

## Colombia hoping to 'repopulate the skies' with condors

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These condors are one of three pairs of the birds brought from Chile to Colombia for inclusion in the national breeding program, supported by the Ministry of Environment through the Andean Condor National Conservation Program

A pair of Chilean condors have been brought to a zoo in Medellin as part of an effort to reintroduce the majestic birds in Colombia, where they have become all but extinct.

"Condors are a very endangered species," said Sandra Correa, director the Santa Fe Zoo in Medellin, who said the goal is to mate the birds to help replenish the population in Colombia, where only about 100 condors remain.

Ornithologists from Chile and the United States since 2012 have been helping prepare for the arrival of the birds, providing Colombian keepers in conservation, breeding, artificial incubation and general care for the birds while in captivity.

In addition to the condors in Medellin, two other pairs have been taken to [nature preserves](#) in Colombia—in the coastal city of Cartagena and outside the capital of Bogota.

The Andean condor, the world's largest non seabird, is native to Bolivia, Chile, Colombia and Ecuador.

The repopulation plan—dubbed the National Condor Breeding Program—which receives support from Colombia's Environment Ministry—aims to eventually release fledglings into the wild.

But first, the complicated mating process has to take place.

"Condors lay one egg per year," Correa explained.

"There must be chemistry between the two [birds](#) before they mate, because they are monogamous," she said.

"The idea is to repopulate the skies of Colombia with these guys," Correa said.



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