

Treasure trove of wildlife found in Peru park

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Giant leaf frogs are among the 50 reptiles and amphibian species found in the park. Credit: Andre Baertschi

The Wildlife Conservation Society's (WCS) Peru program announced today the discovery of 365 species previously undocumented in Bahuaja Sonene National Park (BSNP) in southeastern Peru.

Fifteen researchers participated in the inventory focusing on plant life, [insects](#), birds, [mammals](#), and reptiles. The discovery included: thirty undocumented [bird species](#), including the black-and-white [hawk](#) eagle, Wilson's phalarope, and ash colored [cuckoo](#); two undocumented mammals – Niceforo's big-eared bat and the Tricolored Bat; as well as 233 undocumented species of butterflies and moths. This expedition was especially important because it was the first time that research of this scale has been carried out in Bahuaja Sonene National Park since it was created in 1996.

"The discovery of even more species in this park underscores the importance of ongoing conservation work in this region," said Dr. Julie Kunen, WCS Director of Latin America and Caribbean Programs. "This park is truly one of the crown jewels of Latin America's impressive network of protected areas."

BSNP contains more than 600 bird species including seven different types of macaw, more than 180 mammal species, more than 50 reptiles and amphibian species, 180 fish varieties, and 1,300 types of butterfly.

Since the 1990s, the [Wildlife Conservation Society](#) has been working in Tambopata and Bahuaja Sonene Parks in Peru, and Madidi, Pilon Lajas, and Apolobamba Parks in neighboring Bolivia. The tranboundary region, known as the Greater Madidi Landscape, spans more than 15,000 square miles of the tropical Andes and is considered to be the most biodiverse region on earth.

WCS has helped form more than 20 community-based enterprises in the area that promote the sustainable use of natural resources, such as native honey, subsistence hunting and fishing, ornamental fish cultivation, cacao, handicrafts, and timber. More than 3,000 local people benefit from these community initiatives.

Provided by Wildlife Conservation Society

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