

# Galapagos welcomes six new 'Darwin's flycatcher' chicks

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Six little vermilion flycatcher chicks hatched on Santa Cruz island in the Galapagos

Six little vermilion flycatcher chicks have hatched in the Galapagos Islands, officials said Tuesday, in a boost to the dwindling numbers of

the brilliantly coloured songbird.

Just 40 breeding pairs remain on the upper part of Santa Cruz island in the archipelago, located 620 miles (1,000 kilometres) off the coast of Ecuador and made famous by Charles Darwin's studies of their breathtaking biodiversity.

Also known as Darwin's flycatcher, the bird has been registered on a dozen islands.

Park officials are trying to boost the population by clearing introduced [plant species](#) from the island floor that make it difficult for the chicks to feed, Galapagos National Park director Danny Rueda said.

Rangers are also placing larvicide at the base of their nests to prevent parasitic flies from entering the hatchlings of the young, where they feed off their blood with fatal consequences.

The island province is a Natural World Heritage Site and is home to unique flora and fauna.

In January a [scientific expedition](#) to the Galapagos Islands discovered a tortoise with a "strong" genetic link to a presumed-extinct subspecies made famous by a popular specimen named Lonesome George.

George, the last known member of the *Chelonoidis nigra abingdonii* Pinta tortoise species, died on Santa Cruz aged over 100 in 2012 without ever breeding.



The birds - also known as 'Darwin's flycatcher' - are in in danger of extinction, park officials say

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