



June 2009 Journal

By Anita Evans
Vilcabamba Loja - Ecuador
Source: www.seekvilcabamba.com

This beautiful butterfly came into our apartment

The Vets The week just gone by was a bit stressful. By Tuesday Tui was not well at all. She was running a fever and not eating or taking in any fluids. I was giving her water using a syringe every 30 minutes so I took her to the nearest vet (20 minutes away).

I asked my friend Natalie who is renowned here for her dog knowledge to come with me and translate which she gladly offered to do, leaving her meeting that she was in to help me. Thank you Natalie me and Tui are both very appreciative of your help.

So we bundled the babies into a box and used them to coax Tui to the taxi.

The vet gave her some antibiotics, confirmed she had a fever. Said that there were no babies left inside and it looked like her bowel had stopped working. She gave me instructions to give Tui suppositories and electrolyte liquid to drink. She asked me to bring her back in the morning. So I pre-booked the taxi for 9 am. I also took it to buy several pairs of surgical gloves!

If anyone remembers my experiences after having Emily, my bowel stopped working. This one has thrown a few of my holistic friends here as they say my dogs are empathic to my conditions both present and past. That the fact that Tui and I had that same problem after giving birth is not coincidental. As for me, it's just too much for me to try and get my head around at the moment.

So we bought her home and I nursed her all night. Getting up every few hours to check on her. I gave her suppositories but no poo came out and gave her the electrolyte liquid via syringe.

By Wednesday morning she was still shivering profusely, non responsive, no poo, not drinking of her own accord. So I bundled her up into the taxi and we went to the vet in Loja. Scooby (which is an appropriate name for a vet in my books, after Scooby doo the dog) looked at her straight away and put her onto a IV and gave her another load of antibiotics. Then I administered the laxative, lots of laxative and we waited in Loja for 6 hours at the vets. During this time the puppies were not allowed to have mum's milk so I and Emily hand feed the puppies every two hours.

Scooby confirmed that it was the bowel that had stopped working and that she hadn't pooped out the placenta she had eaten. For those of you that don't know, it is normal behavior for the bitch to eat the placenta of each puppy. They normally poo them out the other end. He said she may have got bacteria from one of the placentas but we will never know why the bowel stopped. She also had an internal infection probably in the bowel.

Yes, I had Emily with me as I had no one to pick her up after school. I had no translator with me this time and the vet speaks no English! I had spent a couple of hours on Spanish Dict website translating sentences that I might need to say to the vet and I had both dictionaries with me. So it was a matter of the vet, his staff and me using the dictionaries most of the time.

Emily was really brilliant help she would keep an eye on the puppies and pat Tui so she stayed calm while I made up formula or assisted the vet or nurse or even just went to the loo.

It was a bitterly cold day in Loja. I didn't realize it could get so cold here. We were not prepared as we had rushed out of the house. So I bought Emily a jacket and grinned and bared the cold myself. We let the taxi go back to V around

lunchtime realizing we were going to be there for a while to come. And the taxi bill was mounting up. Around 3pm Scooby announced that the temperature had come down and that she was rehydrated and good to go home. He gave me antibiotics to give to her for two more days and an enema in the morning! So I've got to know my dogs' bottom!

So we got a yellow cab back to V and had a very nice cab driver. The best yellow cab driver I've had yet. And we had a kind of conversation in Spanish (me with my dictionaries).

The end result is the bowel finally moved after 3 suppositories, a truck load of laxative and an enema around Thursday lunchtime. Tui continued to shiver for 3 more days. I covered her with blankets when every the shiver came one. Today, one week later she is back to her old self. She is up and moving around, all body functions are normal again. She is drinking lots of water on her own and has a good appetite. She even wags her tail again now whenever she sees one of us. The puppies are fine and eating and growing well. Which is brilliant as I didn't fancy hand feeding 4 puppies for six weeks that need feeding every two hours. I'd rather work at getting the mother better, which is what I did.

Needless to say I hadn't slept much since Saturday night so was pretty tired by the time Tui came right. I was able to catch up on some sleep on Thursday night by not Friday or Saturday as there was more political campaigning going on in the town on these nights!!! It's local elections now. They yell out their campaign propaganda over the PA and blast out loud music. The flood the speakers so you can't understand a thing or hear the music it's just this mush of load noise.

Sunday was coffee picking day. Pierre had arranged for a driver and car and our neighbor and Howard to help.

