

Running for the wilderness: 5000 miles through South America

Taking a cold shower, watching the waves of the ocean or just driving a car, people usually get the best ideas in situations like these. Katharine and David, a 34-year-old couple of British Ecologists got inspired to their incredible travel-project when surveying seabirds in the Caribbean. This was in 2009, and it took them about three years to finally make it happen: “We wanted to do something”, they state in the F.A.Q.-section of their [website](#), “raise awareness about South America’s imperiled natural world and undertake a world first expedition.” And that’s exactly what they are doing right now. Started on July, 28th 2012, they plan to run 5000 miles (about 8046.72 kilometers) unsupported through South America. Yes, to run!



In the interview, the two adventurer tell me more about their year-long-journey and their physical challenge of pulling all their kit such as house, office, kitchen, lab in a recycled self-built trailer.

What is the intention of your project?

The reason is wildlife and wild: We want to raise funds for our charities, “Conservacion Patagonia” and “Birdlife International” so that they can conserve threatened habitats on the continent. We also aim to inspire environmental action and connect people from around the world to South America so that we can all ensure our every-day choices help rather than hinder these precious ecosystems.



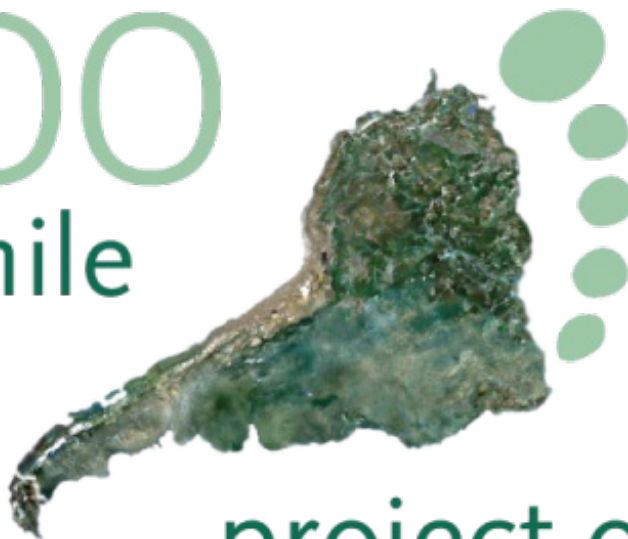
Why did you decide to run 5000 miles?

We thought about walking from west to east through the Amazon, but then found out that a fellow Brit, Ed Stafford, was in the middle of doing it and doing it very well! We thought about walking the length of the continent and hacking a trail through the Amazon, as well as climbing an ancient tree in every continent, but after a couple of weeks in the Amazon on a unguided expedition, we soon worked out this would take us years not one year. Then there was running. Could our bodies with-stand months on end of pounding roads and trails whilst pulling our own kit? We are about to find out....

You recently started your trip, what has surprised you the most so far?

The way Chileans and Argentinians honk their horns and wave at us – we had no idea they would be so excited to see us running on the road! We have even been passed empanadas and milkshakes through car windows and constantly been offered lifts which we can't accept! The Police – in both countries Chile and Argentina. We wouldn't go to a police station in the UK for help, but here they have stopped and checked we are OK, offered us lifts, food, hot water, camp sites. Amazing and very grateful surprise.

5000 mile



project.org

How are the reactions of people you meet on the road and which person has impressed you the most?

95% Incredible. We were running towards Puerto Natales, Chile, recently and someone who had heard about the expedition drove out 60 km to meet us, having no idea if she would actually find us, without ever having met us before, to share some hot coffee and cake with her. We pitched the tent in the snow that night then spent a glorious hour in her warm car eating, drinking creamy coffee and stroking her lovely but slightly crazy dog!

How would you describe your trip in 3 words?

Discover more running.....

If someone wants to follow your path and do the same, what would you recommend or what would you have liked to know in advance?

- a) Keeping websites and connections up to date is really tough even with all the modern tools available, set your expectations low!
- b) Prepare yourself for the cultural difference – and throw away your watch!
- c) You need less than you think. Prepare for the trip, then spend the first few weeks getting to know what you really need and be prepared to get rid of the rest – every gram counts.
- d) Contacts in each town are crucial.
- e) You're never going to be ready, so just go!!!!



Through the preparation and the start, what have you learned already and would like to tell the ones who stayed at home?

Comfort is the barrier between you and real experience, life, ambition, knowledge, everything! Break through it or spend your life sleepwalking.

What are your biggest challenges on the road?

Keeping motivation and keeping connected. The journey is due to last a year, yet we are so impatient to make a difference that often it feels like the time is slipping away – we need to keep focused and be patient.

What is the biggest reward and joy you are expecting?

To know, that through our small steps, we really can protect and secure a small part of South America from destruction.



Apart from the three missions (raise, connect, inspire) for the project, does each one of you have a special mission, something you want to achieve for yourself, as well?

David: To get to the other end running will be enough!

Katharine: That each one of us can make a difference to the environment and to the natural world. All of our decisions affect it, taking the environmentally right ones might be hard at first, but wow it's satisfying and amazing in the long run!

Thank you for the interview and good luck for the rest of the 5000 miles

Read more about their adventures and how to support them: <http://www.5000mileproject.org/>



Hast du das schon gelesen?

Keine ähnlichen Artikel gefunden