

Project Flamingo documents photographically the flamingos of the Altiplano of South America under threat from developing ecotourism, increasing mining pressure and historical hunting. I slept, ate, travelled and photographed in Páramo clothing for six weeks at 4500m, in the often hostile environment between the high altitude soda lakes, in order to record the three flamingo species inhabiting this region.

All three species are classified as endangered by the IUCN (World Conservation Union) with the James' and Chilean considered *Near Threatened* and the Andean flamingo considered *Vulnerable*. Flamingos feed off algae, diatoms, microscopic crustaceans and molluscs which inhabit the saline waters of the soda lakes. These flamingos only breed in this region and are often restricted to a few lagoons to nest upon. They lay only a single egg and are vulnerable to disturbance by tourists and egg collectors. Of course, they are affected by climate change with changes in water levels of the shallow lakes adversely affecting breeding performance.

I wanted to display the beauty of this region and the flamingos living here as well as highlighting the threats to the species and the conservation efforts in the area. Since returning to the UK I've held a number of photo exhibitions and lectures, developed a flamingo website (www.projectflamingo.co.uk), and written articles for magazines and papers. The British are the second most common visitors to this region so it's important to let them know what their impact can be and how to minimize it.

The Páramo garments chosen for the expedition were vital in keeping me warm day to day, enabling me to approach flamingos silently (due to the nature of the fabric) and maintaining my comfort whilst photographing these incredibly beautiful birds.

Niall Riddell wore an olive/ navy Alta II, Mountain Vent Pull-on, Aspira Salopettes Cambia underwear, and Stretch Hat.