

ANTHONY GERARDO PINO CHARAJA

Long before the Andean cat became a central part of his life, he had already found in the mountains a place he always wanted to return to. As a biologist, he was drawn to mammals, especially carnivores. As a photographer, he learned to pause and pay attention to detail. In the high-Andean landscapes, he found a place where these two ways of seeing the world could come together.

Over more than ten years working in high-altitude ecosystems, the Andean cat gradually became an increasingly important part of his journey. At the same time, his relationship with these landscapes grew beyond the species he sought to document. The mountains also came to represent communities, ways of life, challenges of coexistence, knowledge, and different ways of relating to wildlife. In this context, this elusive and still little-known felid came to embody much of what had first drawn him to the Andes.

His path within the Andean Cat Alliance has never been limited to a single role. Over the years, he has taken part in monitoring and conservation efforts, work with local communities, and the development of initiatives in Peru, while also assuming an increasingly important role in the organization's communications. Today, he coordinates AGA's communications and social media, helping bring stories, scientific findings, and field experiences closer to people who may never have seen an Andean cat, but who can still become part of its conservation.

This journey has taught him that conserving a species requires much more than finding or studying it. It means listening to the people who share its territory, understanding the challenges communities face, and building bridges between science, communication, and action. His close work with Quechua and Aymara communities has strengthened this perspective and his belief that lasting conservation solutions are those that also make sense to the people who call the Andes home.

For Anthony, perhaps part of the fascination of the Andean cat lies precisely in how much we still do not know. A camera trap, a track, or a conversation can reveal one small piece of a far more complex landscape. And after years of traveling through and working in these territories, he still holds on to the same feeling that first drew him there, that the mountains and this elusive felid still hold many secrets waiting to be discovered.