



Woodcutting of John Chapman, courtesy of J.J. Lippincott Inc.

# Johnny Ipil-Seed News

The quarterly newsletter of Trees for the Future

Woodcutting of John Chapman, courtesy of J.J. Lippincott

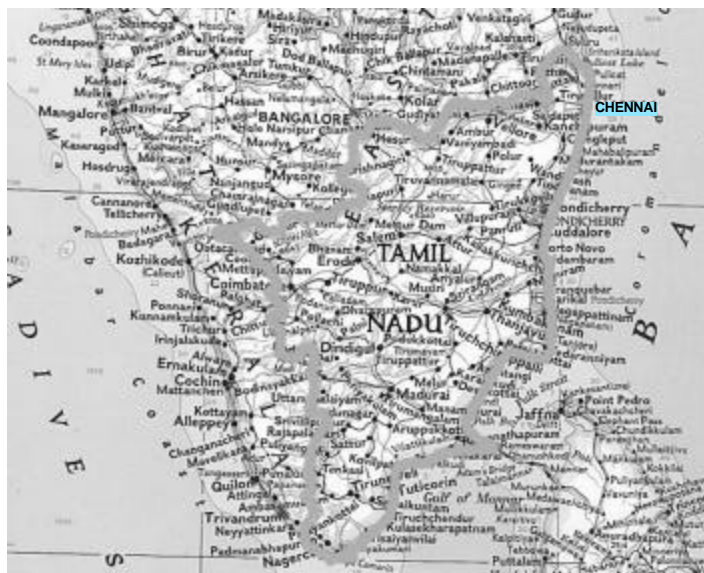
Fall 2004 Vol. XI, No. 3

## India Update: Planting Trees to Harvest Water

While 400,000 hectares (about one million acres) of land in Northwest India and Bangladesh are currently flooded, the people of Tamil Nadu in southeastern India are suffering horrendous seasonal droughts. They are asking for our help to address the water crisis that is punishing the region's agricultural production and health. The local population is eager to plant a variety of fruit trees, timber species and non-timber species suitable for restoring water to the degraded red soil.

**TREES** helped its partnering organizations in southern India plant 37,500 trees in 2003, and with the current support of our members and **Plant-It 2020**, we will be able to supply training and planting materials to help sow more than 100,000 additional trees over the next year.

Similar to Haiti and Cameroon (see page 4), the



Tamil Nadu, in Southeastern India, is suffering from drought and high rates of deforestation.

*In the field with Grace Trust: TREES helped Grace Trust plant trees over this past year. Below, one of their technicians gives a training on organic farming.*



compelling reason to plant trees in Tamil Nadu is for water conservation. Only 5% of rainwater in Tamil Nadu is captured for consumption, while the remaining 95% is lost to the sea - wasted! Rapid deforestation has crippled the region's ability to return rain water to underground aquifers. But we can reverse this trend with a focused effort to plant the right types of trees around springs and on contours of hills and mountains.

Planted around agricultural

*Continued on page 2*

*Johnny Ipil-Seed News* is a quarterly newsletter of TREES FOR THE FUTURE, Inc., a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping people of the world's poorest communities to begin environmentally beneficial, self-help projects.

We earned the nickname *Johnny Ipil-Seed* from Filipino kids almost 30 years ago as we walked their mountains planting seeds of *Leucaena* trees, locally called *Ipil-Ipil*.

This newsletter is printed on recycled paper with soy-based ink and is sent to all supporting members to inform them of recent events, plans, financial matters and how their support is helping people.

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## India Update continued: Planting for Water

fields, along the coast and around topographical depressions, tree cover will slow evaporation of water from the land, guide rain back into groundwater reservoirs, and stop the salinization that is now occurring up to 9 kilometers

(5.6 miles) from the coast.

For 14 years, we have worked with organizations in Tamil Nadu to plant thousands of trees. Now **Trees for the Future's** numerous partners in Tamil Nadu are successfully extending tree planting at the village level to bring water back to these lands.



*Grace Trust project workers perform a nighttime street theater on harvesting water.*



*Project leaders in Sambakulam village gather around to enjoy planting a seedling.*

West Bengal that are under four feet. They are struggling because of the failure of the monsoon season and a lack of funds, but they still manage to get out to the villages and train in sustainable methods of income generation, rainwater harvesting, organic farming, and reforestation of the dry, red soil.

Grace Trust disseminated TREES' seeds



*One of Grace Trust's women's self-help groups prepares nursery beds with trees donated by TREES.*

*Continued on page 3*

*A closer look at the work of GAIA Environmental Conservancy:*

*Director Rajesh George is implementing an agroforestry project for a group of 19 farmers in Tamil Nadu*  
**Nursery beds** **Inspecting trees** **Leucaena grove**



and technical training sheets to farming groups in 10 villages, each of which recently planted hundreds of trees.

