

Angry Birds to help save their counterparts in South Pacific

April 30 2015, byMatti Huuhtanen



Angry Birds balloons on sale in Helsinki, Finland, Thursday April 30, 2015 for May Day celebrations. Angry Birds are getting angrier, because some of their real-life counterparts in the South Pacific are facing extinction. Rovio, the creator of the hugely popular Angry Birds games, says it's teaming up with nature conservationist group BirdLife to disseminate information and help collect funds to protect birds in the region that are particularly vulnerable to attacks by non-native predators introduced by humans. The Finnish company is launching the campaign as it releases the Angry Birds Fight game on May 7 in Asia Pacific, saying it hadn't realized until now that some of the most critically endangered bird species have populations lower than the number of staff at Rovio, which totals 700. (Kimmo Mantyla/Lehtikuva via AP)

Angry Birds are getting angrier, because some of their real-life colorful counterparts in the South Pacific are facing extinction.

Rovio, the creator of the hugely popular Angry Birds games, said Thursday that it's teaming up with nature conservationist group BirdLife to disseminate information and help collect funds to protect birds in the region that are particularly vulnerable to attacks by non-native predators introduced by humans, such as rats.

Some of the endangered bird species are the Polynesian Ground-dove, the Tahiti Monarch and the Tuamotu Sandpiper, named after an island chain in French Polynesia, according to Cambridge, England-based BirdLife.

In the mobile game, downloaded more than 2.8 billion times, [angry birds](#) ' eggs are also threatened by predators, the mischievous pigs.

The Finnish company is launching the campaign as part of its latest Angry Birds seasons update "Tropical Paradise," featuring 26 new levels in a paradise setting of the Pacific islands.

"The update theme aims to support BirdLife International's efforts to save the endangered Angry Birds of the Pacific and raise awareness to prevent the extinction of these birds," Rovio said, adding that "egg-munching predators" across the 25,000 islands had partly killed off half the species in the region, with 81 species still in imminent danger.

"It's really sobering to realize that some of the species to be saved ... have populations lower than the number of staff working at Rovio Entertainment," which employs 700 people worldwide, said Sami Lahtinen of Rovio Entertainment.

The Polynesian Ground-dove has an estimated population of 200 in the

wild and the Tahiti Monarch has about 60, Adrian Long of BirdLife told The Associated Press from Cambridge, England.

The campaign hopes to raise \$150,000 to combat non-native animals as part of island restoration in the area. So far, more than 30 islands in five Pacific countries—Cook Islands, Fiji, French Polynesia, New Caledonia and Palau—have been restored to save bird populations and other biodiversity.

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