

Photo of the Week: The Coveted Scarlet Macaw

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The beauty of the colorful and stunning scarlet macaws (*Ara macao*) is such that even the Maya and the Aztecs equated them with the deities of fire and sun. These ancient peoples used their image in various artistic works and adorned themselves with the macaw's striking feathers.

Unfortunately, the scarlet macaw's beauty has now put it in danger. They live in tropical rainforests from southeastern Mexico to central Bolivia, and in many countries they are endangered due to the loss of their habitat from deforestation and indiscriminate hunting for the illegal pet trade.

This photo is from a tour with **Costa Rican Trails**. Around 1,000 scarlet macaws live in Costa Rica today, and there are many protected areas and organizations dedicated to their protection. Be sure to always book your trips with sustainable tourism businesses so you can rest easy, knowing that you're contributing to the conservation of these and other beautiful wildlife species!