

2024 IMPACT REPORT

Transformation Through Conservation



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Dear Friends,

2024 was a transformative year for Galápagos Conservancy, marked by inspiring conservation milestones. Behind these achievements lies critical, often unseen work: refining internal processes, strengthening operational systems, and equipping our skilled team with the tools and flexibility to tackle evolving challenges. This foundation of purpose and efficiency has driven our progress. As I reflect on this year, I am more confident than ever in our organization’s strength and direction—and deeply grateful for your unwavering support, which empowers us to turn vision into action for Galápagos.

A pivotal moment in 2024 was the search for our new CEO—Hugo Mogollón. His leadership is now bringing fresh energy, new perspectives, and bold ideas to Galápagos Conservancy. This transition marks an exciting chapter filled with opportunities to deepen our impact and enhance our conservation efforts. Key among these is our strong collaborations with the Galápagos National Park Directorate and other local partners. Together, we are steadfast in our commitment to protecting the extraordinary biodiversity of the Galápagos Archipelago for future generations.

The stories in this report highlight the extraordinary dedication and passion of our people-driven team. Our work is driven by the dedication and expertise of scientists, educators, conservationists, and local communities. And none of this would be possible without the steadfast support of you—our donors—who make this progress possible.

This year, we’ve made remarkable advances toward our long-term strategic vision, which is centered around three key pillars: protecting endangered species, fostering a more sustainable society, and restoring the complex ecosystems that make Galápagos so unique. These efforts are ambitious and challenging, but they are also critical to protecting Galápagos by working to save species, rewild the Islands, and achieve sustainability.

As our work continues in 2025, we’re preparing to expand our conservation efforts even further with bold new projects aimed at safeguarding Galápagos’ fragile ecosystems. These initiatives will require continued innovation, resources, and collaboration, but we are more determined than ever to ensure the future of the Islands.

As we approach our 40th anniversary in 2025, it is a moment for reflection—not only on how far we’ve come but also on how much more we must do to ensure that Galápagos remains a thriving haven for its unique biodiversity. Your partnership has been indispensable in our success, and we look forward to continuing this meaningful and transformative journey with you in the years to come.

With deep appreciation,

James Gibbs
Vice President of Science and Conservation
Galápagos Conservancy

A Year of Progress: Key Conservation Wins in 2024

Galápagos Conservancy achieved remarkable milestones in conservation, education, and community engagement, reinforcing our ongoing commitment to protecting the unique biodiversity of the Galápagos Islands.

2024 Financials

DONATIONS AND REVENUE

\$4,524,400

EXPENDITURES

\$4,094,950

78%

of our funding directly supports conservation action



22%
management and admin

120

Giant tortoises were tracked across various populations, enhancing our understanding of their behavior and informing future conservation actions.



TORTOISES

1,616

juvenile giant tortoises and 68 adults received care by our experts at the tortoise breeding centers, safeguarding the future of these iconic species and supporting the restoration of their populations.

Successfully prepared over 300 Galápagos tortoises for reintroduction to Floreana Island, a significant step forward in the island’s ecosystem restoration efforts.



ALBATROSS

50

landing strips cleared on Española Island significantly improving their chances for nesting success and ensuring their continued presence in the archipelago.



SEA LIONS

Conducted comprehensive population surveys

across the islands, counting sea lions and fur seals in every colony, providing vital data to guide conservation strategies.



PETREL

385

fledgling Galápagos Petrels discovered while actively managing invasive species across 190 hectares of nesting habitat, giving this vulnerable species a renewed chance for recovery.

Empowered eight local women entrepreneurs, supporting the launch of new, sustainable businesses that drive both economic growth and environmental stewardship within their communities.



COMMUNITY

400

trained teachers from Isabela, San Cristóbal, Floreana, and Santa Cruz islands, equipping them with the tools to inspire the next generation of environmental stewards through sustainability education.



YELLOW LAND IGUANA

507

yellow land iguanas translocated to Santiago Island, advancing restoration efforts and boosting the island’s biodiversity.

Albatross can now more safely navigate their environment following the clearing of 50 flight paths.

The Waved Albatross (*Phoebastria irrorata*), a striking seabird endemic to Galápagos, faces a unique challenge: its only nesting grounds on the planet are on Española Island, where unchecked vegetation growth has obstructed the birds' flight paths. These magnificent fliers—yet ungainly birds when on the ground—rely on clear routes to safely take off and land to reach their nests. Over the years, ingrowth of dense vegetation, caused by a lack of tortoises on the island, has made access to their nesting areas increasingly difficult.

In 2024, our team took decisive action to clear 50 flight paths used by the albatross, ensuring they can safely navigate their environment once again. Over 10 days of intensive work, the team tackled overgrown vegetation, effectively “clearing the runway” for these iconic seabirds to take flight again.

To further bolster this habitat recovery, we also introduced a large number of giant tortoises into the Waved Albatross nesting areas on Española Island. These natural grazers are helping to manage woody plant growth, providing a self-sustaining force for accelerating the restoration of the albatross' nesting areas and benefiting other native species in the process.

“The Waved Albatross symbolizes the delicate balance of Galápagos, and witnessing the impact of our efforts firsthand is deeply fulfilling. Clearing these ‘runways’ is more than just removing vegetation—it’s about creating safe pathways for a species whose survival is directly tied to the well-being of Española Island.”
Jess Proctor Executive Conservation Assistant



Meet the Waved Albatross

- The world's only tropical albatross.
- Exclusively breeds on Española Island in the Galápagos Archipelago.
- Can live up to 50 years, making conservation efforts even more crucial.
- Known for their intricate, synchronized mating rituals.
- With a wingspan of up to 8 feet, can glide effortlessly for days, traveling between Galápagos to nest and coastal Peru to feed.



