



Conservation of Biodiversity in State of Paraná, Brazil.

Opportunities
for partnership



The State of Paraná boasts a variety of biomes with tropical and subtropical characteristics. This wide range of ecosystems, makes southern Brazilian region a biological diversity hotspot. Of special interest are the Araucaria Forest, which once covered more than one third of the State's territory, and the coastal Atlantic Rainforest, which is part of the biggest remnant of this threatened biome.





Araucaria Forest



Today well-preserved native areas comprise less than 3% of Paraná. This is a local problem which unfortunately reflects a global reality.

The wide degradation of the world's natural areas needs to be addressed by our society. The loss of biodiversity is a global issue with consequences that threaten our very existence.



Atlantic Rainforest

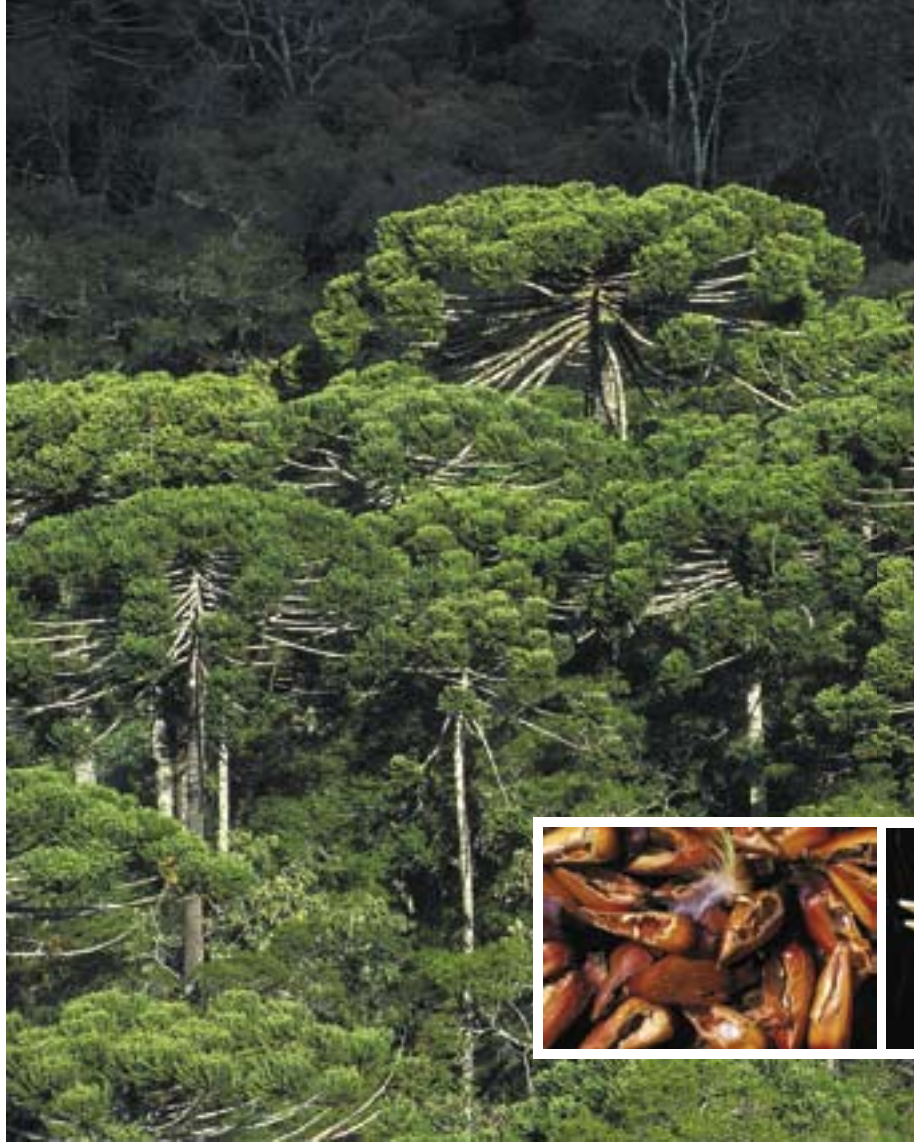


SPVS – The Society for Wildlife Research and Environmental Education – is a non-governmental, not-for-profit conservation organization, founded in Curitiba, the State of Paraná, Brazil, in 1984.

Its projects, focused on the conservation of biodiversity in the State of Paraná and the Southern region of the country, make SPVS one of the most active organizations working for the protection of the last remaining natural areas in this region.

Mission: “to work towards the conservation of nature by protecting native areas, by carrying out environmental education programs and by developing models for the rational utilization of natural resources”.

Paraná’s coast is part of the biggest remnant of the Atlantic Rainforest biome, which once covered nearly all of Brazil’s coast and is now reduced to less than 7% of its original extent. The Guaraqueçaba region, along the northern part of the State’s coast, is one of the last remaining Atlantic Rainforest areas which combine low population density with a mosaic of existing conservation units and well-preserved important natural areas.





