

Third Millennium Alliance Blog: Updates From the Field (11/9/2015)

- **Merengue & Meringue:** TMA Field Staff, Director Ryan Lynch, and interns joined the Camarones community for their annual Day of the Dead fiesta. This celebration included both merengue and meringue: as merengue songs blared on the sound system, local ladies showed hospitality by passing around trays of homemade meringues.
- **Alice's Toadstool?:** The biodiversity of all the kingdoms of life on the reserve never ceases to amaze, and on a recent hike to assess the status of the Del Rio-Gavilan-Armadillo trail loop, we encountered an unusual purple mushroom with what looked like a bite taken out of it. It looked like something straight out of Alice in Wonderland, and although so far the reserve's mammal list does not include Cheshire Cats, perhaps new camera trap studies will find some . . .
- **Oropendolas – Elusive Clowns:** In recent weeks we have seen and heard flocks of Chestnut-headed Oropendolas, both on trails in the cloud forest and even right across the valley from the Bamboo House. Although these birds are large, colorful, and noisy, they are also very active, and thus far have evaded our efforts to snap a photo. When we do, we'll have evidence to suggest that this species' range may be moving south, because it is currently considered rare in the area.
- **Coffee in Full Bloom:** The shade-grown coffee plot on the slope of Cerro Sagrado Trail near Bamboo House is blooming profusely. It's arresting to observe all the stages of the coffee plant life cycle up close. The flowers have a lovely fragrance similar to lemon blossom, and their abundance shows hope of a great harvest to look forward to.