© DANIEL FITTER

ISABELA SANTIAGO SANTA CRUZ

By reducing the effects of predators and invasive plants, petrels now have a better chance of surviving challenging nesting conditions.

The Galápagos Petrel (*Pterodroma phaeopygia*), a seabird found only in Galápagos, faces significant threats to its survival. While it spends most of its life at sea, these petrels return to the vegetated upper flanks of the Islands' volcanoes to dig their burrows and nest. There they build deep tunnels, excavated meticulously in the dense volcanic soil by these tenacious sea-birds, in which they lay their eggs and tend their nestlings to fledging. However, exotic plant species—such as guava, quinine, and blackberry—are invading the petrels' nesting areas and disrupting the petrels by blocking their access to nesting burrows. In addition, feral pigs, black rats, and other predators pose a dire threat by preying on eggs, chicks, and—sometimes—nesting adults.

In 2024, our conservation team ramped up efforts across Isabela, Santiago, and Santa Cruz Islands to restore petrel nesting habitats. Key initiatives focused on controlling invasive plants and predator management. One of the year's most significant breakthroughs came with the discovery of 11 active petrel nests containing juveniles on Isabela Island—the first petrel nests and chicks documented on the island in many years. These milestones are made possible through partnerships with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the Galápagos National Park Directorate, greatly improving petrel habitats to ensure the petrels can resume successful nesting.



The Galápagos Petrel spends most of its life at sea, returning to the vegetated upper flanks of the Islands' volcanoes to dig its burrows and nest.



A juvenile Galápagos Petrel inside its nest, one of 11 active petrel nests discovered on Isabela Island.



Wolf Volcano



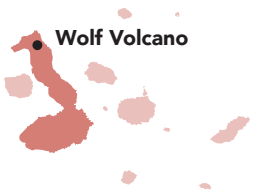
The pink iguana is one of three species of land iguanas, all endemic to Galápagos.

ISABELA

Four field expeditions conducted in 2024 provided crucial data that will now that enhance our understanding of pink iguanas and enable development of a plan of action for their conservation.

The Galápagos pink iguana (*Conolophus marthae*)—one of the rarest reptiles in the world—is a living testament to the remarkable biodiversity of the Galápagos Islands. Endemic to the isolated slopes of Wolf Volcano on the northern end of Isabela Island, this striking species was not even discovered until 2009. Since then, efforts to protect the pink iguana have been nothing short of monumental. 2024 marks a significant chapter in this ongoing conservation success story. ▶





**Pink Iguana Project:
Investigating How to Save a Species**

Our team performs a diversity of fieldwork to fill the gaps in our understanding of pink iguanas in order to formulate a strong recovery plan.

- **How many iguanas are there?**
- **How old is each and of what sex?**
- **Where do they occur on the volcano during different seasons?**
- **How, where, and when do they migrate?**
- **Where do they spend the night and when and where do they bask?**
- **What do they eat?**
- **Where do they nest? What kind of burrows do they build? What is the climate of the nest? Do they tend their nests? When do their eggs hatch and where do the hatchlings go?**
- **Do they compete with yellow iguanas for diet or nesting areas?**
- **How do they survive in this austere environment of extreme heat, cold, and solar radiation?**
- **Why are there no young iguanas?**



With fewer than 300 individuals remaining, almost all older adults, the pink iguana is particularly vulnerable due to its aging population.

The species has not reproduced successfully for many years. In 2024, our Galápagos Conservancy team conducted four field expeditions to find out why. Over 80 pink iguanas were captured, providing vital data on their health, behavior, and population status. In addition, camera traps secured millions of images, revealing important insights into the iguana's behavior, movements, and habitat preferences. The rugged, volcanic landscape of Wolf Volcano presents extreme conditions for survival, to which the pink iguana has adapted remarkably.

The cameras also provided an answer to the question of why there are no young iguanas: Our team has determined nearly all young pink iguanas are eaten by feral cats that lurk on the volcano. Black rats may also be a threat. So we began direct protection of nesting areas, crucial to the long-term survival of the pink iguana. The restoration program is just beginning and will create a secure nesting habitat that ensures the iguanas have a safe place to reproduce, while also preserving the integrity of the unusual ecosystem of Wolf Volcano.

A Comprehensive Management Plan for Long-Term Survival

A major highlight of our work in 2024 was identifying the threats to the pink iguana and better understanding its biology, our mandate for implementing the comprehensive management plan for the species. This plan, developed by the Galápagos National Park Directorate, with input from Galápagos Conservancy, lays out a series of proactive measures to stabilize and protect the pink iguana population.

The plan may include expanding habitat protection, enhancing monitoring efforts, captive breeding and translocation—all to be determined by careful consideration of the information our team has collected in 2024. The management plan will outline a long-term vision for the recovery of the species, and its implementation will ensure that the pink iguana can reproduce yet again.

The Road Ahead: A Promising Future for the Pink Iguana

Thanks to the tireless efforts of dedicated scientists, park rangers, and collaborating scientists, the population of the pink iguana has been slowly but steadily increasing. In recent years there have been signs of successful reproduction and young iguanas being spotted in the wild, a promising indication that the species is moving away from the brink of extinction. However, the work is far from done. The continued support of donors is crucial to ensure the long-term survival of the pink iguana.



Over 80 pink iguanas were captured, providing vital data on their health, behavior, and population dynamics.

Camera traps secured millions of images, revealing important insights into the iguanas' movements and habitat preferences.

