



27 October 1977

Dear Friends of the Galapagos,

After the 33rd meeting of the Darwin Foundation Council in Quito I was fortunate enough to again pay a short visit to the Galapagos National Park and the Darwin Station on Santa Cruz. I accompanied the Ecuadorian minister of Foreign Affairs, the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution and other distinguished members of our Council on a five day tour of the Islands.

First of all let me tell you how deeply impressed I was again by the beauty of the Galapageian environment which we are striving to protect: The rugged beauty of Santa Fe--where we could observe how the native plants recolonize an island now free of goats; the fantastically varied wildlife of Plaza, where for ten years thousands of visitors land annually without doing damage because our push for protection was successful; and the fragile colony of magnificent frigate birds on Seymour which had suffered damage from careless visitors but seems to be recovering, now that protection rules are enforced and observed.

During our meeting and our trip another very important development became obvious: The interest of the Ecuadorian public and government in the protection of indigenous Galapagos environments has increased tremendously in these last years.

- This year the Ecuadorian government contributed more to our budget than in all previous years combined.
- Television, radio stations and newspapers in Ecuador are broadcasting and publishing a growing amount of Galapagos material produced in collaboration with the Darwin Station.
- This year, again, a dozen Ecuadorian students are doing research on Galapagos under Darwin Foundation grants bringing the total of Ecuadorian scholarship holders since 1971 to 72. Many of their results have been published in Ecuadorian periodicals.

All this is a result of increased conservation awareness which serves to strengthen conservation practices in Ecuador.

We are involved in projects which will take many years to decades:

- Although goats have been exterminated on some medium-sized islands, for those larger goat-infested ones, we must protect samples of vegetation by large fenced exclosures.
- We urgently need more applied research to solve problems of introduced organisms, e.g. how to control cats or plants--and on endangered species like lobster, black coral and the Hawaiian petrel.
- We must continue and intensify our educational and training programs (courses for National Park wardens and conservation courses in the schools on Galapagos).

For these and other important projects the economic basis of our research station must be secure. In order to finance all necessary activities we will need \$570,000 US, \$316,000 of which we hope to receive from foundations and governments. We must depend on you for the remainder; please help us to continue our work on Galapagos by contributing what you can.

Yours sincerely,

*Peter Kramer*  
Peter Kramer  
President

PS: Tax deductions for U.S. citizens are permitted only on gifts to non-profit U.S. institutions. U.S. contributors should make checks payable to the Smithsonian Institution "for conservation and science in the Galapagos Islands" and send them to the Secretary for the Americas, Charles Darwin Foundation, c/o Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C. 20560.