

US adds two macaws to endangered species list

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A great green macaw (*Ara Ambigua*) perches on a branch on June 3, 2010 at Zoo Ave, in Costa Rica

Poaching and habitat loss have landed the military macaw and the great green macaw, two birds typically found in Central and South America, on the US endangered species list, officials said Thursday.

"Both macaws are at risk of extinction throughout their ranges," said the US Fish and Wildlife Service, adding that "existing regulatory

mechanisms designed to protect these macaws are not adequate."

The ruling makes it illegal to kill, harass or injure the birds; import or export them from the United States; or carry them across state and national borders.

The listing "ensures that US citizens and individuals subject to the jurisdiction of the United States do not contribute to the further decline of these species," said the FWS statement.

The military macaw is found in tropical forests in Mexico and South America.

While between 6,000 and 13,000 are believed to exist, their populations are isolated and spread out over wide areas.

This fragmentation means each group contains anywhere from a handful of birds to 100 individuals.

There are far fewer left among the great green macaws of Central America and parts of northern South America—with just 1,000 to 3,000 individuals remaining in Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama.

The ruling will be published in the Federal Register on Friday and goes into effect a month later, on November 2.

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