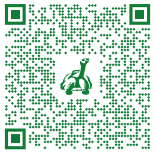
WATCH THE FOOTAGE





Inside the Wolf Volcano crater, the harsh yet stunning environment fosters a unique ecosystem where extreme conditions create a habitat for species found nowhere else on Earth.

**GO BEHIND
THE SCENES AT
WOLF VOLCANO**



Staff Highlight

Dr. Jorge Carrión

*Braving Erupting Volcanoes
for Conservation*

Dr. Jorge Carrión, Director of Conservation at Galápagos Conservancy, found himself once again in the path of nature’s raw power, witnessing the eruption of La Cumbre Volcano on nearby Fernandina Island. While conducting conservation work on Wolf Volcano, Jorge observed massive columns of gas and ash lighting up the night sky—the second volcanic eruption he has encountered on the volcano in just two years, having also been present during Wolf Volcano’s 2022 eruption.

Jorge’s experiences underscore the challenges conservation staff face in Galápagos. Whether exploring volcanic zones or rappelling down caldera walls to search for iguana nests, the work often requires remarkable skill and determination. These dramatic volcanic events serve as powerful reminders of the fragile, ever-changing ecosystems the team is striving to protect. Despite the challenges, Jorge remains committed to understanding and preserving the Islands’ unique biodiversity, driven by a deep sense of urgency and passion for conservation.

Jorge’s work in these extreme conditions exemplifies the dedication and bravery of those who put themselves in harm’s way to safeguard the future of Galápagos.



Cartago Bay



The team estimates that the current yellow land iguana population at Cartago Bay is between 700–800 individuals, some as old as 50–60 years.

ISABELA

A week-long expedition to tag yellow land iguanas provided crucial new data that will enhance conservation efforts for this endangered species.



In 2024 Galápagos Conservancy, alongside the Galápagos National Park Directorate, launched a pivotal expedition to Cartago Bay on Isabela Island. The team spent eight days surveying this rugged, remote area to monitor the last sizable wild population of yellow land iguanas (*Conolophus subcristatus*) that remains on southern Isabela Island, a vast area of two massive volcanoes where the yellow iguana is on the brink of extinction.

During the expedition, the team collected biological samples—such as blood and droppings—to assess the genetic health, diet, and potential diseases affecting the population. It also captured and tagged 288 iguanas—117 females and 171 males—far more than anticipated, providing key data on the species’ size, health, and distribution. Remarkably, half of these individuals had never been tagged before, while the other half were recaptured, including some reintroduced from a captive breeding program started in the 1970s. These long-lived individuals, some now 50–60 years old, are a testament to the success of the program, which has contributed significantly to the recovery of this population.

The team estimates that the current population in Cartago Bay is between 600–700 individuals, with the habitat’s recovery playing a major role in this success. The removal of invasive feral goats has allowed vegetation to regenerate, providing more food and boosting the iguanas’ survival rates.

In addition to capturing and tagging iguanas, the team also collected biological samples to assess the genetic health, diet, and potential diseases affecting the population.





As many as
1/3 of the
30,000
Galápagos
giant tortoises
living in the
wild today
were hatched
in captivity
and released
to the wild
where they
now thrive.

ISABELA SANTIAGO SANTA CRUZ

From reintroducing tortoises to their native habitats to pioneering new census methods, our progress highlights the enduring impact of the committed and meticulous work that conservation demands.

Over the past year, Galápagos Conservancy has made significant strides in giant tortoise conservation, building on decades of critical work. From reintroducing tortoises to their natural habitats to conducting groundbreaking census efforts, our progress demonstrates the lasting impact of the dedicated and often painstaking tasks involved in conservation work. On the following pages are some highlights from 2024. ▶





4500

Number of individual tortoises identified in a historic census on southern Isabela Island

Using a cutting-edge combination of aerial surveys, ground tracking, and satellite technology, the team was able to navigate the island's rugged terrain and locate tortoises in areas that had been virtually unreachable before.

In 2024, Galápagos Conservancy completed a groundbreaking, historic census of the populations of the two species of giant tortoises that inhabit southern Isabela Island—an unprecedented effort that has set a new standard for conservation in Galápagos. This monumental, year-long undertaking brought together over 50 scientists, park rangers, and volunteers, and surveyed an extraordinary 77-square-mile area, including some of the Archipelago's most remote and previously inaccessible regions.

For the first time ever, the census has provided a comprehensive picture of the tortoise

population on southern Isabela Island, identifying an impressive 4500 individual tortoises. This achievement is not just a milestone for tortoise conservation but a major leap forward in our understanding of one of the largest and most vital tortoise populations in the entire Archipelago.

Using a cutting-edge combination of aerial surveys, ground tracking, and satellite technology, the team was able to navigate the island's rugged terrain and locate tortoises in areas that had been virtually unreachable before. The information collected has been invaluable, offering critical insights into the health, distribution, and behavior of these iconic creatures. With this information, conservationists can now develop more targeted and effective management strategies to protect and nurture these populations, ensuring that these tortoises continue to thrive for generations to come.

This census marks a key turning point in the ongoing efforts to restore and protect tortoise populations across Galápagos. The findings will inform breeding programs, habitat restoration projects, and long-term monitoring initiatives, helping to guide the future of conservation for southern Isabela Island's giant tortoises.



Establishing a Safe Sanctuary for Isabela Island's Giant Tortoises

Galápagos Conservancy has begun to establish its Galápagos Giant Tortoise Reserve on 116 acres of private land nestled on the slopes of Sierra Negra Volcano. Home to the Critically Endangered Sierra Negra giant tortoise species (*Chelonoidis guntheri*) whose population has plummeted to just 0.6% of its original size, the reserve is providing a vital sanctuary for the few remaining wild adults. It will soon serve as a rearing site for 500 juvenile tortoises currently in captivity. The reserve will also serve as a place to engage local community members to enable them to protect tortoises on their lands and contribute to the species' recovery across the volcano. The land owned by the Galápagos Conservancy in the future will be included in Ecuador's National Protected Areas System.



