

Magazine of the World Parrot Trust

PsittaScene

February 2002 No.50

Blue-throated Macaws

Cape Parrot News

Parrots That Bite

Kakapo Breeding Update

Celebrating our 50th Issue!

Supporting parrot conservation in the wild and promoting parrot welfare in captivity.

'psittacine' (pronounced 'sit'a sin') meaning 'belonging or allied to the parrots' or 'parrot-like'



Editor

Rosemary Low,
P.O. Box 100,
Mansfield, Notts.,
United Kingdom
NG20 9NZ

CONTENTS

Blue-throated Macaws	.....2-3
Adelaide Zoo	.....4-5
Ecotourism	.....6-7
Biting	.....8-9
Wild and Captive parrots	.....10-11
Red-throated Lorikeet	.....12
Kakapo	.....13
Cape Parrot	.....14
Review of WPT	.....15
PsittaNews	.....16-17
Info / Trade Ban Petition	..18
WPT Admin Page	.....19
Parrots in the Wild	.....20



Cover Picture

Blue-throated Macaws (*Ara glaucogularis*) on a nest palm.

Photo: Bent Pedersen

The World Parrot Trust does not necessarily endorse any views or statements made by contributors to *PsittaScene*.

It will of course consider articles or letters from any contributors on their merits.

Anyone wishing to reprint any articles seen in this magazine needs permission from the author and must state that it was copied from *PsittaScene*.

All contents © World Parrot Trust

Observations at an active nest of Blue-throated Macaws in the Beni Department of Bolivia

(*Ara glaucogularis*)

Text and Photos By BENT AND BIRTHE PEDERSEN

We had just left Santa Cruz in central Bolivia after having spent some time observing Red-fronted Macaws (*Ara rubrogenys*). The wonderful sight of hundreds of these magnificent birds were still fresh in our minds when we landed at the town of Trinidad, capital of the Department of Beni and situated in the northern part of Bolivia.

It was October 11, 2001, the time 1pm and the weather warm and humid when Mr Fellman Bogarth greeted us upon arrival. Mr Bogarth is associated with "Green Bolivia" and with his in-depth knowledge of the area and wildlife north of Trinidad he was the perfect guide for our observations of the Blue-throated Macaws.

Savannah, wildlife and cattle ranches

From Trinidad we headed north towards the ranch San Miguel that was our base during our observations of the Blue-throated Macaws. A reliable 4x4 pick up truck is essential for driving on the clay like "roads", which quickly turn to a sea of mud when rain arrives.

The distance to the ranch is 120 km and usually takes around 3 hours of non-stop driving. However, due to the impressive abundance of wildlife en route we took much longer in order to observe and photograph rheas, storks, parakeets, capybaras, caimans and many other species.

The Blue-throated Macaw is endemic to this area, the "Llanos de Mojos" which is a seasonally-flooded savannah with larger and smaller forest like "islands" of different palm species and mixed vegetation, rivers, streams and ponds. Huge ranches partly fence the areas and run extensive cattle farming.

Generally in this area cattle farming and wildlife go well together. However, a major ecological problem during the dry season

(August - October) is the burning of grass to improve the quality of grazing when the rainy season starts around December.

The nestsite

Each morning we left the ranch at dawn (5.30 a.m.) taking 50 minutes to make our way along a gravel road and through the savannah to a "palm island", where a pair of Blue-throated Macaw were raising two chicks in a nest prepared in a motacú palm (*Attalea phalerata*).

The "Isla Paraba" (macaw island) measured around 300 x 250 m and was dominated by *Attalea phalerata* palms.

The nest palm stood 25 m from the periphery of the island and was free-standing but for the tips of leaves from neighbouring palms. From here the macaws only needed a few strokes of their wings to reach the nest palm. The top two metres of the nest palm were hollow, with two entrances positioned one metre down facing east and west. We estimated a diameter of 55 cm at the nest chamber level.

Observations of the Blue-throated Macaws

Blue-throated Macaws breed during the last half of the dry season (September - November) and since our observations took place during mid October the chicks were already "big". We clearly heard two larger chicks when fed by the female.

From our blind, 20 m from the nest palm (to the east) and 6 m above the forest floor, we had excellent views of the birds while they moved around in the area near the nest and at the nest itself. The greatest problem for the photography was



Blue-throat Macaws (*Ara glaucogularis*) on a nest palm.



Blue-throat Macaws (*Ara glaucogularis*) beside the nest palm.

the number and variety of hyper-aggressive insects that converted the few uncovered areas of our bodies into countless itching spots.

The pair spent a lot of time sitting together either in a tall "observation tree" around 50 m from the nest overlooking the area, or in palm leaves adjacent to the nest palm. They were often preening but always alert and responded to all unusual sights or noises by leaving the palm and circling the area while their typical scream penetrated the forest.

When leaving the nest area for foraging they usually left with a great deal of noise and stayed away for 2 hours at a time. Upon their return they arrived quietly to the "observation tree" and later proceeded either directly to the nest palm or to the palm leaves above the nest. They always rested there for a while before the female started to

crawl down to the eastward entrance, while the male in most cases remained in the palm leaves above the nest.

Before entering the nest she pre-regurgitated a number of times and then spent around 20 - 30 minutes feeding and staying with the chicks. After feeding she left via the westward hole and flew away with the male. The chicks were fed every 3 - 4 hours during the day.

'Attack' by a pair of Blue and Gold Macaw

One morning a pair of the larger and more powerful Blue and Gold Macaw (*Ara ararauna*) suddenly arrived on the nest palm while the Blue-throated Macaws were sitting in the "observation tree".

The Blue and Gold Macaws spent around 5 minutes crawling up and



Red-fronted Macaws (*Ara rubrogenys*) perching in trees.

down the nest palm. They looked down to the chicks and chewed some palm material at the top of the nest. Then both parents flew to the nest and chased the intruders away when landing.

The parents were sitting quietly side by side on the nest palm while the Blue and Gold Macaws were sitting in a tree close by, screaming for 20 minutes before both pairs took off "in full noise" circling around the area. Subsequently the Blue and Gold Macaws disappeared while the breeding pair flew to the "observation tree".

After this successful defence the Blue and Gold Macaws were no longer seen at the site.

Return to Trinidad

In addition to the pressure on the nest site from the Blue and Gold

Macaws we also experienced wood cutting in a palm island and grass burning, both of which seem obvious possible threats to long term successful breeding of the Blue-throated Macaws.

Other macaw species observed included Green-winged Macaw (*Ara chloroptera*) and a large number of Chestnut-fronted (*Ara severa*) and Yellow-collared Macaws (*Propyrrhura auricollis*). Fortunately, we were able to watch Chestnut-fronted Macaws at a couple of nest sites.

After an exciting period of observations and photography at the Blue-throated Macaw nest site, plus a great deal of birding we returned to Trinidad where we enjoyed sights of several active nests of White-eyed (*Aratinga leucophthalmus*) and Dusky-headed Parakeets (*Aratinga weddellii*) just outside the town.



Local girl holding a Yellow-collared Macaw (*Propyrrhura auricollis*).



Blue and Gold Macaws (*Ara ararauna*) attacking at the nest of the Blue-throated Macaws.



Macaws in Flight

Text and photos by PHIL DIGNEY, Supervisor of birds and RYAN WATSON, Specialist bird keeper, Adelaide Zoo.

Phil Digney.



Ryan Watson, bird trainer and manager of the show.



Free-flying Blue and Gold Macaw on the central lawn.

The display of birds within zoos and wildlife institutions has over the last two decades become an evolving arena, driven by an increasingly environmentally aware community. The traditional "cage" approach, where one peered through wire to view a pair of birds morosely sitting on a bare perch, accompanied by little else other than a water bowl and feed dish, is now barely tolerated. With this changing expectation, display of birds has moved towards more natural, landscaped exhibits, which are larger and house a number of mixed species. Then, as the immersion, or "up close and personal" concept unfolded walk-through exhibits materialized. Now, free

flight shows are proving to be not only extremely popular but also highly effective in promoting environmental awareness and empathy for conservation.

New Show

Here at Adelaide Zoo a recently established free-flight show featuring two Blue and Gold Macaws (*Ara ararauna*) has brought another dimension to the display of 180 bird species whilst being a highly successful forum for both the promotion of macaw conservation and fund-raising for the World Parrot Trust.



