FRESHWATER LIFE

Saving the world's most endangered freshwater species

Hooded Grebe

Humanity’s longest lasting impact will be the loss of species we drive to extinction. Fortunately, most extinctions can be prevented with smart conservation. For us this means focusing on freshwaters - 0.8% of Earth’s surface, but 10% of all biodiversity and 27% of all extinctions - and invasive species, responsible for 41% of freshwater extinctions. Freshwater invasive species can often be eradicated after which even species on the edge of extinction can recover. This tool can save an estimated 2-5% of Earth’s most Endangered species.

In Argentina we are working with Fundación Somuncura and Aves Argentinas to save 5 species from extinction by eradicating invasive fish from 15km of stream and a few dozen small lakes. These projects are supported by local communities and businesses, the governments of Santa Cruz and Rio Negro Provinces, and the global conservation community.

Hooded Grebes nest in small lakes on the Strobel Plateau, Santa Cruz Province where they perform an intricately beautiful courtship tango. Invasive trout are now in all grebe lakes. They eat the food grebes need for their chicks and destroy the water plants grebes need for nesting. Trout eradication in just a few lakes will double the chances for the Hooded Grebe survival!

The Naked Characin, El Rincon Stream Frog and two beautiful Potamolithus snails live only in Valcheta Stream, Rio Negro Province. They evolved without predatory fish. Invasive trout and tetras were introduced into the stream. They eat the 4 native species which are now on the edge of extinction. Invasive fish eradication from 15km of Valcheta stream will save all 4 species.

Eradicating invasive fish from the first Hooded Grebe lake and the first section of Valcheta stream will only cost $55,000 and can take place in March 2022.

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