Breeding Center Gets an Upgrade

In 2024, Galápagos Conservancy made a significant investment in the future of Galápagos conservation by renovating key parts of the Arnaldo Tupiza Breeding Center in Puerto Villamil, Isabela Island. This essential sanctuary plays a pivotal role in the breeding, protection, and eventual reintroduction of Isabela’s native giant tortoises. With the new upgrades, the center’s capacity to host tortoises has increased, enabling it to care for more tortoises and support the ongoing efforts to restore populations both on Isabela and neighboring islands.

The expansion features improved infrastructure, including enhanced enclosures and facilities that will allow for more efficient care and monitoring of tortoises at different life stages. The tortoise egg incubation system has been modernized. These upgrades will bolster reintroduction efforts across the island of Isabela, providing a solid foundation for future conservation initiatives.

One of the most impactful aspects of the upgrade is the increased ability to provide individualized care to tortoises, particularly during their vulnerable early stages of development. By enhancing the center’s capacity to nurture young tortoises, Galápagos Conservancy is improving their chances of survival and ensuring that they are well-prepared for life in the wild.



Staff Highlight

Walter Chimborazo & Cristian Gil

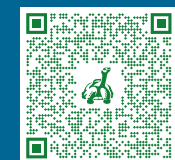
Guardians of the Giant Tortoises

At the heart of the Galápagos giant tortoise recovery efforts are the passionate Galápagos Conservancy staff who dedicate their lives to preserving these iconic creatures. Two such individuals are Walter Chimborazo (far left) and Cristian Gil (right), whose commitment to conservation and tireless work at the tortoise breeding centers exemplify the power of collaboration in action.

Walter Chimborazo is a familiar and beloved presence at the Fausto Llerena Breeding Center on Santa Cruz Island. His hands-on approach to tortoise care includes preparing nutritious meals, ensuring optimal environmental conditions, and monitoring the development of young tortoises. As the “Godfather” of thousands of tortoises large and small, Walter’s dedication spans from daily feedings, health checks, egg harvests and the subsequent—and meticulous—incubation during the nesting season. His efforts play a vital role in the survival and growth of these endangered giants, offering them a safe start in life away from the threats of predators and scarcity.

Cristian Gil carries out his mission at the Arnaldo Tupiza Breeding Center on Isabela Island, where recent upgrades funded by Galápagos Conservancy have improved the care and conditions for tortoises. Growing up surrounded by the unique biodiversity of the Islands, Cristian witnessed first-hand the decline of the Sierra Negra Volcano’s giant tortoises, once the Archipelago’s largest and now its smallest, an experience that sparked his lifelong passion for conservation. With a university degree in environmental science and a deep personal connection to his home island, Cristian is dedicated to restoring balance and ensuring a sustainable future for the tortoises he holds dear.

Together, Walter and Cristian represent the heart and soul of the Galápagos tortoise recovery efforts. Through their hands-on care, dedication, and collaboration with the Galápagos National Park Directorate, they are making an enduring impact on the conservation of these remarkable creatures, helping to secure a future for Galápagos tortoises for generations to come.



TAKE A LOOK
AT LIFE AT THE
BREEDING
CENTER

SANTA CRUZ SANTIAGO

Scientists and park rangers successfully transferred 169 eggs and 112 hatchlings in an effort to protect a critically endangered species.

The Santiago tortoise (*Chelonoidis darwini*) is currently listed as Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List, with an estimated population of just 1000–1200 individuals, mostly males. After years of meticulous conservation planning, a dedicated team of scientists and park rangers are reared 169 eggs and 112 hatchlings gathered during a groundbreaking expedition to Santiago Island in 2023 and transferred to the Giant Tortoise Breeding Center on Santa Cruz Island. There the eggs were carefully incubated at warm, female-producing temperatures and the hatchlings are now in a safe place with ample food and water and growing strongly, ushering in a new era for the island's critically endangered giant tortoise population.

This effort, an ambitious collaboration between the Galápagos National Park Directorate, Galápagos Conservancy, and other key partners, marks a significant milestone in the restoration of Santiago's tortoise population, which was devastated by hunting in the 1800s, when most females were removed from the island, followed by introduced species in the 1900s, which wreaked havoc on tortoise habitats.

The transferred eggs and hatchlings are now young tortoises growing vigorously in captivity that will be reintroduced back to their native Santiago Island in five years as part of a broader restoration strategy aimed at repopulating the island with its native tortoises. The success of this egg transfer underscores the growing impact of breeding and rearing programs in Galápagos and sets the stage for larger-scale reintroductions in the years ahead.



The project — focused on sea lion population health and the impacts of climate change and human activity — is generating a better understanding of the environmental threats facing sea lions and fur seals.



The harbors and ports of modern Galápagos are the historic rookeries of its sea lions. Finding ways for people, their pets, and the sea lions to co-exist on these crowded beaches is another major focus of the project.

In 2024, Galápagos Conservancy supported a key research expedition to monitor Galápagos sea lions (*Zalophus wolfebaeki*) and Galápagos fur seals (*Arctocephalus galapagoensis*), which focused on population health and the impacts of climate change and human activity on these species. Led by Drs. Diego Páez and Marjorie Riofrío from the Universidad San Francisco de Quito, the team visited 14 islands and assessed sea lion populations at 30 sites, monitoring the health of over 300 individual sea lions.