Both birds flying from the presentation stage out through the crowd.



After the flight show the public are invited to have their photo taken with birds.



The final lines of the presentation are an appeal for funds to support World Parrot Trust work. In 8 months of appeal we have raised AUD\$7,200 .

Our two Blue and Golds were acquired in February 2000 as six week old chicks and hand-raised by the Bird Dept with the specific goal of producing young birds that were suitable for free-flight training. They were named Charlie and Madidi, after Charles Munn the macaw researcher and Alto - Madidi National Park in north-west Bolivia. Once weaned, Phil Chamraoui and Ryan Watson, bird trainers here at the zoo, began training using the basic food - motivation and positive reinforcement techniques. Initially

the birds were trained to accept daily weighing, this being achieved by attaching a T- perch to a set of scales and rewarding the birds with a treat such as a peanut once they stepped up. This is the positive reinforcement principal where a bird quickly learns a desired behaviour knowing that there will be a reward afterwards. Training then developed, with rewards for leaving the exhibit and flying to the stage area on the central lawn, then to various points around the lawn area. The daily monitoring of



'Charlie' one of the macaws in the show.

weight is important with training of free-flight birds as it involves lowering the birds' weight to a point where they are motivated and focused by food desire. Allowing them to lose too much weight can cause health problems whilst not losing enough will see a bird difficult to train. Once training is complete and as the birds mature they can be maintained at normal body weight.

Eventually, on the 11th December 2000 the birds were fully trained and ready for public shows. The presentation area on the central lawn was complete, graphics were in place, and the media were invited to the official launch. All four commercial television stations and the state newspaper covered the event and the birds flew perfectly to a crowd of 200 people, mesmerizing them with their beauty and elegance in flight.

The Results

So how does the show, held daily since December 11, 2000, support education and conservation? The first part of the 10 minute keeper presentation informs the public about the background to Charlie and Madidi then goes on to discuss the plight of many of South America's endangered macaws such as Lear's (*Anodorhynchus leari*), Blue-throated (*Ara glaucogularis*) and Spix's Macaws (*Cyanopsitta spixii*) and the impact of illegal trade, rainforest destruction etc. Then, in the final part of the talk,

people are told of the wonderful work being achieved by The World Parrot Trust; offered WPT membership forms and encouraged to join. Finally, people are invited up to the presentation area where for a gold coin donation (\$1-2) they can hand feed Charlie and Madidi and have their photo taken with the birds. Donations are collected in the two WPT donation tins which we requested from WPT along with brochures and membership forms. The flying of the birds, whilst making people aware of the very real threats facing macaws in the wild, has proved highly effective in encouraging support. In the 7 months of appealing for WPT donations at time of writing this article, the show had raised AUD \$6,000. This will equate to about \$10,000 in the first year. All money raised is going directly to the WPT for direction into the Great Green Macaw Fund.

The show is a fine example of captive birds playing a valuable conservation role. To this point approximately 45,000 people have enjoyed a macaw "experience" and are now much more aware and educated about macaw conservation, whilst an important macaw project receives much needed funding. This all contributes to the ground swell of public support which is so necessary if we really are to prise macaws from the jaws of extinction through changed attitudes and values. 



The birds are released from their display aviary and they willingly fly directly to the presentation stage, 300 metres away.



Charlie Munn.

Ecotourism Lodge

How Conservation Groups worked to save a beautiful lake in the rainforest of Tambopata, Peru

By CHARLES MUNN Ph.D., Chairman of the Board, Tropical Nature

This article tells the story of Sandoval Lake Lodge (SLL), the only jungle lodge in Tambopata, Peru that has either hot showers, a lakeside view, or a large palm swamp full of hundreds of Red-bellied Macaws (*Ara manilata*). The lake boasts the most variety and abundance of wildlife in the Tambopata area, including a family of 8-11 Giant Otters, 400-800 chattering Red-bellied Macaws (*Ara manilata*), usually dozens or scores of large macaws each day (Blue and Gold, Scarlet, and Greenwing), six species of monkeys, and hundreds of punk-crested Hoatzins. I have never seen more Red-bellied Macaws in one place in my life, and they are comical and hypercommunicative.

There are three messages in the following article that may be of interest to *PsittaScene* readers.

- The first has to do with how effective conservation actually happens on the ground. Valuable long term conservation almost always involves changing peoples' behaviour, whether that is how they get their food, how they manage their wild areas, or how they recreate. If you're lucky, there may be a win-win solution to be found and the critical act is to simply present this winning scenario to the key players. More often, sadly, to protect a species or a place in a meaningful way includes making some people unhappy. The Sandoval story is a great example of how this has worked in a real case scenario, including the history of the families involved, the local and regional politics, and even the legal battles behind preserving this spectacular lake.
- The second message has to do with ecotourism and how it gets

implemented. There are many ways to get people out into natural area and show them some ecology, but the question of how 'green' is your ecotourism often comes down to the details of, who owns the lodge, where did the employees come from, where did they get the materials to build the lodge, what type of food do they serve, how do they deal with power, water, and waste issues. The Sandoval story illuminates the history of the place and how it came to be built by the families who built it.

- And the third message is that we're arranging trips to this part of Peru this year and next for WPT members. So we're hoping that now you've had a chance to learn about the history of the place, you'll be eager to visit Sandoval Lake and see the spectacular lake and the huge flocks of Red-bellied Macaws that emerge from the palm swamp each morning and fly overhead as you float along peacefully on

a hand carved catamaran. We're sure you'll agree, it's quite a place!

In the early 1950's, Mr. Cesar Mejia, who is from Pucallpa, decided to settle on the unoccupied shores of the two mile long Sandoval Lake with his young wife, Marcelina. Mrs. Mejia is a pure-blooded Amazonian Indian originally from the Ixiamas area just north of the Madidi National Park in Bolivia. They had a number of children and thrived there, collecting Brazil nuts, fishing, hunting, and opening some subsistence agricultural plots.

The first jungle tour lodges in the southern Amazon of Peru opened in the Puerto Maldonado area in 1975 and 1977, the first on the Tambopata River, and the second about 30 minutes by outboard motor downstream on the Madre de Dios River from the riverside entrance to the trail to Sandoval Lake. This latter lodge developed an itinerary that for its two-night package included as its major rainforest excursion a morning walk and boat ride on Sandoval. By 1979, thousands of foreign tourists visited lodges each year on the Madre de Dios River, each visiting Sandoval Lake for one morning. The Mejia clan barely benefited at all from this tourism flow to their lake. Between 1988 and 1990, the owner of an existing lodge attempted to take over pieces of the high ground land occupied and owned by the Mejia clan, which had expanded to include many families spanning three generations. This clan lived along virtually all the high ground property around the lake. The entrepreneur's attempts to obtain land did not involve fair negotiations toward land purchase or rental, but simply attempts to obtain land by influencing government officials in Puerto Maldonado and Lima. None of these attempts succeeded, as each time the Mejias got help and

defended their lands from usurpation. Several times, this help came from Selva Sur conservation group in Cusco.

In 1994, the Mejias approached Selva Sur because a husband of one of the grown daughters of Mr and Mrs Mejia wished to leave the clan and sell his 40 hectares (100 acres) of lake front property to a hotel owner from Puerto Maldonado. The hotelier wanted to build a lodge on the shores of Sandoval Lake, which is generally considered the most beautiful of the five lakes in the greater Tambopata area. The Mejias asked Selva Sur for a loan to buy out the departing ex-son-in-law. The Mejias worried that if the hotelier built a lodge on their lake, they would be marginalized and frustrated. Resentment from this situation easily could have led to the Mejias intentionally hunting near the hotelier's lodge as a form of sabotage. As a nonprofit conservation group, Selva Sur could not lend money for land purchase unless the purchase involved a guarantee of conservation. Selva Sur asked the Mejias if they would like to have Selva Sur, a nonprofit conservation group, buy that land from the departing ex-son-in-law and build a lodge there, making the Mejia clan 49% partners by making them an uncollateralized loan at U.S. prime rate interest. The Mejias agreed to this proposal, whereupon Selva Sur obtained a grant from the World Parks Endowment and bought the ex-son-in-law's land.

