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Amazing Species: Royal Cinclodes

<u>Royal Cinclodes</u>, Cinclodes aricomae, is listed as 'Critically Endangered' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. Named for its occurrence in the Cordillera Real mountain range of South America, it inhabits remnant patches of *Polylepis* woodland and montane shrubland in southeast Peru and adjacent western Bolivia.

This rare bird, which may now number fewer than 250 individuals in total, is under severe threat from the loss and degradation of *Polylepis* woodland. Heavy grazing and uncontrolled use of fire have degraded understorey moss cover and prevented natural regeneration, while cutting for firewood, timber and charcoal production have taken a further toll on this fragile habitat, which is now scarce and fragmented.

Fortunately there are a number of conservation programmes underway for the Royal Cinclodes, including awareness campaigns and habitat restoration. It also occurs in a number of protected areas. Recent records of the species, several hundred kilometres outside of its known range, have also given new hope that it may be more widespread than had previously been thought.