**Grace Trust** is emphasizing the inclusion of women in their agricultural training and tree planting activities with the hopes of empowerment as well as restoring water to their wells.

**AWARE**, also in Tamil Nadu, is assisting in a myriad of activities, from animal health to self-help groups, and is integrating tree planting into all their rural development activities.

**RDS** is working on environmental conservation and education activities with more than 25,000 students in 165 Turuvannamalai District schools. They are encouraging students to plant trees in their schools and at home. Additionally, they are creating “mini-forest areas” in and around wastelands, river beds, and water catchment zones to invite the rainfall.

**Annai Theresa Welfare Trust** is working in 70 villages in several blocks of the Thoothukudi district to train local communities to take full responsibility for the conservation of their vanishing forest resources.

**Rural Development Afforestation Society** is helping ten villages to train locals in sustainable agriculture and agroforestry techniques.

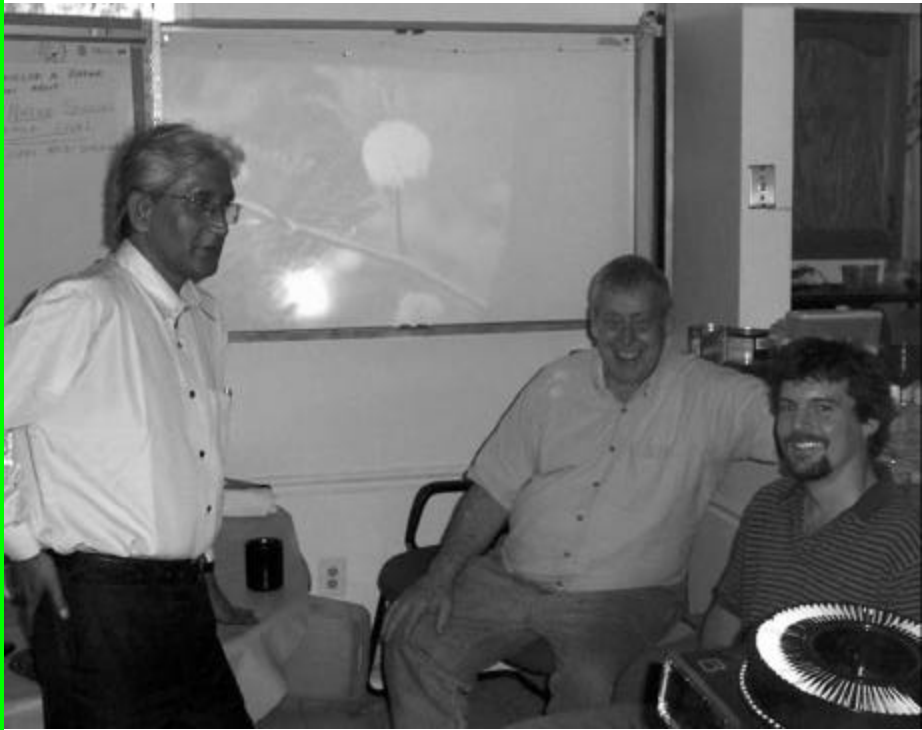
Through **SEEAIMS** and the **Tamil Nadu Forest Department** we are also reaching communities in Acharapakkam and the surrounding villages.

The **Rural Construction Movement** and **Rural Stuards in India**, originally focused on health and hygiene, have now focused on reforestation and water conservation, addressing the root of the problem.

We will continue to support all of these projects with technical assistance and high quality seed, and soon we'll expand these projects with on-site planning and technical training.

It is this type of regional tree planting effort that will enable communities of Tamil Nadu to harvest water for a better future!

*Up close with project leader Bishnu Karmakar: Bishnu (left) with Dave and Chris during his visit from West Bengal, India. He stopped by for a day of training. Bishnu helps village cooperatives with planning for environmental projects, and he is looking to find markets for handicrafts and clothes made by women's groups.*



# Visitors at the Ruppe Center Harvesting Water Throughout the World

## Focus on Haiti

Our hearts go out to the Haitian families who suffered losses in the massive landslides earlier this year. Our technicians in Haiti sent us some disturbing



*The entourage of the Haitian Institute*

pictures of the human tragedy, and it has motivated us even more in our projects. Deforestation limited the mountains' potential to hold their soil and to guide rainwater back into aquifers. The result is not only eroding mountainsides, but the seasonal shortage of water in a country that gets more than 60 inches of rain per year.