Howards girls came too they had a great time playing together Emily and Ambrosia and her sister. They even got into picking the coffee. I have a GREAT APPRIECIATION for coffee harvesters who pick by hand its bloody hard work.



Caterpillar Today being the 8th June Emily and me found a cool looking LARGE caterpillar on a stick on the side of the road while walking through Vilcabamba. Emily diligently carried it all the way home to show Pierre. Making sure she didn't come in contact with the caterpillar as it bites! Many locals on our way back home warned us that it bites and that the bites hurt and itch.

Well we made it home without the thing landing on us and showed Pierre then we let it go. Below are some pictures and information on the caterpillar.

Pseudosphinx tetrio
The Tetrio Sphinx Moth

EGGS, LARVAE, PUPAE:

Females lay eggs in clusters on leaves of various hosts.

Larvae feed on *Allamanda cathartica* and Frangipani (*Plumieria rubra*) and probably other members of the Dogbane family: Apocynaceae.

The brightly coloured caterpillar is easy to find in gardens. The larva feeding on a tree of *Himatanthus*.

This tree produces a white, toxic latex which is incorporated into the tissues of the caterpillar without harming it. The toxins in the caterpillar, however, are toxic to would-be-predators. Larvae with red-yellow-black colours usually carry toxins and are left alone by birds.



***Pseudosphinx tetrio*, Puerto Rico, courtesy of Brian M. Irish.**

Brian writes, "I found many of them devouring a purple allamanda and also on a large tree (Bombaceae) on the USDA Tropical Agricultural Research Station grounds in Mayaguez, PR."

Brian M. Irish, Horticulturist/Geneticist, Tropical Agricultural Research Station, Mayaguez, PR 00680

These caterpillars defoliate the Frangipani tree (*Plumeria spp.*) They generally start at the tip of a leaf and work back. The caterpillar is velvety black with yellow rings and an orange head. They can get up to six inches long and are awesome to see.



Pseudosphinx tetrio male courtesy of Vernon A. Brou.

DISTRIBUTION:

The Tetro Sphinx Moth, *Pseudosphinx tetrio* (wingspan: 5 - 5 1/2 inches (12.7 - 14 cm) females larger than males), flies throughout tropical and subtropical American lowlands. It is very common in Guadeloupe and Martinique, but poorly attracted by light.

Generally the moth is seen from southern [Brazil](#): Mato Grosso, etc., north through Central America, Mexico, and the West Indies to south Florida, southern Mississippi, Texas, and southern Arizona.

Pseudosphinx tetrio, Sept. 7, 2002, 2:06 AM in Yasuni, Ecuador, by Steve Graser.



© Steve Graser 2002

Pseudosphinx tetrio has been taken as far north as Nebraska and Pennsylvania.

Alex (January 8, 2005) writes, "Thank you for your website which includes *Pseudosphinx tetrio* page. I live in Montserrat (island in the Caribbean Sea, southeast of Puerto Rico) and wanted information about the huge caterpillars in the plumeria tree."

The upperside of the forewing is dark brown with a dark spot at the base of the costa and blurry gray and white markings. The upperside of the hindwing is dark brown with white along the inner margin, and the lower half of the outer margin.



© Steve Graser 2002

Pseudosphinx tetrio, Sept. 7, 2002, 2:06 AM in Yasuni, Ecuador, by Steve Graser.

Sphinx hasdrubal Cramer, 1780, Surinam, is same as *tetrio*.

obscura Butler, 1877, Honduras, is same as *tetrio*.

albina Gehlen, 1941, Cuba, is synonym for *tetrio*.

FLIGHT TIMES: In Costa Rica there are records for all months except March and December. There are several flights from March-September in Florida. I occasionally get asked to identify larvae found in Florida in December or even January.

ECLOSION: Moths eclose from pupae under leaf litter or in subterranean chambers.

Pseudosphinx tetrio female courtesy of Vernon A. Brou.

SCENTING AND MATING:

Females call in the males with a pheromone released from a gland at the tip of the abdomen.

Adults nectar from flowers including rosy periwinkle (*Vinca rosea*).



Pseudosphinx tetrio pupa, Boca Raton, Florida, courtesy of Alan Chin-Lee. Ruby Rodriguez reports them defoliating *Plumeria cujete* in Puerto Rico.

