

Couple sponsoring BirdLife are first in world to run the whole length of Bolivia

Title

British adventure-running couple, Katharine and David Lowrie, are hoping to run into the record books after completing an unsupported and gruelling 1,187 mile run across Bolivia (four times the size of Great Britain). This is the first time this feat has ever been attempted. Their challenge is **raising money for BirdLife International and Asociacion Armonia (BirdLife in Bolivia)**.

Due to the vast wild areas the pair had to run through, they pulled all their equipment, plus food and water supplies behind them in a trailer they made from recycled materials.

“It’s a love-hate relationship with the trailer”, said Katharine, “At times I wanted to throw it into the caiman-filled creeks! It was like pulling a plough, especially through the mud, sand and pot holes of the 40% of the route on dirt roads. On the other-hand, it was our life-line, allowing us to survive in really remote stretches of the Amazon basin, with temperatures soaring to 40 degrees Celsius and near 100% humidity.”

The run across Bolivia is part of a larger expedition for the pair, who are seeking to be the first to run the length of South America unsupported.

David explains, “It’s a dream expedition; to run through some of the most biodiverse and climatically challenging areas on earth. And it’s been amazing to run in the company of river dolphins, capybaras, howler monkeys and fireflies. But we also want to remind people about how much of South America’s incredible wild lands and wildlife are threatened and that there are small steps we can all take to conserve them”.

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David and Katharine want to save the Critically Endangered Blue-throated Macaw

In addition to running and recording the wildlife they observe along the route, David and Katharine are raising money for BirdLife International and their Partner in Bolivia, Asociacion Armonia, who are conserving habitat for the Critically Endangered Bolivian **Blue-throated Macaw**. There are only believed to be 300-400 individuals left in the wild, due to habitat loss

from cattle ranching and the illegal pet trade. Protection of the parrot's seasonally flooded savanna homes in the north of the country also ensures habitat for other threatened wildlife including maned wolves and giant anteaters.

Every day, the couple chatted to ever curious passers by, schools and local communities, "After overcoming the general shock of two strangers running down the road with a trolley behind them, the local people were extremely warm; plying us with maize cider and filling our bags with oranges and grapefruits. Aside from asking where we had come from and how many children we had, they were incredulous to learn that we slept in the forest, constantly asking us were we not afraid of venomous snakes and jaguars?!"

Indeed, not all their wildlife encounters were positive. Much of the territory the couple ran through harboured tropical diseases and it was a constant battle to keep the mosquitoes at bay. Ants raided their food supplies, cut holes in their equipment, while wasps and bees repeatedly stung them.

"We've learnt a lot about running big distances day-on-day in tropical climates and the challenges of staying healthy whilst living by the roadside with no shower or bed. We suffered from prickly heat, gastro-intestinal infections, flu and I had a particularly delicate case of crotch rot!" said David.

Running the length of Bolivia

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<http://www.birdlife.org/community/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/Katharine-David-running-Bolivia-1-300x214.jpg>

Please give them your support!

Now the husband and wife team are setting their sights on Brazil and Venezuela in order to complete their 6,500 mile running challenge.

Katharine & David are running the length of South America unsupported to achieve the [5000mileproject-transparent-background](#)

following aims:

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<http://www.birdlife.org/community/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/5000mileproject-transparent-background-300x187.png>

Raise money for BirdLife International and Conservacion Patagonica to buy and conserve threatened habitats in South America, ensuring their protection through local governance and employment. [click here](#).

Connect people from around the world to the communities and wildlife met along the way, via

the 5000mileproject interactive website and on-the-road communications and examine how, through our actions, we are connected.

Inspire environmental action; to prove that with small steps we can tackle seemingly insurmountable challenges; it's not too late to protect the world's remaining unspoiled ecosystems, but time is running out.

We wish them the best of luck! If you would like to support Katharine and David's run by donating to their charities (they still have another 3,500 miles to run before they reach the Caribbean Sea of Venezuela) please **click here**. To find out more about their expedition check out: www.5000mileproject.org and <https://www.facebook.com/5000mileproject?fref=ts>
. <https://www.justgiving.com/5000mileproject>