Editors note

Carmabi will be subject to many changes in the coming years. In our last newsletter you read about the signing of the SEI project Marine Park Visitor Center. This project will start this year. Another major SEI project which was signed last February is the Knowledge Center at Carmabi consisting of a new building with dorms, a modern laboratory and office space for visiting scientists and of course our own personnel. You can read about this new Knowledge Center on page 8 of this newsletter.

And of course we are still very much involved with the project of Savonet Museum we plan to open at the end of 2009 adding another attraction to the Christoffelpark and to the list of attractions on the island. There is more to come in the near future. We will keep you up to date trough this newsletter.

All this work is being done by dedicated people who see a bright future for our institute and are determined to deliver high quality products and services.

As you can read in our annual report 2008, more than 31.000 visitors came to the park and more than 11.000 children participated in the educational program.

We would hereby like to thank everyone who contributed by visiting us, donating and sponsoring our projects. Without your contribution we would not be able to do our work.

Have fun reading this edition and don’t hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or remarks.

And stay tuned for the things to come!

The editors.
On the 21st of April we received a very special group of visitors at Savonet.

We were quite honored to give both Ms. Ank Bijleveld, the Dutch Secretary of State, and Ms. Emely de Jongh-El Hage, Premier of the Netherlands Antilles, a tour on the premises of Savonet. They were accompanied by a group of representatives of the local government, representatives of the Netherlands, USONA and - of course - the press.

Because the entire project, both the restoration and museum implementation, is subsidized by the Netherlands, Ms. Bijleveld was quite interested to see what the substantial financial injection of about 6.5 million Antillean guilders produced so far. Although we were not in fear of a “negative evaluation” we were happy to note that both she and the Premier were impressed by the work done so far.

The visit was concluded with the consumption of a simple but tasty lunch, prepared by our own Alice, and of course enjoyed in local style: “bou’i palu” (under the trees). An informative and fun visit for all!
We have been working very hard to produce the annual report 2008 on time before the end of March. The end product is a remarkable document containing all information on the extensive work that has been done by the institute in 2008. Efforts in the scientific department, nature protection and of course environmental education made the year a fruitful one, despite suboptimal financial support. Our commissioner Anthony Godett signed the annual report as a sign of his appreciation of the work done by our organization. Please read on for a short summary on all the work that has been done. Of course you can download the document as a pdf-file from our website www.carmabi.org.

Science
57 scientists visited Carmabi in 2008 compared to 38 in the year before. Together with students who came to the institute for several courses the increase in occupation of the laboratory and rooms also increased. As always the amount of scientific publications, an important scientific task for a scientific institute was respectable at 24. Carmabi was present at the Coral Reef Symposium in Ft. Lauderdale, sought collaboration with other marine laboratories in the Caribbean and has been actively extending scientific contacts throughout the world. Many research projects were up this year like: the Conservation status of Caribbean coot (Fulica caribaea) in the Netherlands Antilles and other parts of the Caribbean; Long term monitoring of reef communities on Bonaire and Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles; and much more.

Christoffelpark
The park has been busy in 2008, celebrating its 30 year anniversary with all kinds of activities and events. All marketing efforts resulted in an increase in park visitors both local and foreign of 14.3%. Several new additions in the park in the form of activities, infrastructure and products were accomplished. Safari tours are now done with the new land cruiser, sunrise and sunset safari’s and camping are new among the activities, annual memberships are available and of course the expansion of products in our shop with local natural products speaks to visitors. Basic park maintenance, wildlife management, searching for sponsors, marketing, basic life support training from just part of the work done over the year to develop the park in a top eco attraction.

Other endeavors
More than 11.000 school children participating in the educational programs, the management of small conservation areas like Daaibooii, Shete Boka and others, the Clear Water Challenge 2008, marine park management and visitor center endeavors, kayak tours, the Savonet Museum project etc, committees and work relations, sponsors and much more, all contributed to the successful year of 2008. The crisis in not over, financially Carmabi is still struggling, but it doesn’t influence the amount of output we produce.
By: Jessica Hermsen

Everywhere in the world nature experiences a lot of pressure and species disappear at a high rate. To maintain biodiversity, protective measures must be taken and to accomplish this the European council in 2001, in Gothenburg, decided to aim for stopping the loss of biodiversity by the year 2010. All countries who signed the Biodiversity treaty during the Biodiversity convention in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992 are required to compile a biodiversity database of all the species that appear in their country. The Netherlands signed this treaty and because of this the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba are committed to develop a Biodiversity database.