True to its word, in 1995-1997, Selva Sur built Sandoval Lake Lodge (SLL), a 50-bed lodge with private bathrooms and hot showers right on the shores of Sandoval Lake. The location is clearly the most scenic and wildlife-rich of any of the 15 rainforest lodges of Tambopata. Additionally, Selva Sur, which in 1990 convinced the Peruvian government to create the 1.47 million hectare (10% larger than Connecticut) Tambopata-



Clay lick near Sandoval with Mealy Amazons, Blue-headed and Severe Macaws.

Photo: Jamie Gilardi



Example of a Lodge in local area.

Photo: Jamie Gilardi

Candamo Reserved Zone, used the most ecological of all wood sources for this lodge: natural driftwood mahogany ("cedro" - *Cedrela odorata*, *Meliaceae*) floated all the way from Manu National Park to Puerto Maldonado. No other lodge in the Tambopata area is built principally of this ecologically-produced wood, which is unique in the world. The use of this ecological "cedro" cost tens of thousands of dollars more than would have simply buying this wood from felled trees - the "normal" source used by all other lodges.

From 1996 through the abrupt end of the Fujimori Government in November 2000, owners of several existing lodges colluded with a corrupt government minister to try without success to stop Selva Sur from building and operating SLL. Their motives in each case were simple fear of the superior location and wildlife viewing offered by Sandoval Lake Lodge. These attempts to sabotage SLL have cost Selva Sur much more in legal fees and related defense mechanisms than the total cost of this \$200,000 lodge - a terrible waste of resources that would have been much better used to protect the environment or to create more jobs in the Maldonado area than to pay for batteries of lawyers. As a result of this eye-opening experience, Selva Sur, its national partner group, Peru Verde, and its international partner group, Tropical Nature, have all learned an important lesson. That lesson is that creating jobs for local people to conserve the rainforest is a good deed that only goes

unpunished as long as you stay out of the way of important people trying to make money.

The final business deal with the Mejias is really a very soft loan - more of a gift than a loan. Selva Sur owns 51% of the lodge, while five grown members of the Mejia clan (and their spouses) own 49%, or 9.8% for each of the five. The agreement specifies that the Mejias only have to pay their prime interest loans if the lodge makes a profit. Thus, if Sandoval Lake Lodge makes a profit (which it will for the first time in 2001), then half of the families' share of the profit will go into their pockets, and the other half will be used to pay down their debt with Selva Sur. If the lodge goes bankrupt, the Mejias lose nothing because the loans are uncollateralized-that is, they are not guaranteed with the Mejias houses or lands or belongings other than the lodge itself. In 2001, Sandoval Lake Lodge earned a greater share of the Tambopata tourism market than either of the original (26- and 24-year-old) lodges of the region by receiving 2,500 guests and grossing about \$200,000, 12% of which was profit. Peru Verde, Tropical Nature, and Selva Sur now operate for conservation rather than for personal profit a network of 12 leading eco-lodges in the tropical forests Peru, Brazil, and Ecuador.

For more information, contact Tropical Nature at: +1 202 466 0570 (www.Penglish@tropicalnature.org or www.tropicalnaturetravel.com)



BirdsFirst Pet Bird Conference

The second conference organised by BirdsFirst in Birdkeeping took place on October 28 at Stratford, UK supported by Northern Parrots. It was a well-attended and informative meeting. Rosemary Low was the first speaker. She described advantages and characteristics of the various parrot species kept as companions. She said that Grey Parrots (*Psittacus*) are usually too complex psychologically to be a good choice for the first-time parrot owner.

Sue Baddeley from Sparsholt College, Hampshire, then spoke about the aviary to be built there in which research on the behaviour of Grey Parrots will be carried out. Non-humanised, wild-caught Greys will be maintained in an aviary 10m square and at least 3m high within a barn. They will not be able to see people and will be monitored by video. Greg Glendell mentioned that the aim is to study the innate language of Greys by recording their signals and interactions in a small flock, resulting in an ethogram.

One of the two speakers from the USA, Tim Wright described aspects of his work in studying Yellow-naped Amazons (*Amazona auropalliata*) in the wild. A large communal roost was used by 200 Amazons whose dialects were studied. Pairs 'duet' around their nesting area throughout the year, perhaps as a territorial defence. They will attack speakers that play the duet of another pair. The young of these Amazons stay with their parents for up to one year.

Well respected avian vet Neil Forbes, FRCVS, gave an absorbing talk on feather plucking, which covered every conceivable cause. In his opinion, the problem is usually multi-factorial. In neotropical parrots, an allergy might be to blame, even an allergy to sunflower seed, or to house dust. Few vets in the UK test for specific allergies. Mites are very rarely to blame, but covering the cage with a white sheet at night will reveal their presence. Endoparasites, especially giardia in Cockatiels (*Nymphicus hollandicus*), can also cause feather-plucking. The bird develops an allergy to the parasite in its gut. Mr Forbes said that he can smell tobacco on about 10% of the feather-plucked birds that he sees. (Please do not allow smoking near your parrot!) Poor diet, such as a high

fat content in some species, results in liver disease and feather-plucking. Therefore the liver function should be checked. Some other causes are an air sac infection resulting in pain and irritation on the parrot's back, chlamydiosis, and metal poisoning. It is very important to consult an avian vet if your bird plucks itself. Malnutrition is another common cause. Note that sunflower seed and peanuts contain more than four times as much fat as a Mars bar. Pet birds need low energy diets - not sunflower seed.

Greg Glendell spoke on the welfare of birds offered for sale and mentioned some of the laws that should protect them. Unfortunately, the laws are not enforced - and local governments are often at fault. There is also a cultural problem in that the intelligence and needs of parrots are seldom recognized. Would the RSPCA tolerate dogs and cats offered for sale at shows in tiny cages? He said that we need 'a new kind of aviculture' in which it is recognised that birds are sensitive creatures.

Finally, Sally Blanchard spoke on the companion parrots who are 'clearly more intelligent than any of us! We have to learn to manipulate them and to read their behaviour. With a screaming cockatoo, for example, when we see that it is becoming agitated, we have to divert its attention before it starts to scream. Talk to it - and when it raises its wings, as cockatoos do, clap and say 'Good boy!' She said "The smarter a bird is, the more trouble you have with it. If its basic needs are not met, it will be unhappy." Poorly socialised hand-reared young birds are the most likely to become neurotic. Regarding biting, she said "This is the simplest problem to solve. Biting occurs because you have broken the rules". You must anticipate your parrot's mood.



Neil Forbes. Photos: Rosemary Low



Sally Blanchard.



Steve Martin.

Behaviour issues:

Biting is not for the birds!

By STEVE MARTIN

"Biting is just part of having a parrot as a pet." Does that sound familiar? It should. It is a very common attitude associated with companion parrot ownership. However, I feel the opposite is true. A parrot owner should strive to never get bitten. That is a pretty bold statement for such a common problem. The fact is that biting is something parrots learn to do in captivity and not something that is normally seen in the wild. That's right, they don't bite each other in the wild, at least not hard enough to make another parrot bleed.

In the past 15 years or so, I have interviewed many parrot field researchers (personal communications: Brice, February 1994, Munn, July 1998, Gilardi, February 1999, English, November 2000, May, May 2001) about biting and dominance. With a combined total of over 35 years of field research, only two of these researchers have ever seen or heard of a parrot biting another parrot hard enough to make it bleed. Both of these incidences were associated with nest holes. One incident involved two birds fighting over a nest cavity and the other involved a parrot attacking a young bird in the nest in an attempt to take over the nest.

Parrots very rarely bite each other in the wild. However, they often show aggression to protect resources like territory, mates, desirable perches, food items, etc.

These interactions are generally limited to body language like the raising of the head feathers or a subtle look of the eye. Sometimes the aggression escalates to vocal displays such as growling or even more overt body language like thrusting the beak forward in a jousting fashion. In the wild, this body language is usually enough to deter an intruding bird and avoid negative physical contact with the resource holder.

So, why do parrots bite in captivity?

- 1 if you put an animal in an unnatural environment you can expect some unnatural behaviour.
- 2 all behaviour is a product of instinct or experience.

A bite from a parrot falls into one of these two categories. Some biting incidents are innate and some are

learned. Many parrots have been forced to bite out of fear, or self-defence. Humans tend to be aggressive in the manner in which they approach and pick up their parrots. This bold, aggressive action may cause a bird to bite out of fear. Most parrots do not have the option to fly away like their wild counterparts and are sometimes pushed to the point that biting is the only way they know to defend themselves or express their displeasure.