When leaders of the Haitian Institute visited us recently, Director Marc Christophe and Ketly Bateau-Walker told us about a similarly horrific landslide tragedy that happened decades ago. Somehow people have forgotten. So naturally our conversation focused on how we can help the Haitian Institute in making agroforestry and sustainable agriculture a large part of their new project: *The 1804 Memorial Garden* - which will glorify Haitian flora and demonstrate agroforestry techniques.

Dave and John spent a couple months working in Haiti last year, and John plans to return as soon as the farmer-to-farmer program is reinstated.

## Focus on Cameroon

During the 1980's, experts from Switzerland led a project that planted millions of eucalyptus trees around Lake Jakiri in the Northwest Province. As a subscriber to Johnny Ipil-Seed, you are already quite



aware of the degradation these trees cause. The fate of Lake Jakiri was no exception. These insatiable trees greedily sucked the groundwater, and before long the lake went dry!

That horrible fate is what brought **Mayor Akoso Neba** of **Bafut, Cameroon** to the Ruppe Center. Mayor Neba is planning two large-scale reforestation efforts in the Northwest Region of Cameroon. A major goal is the replacement of eucalyptus trees with other, beneficial species that build groundwater supplies and encourage vegetative growth.



*This Cameroonian farmer in Jakiri loads his cart with *Pygeum africanus* to transport the seedlings to the outplanting site. The medicinal bark of the pygeum tree has been sold in Europe for the past 300 years for its ability to inhibit inflammation.*

## Training Videos

We have started producing, copying and distributing training videos on CDs. Soon we will be translating them into several languages.

We recently finished the first two videos in our West African Series. The first video depicts a training session to Senegalese farmers on grafting trees. The extensive, close-up footage illustrates and explains everything one needs to know about grafting citrus and mango trees.

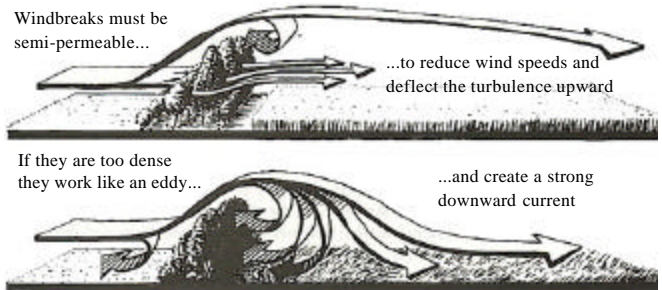


The second training video teaches farmers a variety of skills and land use techniques including establishing and maintaining living fences, making natural insect repellents, and growing a variety of fruit and forestry species.

The videos are formatted to play on virtually any computer worldwide. Project leaders can now facilitate effective training using computers at their offices, schools, churches, and cybercafes. Peace Corps Volunteers with laptops can deliver an effective training in even the most remote villages.

## How a Windbreak Works

Windbreaks slow the wind at crop level and divert the force of the wind to higher altitudes. Farmers plant windbreaks for three main reasons: to minimize damage to vegetables and crops, to protect flowering fruit trees and to minimize soil erosion and desiccation. The species and spacing between trees and shrubs varies greatly around the world, but the basic design stays the same. Windbreaks should be planted perpendicular to the wind (though winds change directions so you need to choose wisely) and they should have an "A" shape. This A-shape is done by planting tall and short trees in staggered lines. It is also important to pick tree species that will produce secondary products, such as berries and fuelwood.



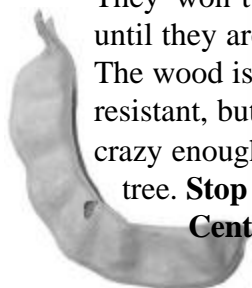
## Using Tamarind Trees in Windbreaks

Tamarind trees reach heights up to 100 feet, and as they get older, they have a leaf density ideal for a windbreak - not too thick and not too thin.

The young trees in the picture to the right will start filling out over the next couple years, and older trees will keep their leaves all year - though the ends of branches may get a little sparse at the end of the dry season in areas where the water tables are low.

Tamarind trees require patience! They won't begin bearing fruit until they are 8 to 12 years old. The wood is tough and termite resistant, but who would be crazy enough to cut such a tasty tree. **Stop by the Ruppe**

**Center for free tamarind seedling!**



*Above:* Picture from Project Leader Rajesh George in Tamil Nadu. *Right:* Photo courtesy of Tropical Plants Library Online at [mgonline.com](http://mgonline.com). *Left:* A tamarind pod..

## Tree-mendous Gift Ideas

### Put a Little Moringa in Your Diet This Coming Holiday Season

Known as another **Miracle Tree**, **Moringa** is grown around the world as a vitamin-rich food for both people and animals. Now you can grow your own!

This holiday season we will be offering an intriguing gift idea: **The Moringa Kit**.