The task was given to the Ministry of environment in Curaçao who passed it to us, the Carmabi foundation. Carmabi will thus be responsible for starting up the database for the Netherlands Antilles.

The reason for the development of a biodiversity database is to have all information in one location which makes it easy to see what the biodiversity is in a respective country. When this diversity changes, measures can be taken to do something about it. Information in the database consists of all (known) species with all information that is known and available. Everybody will have the opportunity to look up species, by using the online database, and to find information about the particular species.

The first step towards developing an accessible database is to create a website that is easy to use for everyone. The database will be public and easy to find on the internet. The main target groups are students and scientists. Students can use the website to find information about species and use this information for projects or reports. Scientists can quickly find out if a species is present, already researched and what is known about the species. Information about species in the database will consist of scientific names, with additional local or popular names in English, Dutch, French, Spanish and Papiamentu since many people are not familiar with scientific or Latin names of species.

Attractiveness of the website is also an important requirement and ecological and biological terms must be explained in order to facilitate a reader’s understanding of the information provided.

A designer made a concept for the site, that will be tested and, if it is necessary adapted. All data must be inserted manually into the database, starting with the species names and concluding with the information on appearance in other Biodiversity databases, which is confirmed by internet searches.

For example, we will use the Nature Serve and the Catalogue of Life to search through. The Catalogue of Life is an American Biodiversity Database focussing on all known species in the world. They are building a website for this purpose and have been working on it for quiet some time. They are trying to get help from scientists all over the world. To prevent us from doing work that
has already been done by others Carmabi made a deal with the two organ is at ions and is allowed to use the information in Nature Serve and Catalogue of Life for its own database. If there is a species that is not imported in Catalogue of Life, then it is up to Carmabi to import the information of this species. Carmabi must also provide locally relevant information on each species.

Carmabi has been investing in a library since its establishment in 1955, consisting of books, magazines and publications. A lot of scientific research on flora and fauna of the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba has been published over time and brought together in this library. Local species are also mentioned in many international publications. These publications are not available in digital form, so they are scanned and imported in the Biodiversity Database.

Basic information on the project and on ecological and biological terms like taxonomy will complete the site.

Designing and building a database and website like these takes a lot of time. Information on the site and in the database will be less extensive in the beginning, but will be adapted, updated and extended through the years.

New websites funded by Percy Henriquez Fund

In the last couple of years the separate departments of Carmabi have been establishing their own target group specific products and services. The clients of these expect different kinds of styles and information. Scientists looking for research facilities for example are not waiting to be confronted with educational programs for kids and tourists are not looking for the rates for using our laboratory and other facilities. The current carmabi.org site, with extensive information on all products and services offered by the organization is too cluttered for the different target groups. We decided to develop different sites for the target groups so everyone can find relevant information easily and without being bothered by “clutter”.

Thanks to the Percy Henriquez Fund we can now finance the development of these new websites for the Christoffelpark, the research department, the educational department, future Savonnet Museum, the Curacao marine park and visitor center respectively and of course an updated look for the general Carmabi website.

We would hereby like to thank Percy Henriquez Fund for once again supporting our work on research, nature management and education on our island.

The design of these new websites is in the hands of the team of Dragonfly Media. We will keep you posted on the developments of these sites and let you know as soon as they are accessible.
As of February 2nd there are 5 new intern at Carmabi from a wide variety of studies and subsequently with a wide variety of assignments. They will be introduced in this article so you’ll get to know the faces and get an idea of the work they are doing at Carmabi.

First of all Jeroen van de Belt, who studies Commercial Economics in Zwolle in the Netherlands. His internship will take about six months and focusses on activities for the marketing department, most of all the Mangrove Eco Kayak Tour. He hopes the tour will create a stable source of income for Carmabi. Besides the Mangrove Eco Kayak Tour, he will be doing a lot of other marketing activities for Carmabi. Jeroen hopes that his input will contribute a great deal to Carmabi and is looking forward for a great time here at Curacao. He really likes Curacao and thinks time is going too fast on this beautiful island.

Jessica Hermsen studies Animal Management at the van Hall institute at Leeuwarden, the Netherlands. She will be staying here for 19 weeks and will complete different kind of assignments like assisting with the development of the new version of the Christoffelpark Management Plan and helping out with the biodiversity database project. Besides these assignments she will also be helping out with small projects for the coming Savonet Museum, Christoffelpark and a variety of other departments so she can get a hang of the types of work done at Carmabi. She hopes to learn a lot at Carmabi.