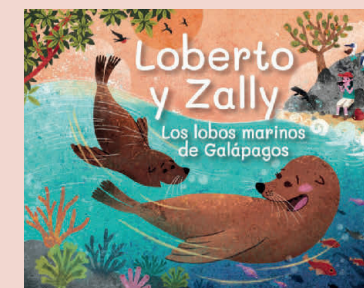
Using GPS technology, the researchers tracked the sea lions' movements and foraging patterns, providing vital data for marine protected area management. From the chemical composition of sea lion whiskers, the team learned what the sea lions eat. The project also has a key community component: the harbors and

ports of modern Galápagos are the historic rookeries of its sea lions, and finding ways for people, their pets, and the sea lions to co-exist on the crowded beaches of Galápagos' urban areas is another major focus of the project. Ultimately, the project is generating a better understanding of the environmental threats facing sea lions, from rising ocean temperatures to human activities like tourism and fishing.

This research is crucial for understanding the pressures sea lions face and ensuring the long-term protection of their populations in the face of climate change and other environmental threats. By working closely with local communities, the project also strengthens public awareness and fosters a shared commitment to preserving Galápagos wildlife. The major product of the project will be a management plan to be implemented by the Galápagos National Park Directorate to protect sea lions throughout the Islands.

Book Launch!

Loberto and Zally's Sea Lion Adventures



What do you get when you combine sea lions, adventure, and a whole lot of heart? A delightful children's book that's bringing the spirit of Galápagos to life! In 2024, Galápagos Conservancy proudly launched *Loberto and Zally: The Galápagos Sea Lions*, a vibrant tale written by Dr. Marjorie Riofrío, a renowned conservationist and sea lion researcher at the Universidad San Francisco de Quito. This engaging book doesn't just captivate young minds—it also sparks important conversations about conservation and the protection of one of Galápagos' most iconic species.

In this whimsical story, readers follow Loberto—a curious sea lion pup—and adventurous companion Zally—his curious older sister—as they explore the Islands, meet new animal friends, and discover the challenges facing their ocean home. With colorful illustrations and a captivating narrative, the book teaches children the importance of protecting sea lions and their habitats, all while sharing the magic and wonder of Galápagos.

Thanks to support from generous donors, this book is already making a splash in local schools across the Archipelago, engaging young minds in sea lion conservation and their role as environmental stewards. As we continue our efforts to ensure the future of these beloved marine mammals, we're excited to see how Loberto and Zally will inspire the children of tomorrow to protect Galápagos' sea lions and other unique wildlife.

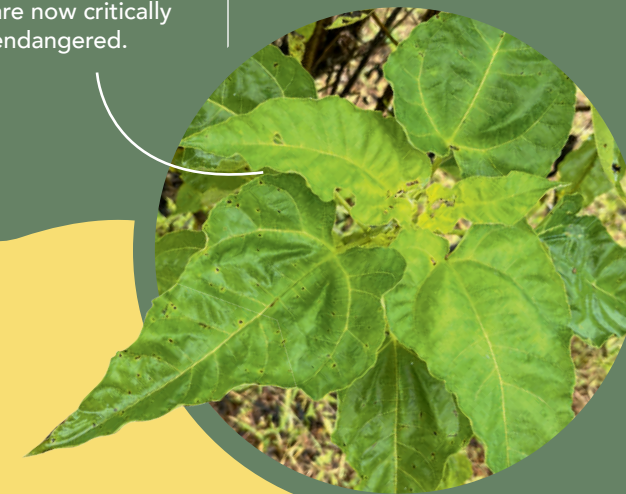
During the discovery, researchers attached non-invasive tracking tags to juvenile and subadult sharks, generating crucial data on shark migration patterns, feeding grounds, and breeding habitats.

LEARN MORE ABOUT
THE DISCOVERY



The growth of the young heart-leafed *Scalesia* seedlings in the nursery is a tangible sign of progress and hope for the species.

Endemic to Galápagos, heart-leafed *Scalesia* once formed unique forests that dominated the flanks of the Sierra Negra and Cerro Azul Volcanoes but are now critically endangered.



Significant strides were made in the restoration of a most elegant species of tree endemic to Galápagos—the heart-leafed *Scalesia* (*Scalesia cordata*)—which occurs only on southern Isabela Island. Heart-leafed *Scalesia* once formed unique forests that dominated the flanks of the Sierra Negra and Cerro Azul Volcanoes but are now critically endangered.

Thanks to the continued collaboration between Galápagos Conservancy and the Galápagos National Park Directorate, a major milestone this year was the revitalization of the Galápagos National Park's Forest Nursery. This nursery has become a cornerstone of heart-leafed *Scalesia* restoration efforts, producing thousands of seedlings that are essential for re-establishing the species' presence in its native habitat. In addition to the plant propagation work, an adjacent housing facility was upgraded to provide park rangers, scientists, and volunteers with a safe and functional space for continuous monitoring and care of the seedlings. This enhancement ensures the long-term success of our restoration work, allowing for year-round stewardship of this unique ecosystem.

The growth of the young heart-leafed *Scalesia* seedlings in the nursery is a tangible sign of progress and hope for the species. These seedlings represent the future of a forest that was once widespread across southern Isabela and will be once again. With continued efforts, including replanting and habitat restoration, the revival of this iconic species will not only benefit the *Scalesia* forests but also the rich biodiversity that depends on them.

By employing cutting-edge technology, researchers have discovered a previously unknown nursery area for hammerhead sharks.