Before biting, most captive parrots display various body language and vocalizations to express their feelings, just like wild parrots. However, few people ever notice the slight glance of an eye or the almost imperceptible tightening of the feathers on the parrot's head that holds so much information about its thoughts and feelings. After all, human communication is generally very bold and obvious, and has evolved to put much more emphasis on verbal communication, than body language. Many, if not most, parrot owners are oblivious to their parrot's subtle attempts at communication. They fail to notice the slick feathers, or quick head movements, as the nervous bird instinctively looks for an escape path, a common avoidance behaviour. Often, the first signs of nervousness most parrot owners notice are the obvious escape attempts or the growls and other vocal displays of discomfort and fear. By this time, they have already missed the myriad of signals that have preceded this most obvious show of discomfort and have pushed the bird to the brink of aggression.

Another important point to consider is most of the information available to parrot owners today does not encourage sensitivity. In fact, some of the most common teachings today encourage dominance and aggression when working with a parrot. It is common to hear and read things like "make sure he knows you're the boss," and "don't

let him get away with that," etc. The popular trend is to dominate pet parrots rather than build partnerships. This aggressive approach only encourages more biting incidents as birds are forced to bite to express themselves to their confident but insensitive owners.

Parrots bite for the following main reasons:

Play; It is an instinctive behaviour for parrots to investigate a person's finger or other body part with their strong beak. This is the way nature provides information to the young bird about its environment. It is the responsibility of the owner to tell the bird just how hard it is allowed to "investigate" fingers and other objects. A loud and sharp "NO" is similar in effect to the vocalization that an adult parrot would use in the wild to communicate to a youngster that it has exceeded its bounds.

Territorial Aggression; Parrots instinctively protect territories both in the wild and in captivity. In the wild a parrot bonds with one individual and will protect their nesting territory from intruders. Captive parrots also bond with one individual, often a human. When this happens, they can aggressively defend a territory from intruders. They can easily learn that biting is the only, or at least the best, way to drive human intruders away from their territory.

Fear Aggression; As mentioned earlier, many parrots have bitten out of fear of a human forcing himself or herself on the nervous bird. This is also an instinctive reaction that is closely associated with survival. If the bird were in the wild it would simply fly away. However, most captive birds are denied the ability to escape and are left with biting as their last resort.

Learned Aggression; Some parrots learn to bite for a desired response.





A parrot's 'body language' indicates when it is going to bite. Photo: S. Martin

This learned aggression is displayed in many ways. One bird could learn that a light bite to the arm of its owner when he or she is eating a donut may result in a piece of the tasty treat being offered to stop the annoying nibbling. Another

bird may learn that a bite to the finger will cause a person to leave it alone on top of the cage or on a person's shoulder, even if it is for just long enough for the person to go get a dowel or perch to pick the bird up with. Once a parrot bites a

person for the first time, it may be on its way to learning that this is a valid way to communicate with humans. Any behaviour that is reinforced is likely to be repeated.

To avoid being bitten:

Start by developing a positive relationship with the bird. Try to avoid forcing the bird to do anything it doesn't want to do. This is a very difficult concept for many parrot owners to understand, especially when the information available to parrot owners suggests dominating the bird. Plus, many humans have a fairly good reinforcement history associated with dominating other animals, such as dogs, and even other humans. It is a communication strategy that seems, at least to them, to work fairly well. Going against this natural tendency and working to establish a relationship with the bird that is built on positive interactions is the first step toward a partner relationship with a parrot.

Next, the bird owner should develop sensitivities to the bird's communication. He or she should

learn how to read its body language and listen to what it tells them. Then, they should care about what it says and allow the bird to be a partner in the relationship instead of an object. They should learn to ask the bird to do things and avoid telling it. After all, rarely does anything, except a predator, ever force a parrot in the wild to do something it doesn't want to do.

One more thing that will enhance a parrot owner's relationship with their parrot:

Taking responsibility for each bite. Parrot owners should understand that biting is something that they have either forced a bird to do or taught it to do. When they accept this responsibility they will begin to see that their scars are signs of insensitivity and not badges of courage. They will also begin to lay the foundation for a more rewarding partnership with their companion bird.



Top illustrator helps wild Palm Cockatoos

By MIKE REYNOLDS, Chairman WPT

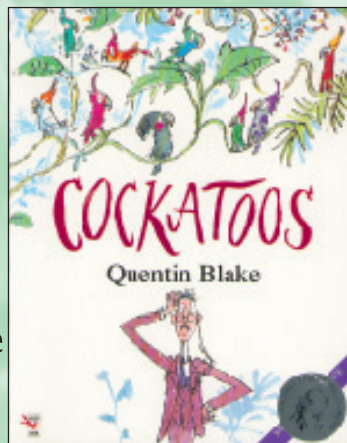
Following a request from one of our new trustees, Victoria Ewart, the celebrated author and illustrator Quentin Blake has kindly provided us with five signed copies of his hilarious book 'Cockatoos'.

This comes just at the time when we have decided to continue our WPT funding of vital research into the life-style of the Palm Cockatoo (*Probosciger aterrimus*) in Cape York, Australia as very little is known.

We have previously provided AUS\$10,000 a year for three years, but have now been asked to extend our support for a fourth year. AUS\$10,000 is about £3,775 or US\$2,700 - this is quite a large new commitment for WPT, and it's needed right away.

What we would like to do is invite donations towards this commitment, and reward the first five donors (minimum £50) with a signed copy of Quentin Blake's 'Cockatoos'.

Please consider helping with this important research task, and having the pleasure of owning what is something of a collector's item.



NEW Palm Cockatoo T shirts

now available from
WPT UK and WPT USA
S,M,L,XL,XXL - £15, US\$20, €23
inc. post and packing



50 million captive parrots and 50 million wild parrots;

what can we learn from each population to secure the healthy future of all parrots?

By JAMIE GILARDI

There is an ongoing and somewhat light-hearted argument among ornithologists about which bird species is the most abundant in the world? Different factions of course have their different theories - often a sparrow or a storm petrel is suggested - and given the vagueness of the population estimates, the argument rages on with no end in sight. Soon after I started working for the Trust, Mike Reynolds asked me off-hand how many wild parrots I thought there were in the world. No doubt he was amused by my puzzled reaction, never having contemplated such a question. Naturally it's hard enough to guess the number of individuals of any one species, far less a total for all 350 species! We hemmed and hawed over this for a bit, agreed on which are the most common species and roughly what their numbers were, and came up with a slightly-educated - but still highly suspect - estimate of 50 million wild parrots. What struck me at the time was the fact that this figure seems to be a number I've heard on many occasions as an estimate of the number of parrots in cages around the world (a number that may be equally difficult to estimate, if for very different reasons). But whatever the estimate of either population, the interesting part to me is that there may be roughly the same numbers of parrots in the wild as there are in captivity. How do these populations compare - do they share the same fate, do they share the same threats, and perhaps more importantly, how can we help ensure that what we learn about each population helps save the other?

Let's start by asking how knowledge of the wild birds can help those of us dealing with captive birds in any context, such as breeding, training, pet care, and rescue. As we all know, wild parrots are animals that evolved in a specific part of the world and in a specific habitat type. These habitats include an astounding array of environments, from the driest of deserts, to the high Andes and Himalayas, to all of the major tropical rainforests of the world. If we want to know the best way to care for any captive parrot species, it's very helpful to know where the bird came from in the wild, because in most cases, these birds are no more than one or two generations removed from the wild state.

So a first step is to determine the bird's physical environment - whether it is a Conure from the highlands of Peru or a Senegal from the savannahs of Africa. To understand this environment, ask yourself what are the extremes of heat and cold, how humid is the place at various times of the year, when in that year do the wild birds experience rainfall, how long are the days and nights throughout the year? These are all the basic factors that make up an animal's physical environment and they can be critical to its well being. Naturally, we can't replicate the exact habitat of these birds in our houses and backyards, but a clear understanding of the birds' wild environment can help explain and solve behavioural and reproductive issues in captivity.