*The Moringa kit makes a beautiful arrangement. We grow our own and mix it into lunch.*

The kit comes complete with a packet of seeds, and directions on growing your own trees. Also included are a color booklet and video CD depicting the amazing qualities and uses of Moringa and other trees throughout the world.

Better yet, half of the fifty dollar donation will plant 250 Moringa trees in Haiti, Senegal, or Ethiopia.

### Stop by the Ruppe Center For a Free Tree

This year we have over 200 seedlings in our office nursery, both temperate and tropical. The tropical fruit trees need to come inside during the winter.



## Haiti Update

TREES is helping Starfish Ministries' orphanage in Tricotte, Haiti, to plant well over 20,000 trees this year. The orphanage's leaders plan to use the trees to establish a sustainable supply of fuelwood and a protected woodlot for a sustainable supply of certified tree seeds.

We gave Starfish Ministries over two (2) kilograms of seeds of fast-growing, multipurpose trees, training materials, and technical training. The kids took it from there. They are outplanting thousands of trees as you read this!

Best of all, their work will be able to be sustained for years to come.



Inside the orphanage they will grow their own source of high-quality seeds and will use our barestem method of planting.

The barestem method eliminates problems with transporting heavy, soil-laden sacks. Using barestem seedlings, each kid can easily carry fifty trees at a time. The technique makes planting simple enough that the orphanage will be able to continue community afforestation for years to come.

To see more pictures, there is a link to Starfish Ministries on the [treesff.org](http://treesff.org) web page under Haiti.



## Opinion: Football Season

They say turnabout is fair play. So for a change, Grace is on a long overdue visit to the Philippines seeing her mother, and I'm stuck here doing the work.

She and our son, Francis, will also be visiting projects including those in the uplands of Zambales. This gives her the chance to stay at the beach we so enjoyed when we were first married - 25 years ago.

We were back there for our 20th anniversary, dancing the night away in a *bahay kubo* (grass shack) while a typhoon roared outside, slamming the shack and drenching us.

As the skies cleared, we found the beach much narrower than before: in 20 years, the South China Sea has risen more than six inches.

They can't tell us, or anybody along that beach, or on the smaller islands of the Pacific, or in the Indian Ocean, that global climate change is "bad science". People can see and measure the steady rise of the ocean. They know just about when their world will end - which won't be long now.

With your help, we have worked all these years to show the world this need not happen, sharing our experiences, demonstrating that cleaning the atmosphere need not cost us, need not raise taxes nor take away jobs. It only requires us to do some thinking outside the box - to show more concern for each other and less enthusiasm for the growing corporate welfare system.

People show us this is already starting to happen. Our "Cool Car" certificates are a big hit, gaining hundreds of new members over this summer. People we assist in developing countries understand the threat - they believe that if we can only work together, we really can turn this threat away. They also know what the alternative will be. Benito Jasmin's latest message from storm-ravaged Haiti makes it clear enough: he sent no words, only photos, and we can't even show you them - it was just that terrible.

Because of what is happening in these places, our work load keeps growing. We don't mind, but on some days we read our e-mail or the newspapers and it all gets a bit wearying:

Thanks to Exxon Mobile, we get cheap, newly-discovered oil from Equatorial Guinea, a very poor nation. But our oil money stays in the presidential palace - nothing for people with desperate needs.

Oil was also found in the Sudan, so we can cry about the atrocities happening in Darfur and other minority areas, but crying is all that will happen.

They're at it again in Brazil, where government continues to find new and profitable ways to rape the environment. 2003 saw record clearing and burning of the Amazon - 5.9 million acres, or a bit larger than New Jersey.

The result? They sent another 200 million tons of carbon dioxide into the global atmosphere, giving Brazil membership in the major polluters' club, now with 3% of the world total.

Responding to the outcry, Brazil, a signer of the Kyoto Treaty, points out that it uses comparatively little fossil fuel. Burning the forests, Brazil claims, is a "natural outcome of occupying the forests." (huh?) Furthermore, they claim none of this should take attention away from the Great Polluter, The United States, where 6% of the world's population now produces 25% of the world's carbon emissions.

Why is it that when the situation demands action, in every case the threat is turned into a political football? Money, of course. Big money from big oil and big electric power. But it can't keep going their way much longer. Dying islands in the Pacific and dying children in Haiti and the Dominican Republic may not bring us around, but our own islands in the Chesapeake Bay are also disappearing. It's all coming home faster than we might imagine.

With your help we continue to plant trees, ignoring the politicians and big oil users. We bring hope to communities struggling to turn away this threat. And we gain hope because there are so many people, here and in these faraway lands, determined to do what they can to end this threat.

Please help us, and them, all you can.



**We're  
Losing  
this to  
global  
warming**



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