In 2024, Galápagos Conservancy fostered a major leap forward in the conservation of one of the ocean's most iconic yet elusive species, the smooth hammerhead shark (*Sphyrna lewini*). In collaboration with fisheries expert Eduardo Espinosa from the Galápagos National Park Directorate, a previously unknown nursery area for these sharks was identified in the waters surrounding Isabela Island—offering new hope for the species' conservation.

This discovery was made possible through the integration of cutting-edge technology, including satellite tagging and underwater shark tracking systems. By attaching non-invasive tracking tags to juvenile and subadult sharks, their movements were followed in real-time via satellite, generating crucial data on shark migration patterns, feeding grounds, and breeding habitats. The data has revealed how these sharks use

specific areas of the Galápagos Archipelago for vital activities like mating, feeding, and pup-rearing, yet they also undertake surprisingly cross-Archipelago voyages on unpredictable schedules.

In 2024 alone, over 500,000 data points were collected, providing valuable insights into the effectiveness of the Galápagos Marine Protected Areas. This research is a direct result of Galápagos Conservancy's ongoing collaboration with the Galápagos National Park Directorate, the National Marine Fisheries Service, and marine conservation experts worldwide. By helping to deepen our understanding of hammerhead shark behaviors, Galápagos Conservancy is driving conservation strategies to better protect not only the sharks themselves but also the broader marine ecosystem they inhabit.

Trailblazing with Technology

Galápagos Conservancy is leading the charge in innovative conservation, leveraging cutting-edge technologies to protect the Islands' unique biodiversity. Using tools like satellite tracking, molecular genetics, aerial drones, and interpreting with AI information gathered, Galápagos Conservancy is enhancing the ability to monitor wildlife, safeguard habitats, and make data-driven decisions faster, more efficiently, and more effectively.

By embracing these innovations, Galápagos Conservancy is not only keeping pace with the challenges facing the Islands but also setting a new standard in modern conservation. Through technology and collaboration, the organization is building a more secure future for the extraordinary species of Galápagos.



TRACKING

In 2024, tracking devices sent invaluable real-time data via satellite on movements of sea lions and hammerhead sharks, pinpointing key habitats for protection and supporting the management of the Galápagos Marine Reserve.



GENETICS

Genetic research is strengthening captive breeding programs, ensuring the capture of genetic diversity critical to the survival of endangered species, such as the Floreana Island giant tortoise, while also helping authorities identify wildlife taken by animal traffickers, boosting protection efforts for many species.



AI

Looking ahead, AI is streamlining conservation work by automating data analysis and improving species identification. We now rely on AI to process the millions of images we harvest from our wildlife cameras around the Archipelago, enabling our conservation team faster detection of threats and more precise decision-making, increasing the overall efficiency of our efforts.

IMAGING

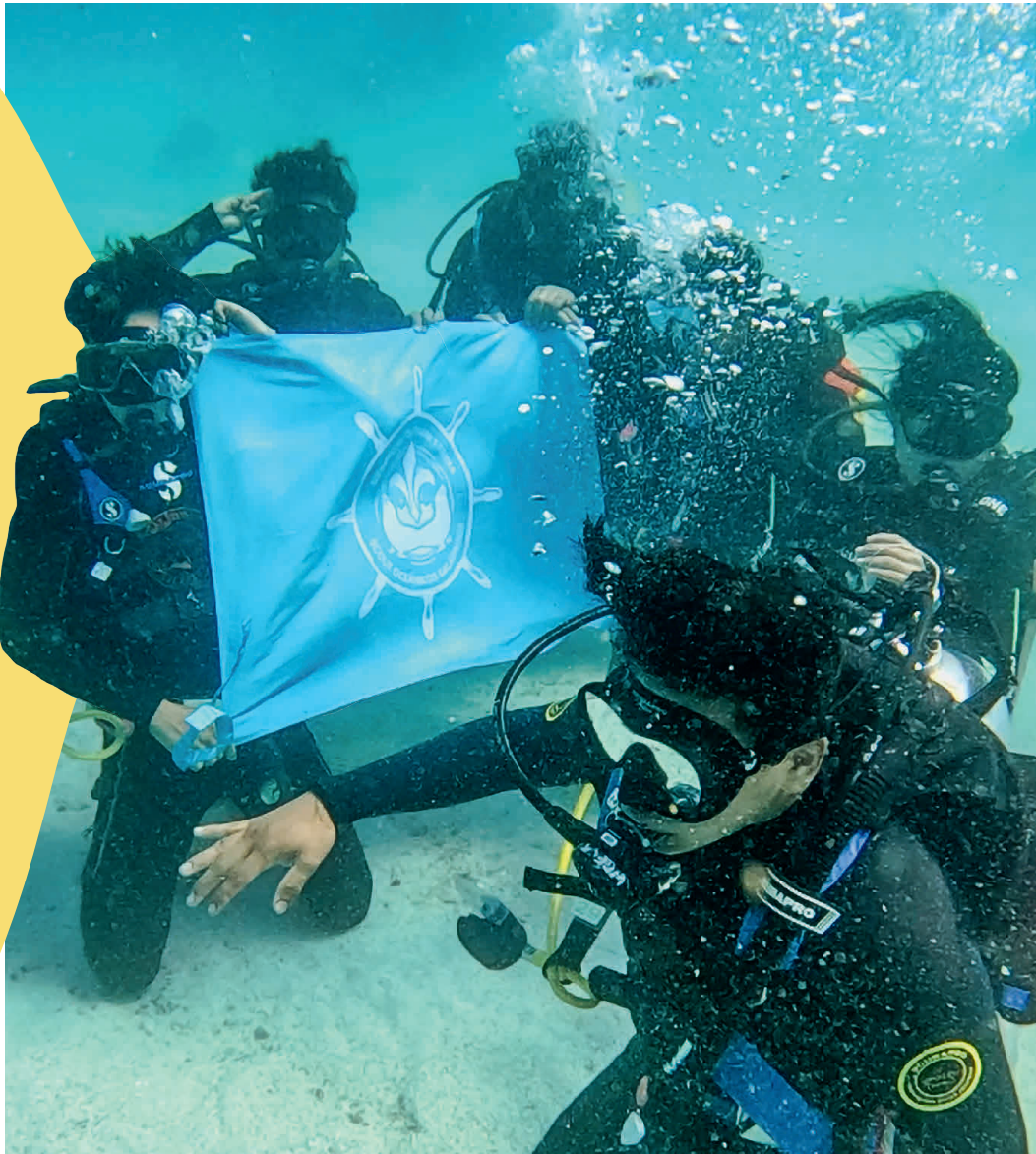
Drones and satellite imagery are expanding the reach and capability to monitor populations of endangered species, the spread of invasive species, and illegal activities. These technologies allow for quick, targeted action, protecting vital ecosystems and nesting sites across the Islands.

