

**Dr. Mauro Lucherini / CATcrafts, General Coordinator**

Although he has worked with bighorn sheep in Canada and porcupine in Italy, which is his country of origin, his passion has always been carnivores. So when the opportunity arose he went to Argentina to join a young group of biologists who set out to study few known carnivores. From the moment he heard about the Andean cat and learned that it was an almost unknown species, he decided to do everything possible to help uncover the secrets that surrounded it. He quickly realized that researching its ecology was not going to be enough to guarantee that this cat did not disappear and was one of the promoters of the creation of the Andean Cat Alliance. Despite having to wait eight years to observe his first Andean cat, for two decades Mauro has dedicated himself to understanding the ecological and conservation requirements of the Andean cat and raising awareness both for local communities and society in general, together with his wife María José Merino (who is also part of AGA). During these years he has advised a large number of researchers and conservationists, including some of the current members of AGA. Since 2013, he has been leading projects that involve local communities in the conservation of the Andean cat and its natural habitat, favoring sustainable community development and peaceful coexistence with carnivores. At the same time, he tries to dedicate time to his young daughter and to work on other species of carnivores, such as the gray fox, Geoffroy's cat and the puma, and on the conflicts between carnivores and human populations.