

tropicales, en selvas llenas de lianas, ramas y hojas que esquivan de forma experta, y que raramente sobrepasan la altura de las copas de los árboles para desplazarse.

En un enorme árbol, como el ceibo, y sólo cada tres años, el águila cría un único polluelo, que será cuidado por los padres hasta que cumpla algo más de dos años y medio de vida. Además, muchas culturas indígenas que conviven o han convivido con ellas la consideran un espíritu del aire, siendo respetadas y, en parte, temidas por sus poderes ocultos.

En Ecuador, SIMBIOE (Sociedad para la Investigación y Monitoreo de la Biodiversidad Ecuatoriana) está trabajando desde hace más de ocho años para conocer y crear herramientas que puedan apoyar su conservación, formando equipo con el Ministerio del Ambiente y, en estos últimos años, con EcoFondo. Más manos y mentes son necesarias para continuar ideando estrategias que revaloricen nuestro patrimonio, pues al fin y al cabo es nuestra seña de identidad./ As

the many secrets of the planet are unveiled, we realize that the natural world has some of the most striking ones, and many of these in Ecuador. As for example: did you know that the venom of a single frog called "dart frog" (*Phylllobates terribilis*) could kill more than 1,500 people? Or that the howler monkey (*Alouatta seniculus*) is the animal that sends sound the furthest away? And that the harpy eagle is the strongest eagle in the planet and is also found here in Ecuador?

This eagle is not only known for the strength of its claws, capable of tearing preys from their trees (usually monkeys and sloths) but for being the largest eagle in the Americas. If we stood to its side, it would reach most of us up to the waist, measuring 1 meter in height, and if we laid on the ground, it would be longer than us, as from one wing to the other it measures 2 meters in width.

Due to their tremendous size one would believe that they inhabit areas free of obstacles for their flight. But as always, nature surprises us. Harpy eagles live, hunt and breed in tropical fo-



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rests, jungles full of vines, branches and leaves that they dodge like pros, as they rarely fly above tree tops.

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many indigenous cultures that live or have coexisted with these eagles consider them spirits of the air, respected and in part, feared due to their hidden powers.

In Ecuador, SIMBIOE (Society for the Study and Monitoring of Ecuadorian Biodiversity) has been working for over

eight years to identify and develop tools that can support their preservation, teaming up with the Ministry of Environment and, in recent years, EcoFondo. More hands and minds are needed to continue devising strategies to revalue our patrimony, which is part of our identity.

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