Small grant programs and corporate partnerships are essential in advancing conservation and sustainability in Galápagos.

Through direct-impact funding from partners for catalyzing on-the-ground action, Galápagos Conservancy resources are directed toward the most urgent conservation and sustainability needs on the Islands. These collaborations support efforts to protect endangered species while also focusing on empowering local community members to become environmental stewards and play an active role in preserving Galápagos’ unique biodiversity for future generations.

“Programs that empower youth in Galápagos create a lasting impact, fostering community resilience and safeguarding species across this extraordinary landscape. As Board Chair, I am immensely proud of the progress we’ve made in 2024, and I’m excited for what we will continue to achieve in the years ahead. Together, we can ensure the protection of Galápagos and its unparalleled biodiversity for generations to come.”

Dr. Dan Sherman Board Chair



Scouts Dive into Galápagos Conservation

Galápagos Conservancy, in partnership with Silversea Cruises, is empowering young scouts in Galápagos through a transformative program that provides them with invaluable scuba diving skills while training them to become certified divers and, eventually, ocean conservationists. Eleven enthusiastic participants from Puerto Baquerizo Moreno on San Cristóbal Island now possess the skills to explore the Galápagos Marine Reserve, home to iconic species like sharks, sea turtles, and manta rays. They are participating in many marine conservation projects, including propagating corals to restore underwater reefs. Through this hands-on experience, they are developing into passionate advocates for protection of the marine environment of Galápagos.

Young people participate in broadcasts on Radio Santa Cruz aimed at spreading messages to the community about environmental responsibility.



“The radio lets us talk about what matters—our Islands and how to protect them. It’s exciting to know we can actually make a difference!”

Youth radio host

The Galápagos, My Responsibility project is sparking a revolution in environmental education on Santa Cruz Island, thanks to support from Galápagos Conservancy’s Small Grants Program. Led by environmental activist Alberto Andrade, this initiative is equipping the next generation with the tools to become leaders in conservation through hands-on workshops, dynamic radio broadcasts, and engaging social media discussions.

Through interactive storytelling workshops and production of 21 radio broadcasts, young people are developing critical skills in communication and environmental leadership. These youth radio hosts are now producing thought-provoking episodes on topics ranging from invasive species to climate change. Local experts are interviewed and share updates on regional

conservation efforts. The program is quickly gaining popularity, becoming a cherished platform for community dialogue on how to protect the Islands.

One student host reflects, “The radio lets us talk about what matters—our Islands and how to protect them. It’s exciting to know we can actually make a difference!”

This growing initiative is more than just a radio show—it’s a movement uniting schools, conservation groups, and government agencies in a shared commitment to safeguard Galápagos’ biodiversity. As Jenny Macías, pedagogical advisor for the Education for Sustainability program at Galápagos Conservancy puts it, “These young voices aren’t just learning about conservation—they’re becoming the future stewards of the Islands.”



Staff Highlight

Jenny Macías

Empowering Educators for a Sustainable Future

The 15th Teacher's Institute, held in September 2024, marked a milestone in Galápagos Conservancy's Education for Sustainability program. Over 380 teachers from across Galápagos participated in hands-on training focused on water and sanitation issues, equipping them with creative teaching methods to tackle these critical challenges.

At the heart of this initiative is Jenny Macías, Galápagos Conservancy's pedagogical advisor for the Education for Sustainability program. Jenny played a key role in orchestrating the teachers institute and shaping its success. She emphasizes the importance of empowering teachers to foster in students a deep awareness of sustainable water use. "It's about encouraging creativity and a proactive mindset," she explained, ensuring teachers are well-equipped to inspire the next generation of environmental leaders.

With support from key partners like Silversea Cruises and the Scalesia Foundation, the program is helping to create a culture of conservation across the Islands. Thanks to Jenny's leadership, these teachers are now better prepared to reach and teach the 7,000 students who live in Galápagos on matters of environmental sustainability in Galápagos.

"Empowering women in Galápagos isn't just about creating economic opportunities; it's about fostering leadership in conservation that benefits both people and the ecosystems they care for. I'm proud to be part of a program that's helping to shape a more equitable, sustainable future for the Archipelago."

Gabriela Vivas WISE Director of Operations



Empowering Innovation, Entrepreneurship, and Sustainability through WISE

In 2024, the Galápagos Conservancy's Women in Sustainable Entrepreneurship (WISE) program continued to drive meaningful change in Galápagos by empowering women entrepreneurs to create sustainable businesses.

