



NEWS RELEASE

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Flight Over Newly Discovered Harpy Eagle Nest in Honduras to Aid Plan to Halt Extinction

Last November, conservationists discovered a harpy eagle (*Harpia harpyja*) nest—the first ever found in Honduras. Biologists from Panthera and Asociación Patuca found the nest during a ground expedition. Scientists believe this may be the only currently active nest in Central America (north of Panama). LightHawk, an organization that donates flight to promote conservation efforts, will provide a survey flight to monitor the nest on January 29th.

“Our flight over the harpy eagle nest will reveal where threats to the nest’s viability may exist,” explains Armando Ubeda, LightHawk’s Mesoamerica Program Manager. “It will also provide an at-a-glance understanding of the topography of the largest national park in Honduras to inform plans to safeguard the breeding pair.”

Harpy eagles are the largest and most powerful bird of prey in the Americas. The species was once found from Mexico to Argentina, however habitat destruction and hunting have nearly eliminated this now critically endangered bird.

The discovery of a harpy eagle nest in Honduras has awakened the national and international attention, with many groups expressing an interest in collaborating with the Honduran government to save this nest. The Honduran Committee for the Harpy Eagle Conservation has been formed by the National University, Panthera, and others.

“We believe this is a decisive moment for the history of conservation in Honduras,” said Franklin Castañeda Panthera’s Honduran Coordinator. “The world will be looking at this small country to see what measures it takes to preserve the harpy eagle nest.”

The National Committee is already working on a conservation strategy to help save the nest. Two ground expeditions have been made to the area to collect ground information. Now the Committee has called in air support from LightHawk. "We believe overflying the nest area can be most instrumental in the process of building up the strategy," explains Castañeda. "The information from the flight will help give the Honduran Committee for the Harpy Eagle Conservation a better understanding of the situation of the forest surrounding the nest and immediate threats."

About LightHawk

Founded in 1979, LightHawk is a non-profit a network of 200 volunteer pilots. LightHawk works in partnership with over 250 conservation organizations each year, providing flights for scientific research, aerial photography and educational tours that serve to protect land, water and wildlife across North and Central America. For more information, visit www.lighthawk.org.

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