Claudia Slangen and Saskia Smits both study Higher Tourism and Recreation Studies in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. They work 2 days a week at the office of Carmabi and 3 days a week in the Christoffelpark. Their work consists of guiding visitors in the park, make a picture database of activities and events in the park for marketing purposes, front desk work, and much more. At Carmabi they will work on the design of flyers and newsletters, doing a small shop research in order to give advice on new products we can sell in the Christoffelpark shop. They are also working on a small visitor survey in the park. They hope to have a great time and learn a lot.

Last but not least, we have Sanne Cornelis. She lives and studies in Nijmegen to become a teacher in Biology. Her main assignments are for the educational department of Carmabi for which she is finishing a new sea turtle lesson box and lesson plan, which will be tested in May and June 2009. She is also working on 4 new info sheets for the website on a wide variety of themes and on the design of a new program for Secondary school together with teachers from the local Secondary school Peter Stuyvesant College. Sanne thinks she will have a great time at Carmabi.
On the 27th of February the Island Council of Curaçao and USONA signed the financing contract for the development of the new Knowledge Center at Carmabi for an amount of ANG 2 million. This regional Knowledge Center will provide facilities for foreign and local scientists so they can do research, which will benefit the island.

Commissioner Rhuggenaath, representing the government of Curaçao, thanked the Dutch government and USONA for making the necessary funds available. In his speech he especially put emphasis on the importance of the Knowledge Center for Curaçao and sustainable development of the island. He also said that this Knowledge Center should become one of the pillars for the development of the Knowledge Economy. The center is crucial for the education of future generations. Knowledge of our natural resources is already brought to school children through the government subsidized environmental education program. This way children learn about the beauty and importance of nature and learn to appreciate the close interaction between nature and our rich culture. By ways of structural educational programs, housed in the new Knowledge Center, a foundation will be laid for increased environmental awareness of the local citizens, government officials and leaders.

New Christoffelpark leaflets

Up to date information in marketing tools for promotion of any product is always necessary. As it is for the promotion of a nature reserve like Christoffelpark. A lot of changes took place in the park over the last 2.5 years: the diversity of activities offered increased significantly, the services provided were amplified and of course the restoration of the future Savonet Museum is an important item. In the past 2.5 years we have been using the former Christoffelpark flyer to bring the park under attention of local and international potential visitors. The information in this flyer was not up to date anymore and because the flyer also included information on Shete Boka many people got confused about locations and prices.

Market research last year suggested that most visitors heard of the park at one point during their stay but were not well informed about all the activities and possibilities in the park. To make sure potential visitors get a good impression of all the activities and services offered at the park we started developing a new Christoffelpark flyer focusing on both the general information, specific activities and attractions that are possible and of course the top species to see in the park.

The colorful flyer is now in press and will be available at hotels, tourist desks, car rentals an other strategic locations shortly. The picture gives a preview on what the flyer will look like.
Last year we mentioned the sponsoring by ENNIA of our outdoor center in the Christoffelpark. Their 10.000 guilders allowed the purchase of 6 new mountain bikes that can now be rented in the Christoffel Park. Mark Paul, weekend ranger and part time ranger in the activities and events department in the park helps the clients who want to explore the park by bike on their own and also guides small groups if our guests want a guided trip. The Northern route in the park serves as the mountain bike route with opportunities to go off road if the guide is present. Of course the exploration of the park is not only a fun and sporty way to enjoy your surroundings, it offers splendid opportunities to get close encounters with wildlife such as birds of prey and even white tailed deer. This however is only possible if bikers act responsibly in the park by staying on stipulated routes and trails, don’t make sounds like screaming and talking and of course keep a good watch.

Mountain bikes can be rented for US$20 or Naf.35 for ½ day (4 hours). This includes all safety equipment, a map of the park and the general entrance fee. If you want a guide, an additional Naf.50 per group will be charged. For more information on the mountain bikes you can mail us at info@carmabi.org or take a look at our website. For reservation of bikes (not necessary but if you want to be sure they are not rented to other visitors) and guide you can contact the park at 864-0363 or mail ch.park@onenet.an.

### Christoffelpark activities in May

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 8</td>
<td>Moon walk</td>
<td>15,00</td>
<td>19.30 - 22.00</td>
<td>Fruit and drink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 10</td>
<td>Mothersday Safaritour</td>
<td>5,00 mothers 10,00 kids</td>
<td>09.00 - 10.30</td>
<td>Guide Reservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 10</td>
<td>Bird watching</td>
<td>15,00</td>
<td>06.00 - 09.00</td>
<td>Fruit and drink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 17</td>
<td>Survival walk</td>
<td>15,00</td>
<td>08.30 - 12.00</td>
<td>Fruit and drink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 24</td>
<td>Sunrise Safari</td>
<td>20,00</td>
<td>05.15 - 09.00</td>
<td>Fruit and drink</td>
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**Extra’s in May:**
May 10, Mothersday! Mothers who visit the park with their kids get free entrance. Mothersday gift cards are available for safari tours, deer watching tours and annual memberships.

