



INVENTOR & MAKER OF THE WEEK

Topher White

FOREST GUARDIANS INVENTOR

While visiting a gibbon reserve in Indonesia, Topher White was struck by the amazing sounds of the rainforests. Suddenly his group heard a chainsaw in the distance. They sprinted toward it and found a poacher felling a tree. Busted, he dropped his tools and ran off.

Topher had an idea: What if he used old mobile phones to detect the sounds of deforestation (chainsaws, gunshots, animal distress) and then alert local authorities of their location?

He put together old smartphones in recycled plastic boxes, fitted with an extra microphone, battery pack, and solar panels. These finished devices (or "Guardians") were attached to trees 150 feet up in the canopy and recorded sounds. If any noises of destruction were made, it triggered an alert to the park rangers.

Topher use these devices to set up the Rainforest Connection which has helped stop illegal logging and poaching in 35 different countries all over the world.