Two other sets of questions focus on the ecology of the birds themselves - their social and nutritional biology. In the wild, do the birds move from place to place in large flocks like budgies or Cockatiels, or do they move about in family groups like most Macaws? Do they roost in large aggregations, like African Greys and many Amazons? What does this mean for how you house your birds: are they in a flock, a pair, or solitary? And although most parrots are

monogamous, some appear to show some interesting social behaviour at the nest, such as Golden Conures and Eclectus, so a breeding effort may include more than just the one adult pair. Again, what does this mean for the social environment for your birds, both in the breeding and non-breeding season?

Of course one of the recurrent issues in caring for parrots is how to feed them a healthy diet. While many of the nutritional challenges of captive bird husbandry in the 20th century are thankfully behind us, there is still much to learn about how to feed parrots - especially if we expect them to live for many decades. As a graduate student, I studied the nutritional aspects of parrot diets in Peru and hoped that this research would help improve the diets of captive birds everywhere. But the question turns out to be more complex than I thought - yes I did learn a lot about wild parrot diets and I can tell you very specifically what their wild foods contain in terms of protein, fat, sodium, and calcium, etc., but the key word there is 'wild.' When wild birds fly, they often do so for many miles at a stretch and they do so with little apparent effort. In

contrast, I can recall as a kid how my budgies might slip out of the cage, fly across the room and arrive there gasping for breath as though they'd just run a marathon. Let's face it, very few captive birds have the opportunity to maintain the peak physical fitness of a wild bird. Consequently, it makes little sense to feed them the same super high energy diet that the wild birds thrive on. So, the specific dietary information from the wild is not directly applicable.

But many observations of wild parrot diets are useful in guiding how we feed our birds. Many birds, for instance, eat flowers, wood, bark, soil, and insect larvae - not exactly the sort of thing you'd expect from a classic frugivore, but worth knowing perhaps when interpreting your birds' consumption of various parts of your house and yard. And we also are learning a lot about what wild parrots feed their chicks, and of course the chick-rearing environment is nearly identical in both places.

So, short of us all going back to school to become a parrot biologist, how does one learn about the wild counterparts of ones' captive birds?

Probably the quickest way to start is to read very closely the appropriate sections of Forshaw's *Parrots of the World* (3rd edition) and the more recent text by Tony Juniper and Mike Parr, *Parrots: a Guide to the Parrots of the World*. Those are great general references which will get you a good portion of the way there and point you to specific references on your species. And now that most of us have web access, try typing either the common name or Latin name of your bird into one of the search engines, such as Google.com.

If the species is threatened with extinction, there should also be a specific section of the Parrot Action Plan devoted to the state of the bird in the wild and steps required for its recovery (available for free download or to buy a hard copy on www.worldparrottrust.org). If you have a bird that is not common in captivity, you may have to dig deeper and perhaps look at a better-studied bird that is closely related. Of course, these references are just a first step. You'll then have to take what you learn about the birds' range and do some research on the physical environment there, so you can think more deeply about your birds' needs and your options for mimicking that environment in your home.

But the ultimate step, and by far the most exciting step of all, is to go see the wild birds on their home turf. While this isn't always affordable, more often than not, a trip to experience the wild birds first hand turns out to be a once-in-a-lifetime experience, which is well worth saving for. Just hearing these birds screeching back and forth across the forest or flying as a flock from one horizon to the other can't help but bring you a new perspective on your own bird at home. And spending a few days in its environment speaks volumes about what your bird is 'designed for,' as well as identifying the threats these animals face on a day-to-day basis: threats from



Pet owners should learn about the habits of the species they keep. Are they flock birds, like Cockatiels?



A Goffin's Cockatoo won the hearts of senators.

Photo: Rosemary Low

weather, predators, diseases, and of course humans.

So, why should we look to the wild birds to learn about and help save our captive birds? To put it simply, our 'captive birds' are essentially wild birds, often removed only one or two generations from the wild. With the exception of budgies, Cockatiels, and a few other species, parrots are not domesticated animals, in the sense that they haven't gone through tens or hundreds of generations of selective breeding to live compatibly with humans. They haven't been moulded to fit our lifestyles, to eat simple diets, to live alone in a cage while we run off to work for most waking hours of the day, to live without flight, and to live without a 24-7 mate, their family, and their flock.

I enjoy asking people, "How many species of domestic dog there are in the world?" The answer of course is only one. Horses 1. Cows 1. Chickens 1. Parrots 350! These domestic animals have been bred for centuries to thrive in a human context; parrots have not. That said, parrots are remarkably flexible birds and many species are clearly capable of making these adjustments very well. But if we think of these birds as wild animals that have made some big adjustments to live with us, we'll be much better able to interpret and respond adaptively when we're faced with any of the frequent challenges of keeping our birds happy and healthy.

But what about the fate of the wild birds; is that fate somehow linked to the fates of the 50 million or so birds in cages around the world? My answer would be an unequivocal, YES! Perhaps the most obvious reason is that these captive birds are deeply important to the people who care for them, so they create a very large and natural constituency of

concern for all parrots, captive and wild. More than anyone, those who live with parrots know what remarkable animals these parrots are, what feats of intelligence and grace they show on a daily basis. When it comes to thinking about wild parrots, there are literally tens of millions of people around the world who have a direct link to these birds.

In the past, parrot conservationists have viewed bird owners as simply the last step in the 'pet trade' which has threatened many wild species. So the goal has been to work toward a reduction or elimination of this trade. There is of course a great deal of truth in this perspective and there are reasonable estimates of over a million wild-caught birds being bought and sold each year. As you know, there has been a remarkable effort to curb trade here in the US. The 1992 Wild Bird Conservation Act converted the USA from the largest importer of wild-caught birds to a non-importer of wild-caught birds, virtually overnight. But the amazing part to me is that this Act only happened because a coalition of people including conservationists, animal welfare advocates, and bird enthusiasts worked together to make a change.

But there is a "rest of the story" that few people have heard. At the end of one of the last Senate Hearings on this Act, the Committee Chair closed discussion because he said there was someone he absolutely had to meet. He directed attention to an extremely tame Goffin's Cockatoo (*Cacatua goffini*) in the room who had been patiently listening. Then the bird proceeded to walk from Senator to Senator, rolling over in their laps, and clearing winning over their hearts in a way that human testimony never could. Not only did the Act pass, it passed by a



Can you provide your bird with foods that mimic what your parrot would eat in nature?

unanimous vote in both houses of Congress!

So, the simple fact that so many of us share our lives with parrots means that these captive birds are a critical factor in all parrot politics - to ignore these birds in trying to conserve the wild birds would be to throw the baby out with the bathwater. But there are several equally compelling reasons for people who seek to save wild parrots to build links to captive animals and their caretakers - reasons that are playing a growing role in conservation.

Dollars from tourism

Naturally we feel there are better ways to 'use' these wildlife resources than to simply 'harvest' them from the wild - the most viable use is the one I mentioned earlier: ecotourism. If even 5% of bird owners went to see wild tropical birds each year, this would generate literally billions of dollars for the conservation of these birds in the wild. If ecotourism is done in a way that benefits local people, it creates clear and effective economic incentives for these people to protect and save their own wildlife. It's also remarkable how much pride you see in local people when they see 'rich' people from all over the world coming to see those big screaming birds in their back yards - the locals start to view and value their wildlife in a whole new way.

And of course, watching and learning from wildlife is critical to the biologists seeking to study and save these birds as well. Unfortunately, many wild parrots are very hard to view and consequently hard to study using standard ornithological methods. But with parrots, we have the potential to live among these 'wild' animals, to experience first-hand their daily rhythms and rituals, and

to be deeply integrated with their complex social systems. For those of us who have struggled to study wild parrots, and generally feel lucky to even see the birds for any length of time, these captive individuals provide a window on the parrot social world that few wildlife researchers have.

Another useful link is that the parrot husbandry wisdom that has accumulated over the years has become an essential part of many parrot conservation projects. Whether that involves an avian veterinarian studying the diseases of wild parrots, or a nutrition specialist helping with the diets of temporarily captive birds slated for release, or a breeder's consultation on methods of manipulating wild clutches for maximum reproductive output, knowledge from the realm of the captive parrot has become an integral part of many parrot conservation projects. As in any multidisciplinary collaboration, it's not easy for people from such disparate backgrounds to work together in complete harmony, and many of these collaborations have required thick skins all round, but by-and-large the fundamental focus on 'what's best for the birds' generally wins.

