

A Living Mythological Creature: The Resplendent Quetzal

Posted At : October 23, 2012 1:38 PM | Posted By : Dipika Chawla

Related Categories: Biodiversity Conservation, Costa Rica, Panama, wildlife, Guatemala, ecotourism, Mexico, Biodiversity, birds, sustainable tourism, Honduras, Nicaragua



The magnificent resplendent quetzal is a creature of legends. This spectacular bird played an important role in Mesoamerican mythology; it was worshipped by the Aztecs and Mayas as the god of the air and closely associated with Quetzalcoatl, the powerful god of creation. For many years, it was believed that they could not be held in captivity, for a resplendent quetzal would usually kill itself soon after being caged - which led to its becoming a traditional symbol of liberty and freedom.

Today, the resplendent quetzal is the national bird of Guatemala. Travelers can find them living in the cloud forests of Central America, singing their soft and mellow call. The resplendent quetzal is threatened throughout its range, due primarily to deforestation.

For a list of sustainable birdwatching destinations in Central America, [click here](#).