



DECEMBER 2015 - JANUARY 2016
NEWSLETTER



SOUTH RUPUNUNI CONSERVATION SOCIETY Field Visits: Shorin Tau, Blackheart Creek and Wiiwiitau
Sand Creek, Shulinab and Rupunau

SRCS EXEC. TEAM

Nicholas Fredericks, PRESIDENT
Leroy Ignacio, VICE PRESEDENT
Kayla de Freitas, TREASURER
Erin Earl, SECRETARY
Asaph Wilson, BIRD SPECIALIST
Chung Liu, PROJECT MANAGER

SRCS PARTICIPANTS

SAND CREEK FIELD/SCHOOL VISIT

Leroy Ignacio
Asaph Wilson
Nicholas Cyril
Erin Earl
Vidia Kaitano
Kim Spenser
Joy Perry
Paul St Hill
Flavian Thomas
Maxi Ignace
Samuel Melville

SHULINAB FIELD/SCHOOL VISIT

Leroy Ignacio
Maxi Ignace
Maya de Freitas
Erin Earl
Nicholas Cyril
Flavian Thomas
Kim Spenser
Asaph Wilson
Terence Augustine
Leroy Ignacio
Barnhabas Ignace

RUPUNAU FIELD/SCHOOL VISIT

Eon Grey
Nicholas Cyril
Flavian Thomas
Ponila Joseph
Henry Joseph
Lexroy Joseph
Leon Baird
Amanda Adams
Maxi Ignace
Joy Perry
Levi Joseph
Nathaneel Wilson

SGP The GEF
Small Grants
Programme



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

2015 concluded with a fabulous trip to Sand Creek, and January saw field visits to Blackheart Creek and Wiiwiitau. Thank you to all three villages for your continued support, and especially to Sand Creek, Shulinab and Rupunau Primary School children and teachers, for all your enthusiasm during our visits.

Please enjoy the photographs



Top (1) Sand Creek Primary School children birdwatching on a blustery day. Clockwise, from upper left (2) A group of 7 Red Siskins spied through a scope on Shorin Tau. The birds were fighting and chasing each other from tree to tree. This kind of behavior usually means they are preparing for breeding season. (3) Two Siskins drinking from water trickling over a rock. Note the blue band on one. (4) Ciambe seeds make tasty siskin food (5) Shulinab children squint at a White-Headed Marsh-Tyrant on a very hot morning.

THANK YOU TO CHUNG!



Chung Liu has been a very important part of SRCS for more than 5 years. His interest in the Region, and particular the birds, inspired him to do his Master's research thesis on Rupununi birds and their interaction with Wapishiana people. After graduating, he returned to take up a position as Project Manager for the current Red Siskin project.

But Chung was not content just to manage a project about birds. He saw far beyond the job description he was given. During his two years here he also masterminded and secured funding for a coffee project, progressed us towards our goal of creating Rupununi Important Birding Areas, he has arranged first aid training and certification for our rangers, started school visits, and encouraged young cadets to enter the group. But his legacy will be in his appreciation of the unique talents of each individual; whether that is writing, photography or planning, Chung always has time to listen to you, and a plan to get you to where you want to be.



As this phase of Red Siskin research draws to a close, Chung will be returning to Canada. It will be difficult to manage without his help and diligence. We will try our best Chung! Thank you for everything.

SPECIAL CONTENT: ROCKS OF THE RUPUNUNI

Our beautiful South Rupununi landscape is unique: strange shaped rocky mountains pop out of flat sandy savannahs. Next time you climb a hill, crack open a rock to see what it looks like, and then compare it with the rocks at river crossings. You will see they are quite different. But why?

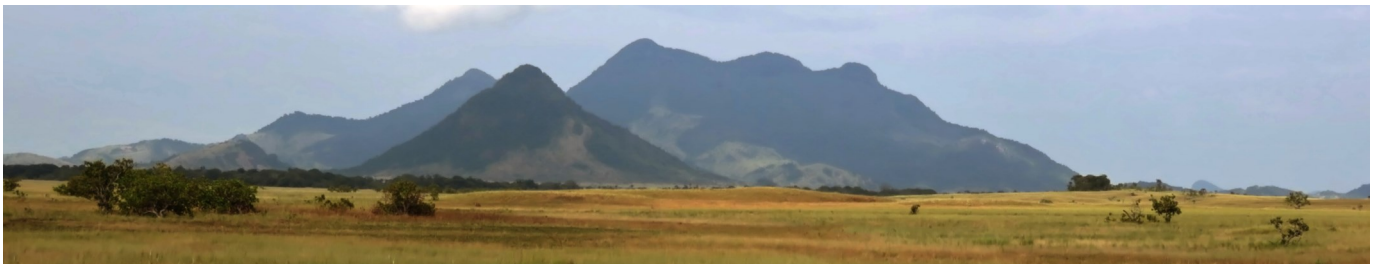
Look at the bedrocks at a river crossing. You will see they are twisted and folded, sometimes with little stringers and veins running through. This rock is very old. About 2 500 000 000 (two and a half billion) years old! It was squashed and folded when land came together to make the first continents.



The picture on the left is the kind of rock you see in most mountains in the savannah. It is a type of granite. You can tell because it contains small grains of quartz, as well as creamy white grains (called plagioclase) and black grains (called biotite and hornblende).

About 2 000 000 000 (2 billion) years ago this was not rock at all, but a hot, hot liquid that squeezed up and into the surrounding rocks. This hot liquid formed big pools the size of mountains inside the old rock. Eventually everything cooled and turned to solid, very hard, rock. Then, over millions and millions of years, all the surrounding rock crumbled and turned to dust and was washed or blown away. So what was left was just the very hard material, sticking up out of the ground as mountains.

That is why now we have isolated mountains like Shiriri and Wiiwiitau



Note: The endangered Red Siskin (*Sporagra cucullata*) is officially protected by the South Rupununi Conservation Society
The SRCS is currently researching its ranges in the South Rupununi, to be included as an Important Birding Area (IBA)

The South Rupununi Conservation Society is based at Dadanawa Ranch, South Rupununi, Region 9, Guyana.

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