State Highway 35 closed

Sat, 13 Jun 2009 10:09a.m.

Rain has closed State Highway 35 on the East Coast, north of Gisborne.

A slip has blocked the road at Kemps Hill, north of Hicks Bay and 180km north of Gisborne.

Police don't expect the road to reopen for another couple of hours.

They advised drivers to delay travel or take alternative routes.

I came across the above short news item on TV3 website today (12 June) and it made me chuckle. I've rewritten it for Ecuador, Vilcabamba.

The main Highway between Loja and Vilcabamba is closed

Sat, 13 May 2009 10:09a.m.

Rain has closed the main highway between Loja and Vilcabamba.

A slip has blocked the road at San Pedro, north of Vilcabamba and 35ks south of Loja.

Police don't expect the road to reopen for a couple of months.

They advised drivers to delay travel. An alternative route has been created through the dirt back roads of the settlement of San Pedro. Drivers are advised to keep their windows up and air conditioning off while on the diversion to minimise the amount of dust that will enter in to the inside of their car.

Pedestrians are advised not to walk on the diversion roads due to been unable to breath because of the dust. Residence living on the diversion roads should go stay with family if they can or keep all doors and windows closed.

Local pharmacies have notice a marked increase in the number of ear plugs sold to the residence of San Pedro. They suspect it is due to the noise created by the traffic going through San Pedro.

Here in V you are looking a months for road closure not hours. Hours don't even count! ☺ A year closure might make the news here in Ecuador ☺



Nina Update. She's' growing like a weed. Her legs are longer then her body. Overall she's a very well behaved puppy. She has developed a fetish for plastic shopping bags. At first it started out with her just playing with one and ripping it up. But it has evolved. I keep the empty bags in a wicker round basket. Nina has taken to getting into the basket and curling up and going to sleep. However, she a bit big for the basket and can't get comfortable. So tonight she has improvised. I'm impressed with her problem solving skills. I heard her go to the basket and forsook around with the plastic bags. I didn't pay much attention to her as I was working on the PC and knew she doesn't make a mess with them. Then just now I passed her asleep on her matt by the bedroom door and under her head was a plastic bag. She was using it as a pillow!!!!

All I want is to be in the plastic bag basket!

30 June Christ, it's the end of the month ALREADY. What a month we have had. I've had little time to write my journal. I've had the flue this last week. Emily had a mild dose the week before hand. This has meant little or no time to write. I've been very very busy with dogs as you can imagine. Two is manageable. 6 is unmanageable. Especially when 5 of the 6 are puppies running riot everywhere. Needless to say I'm dogged out at the moment. Tomorrow I will prepare my 'need a home' flyer for them and have them re-homed within a week.

I've started learning to read Tarot cards and have been having meditation lessons with Howard. My cold has slowed down my meditation for this week just gone. It's very hard to do breathing exercises through your nose when it's blocked ☺. I'm getting better so have booked for my next lesson on Wednesday afternoon.

What energy I've had to write has been put in the Vilcabamba Survival Guide and the Vmap which I hope to get up on the net very soon.



Use grooming the horse

The Mountain We have had many trips to the land. Pierre goes everyday to check the workers. Great progress is being made there with the road nearly repaired, new tracks cut and the water system planning underway. Our neighbor Manual has nearly picked all the coffee on the top plantation. 3 people 3 weeks fulltime! Now he has to start on the bottom one ☺ We've visited the horse on our land and had some lessons in grooming and caring for him as well as a ride. We have a mule on holiday on our land at the moment as its owner is in hospital. The mule and the horse have become attached at the hip. When the owner comes out of hospital he's going to help us buy a mule. Plus there are the 6 donkeys! So Pierre always has a bag of salt on him as they love it and have to have salt. So now the donkey, mule and horse come running up to him when they see him. Here

Trout We've been here since February and Pierre's been here last year and we have owned the land since September and traveled up and down the road to our land zillions of time. Yet it is only this month that we find out we have a restaurant and trout farm at the end of the road a 15 minute walk into the bush. It's a fantastic place. The trout are raised in tanks that are feed by the river or waterfalls. It's like Rainbow Springs in Rotorua in the very very early days. For \$4 you get a fresh trout and vegetables and a drink. We can walk to the restaurant from our property in 20 minutes. Excellent, we won't have to go into town for a meal. I've got to say the trout is some of the best fish I've ever had. The location is nothing short of breath taking.

