

WCS photo of rare cat in Bolivia wins BBC prize

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A photograph taken by Wildlife Conservation Society scientists of a little known Bolivian cat species called an oncilla has won a BBC Wildlife camera-trap photo competition. Credit: Photo Credit: Guido Ayala, Maria Viscarra, and Robert Wallace/WCS

A photograph taken by Wildlife Conservation Society scientists of a little known Bolivian cat species called an oncilla has won a BBC Wildlife camera-trap photo competition.

The photo, which won the [New Discoveries](#) category, documents the first-known occurrence of this extremely rare spotted cat in Madidi National Park.

The Oncilla (*Leopardus tigrinus*) occurs across the Amazon and along the tropical Andes. About the size of a house cat, they are the smallest [cat species](#) of South America's lowlands. Very little is known about their life history.

WCS researchers Guido Ayala, Maria Viscarra, and Robert Wallace submitted the photo taken last July during camera trap surveys of jaguars and other wildlife living in Madidi – considered to be among the most biodiverse protected areas on the planet.

More than 1,300 entries were submitted from around the world. The winning entry received £1,000 (approximately \$1,500), courtesy of Paramo Directional Clothing Systems and the World Land Trust. The photo is featured in the December issue of BBC Wildlife and on the website www.discoverwildlife.com

The new record for oncilla in Madidi pushes the number of confirmed cat species in the park to six with at least two more waiting to be confirmed. Madidi National Park contains 11 percent of the world's birds, more than 200 species of mammals, almost 300 types of fish, and 12,000 plant varieties. The 19,000 square-kilometer (7,335 square mile) park is known for its array of altitudinal gradients and habitats from lowland tropical forests of the [Amazon](#) to snow-capped peaks of the High Andes.

The Greater Madidi-Tambopata Landscape Conservation Program aims to develop local capacity to conserve the landscape and mitigate a variety of threats, including road construction, logging, and [agricultural expansion](#).

Provided by Wildlife Conservation Society

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