

Ecuador to reintroduce species on Galapagos island

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The Galapagos archipelago, some 1,000 kilometers (600 miles) off the coast of Ecuador, has flora and fauna found nowhere else in the world.

Ecuador's government has announced it will spend \$3.4 million on reintroducing 12 endemic bird and turtle species that have disappeared

from an island in the Galapagos archipelago where Charles Darwin developed his theory of evolution.

The project, funded with government money and donations, will also seek to weed out invasive rodents and cats on the island of Floreana, the environment ministry said late Saturday.

The government plans to reintroduce vegetarian finches, vermilion flycatchers, lava gulls, barn owls, Galapagos hawks and giant turtles through the project due to start in January, it added.

The Galapagos archipelago, some 1,000 kilometers (600 miles) off the coast of Ecuador, has flora and fauna found nowhere else in the world.

Observing its wonders led British scientist Charles Darwin to develop his ground-breaking theory of evolution by [natural selection](#) in the 19th century.

The government on Saturday also inaugurated a biodiversity laboratory on Floreana that will be dedicated to studying invasive species and monitoring the health of creatures on the island that also hosts pink flamingos and [sea turtles](#).

In May, Ecuador said it had converted \$1.6 billion of commercial debt into a loan that will direct vast resources to Galapagos Islands conservation in the largest-ever transaction of its kind.

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