Finally, anyone willing to share their life with an animal as colourful, intelligent, destructive, loud, conniving, and hilarious as a parrot has got to be a good-hearted and generous person. And it is this generosity, which has created and sustained the World Parrot Trust, the welfare work, and the conservation work we've done over the last twelve years. Without captive birds, there would be no Trust. Clearly our principal job at the Trust is to clarify and build these strong links between the captive and wild birds in hopes of protecting all parrots. Thank you for supporting us in our efforts to do so.





Kirsty Swinnerton.

Searching for the Red-throated Lorikeet

(Charmosyna amabilis)

By KIRSTY SWINNERTON

Aleksandra Maljkovic (assistant) and I have been in Fiji now for nearly two months, and we have just returned from the field. We landed on the main island, Viti Levu, and made a base in the capital city of Suva. We are working with the National Trust of Fiji and our first two weeks were spent meeting people and organising everything necessary for our field surveys of the Red-throated Lorikeet. We collected our two off-road dirt bikes, which we managed to buy second-hand though they are virtually new, and headed off into the field on 23rd November. Our first destination was the Central Highlands of Viti Levu at a site called Monasavu, where we spent the next month. The trip up was a little hair-raising on the bikes. It took five hours and 100 kms of hard driving on a dirt road that at times seemed much like a flower bed the soil was so thick, and towards the end it was like driving up the side of a slate quarry.

The Central Highlands have some of the best native forest left in Fiji and is the only area where the Red-throated Lorikeet has been seen with any regularity. Regularity is a bit of a misnomer however, the last reliable sighting was in 1993. But it seemed like a good place to start. The area we surveyed ranges from 700 m to 1,300 m and is the wettest part of the island, receiving up to 9,000 mm of rain a year. In the centre is a hydro-electric power station that supplies 60% of Viti Levu's electricity. There is a small team of people living there and we had been given the use of the managers flat. This was so well equipped (hot showers, washing machine, tumble drier, microwave!) that we really didn't feel like it was

fieldwork. During the month's survey we also camped in areas farther afield to cover more ground. To carry out our survey, we have been doing canopy watches from vantage points overlooking the forest. As the lorikeets are canopy feeders and fast flyers, we felt that this was the most likely way to see birds. As usual in the tropics, we lost several days to heavy rain and thick, low cloud where the visibility dropped to about 10 m. We have seen most of Fiji's endemic bird species, including lots of Collared Lories, Masked Shining Parrots and even the Fiji Peregrine Falcon, which is currently estimated at about 50 pairs. But we are sorry to say that we have not seen a single Red-throated Lorikeet, nor heard any

definite calls from them. This has been very disappointing, but we still have many other sites to survey yet so only time will tell.

In addition to looking for the lorikeet, we have been investigating why it might be so rare. Fiji has the familiar gamut of introduced species: rats, lesser Indian mongoose, feral cats, feral pigs, mynah birds (two species here), red-vented bulbuls and even feral goats and deer on some islands. Rats have been suggested as a likely cause of the lorikeet's rarity, particularly the black rat which is a tree-dweller. However, most Pacific islands have an aboriginal rat, the Polynesian rat, which has been in Fiji for thousands of years. It is a little difficult to see how rats could affect the native birds, when they have already resisted the effects of rat predation for so long. However, we have been catching rats in the native forest to find out what species are living there, and to compare rat densities in different forest types. We have found that mongooses and feral cats abound, even in the high altitude native forest. The rarity of the lorikeet may not be due to one specific thing, but a suite of factors including introduced species and a gradual loss and degradation of

native forest by fire and clearance for farming and plantation trees.

We are lucky to be working with Alifereti (Fijian for Alfred) Naikatini, who works for the University of the South Pacific in Suva, and who has been guiding us through the Fijian traditional customs. Most of the land in Fiji is owned by the villages and, before being able to access any land, we carry out a 'sevusevu' with the village Chief and Elders in order to ask permission. This is followed by a kava drinking session shared with the villagers. Kava is the root of a pepper tree, which is made into a narcotic drink. It is currently being sold in the West as a herbal remedy for stress relief and insomnia! These ceremonies can go on for several hours but are a good way of finding out information about the birds.

Now that the Christmas and New Year holidays are over, we are heading off once again into the field. For the next two weeks we are surveying another area in Viti Levu and then heading off for Fiji's third largest island, Taveuni. Taveuni has a reputation as being Fiji's 'Garden Island' and I hope that in my next letter, we will have some more positive news.



Red-throated Lorikeet in the wild.

Photo: Dr William Beckon



National Trust for Fiji Team at HQ in Suva.

Photo: K. Swinnerton

A New Kakapo Breeding Season

By ROSEMARY LOW and DON MERTON



Rosemary Low.



Don Merton.

- Kakapo (*Strigops habroptilus*) do not breed annually but at 2 - 5 yearly intervals. They are thought to have the slowest reproductive rate of any bird. Breeding last occurred in 1999.
- Rimu trees on Codfish/Whenua Hou Island off N/W Stewart Island currently have an unusually heavy ("mast") crop of green fruit (around twice the volume of fruit seen in any previous mast year!), which should ripen in March/April 2002.



Kakapo and helper in the wild.

Photo: Pete Haverson

New Zealand's large, flightless bird, the Kakapo (*Strigops habroptilus*) is the most unique of all parrots, perhaps the most charismatic, even the most endearing. It is also one of the most endangered. With only about 60 birds in existence and the lowest reproduction rate of any parrot, every egg is like a miracle. So this year, on January 7, there was great cause for jubilation when female "Lisa" was found incubating two eggs. She was likely to lay a third to complete the clutch, and this would be confirmed with the installation of a nest camera.

It is believed that on Christmas Eve she paired with "Basil", a male of unconfirmed fertility. This was by far the earliest nest ever encountered. Also on January 7, another female mated, giving hope that 2002 will be the most productive breeding season since intensive management began in 1989. "Lisa" was the mother of the last three female Kakapo reared in 1999. (See *PsittaScene* May 1999). This clutch, when female recruitment to the population was almost nil, was perhaps the most important in Kakapo history.

Exciting Developments

The news in January was exciting enough! In February it was quite extraordinary! By the first week in that month 19 of the 21 females had either mated or laid. Nothing like this had happened since Kakapo have been intensively managed. Six nests containing a total of 16 eggs were known to exist.

Scanner-loggers and sign left on the ground indicate when matings have occurred. In six of these cases the female's identity was unknown. Among the females known to have mated are the ten-year-old Hoki. Female Cyndy has three eggs (two fertile) in the same tree-trunk cavity that she used in 1997. In anticipation of this, Don cut a hole in the hollow trunk and fitted

plastic tank lid, in order to provide easy access. Last time she nested, the cavity was inaccessible and her two chicks died. It was not possible to monitor their weight when the rimu crop failed. Other females with eggs are Wendy (a clutch of four) Margaret Maree and Nora, both of whom last bred in 1992. It is interesting that five of the first seven females to lay were those transferred from Maud Island last winter in anticipation of this masting event.

Past Problems

Because they are nocturnal and flightless, Kakapo were almost wiped out by introduced predators such as cats, stoats and rats. These trusting parrots were killed in their thousands two or three centuries ago, for skins, for food and even to feed dogs. The threat from mammalian predators was the reason for the removal of the few surviving birds to offshore island reserves that had been cleared of predators by the Department of Conservation. Eight different islands have been used. Thus Kakapo are officially declared as extinct in the wild, although, of course, they live at complete freedom on the island.

Codfish is a small island just off the south coast of South Island. Nearly 4km (2 miles) of turbulent ocean separates it from Stewart Island to the east. It was on Stewart that the last wild population of Kakapo was discovered in 1977. Before that, the species was believed to be effectively extinct, as only males were known to survive. Females are especially vulnerable to predation, as they tend their nests.

On January 14 Don Merton departed for Codfish Island, where he will spend most of the next six months. We hope to publish more news from Don in the next issue. Let's all keep our fingers crossed!

- Since the late 1980's when Kakapo were first transferred to Whenua Hou there have been three Rimu masting events there, and each has induced breeding in Kakapo.

