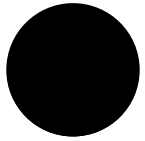


## Are these species lost forever? Not if this group can find them

*The Search for Lost Species campaign aims to document 'missing' animals that might still be surviving somewhere.*



**JAYMI HEIMBUCH** 

April 21, 2017, 10:09 a.m.



Attenborough's Echidna



De Winton's Golden Mole



Miss Waldron's Red Colobus



Bullneck Seahorse



Guinea Crab



Himalayan Quail

The search for lost species begins with 25 keystone species that haven't been seen in the wild in decades. 'The way these drawings are made, they're really not about control; they're about a certain sensibility, of optimism that it's going to work out,' says the artist, Alexis Rockman. (Photo: Alexis Rockman/Global Wildlife Conservation)

This week marks the launch of the largest global search for species believed to be extinct. But are they really gone?

Even in an age of rapid extinction of species, we are constantly discovering new species previously unknown to science. Could that also mean there are species that persist somewhere out there, away from human eyes? Just because they haven't been seen in decades doesn't necessarily mean they're gone forever.



*Ophrysa superciliosa*, or Himalayan quail, was last seen around 1875. (Photo: National Museum of Natural History Naturalis/Global Wildlife Conservation)

[Global Wildlife Conservation](#) is heading up a series of scientific expeditions to search for more than 1,200 species across more than 160 countries, with researchers and specialists from more than 100 IUCN Species Survival Commission Specialist Groups going into some of the most remote locations left on the planet in the hopes of finding these elusive creatures. If researchers succeed in finding them, the species could become symbols for conservation of that area as well as a beacon of hope that we can reverse the extinction trend.



The pink-headed duck was last seen in Myanmar in 1949. (Photo: Global Wildlife Conservation)

“These species include quirky, charismatic animals and plants that also represent tremendous opportunities for conservation,” said Robin Moore, GWC communications director and conservation biologist. “The rediscovery of any of these elusive species will help unlock its mysteries, providing us with the valuable information we need to understand and best conserve the species, its habitat and the wildlife and plants that share its habitat. While we’re not sure how many of our target species we’ll be able to find, for many of these forgotten species this is likely their last chance to be saved from extinction.”





*Atelopus soriano*, or the scarlet harlequin frog, was last seen in 1907. (Photo: Enrique La Marca)

You may recognize the name of Robin Moore from the book "[In Search of Lost Frogs](#)." The book documents his work searching for frog species thought to be lost forever — or perhaps not. Moore and the teams of researchers that spread out across the globe did manage to rediscover several species presumed to be extinct. Who better, then to be the project lead for Search for Lost Species?

GCN says of the selection of species:

The list of top 25 “most wanted” species spans across groups of animals and plants and geography and includes the Wondiwoi tree kangaroo, last seen in 1928 in West Papua and deemed a “zoo-geographical mystery;” the pink-headed duck, with its bright-pink plumage, last seen in 1949 in Myanmar; the Fernandina Galapagos tortoise, last seen in 1906 on the Galapagos’s youngest and least-explored island; the bullneck seahorse from Australia, a tiny seahorse never before seen in the wild; and a colorful tree-climbing freshwater crab from the Upper Guinea forest block last seen in 1955.



It isn't just researchers who are contributing to the project. Artist [Alexis Rockman](#) has created beautiful, colorful portraits of the top 25 "most wanted" species, even for those that have never been photographed or sketched. His soft watercolor depictions of the animals are representative of the hopeful task at hand.

# THE SEARCH FOR LOST SPECIES 25 MOST WANTED



SYR DARYA SHOVELNOSE STURGEON  
LAST SEEN 1960, KAZAKHSTAN



WONDIWOI TREE KANGAROO  
LAST SEEN 1928, INDONESIA



BULLNECK SEAHORSE  
NEVER SEEN IN WILD, AUSTRALIA



DE WINTON'S GOLDEN MOLE  
LAST SEEN 1936, SOUTH AFRICA



ZUGS MONITOR  
LAST SEEN 1980, INDONESIA



WALLACE'S GIANT BEE  
LAST SEEN 1981, INDONESIA



ATTENBOROUGH'S LONG-BEAKED ECHIDNA  
LAST SEEN 1961, INDONESIA



WELLINGTON'S SOLITARY CORAL  
LAST SEEN 2000, GALÁPAGOS



SIERRA LEONE CRAB  
LAST SEEN 1955, GUINEA FORESTS



JACKSON'S CLIMBING SALAMANDER  
LAST SEEN 1977, GUATEMALA



HIMALAYAN QUAIL  
LAST SEEN 1876, INDIA



PINK-HEADED DUCK  
LAST SEEN 1999, MYANMAR



PONDICHERRY SHARK  
LAST SEEN 1979, INDIA



NAMDAPHA FLYING SQUIRREL  
LAST SEEN 1981, INDIA



ILIN ISLAND CLOUDRUNNER  
LAST SEEN 1953, THE PHILIPPINES



SILVER-BACKED CHEVROTAIN  
LAST SEEN 1990, VIETNAM



MISS WALDRON'S RED COLOBUS  
LAST SEEN 1978, CÔTE D'IVOIRE



VOELTZKOWI'S CHAMELEON  
LAST SEEN 1913, MADAGASCAR



SCARLET HARLEQUIN FROG  
LAST SEEN 1990, VENEZUELA





The Lost Species Campaign's 25 'Most Wanted' species, as depicted by artist Alexis Rockman. (Photo: Global Wildlife Conservation)

The [Search for Lost Species](#) has launched a [website](#) where supporters can explore the species, learn more about the team, the progress of the searches, and of course donate to keep the expeditions going.

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