Snakes Pierre had his second snake experience this month. Rather him than me. The workers disturbed it when they were cutting back the scrub to make a path. They swiftly cut its head off. Two hours later Pierre has footage of this headless snake body STILL MOVING! The workers say it was a poisonous one. That you have to be careful when you cut their heads off and get out of the way as the head still moves and will come around and bite you! Also with this grey one in particular it has to 'claws' at the end of its tail that it can get you with and inject its poison.



Walking on our land with Howard, Hillary, the kids etc.

Emily She's been having a ball with her new friend Ambrosia. They can play together for hours and hours these two. Emily had her first sleep over in Ecuador on Saturday night at Ambrosia's house. Needless to say she had a fantastic time. Howard and Hillary (Ambrosia's parents) are wonderful. We all get on very well together and they are just fantastic people. They are happy to have Emily any time as the girls love being together. This has meant Pierre and me have had some time together which has been wonderful. Unfortunately they have decided to return to Canada at the end of next month. We will all dearly miss them especially Emily. I'm not looking forward to the end of July. On the other side I know have a reason to visit Canada in the future.

On the up side Chung and his family are coming back to live here. Emily got on well with Chung's daughter when they were here last. They share a love of horse riding together. Emily loves horses, she helped groom the horse and feeds them their salt.

Aaron and Ivy and their little boy come back early July to live here for a year. Sven and Suzanne are back for good now. There are a number of new families moving here too. The place is growing. She has two friends that live here all the time but not knowing enough Spanish is proving a bit of a barrier with these friendships. As the Spanish improves so will the friendships.

School Emily hasn't gone to school for most of June. With both of us being sick over two weeks getting up at 6am and going to school by 8am was out of the question. It's the summer holidays here now till end of August so no school. I must say I'm really enjoying having her home and doing such cool things together like caring for the horse, mule etc. Going to Loja together, finding big bugs and exploring our new world here in E together. She's been great with the puppies. She really wants to help look after them and helps prepare their food, clean up after them ... she is developing a real love for animals of all sizes. Ideally we would like her to be in a school that has a holistic approach as opposed to pure academic.

There is a group of parents setting up another school here based on Montessori principles which will start in September. But it is further out more than I am prepared to travel to every day, twice a day. So we'll have to see how things go.

Bugs I think Pierre has found a bug in Ecuador (again on our land) that competes if not surpasses the Weta! I'm impressed with the person game enough to put this thing on their finger! What do you think?



Should I bite or shouldn't I?



What are you looking at?

Animal update Like the cat and the owl in the pea green boat the mule and the horse have gone off together. The mule has gone back to her original home and the horse has followed her. If he had balls (he's neutered) I'd have to say she has him by the balls. So their owners are working out how to get them back on our land and maybe separate them. So I guess our fencing on the boundary needs to be looked at too.

William (a horse guy here) has dropped off 1 mare (pregnant) and her fowl. Plus we have Rome's Filly on the land too now. I've always loved horses and wanted them around and now that dream has come true.

Tui's puppies are coming up 6 weeks old now and ready to be re-homed. She's pretty sick of them and is weaning them off her by sitting on the tits so they don't get access and growling at them if they get too pushy wanting milk. They are all healthily fat cubby things.

Nina is growing like a weed. I've had to update her harness and she now sleeps outside with the Tui. She's like a gazelle. She runs and bounds all over the place. She can jump! And when she does it's like she is flying. I can still walk the legs off her though. When we do our shopping in town it can take hours of walking around and I take her and when we get back she is buggered and sleeps for hours.

Well that is it for June. We are coming up six months in Ecuador, can you believe it. We have applied for our residency. For the first time in my life I will be a resident of a different country. Pretty exciting stuff! The Vilcabamba Guide is going online as I type this. I'll send out the website when it is live. We've set it up as a new web site. That way you can see what I've been up to these last few months and why my journal is not as long and detailed as normal.



This is a peeled dog. The bread is from Peru. He belongs to one of the workers. He has no hair apart from the tuff on his head. He is very leathery to touch!



This is Jim and Ruchel walking on the land with Alasain the horse (that's run off with the Mule) behind them. We have just had a wonderful lunch and afternoon at their house today.



This is us with Howard, Hillary, the kids and friends having lunch at the trout restaurant.



This is an awesome photo of Emily!



Love and peace from us all in Vilcabamba