For more information about these activities or reservations, contact Cyrill Kooistra at the Christoffelpark. c.kooistra@carmabi.org / 864-0363/ 864-0170
Gift cards for special occasions

If you are looking for an original gift for your loved ones or to pamper a member of your personal we now have the ideal present you can purchase. As of April we offer several gift cards for activities in Christoffelpark. Want to give a pickup safari or a deer spotting sunset tour? We have specific gift cards for these guided trips. And if you want the perfect gift for someone who wants to spend a lot of time in nature, the gift card for our annual membership to the park is the perfect option. The gift cards are available at the front desk of Christoffelpark and at the administration offices of Carmabi Piscaderabay (during office hours.)

Take a look at the advertisement at the end of this newsletter for more information or mail info@carmabi.org.

Christoffelpark news in a flash!

Deer attacked by dogs on main road
On the morning of February 19th, Henk Langenfeld coordinator of the restoration of the Savonet complex spotted a injured deer along the main road that crosses the park. 6 dogs were running after her in the proximity of Wacawa. He took the animal to the park where a vet confirmed the suspicions of dogs being responsible for the severe injuries of the animal. After giving the doe a tetanus and antibiotics injection and some rest, the park was closed an hour early to facilitate the release of the frightened animal. Together with the workers of Willemstadt N.V. the animal was successfully released.

Waterfall tours
Heavy rains in February fed the already running streams in the park into small rivers and waterfalls. The last time similar circumstances occurred in the park was in 2005 and many people were waiting to see this rare event again. For the occasion we organized two special hikes to the waterfalls at the foot of the Christoffel Mountain. A total of 200 people participated in these hiking trips.

The rainfall in the last couple of months is still having its effect on the parks flora and fauna. Prepare for the blooming of trees like Kibrahacha and Brasia with their yellow flowers. The Teku di Mondi (Bromeliad) will also show its purple and red heart the coming period and you can still find white orchids in full bloom.
Mangrove eco kayak tours

By: Jeroen van de Belt
The mangrove tour of Carmabi is, for those who don’t know much about it, a kayak tour of two hours which will take you along the mangroves in the Piscaderabay. The Piscaderabay is full with three different kinds of mangroves; the black mangrove, the white mangrove and the red mangrove. The mangroves are offering shelter to different kind of animals. Pelican, swallows and frigate birds are often seen guests in this bay. In the water there is enough to enjoy, between the roots of the mangroves there are a lot of fish, crabs and even mussels can be found here!

In the mean while we already have organized two Mangrove Eco Kayak Tours which were both received with a lot of positive comments. The first tour was well visited with a number of 11 guests; the second tour was a gigantic success and was visited by 19 (!) guests. Due to this high number it was almost impossible to have everyone come along with the tour and even one guide had to be left on shore!

The Mangrove Eco Kayak Tour will be offered on request. Starting from April 18th the project group kayak tours, existing of Iris de Snaijer, Léon Pors and Jeroen van de Belt, will even start to organise kids birthday parties, team building programs and special tours such as camp fire tours.

Does this sound fun to you? Do you want more information and/or make a reservation? Call 969 1260 or send an email to info@carmabi.org.
Annual membership Christoffelpark

Enjoy the beauty of nature for an entire year in Christoffelpark!
Only NAFL45 a year.
(Only inhabitants. Special price for kids.)

NAFL45 PP PER YEAR...AND YOU GIVE NATURE A HAND!

Get your inscription form at the frontdesk in Christoffelpark, or ask for it by mail at info@carmabi.org.

More information:
Tel: 864-0383
Email: info@carmabi.org/ch.park@onenet.an

A BREATH OF NATURE.... CHRISTOFFELPARK

Gift Cards Christoffelpark

Give your loved ones a Christoffelpark Gift Card as the ultimate special and alternative gift. Available for pickup safaris, Deer spotting safaris and annual memberships in Christoffelpark.

A GIFT...AND YOU’LL GIVE NATURE A HAND!

Available at the frontdesk in Christoffelpark and at the administration offices of Carmabi at Piscadera (during office hours).

More information:
Tel: 864-0383
Email: info@carmabi.org/ch.park@onenet.an

A BREATH OF NATURE.... CHRISTOFFELPARK