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Re: Tortoise Species Not Extinct After All

## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **For Immediate Release**

February 3, 2020

### **'Lonesome George' Subspecies Recently Discovered in Ecuador's Galapagos Islands.**

Hamden, CT- When Lonesome George passed away in 2012, it was believed that the world lost its last known tortoise subspecies of *Chelonoidis abingdonii*. However, researchers from the Galapagos Conservatory Inc. released the news that a direct descendent had been discovered. The young female tortoise had been found while on a 10-day expedition at the base of a 5,600-foot-tall volcano.

Conservationists were also able to find 11 male tortoises and 18 other female tortoises at the base of the volcano. The reptiles were soon found to be partially related to the Floreana Island species, *Chelonoidis niger*, which at the time were also believed to be extinct. President of the Galapagos Conservancy Johannah Barry commented, "We are absolutely thrilled that she was found. This is very good news."

This new finding prompts researchers to believe that Lonesome George's subspecies may not be extinct after all and that a hybrid species with Pinta Island lineage could be found elsewhere in the Galapagos. While this work often leads to bleak results and outcomes, this most recent finding offers a sense of hope.

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For more information:

Nora Carr

Communication Specialist

(203)-731-7030

[rracaron96@gmail.com](mailto:rracaron96@gmail.com)