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Boy in Ecuador Finds Frog Once Thought Extinct For 30 Years



Luis Coloma, director of the Jamabtu Center in Quito, watches a *Gastrotheca plumbea* or marsupial gray frog that lives in the Andes. | Photo: Reuters

"It was such a long-standing presence in the Ecuadorean community that we would have never conceived it could disappear," Luis Coloma of the Jambatu Center for Research and Conservation of Amphibians said.

Last year, the center offered US\$1,000 for one frog of its kind to raise awareness of its conservation, not expecting to find it.

The next phase was to get the specimens rescued from the wild to reproduce in the lab.

"For several months, the frogs would mate but never lay eggs," Coloma said.

"So we decided to move them to an outdoor enclosure."

"When we finally discovered the eggs, we felt like Thomas Edison must have felt seeing an electric bulb lighting for the first time. It was extraordinary," Coloma added.

Andrew Gray from the University of Manchester said this process is critical for preventing other amphibians from becoming extinct.

"These frogs could disappear at any time, so if scientists manage to aid their reproduction, that's a safety net for the future," Gray said.