The Araucaria Forest is characteristic formation of southern Brazil, and has played an important role in the history and culture of the people who live there. In the State of Paraná, it is estimated that less than 0,5% of the Araucaria Forest remain well-preserved.



Throughout its history, SPVS has worked in partnership with both private and public organizations. In addition to the accomplishments of its campaigns and projects, the synergy developed with both sectors has allowed SPVS to build its main asset: its transparency and credibility in society.

Today, SPVS is developing critical initiatives that require new partnerships, bigger investments and better integrated efforts in the search for solutions concerning the protection of biodiversity.

Current initiatives and challenges

Conservation of the Guaraqueçaba Environmental Protection Area (EPA)

Description

The Guaraqueçaba Environmental Protection Area (EPA) was created by the Brazilian government in 1985 and covers approximately 313,000 hectares.

SPVS has been working in the region since 1991 where it maintains three natural reserves in partnership with The Nature Conservancy. In these reserves it implements projects to combat global warming and preserve biodiversity, conducts scientific research, and restores degraded areas.

SPVS also works with environmental education and in the search for alternative income for the communities who live in the region.

Challenges

The Guaraqueçaba EPA is an “island of biological diversity” under tremendous pressure. For the EPA to successfully preserve significant areas of this important biome, the following must be done:

- Establish guarantees for the protection of existing Conservation Units;
- Create new Conservation Units;
- Restore degraded areas;
- Integrate management efforts, through support of governmental entities;
- Increase scientific research;
- Expand environmental education efforts;
- Promote, within the local communities, economic activities that combine income generation with nature preservation.

Conservation of endangered species

Description

The destruction of habitat and the lack of corridors connecting the few remaining natural areas in the state has put a large number of species in Paraná in risk of extinction.

Since 1998 SPVS has been coordinating The Red-tailed Amazon Parrot Conservation Project (*Amazona brasiliensis*) along Parana’s northern coast, in an area of the Atlantic Rainforest that shelters other endangered species such as the Black-faced lion tamarin (*Leontopithecus caissara*). The project includes population census, radiotelemetry and behavioral research, nest monitoring, environmental education and support for law enforcement action.

Challenges

The work to protect endangered species requires additional support for the following goals:

- Guarantee the continuation of conservation and monitoring activities concerning *Amazona brasiliensis* and its habitat – the Atlantic Rainforest;
- Increase work with other species, occurring in remnants of endangered biomes, such as the Wolly spider monkey (*Brachyteles arachnoides*), in the Araucaria Forest.



Adoption of Araucaria Forest areas

Description

The Araucaria Forest biome historically occurred mainly in the State of Paraná. Originally, there were more than 8 million hectares of which less than 40 thousand hectares remain – generally belonging to private owners. This is a very small amount of forest to preserve for such an inspiring forest landscape that is also the symbol of the people of Paraná.

In 2003 SPVS developed the Araucaria Forest Adoption Program. Its main objective is to bring together owners of well-preserved areas and companies interested in supporting the biome's protection.

Challenges

Because of the critical nature of this situation, the few well preserved remnants of Araucaria Forest must be protected as quickly as possible.

To accomplish this, support is needed for the following:

- An immediate increase in the number of adopted areas;
- Increase in cooperation with governmental entities in order to create better public policies for promoting conservation and control measures.



Biodiversity Condominium

Description

Developed in partnership with the Mater Natura Environmental Studies Institute, and other institutions, the Biodiversity Condominium's main objective is to promote conservation of natural areas in urban environments and their immediate surroundings. In Curitiba's Metropolitan Region, homeowners, apartment building owners and private businesses are invited to collaborate to preserve nature on their own properties. The idea is to transform these areas into small natural reserves and, thus, attract birds and small mammals, as a means to restore and value the biodiversity native to the region.

Challenges

- Continued identification of good natural areas for preservation in the Curitiba's Metropolitan Region;
- Continued technical assistance for owners of natural areas about the conservation of biodiversity;
- Production of educational materials;
- Creation of an education program for the public authorities in the 26 municipalities of Curitiba's Metropolitan Region;
- Establishment of Biodiversity Condominium in other Brazilian urban centers.



Institutional Development

In order to strengthen itself as a non governmental conservation organization, SPVS is working closely with the general public and the private sector. Projects, such as the Membership Campaign, which challenges common citizens to join SPVS' cause, and the Corporate Affiliate Program – an initiative that invites private businesses to support SPVS through financial contributions and through integrating a consciousness of conservation into its corporate culture. Once affiliated with the Program, SPVS develops workshops of environmental education for the members' employees, clients and other entities with which the company interacts. In an effort to attain financial self-sustainability and autonomy, SPVS created, in 2003, its Permanent Fund, designed to complement the institution's budget.

Credits

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