However, this promises to be the heaviest crop, and this is the first occasion that Kakapo staff have been able to anticipate the event and to capitalise on it through moving potential breeding stock to the island many months in advance. All (9) adult female Kakapo from Maud Island were moved to Whenua Hou last April/May. Thus, all (21) adult females known to survive are now on Whenua Hou in anticipation of a bumper breeding event this year.

- Kiore rats, a significant predator of birds eggs and chicks, were eradicated from Whenua Hou (1,400ha) in 1998.
- DOC staff and volunteers are currently re-training adult female Kakapo to

recognise and eat supplementary foods and to access these foods by opening the lids of closed food hoppers - something these highly intelligent birds quickly learn to do! This is essential in order to support breeding females (all of which are solo mothers) should the natural food supply fail as it has done during the last three breeding events. In 1992 we desperately tried to feed one breeding female, but she simply incubated the sweet potato we placed near her nest, while she and her foster-chick ("Hoki") almost starved!

- The female "Hoki", rescued as a near-starving chick from a nest on Codfish Island in 1992 and raised by Auckland Zoo staff - the first Kakapo ever to be hand-raised - is now almost 10 years old. Kakapo staff believe she is now sexually mature.
- While almost all females are in excellent condition, several are being supplementary fed to increase their body weights a little, to a level where they are more likely to breed. It is also important to ensure that no female becomes

too heavy or she is likely to produce mainly male offspring. (We need more females!) Adjusting weights of individuals is a difficult job considering these are all free-living birds with access to a wide range of natural foods.

- Many of the 19 adult males on Codfish Island had prepared their "track & bowl systems" - their traditional booming bowls or "courts" - for use by December. A number of bowls had been excavated and tracks trimmed ready for booming. There was a great deal of calling, chasing and mock-fighting by males on the display-ground ("lek" or "arena") each night.
- Over 80 people from New Zealand - and as far away as Canada - have offered to help for a two week stint as unpaid Kakapo volunteer nest-minders on Codfish Island next year. With an intensive management and monitoring programme planned, volunteers are essential to assist the few full-time Kakapo staff during the height of the breeding season - February to May



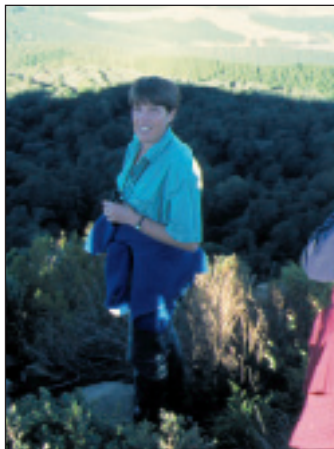
Cape Parrots and Yellowwood Trees

By MIKE PERRIN PhD

Major threats to the Cape Parrot (*Poicephalus robustus*) include the loss of their forest habitat, which supplies their food, particularly the kernels of yellowwood fruits, and nest sites. Nest sites are located predominantly in dead and decaying yellowwood trees, which are lost during storms and to chain saws. Older trees are felled under permit as foresters believe they have reached maximal harvestable yield and will add little to the productivity of the forest, or its regeneration, although the latter is prevented by cattle and goats grazing on yellowwood seedlings from the under storey. Forest patches that remain today are fragmented and widely dispersed causing the parrots to fly long distances between roosting and feeding localities. During seasons when the natural food supply is low or fails, owing to aberrant weather conditions, the parrots may feed in nut or fruit orchards, where they are exposed to shot guns and trapping.

Birds are trapped for aviculture, not usually for pets, yet the demand has increased dramatically. Why? Since the parrots are increasingly rare, the law of supply and demand dictates that the price goes up. Therefore, it is a greater temptation for rural Africans to be persuaded by avaricious middle men to catch wild birds and to raid nests for chicks. Why are these poachers not apprehended? Is it because of inadequate legislation? No, it is because of inadequate law enforcement. Are the law enforcers sufficiently motivated? Yes, some of them are very motivated, but many aviculturists and few veterinarians will not stand up in court to give evidence against the poachers. Occasionally evidence has gone missing from the offices of nature conservation organisations, which has prevented court action.

In order to make future prosecutions successful, advanced contemporary, molecular techniques are being employed. In much the same way that DNA can be used to sex parrots, it can be used to determine parentage, kinship and individual identity. No longer can breeders with a pair of Cape Parrots, acquired many years ago on a permit, be able to replace them with wild-caught birds, when the original pair is sold; or, claim that chicks taken from a nest in the wild are the offspring of an unproductive pair of captive birds. DNA profiles, or fingerprints, will demonstrate this is not so.



Dr. Colleen Downs overlooking an endangered yellowwood forest.

Forensic Science

In June, I travelled to the UK to meet with Dr. Jon Wetton, Senior Forensic Scientist - DNA Research of The Forensic Scientific Service, who does much contract work for the British Police Force and Home Office. He is one of the experts in the labs that developed these techniques. I also met with Dr. Deborah Pain, Head of International Research, and Dr. Guy Shorrock, of the Law Enforcement Section, at the RSPB (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds), who collaborated in bringing successful court actions against several traders of Peregrine Falcons in the UK. I was told that all of the court action by this team in this regard has been successful. I recently appointed Dr. Tee Taylor, who completed her doctorate on the development of microsatellite DNA markers for parrots, to my team at the Research Centre for African Parrot Conservation, at the University of Natal. She will train several masters students in similar techniques, particularly RAPDs (random-amplified polymorphic DNA) and applications. (The students will be jointly supervised by Genetics Professor, Annabel Fossey, and myself to conduct the research work on the individual identity and paternity of the Cape Parrot, which will be used as forensic evidence in court cases. The method will also be used on cranes in conjunction with the Crane Foundation, thereby optimising the use of a new R1.5million, DNA automated-sequencer). A consultant in environmental law is also being appointed to ensure effective use of this information and that provided by informants.

In the past there has been poor co-operation between the nature conservation authorities in the provinces where Cape Parrots occur in the wild and where they are traded. This loophole has been plugged through the activities of the Cape Parrot Working Group which includes representation at senior level by nature conservators concerned with law enforcement.

Expensive operation

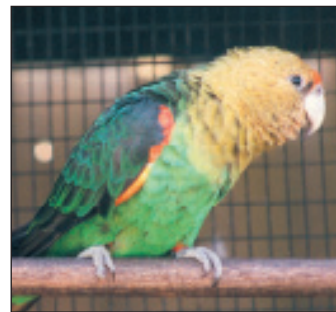
This will be a large, ongoing and expensive operation, like that

against global terrorism, but funds are being raised in various quarters by many dedicated individuals, several locally and some overseas. Including for example Jean Pattison, President of the (American) African Parrot Society and Council Member of the American Federation of Aviculture to whom I presented talks at their national congress in Houston in July 2001. The Director of Birdlife SA, Dr. Aldo Berruti, has pledged the full support of his organisation. He, like many others, has accepted not only the regional Endangered status of Cape Parrot, but its probable Globally Endangered Species status. This would almost certainly follow acceptance of CITES Appendix 1 categorisation. The motivation for this has been accepted by KZN Wildlife and been taken to the national committee for approval and submission to the international body. This would immediately place the Cape Parrot at a more endangered level than, for example, any of the African cranes. (Each of our cranes is represented in the wild by an estimated 10,000 individuals plus, whereas the estimate for wild Cape Parrots is about 500!).

Catapult threat

Last year, when I heard that Cape Parrots in the Eastern Cape were infected with psittacine beak and feather disease, which is untreatable and very infectious, I thought that was the last straw for the Cape Parrot, and it might well be. However, there is now yet another threat, Cape Parrots are now shot with catapults, suffer a painful death and are offered for sale in Muthi markets. As far as I know this is not part of traditional medicine or African culture, but abuse by impostor sangomas who are trying to make a few Rands quickly.

Myles Mander of the Institute of Natural Resources advises me that these kinds of occurrences are opportunistic, with only a few species being regularly sought after, which, until recently included the louries, vultures and ground hornbills. Clearly, the poachers and impostor sangomas do not know the true value of the birds for conservation, or financially. I am trying to ascertain why Cape Parrots



Cape Parrot chicks are illegally removed from nests.

can be regarded as muthi. Their bill is robust, which gives them their scientific name (*Poicephalus robustus*), but they are hardly as powerful or as symbolic as rhinos. I wonder whether it is because of its newly acquired financial value and hence their appearance in the muthi trade. It is difficult to place the blame on poor and impoverished rural Africans. This new attack on the ever declining, threatened and endangered species, the Cape Parrot, is catastrophic.

