbarium agrees to clearly mark these collections as a donation from Omaere.



Carmen Ramirez Lord



Janeth Kajekai & son Felipe

The Eco-Nantar Project in Morona Santiago

The purpose of the Eco-Nantar Project is to create an Ethno-Cultural Complex on a 250 hectares (approximately 615 acres) section of primary rainforest.

The land was bought by the Omaere Foundation in Nov 2006 to preserve the abundance of wildlife and rich biodiversity of this land as well as to preserve the ancestral knowledge of indigenous peoples.

The reserve is located on the Kankaim River, Provincia de Morona Santiago; Southeast Ecuador Amazon.

This complex will include a Traditional Health Center, a Scientific Center, and an Eco-Tourism Center.

We are currently looking for collaborative partners, such as NGOs, universities, tour operators, and interested individuals.



Interested in participating?: fundacionomaere@gmail.com



*“Omaere”
means “nature
of the
rainforest”
in the
indigenous
Waorani
language*

OUR GUIDES AT THE PARK

Omaere's principal guides are:

- **Luis Dagua** is a Kichwa man who has taken several courses in guiding, and works freelance accompanying tourists to many sites in Pastaza.
- **Sandra Villegas** is a Kichwa woman from Mushullacta. She has ample experience in tourism, hotels and sales.
- **Robinson Sando** is a Shuar man from Morona-Santiago who studies tourism at the Universidad Estatal Amazónica and leads trips to Shuar communities.
- **Cristián Pavón** is Shuar and studies Environmental Engineering at the Universidad Estatal Amazónica.
- **Teresa Shiki** is a Shuar medicinal plant expert from Chumpias in Morona-Santiago. With two French women, she founded Omaere over 15 years ago.
- **Chris Canaday** is a biologist from the USA, who has lived in Ecuador for over 18 years, working in bird research, nature conservation and “EcoSan”.

Chris is responsible for training new guides and for striving to maintain the best quality information for our visitors.

Two other members of our staff:

Janeth Kajekai is our secretary/receptionist. She is Shuar and has her high school degree in accounting.

Fausto Kaisar is our night watchman. He is Shuar and is retired from the Ecuadorian Army.



Link to us!

www.fundacionomaere.org

Land for Sale

The Omaere Foundation is selling two parcels of land that had previously been used for projects.

1. **Cotacachi, Imbabura**, in the Sierra region of Ecuador: half a hectare of arable land, ponds, reforestation area, and dry toilet, located in the Barrio Cushcagua, on the banks of the Rio Pitzambiche.
2. **Tena, Napo**, in the Oriente region: two large lots located in the Barrio Pepita de Oro, close to the Rio Tena and the swimming area “Las Sogas.”

Prices are negotiable. For information write: fundacionomaere@gmail.com

Visitors & Volunteers this year in Puyo

We have had nearly 6000 visitors to Omaere this year. The biggest percentage is Ecuadorian students, followed by Ecuadorian families and international tourists who come from all parts of the world. Most of these world travellers come from the United States, Canada, England, France, Spain and Germany, but we also receive growing numbers from Japan, China, the Cheque Republic (and other parts of Eastern Europe), Argentina and Chile. A small but steady flow of Polish visitors comes to Omaere thanks to tours offered by Hostal Caiman in Quito.

Excellent student interns have come this year from the Universidad Central del Ecuador, Universidad Católica de Quito, Universidad Autónoma de Quito, Universidad Cristiana Latinoamericana de Ibarra, Universidad Técnica de Machala, Universidad Técnica de Cotopaxi, UNIDEC de Riobamba, and the ITHI Tourism Institute in Quito. One Ecuadorian student from Ambato did an internship for his high school in New York City.

International volunteers many times organize in advance via the internet to work with us, while others come as tourists and get interested in helping out.

This year, we have had fantastic volunteers from France, Canada, Austria, Peru, and the United States. One outstanding project was done by Geoffroy of France and Walker of Peru: they built a beautiful section of trail with carefully selected stones from the river. Tifanie and Kevin of France helped with many things, including a major renovation of the kitchen in the Reception Building.

These and other volunteers and interns have helped with the preparation of natural medicines, the guiding of tourists, the lighting of fires in the traditional houses, the maintenance of trails and the overall upkeep of the Park.

Volunteer work in Omaere

We are always happy to receive volunteers.

Ecuador could be an experience of a lifetime, an opportunity to observe the unique wildlife of the tropical country.

Omaere welcomes volunteers, interns and researchers, who are willing to help us out for a minimum stay of one month (although exceptions can be made, especially if the assigned tasks do not take long to learn).



Laurence Lebrun and Teresa Shiki with volunteers greenhouse that was damaged by severe thunderstorms this year and rebuilt with the help of volunteers



- We are planning to build a small laboratory where Teresa could process medicinal Shuars plants. A place to extract and transform medicinal plants.
- Two Canadian volunteers are scheduled to be in Puyo next February 2010 to help out in this area.

We are always open to work with volunteers. For more info, please email us at fundacionomaere@gmail.com

Ecological dry toilets could serve as an excellent thesis study for university students, focusing on the contribution that dry toilets can make to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, reduce chemical fertilizer use, and reduce energy use in the treatment of waste water.

People that are interesting in collaborating in one way or another with the construction of ecological dry toilets are more than welcome.

Read more on Chris's blog at:
inodoroseco.blogspot.com

The Omaere Foundation

Omaere means "nature of the rainforest" in the Waorani language, one of the indigenous groups of the Ecuadorian Amazon.

The main objective of the Omaere foundation is to contribute to the conservation of nature and the protection of environment as well as preserve the ancestral knowledge of indigenous peoples.

Up to 10,000 people visit us each year, the majority being Ecuadorians, making Omaere one of the most important places where people can easily and economically learn about Amazonian plants and people.

The Omaere Foundation is directed by Teresa Shiki (president, 593 80330383, email: fundacionomaere@gmail.com)