



WORLD
LAND
TRUST

Save the Blue-throated Hillstar

COUNTRY: ECUADOR
LAND: 70,000 ACRES
TARGET: £30,000



Urgent action needed for newly discovered hummingbird species



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In September 2018, researchers in Ecuador announced the discovery of a new species of hummingbird occurring only on a few remote mountaintops in the western Andes.

The beautiful Blue-throated Hillstar is critically endangered. The hummingbird's limited range and small population size (only 250-750 individuals) makes it highly vulnerable to habitat loss.

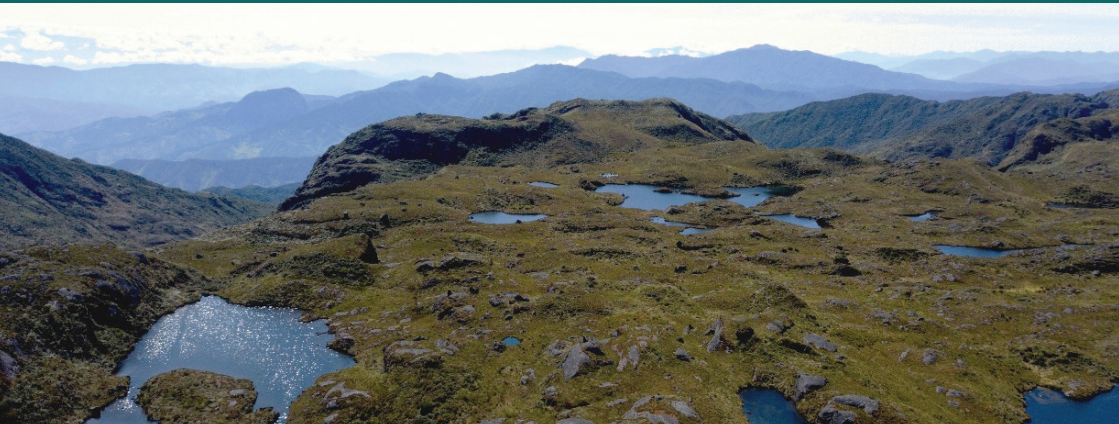
Mining corporations have gained the rights to mine key areas for metal deposits, which would most likely be extracted through open-pit mining and would be a disaster for local wildlife.

World Land Trust's (WLT) partner Naturaleza y Cultura Ecuador (NCE) and the Water National Secretariat (SENAGUA) have been working on creating a Water Protection Area in these mountains to protect water sources from pollution for the benefit of local communities and wildlife.

WLT is raising funds to support NCE so the Water Protection Area can be extended to include the hummingbird's habitat, and prevent it from being exploited for mining.



Securing this habitat government-level protection

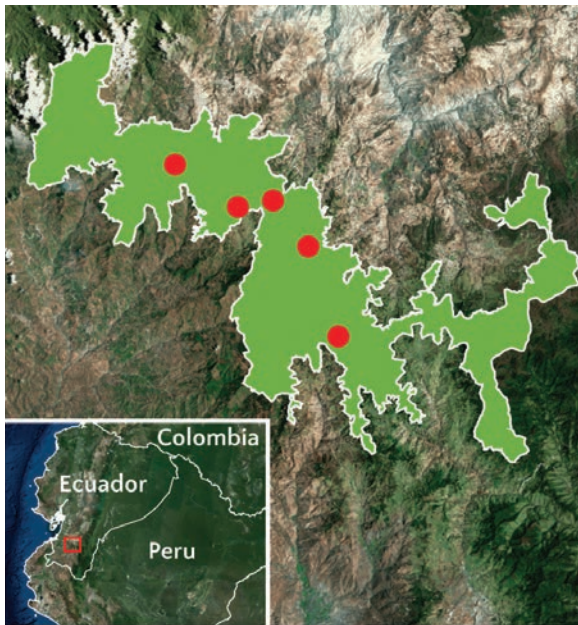




A Water Protection Area will give the Blue-throated Hillstar's habitat government-level protection.

A new type of protection, this will be one of the first Water Protection Areas to be declared in Ecuador. An area of land qualifies when the water sources are declared to be of public interest by the government. The land becomes integrated into the National System of Protected Areas, thereby safe from mining.

NCE have already been creating a Water Protection Area to connect water sources totalling 125,000 acres (50,700 hectares) in the hillstar's mountains. The land is community owned and local people are working with NCE to protect the land, as it provides clean freshwater for over 470,000 people.

If WLT reaches the fundraising target, NCE can extend the area to include the hillstar's habitat, creating a continuous protected area of almost 200,000 acres (79,000 hectares).



-  Blue-throated Hillstar populations, currently estimated at 250-750 individuals
-  Proposed Water Protection Area, which includes extension connecting the hillstar's habitat

Wildlife of western Andean páramo

The habitat of the Blue-throated Hillstar is the páramo of the western Andes, an eco-region above the forest line but below the snow line.

The páramo is home to many remarkable examples of Andean wildlife and because of its unique species it is referred to as an evolutionary hotspot.

In addition to the hillstar, a new species of rain frog was also discovered in 2018. The Tik Tik Rain Frog (right) is about the size of a fingernail. It was named after its repetitive call, which sounds like the ticking of a clock. It was evaluated by the scientists who discovered it as endangered due to its small range and the threats to its habitat.

Andean páramo is home to a number of charismatic mammals, including the Spectacled Bear and Mountain Tapir. Both mammals are classified as threatened on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species due to poaching and habitat loss.

Another striking species is the Andean Condor, one of the largest flying birds in the world. This vulture's range stretches down the southern side of the South American continent and is the national symbol of Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru.



How can I help?

By donating to Save the Blue-throated Hillstar, you will be helping to give this species' habitat in Ecuador government-level protection.

For more information or to make a donation, call the WLT office at 01986 87442 or visit the WLT website at worldlandtrust.org.

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Saving land, saving species. World Land Trust is an international conservation charity, which protects the world's most biologically important and threatened habitats, with more than 760,000 acres saved to date.

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