One of the standout success stories of WISE is the Sin Lata tuna initiative, led by Lucía Galarza. This innovative project leverages sustainable catches of tuna and packages them in recycled glass containers instead of traditional aluminum cans, thereby eliminating waste. The glass containers can be reused again, and the byproducts from the tuna are even repurposed to create treats for pets, promoting a circular economy in the process.

Since its launch, the WISE program has provided crucial resources to women like Lucía, enabling them to develop and expand their businesses while contributing to the local economy. Sin Lata's success is a testament to the power of innovation, entrepreneurship, and sustainability.

Through this initiative, Lucía and her team are setting an example for women's leadership in conservation and entrepreneurship.

Celebrating 40 Years of Impact

As we celebrate 40 years of unwavering dedication to conservation, Galápagos Conservancy reflects on our transformative journey.

Key achievements include:

- **Over 3,000 giant tortoises successfully reintroduced** to their natural habitats since 2014, playing a pivotal role in restoring ecological balance across the islands.
- **A nearly 100% survival rate of reintroduced tortoises**, accelerating population recovery and bolstering the resilience of island ecosystems.
- **35,000 Waved Albatross, 5,000 Galápagos Petrels, and 500 Galápagos Penguins thriving** in newly restored nesting areas, ensuring the survival of these critical species.
- **Ongoing monitoring of 500+ juvenile sharks** from three species, advancing our understanding of marine biodiversity and contributing to ocean health.
- **Hundreds of sea lions and fur seals monitored** for climate change impacts, enabling proactive strategies to address changes in health and behavior.
- **Community engagement initiatives that have empowered local women entrepreneurs** and built strong partnerships with community organizations, fostering sustainable futures.
- **Comprehensive training for all teachers in sustainability education**, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, establishing a foundation for a green generation.
- **Galápagos Conservancy established the gold standard for sustainability** education in Ecuador, setting a national precedent for environmental responsibility.
- **Our enduring collaboration with the Galápagos National Park Directorate**, driving ecosystem restoration and species recovery efforts to preserve the islands’ unparalleled biodiversity.

As we look ahead to the future, Galápagos Conservancy remains committed to building on these achievements and driving further progress in conservation and community empowerment for generations to come.



Looking Ahead

Building on our momentum as we approach our 40th anniversary in 2025, Galápagos Conservancy is more dedicated than ever to advancing the conservation of this extraordinary Archipelago and supporting its communities. The coming year will see transformative initiatives, including the historic release of several hundred giant tortoises to Floreana Island for the first time in over 200 years and the development of a restoration plan for Pinta Island. Satellite tracking devices will monitor tortoise populations across the Archipelago, while eggs from Pinzón, Santiago, and Santa Cruz will be collected for head-starting programs. Habitat restoration will advance with efforts like the Giant Tortoise Reserve project, including ranger stations, secured boundaries, facilities for young tortoises, and expeditions to protect endangered species on Roca Unión and San Pedro.

Conservation technology and ecological restoration will play key roles, with new pink iguana monitoring

areas identified, drone surveys estimating waved albatross populations on Española Island, and the restoration of Heart-leafed Scalesia forest remnants. Efforts to address invasive species will intensify, including biosecurity measures to mitigate their impacts and support for research into biological controls for the avian vampire fly (*Philornis downsi*), a major threat to Galápagos birds. These projects reflect a unified commitment to safeguarding the Archipelago’s biodiversity while adapting to emerging challenges.

Through small grants like Parqueritos en Acción, we will empower local conservation leaders, while initiatives such as Women in Sustainable Entrepreneurship will foster sustainable development and entrepreneurship within the community.

These efforts not only preserve the unique natural wonders of Galápagos but also inspire a lasting legacy of stewardship in future generations.

Closing Thoughts



Dear Friends,

When I first stepped into the role of CEO at Galápagos Conservancy, I was deeply inspired by the extraordinary biodiversity of the Islands and this organization’s enduring commitment to the Islands’ protection, as is shown in this report. As the challenges of climate change, overfishing, and habitat loss accelerate, we are reminded of the urgency to act. This pivotal moment calls for bold leadership and transformative investments to preserve this global treasure.

My vision is rooted in collaboration. By working with prestigious scientific institutions, local communities, and global partners, we can translate cutting-edge science into actionable, scalable solutions. Together, we will ensure that conservation efforts are aligned with sustainable economic opportunities for local communities, fostering a resilient system where people and nature thrive in harmony.

The challenges are immense, but so is the opportunity to lead. Your continued partnership will enable us to protect not only Galápagos but also inspire a future where conservation transforms lives and landscapes worldwide. Let us embark on this journey together, ensuring that the wonders of Galápagos endure for generations to come.

With deep appreciation,

Hugo Mogollón
Chief Executive Officer
Galápagos Conservancy



Support Our Work

Thank you for taking the time to explore the remarkable achievements of Galápagos Conservancy in 2024. Your interest and support play a vital role in helping us protect the unparalleled biodiversity of the Galápagos Islands.

Together, we can ensure that Galápagos continues to thrive for generations to come. Thank you for being part of this incredible journey.

If you’ve been moved by this work, there are many ways to get involved:

Donate

Your generosity fuels our mission.
[Donate Here](#)



Learn More Discover how your involvement makes a difference at www.galapagos.org

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SANTA CRUZ

Marine iguanas basking in the morning sun to warm up after swimming in the cold ocean. Basking on sun-heated rocks helps them absorb heat and return to their ideal body temperature so they can move and digest.

GALÁPAGOS CONSERVANCY
1630 Connecticut Ave. NW, Suite 300
Washington D.C. 20009

703-383-0077
info@galapagos.org
[@galapagosconservancy](https://www.galapagosconservancy.org)