Myles and I will be meeting with the animal traders to discuss and hopefully resolve the problem. For a couple of years he has been asking the birding and wildlife authorities to start working with the traders to address these issues and to look at alternative options e.g. using culled animals or road kills. (An option for the Cape Parrot might be birds that die of natural causes in the captive breeding programme). Dr. Mander says that the people marketing muthi are quite open to discussion and we may get some market support to ban (or control) trading. Every avenue will be explored.

While writing this article, I received a phone call from Dr. Colleen Downs, who has been involved with the Cape Parrot conservation research project from its initiation and who currently runs the annual Cape Parrot Big Birding Day census so effectively, to tell me some more bad news! It transpires that about one hundred mature yellowwood trees have been felled at Ntsinkeni Forest where we have observed Cape Parrots and might have contained nesting sites.

The DWAF (Department of Water Affairs and Forestry) Hans Merensky, controlled forest has apparently been harvested by a freelance timber merchant who was allegedly granted 'permission' by the tribal authority in the region. (How can this sort of action be justified as 'sustainable utilisation' or optimal use of resources? - rather it is financial avarice and yet another rape of the sub-montane forest environment.) Most recent information suggests that the timber has been impounded and legal action is being taken against the timber merchant.



Review of The World Parrot Trust

By JAMIE GILARDI

PsittaScene turns 50!

This is an exciting time for us at the World Parrot Trust, as you'll read on page 18, we've now published 50 issues of the *PsittaScene* over the past 13 years. Our hope is that the content of the magazine provides our members with a rewarding mix of information about our work on the conservation of wild parrots and the welfare of captive parrots around the world.

Projects

Of course it is impossible to summarize in a brief report all the projects we're involved with and we rely on the *PsittaScene* to achieve this goal. In the past year, we've supported the conservation of wild parrots in Africa, Asia, Australia, the Pacific, the Caribbean, and Central and South America. Through our Action Grants program, we are now supporting several new species including the Thick-billed Parrot in Mexico (technically North America) and the Orange-bellied Parrot from Australia - stay tuned for more details in the next *PsittaScene*. On the captive side, we're adding to our many publications and leaflets on parrot care, and we're now including more articles in the *PsittaScene* which address the issues surrounding birds in the home and aviary. In the past year, we have also helped launch the World Parrot Welfare Alliance which seeks to support and orchestrate the many captive-bird rescue and sanctuary efforts popping up around the world (details on page 17).

The Internet

In hopes of its potential to help us grow in size and influence, we've embraced the internet in several ways. Our website allows us to provide extensive high quality information at a very reasonable cost. With the help of Ray Hales at Paradise Park, we're enhancing the WPT website with all sorts of new content: from photos, to field reports, to whole *PsittaScenes*, and even video clips! We now have the entire Parrot Action Plan available there as well as an on-line petition for people to speak up

about the trade in wild-caught birds. All this enhanced content has led to nearly three times the traffic we were getting at this time last year! The Trust has benefited from the internet in other ways as well - we have a very active members' discussion list where members from all over the globe can discuss a wide range of parrot issues (to subscribe, write to wptmembers@worldparrottrust.org), and of course, our far-flung trustees, staff, and volunteers are entirely dependent on electronic mail for our day-to-day communications.

WPT Accounts

As promised, we've done our best to bring you an up-to-date picture of the World Parrot Trust accounts. While these sorts of accounting details are mostly unsatisfying - they're generally out of date when they're finally produced, and they're either too vague to tell you much or too specific to wade through - we feel it is important to give members a sense for where the Trust gets its support and how we choose to allocate that support. You'll note that the accounts for each branch were done by different people, and so the categories in each case end up looking somewhat different, as you might expect. And of course, they're nearly a year behind which to us feels like ancient history. But with a skeleton staff and lots of things we'd rather focus our energy on - like parrots! - you can imagine why we haven't chosen to invest great sums and energy into producing detailed and polished annual reports. We'd rather those resources went to help save the parrots, and we hope you'll agree.

2000-2001 Accounts in £ Sterling	UK	USA	Canada	Benelux	Total
Income					
Donations	£25,162	£28,776	£2,787	£431	£57,156
Membership	£17,515	£14,652	£2,117	£3,660	£37,944
Bank Interest	£792	£2,182	£133	£42	£3,149
Merchandise Sales	£7,244	£2,353	£4,013	£1,243	£14,853
Other Income (fees, rebates, etc..)	£0	£100	£0	£134	£234
Meetings	£0	£0	£0	£76	£76
Legacies	£23,822	£0	£0	£0	£23,822
Total Income	£74,535	£48,063	£9,050	£5,586	£137,234
Expenditures					
Project Funding	£23,182	£33,334	£0	£0	£56,516
Educational Literature (includes PsittaScene)	£9,349	£4,201	£0	£0	£13,550
Advertising and Fundraising	£1,578	£261	£1,249	£590	£3,678
Purchases / Merchandise	£6,301	£2,223	£3,560	£940	£13,024
Bank Charges	£651	£74	£114	£54	£893
Fees and Dues	£874	£84	£214	£27	£1,199
Office, Phone, & Post	£7,168	£3,088	£661	£256	£11,173
Rent	£0	£5,414	£0	£0	£5,414
Personnel	£12,706	£8,472	£0	£0	£21,178
Computer Expenses	£2,110	£1,738	£569	£0	£4,417
Travel / Meetings	£3,832	£1,513	£111	£447	£5,903
Total Expense	£67,751	£60,402	£6,478	£2,314	£136,945
Balance	£6,784	-£12,339	£2,572	£3,272	£289

Notes

- The Trust's UK branch enjoys free office space, use of office machines, storage, vehicles etc and benefits from much uncharged time from Paradise Park.
- The branches in Asia, Scandinavia, France, Italy, Spain and Switzerland send any money collected to the UK and are included in the UK accounts.
- The money collected in Australia is sent direct (to avoid exchange rates) to the Palm Cockatoo project and our donations get topped up from the UK accounts.
- USA, Canada and Benelux have their own accounts and are registered as a charity in their own country.

Why Easter spells disaster for Yellow-eared Parrots

From WORLD BIRDWATCH Vol 23 No 4, Dec 2001.

The Yellow-eared Parrot (*Ognorhynchus icterotis* Critically Endangered) was once abundant across the High Andes of Colombia and Ecuador. However, by the late 1990's it was feared extinct until *Proyecto Ognorhynchus* rediscovered a small population in central Colombia. Thanks to their efforts, working with the local community, this population has steadily increased, from 81 birds in 1999 to approximately 180 birds today.

In January 2001, a second population of 277 birds was found in western Colombia, a considerable extension of their known range. *Proyecto Ognorhynchus* immediately sent in a research and conservation team, funded by Loro Parque Foundation and working with CorAntioquia (a regional environment agency). It soon became clear that the population was severely threatened because the wax palms *Ceroxylon spp.*, on which the parrots are totally dependent, were being felled at an alarming rate. The wax palm, Colombia's national tree, is Critically Endangered and grows extremely slowly. Mature trees may be more than 500 years old. Each year, during the religious festival of Easter, Palm Sunday is popularly celebrated around the world with palm-frond waving parades. Unfortunately, in most towns in the Colombian Andes, wax palms are the fronds of choice for this procession. Ahead of Palm Sunday, CorAntioquia approached the local priest to ask him to encourage his congregation to use alternatives, such as the far commoner *Wettinia* palm. Despite this, on Palm Sunday roughly 400 villagers, and even some police, who had been advised of the palm's legally protected status, were carrying wax palm fronds. This equates to the destruction of roughly 100 trees. *Proyecto Ognorhynchus* is now



Yellow-eared Parrots.
Photo: Proyecto Ognorhynchus/
Bernabé López-Lanus

intensifying environmental awareness and conservation activities with local communities to avoid a repeat of this needless destruction, and in October, more than 200 members of the community participated in a World Birdwatch day event at the site.

Ironically, Palm Sunday parades in the area where Yellow-eared Parrots were first rediscovered do not pose a threat; FARC guerrillas are active there, and do not permit the felling of live palms.

For more information on *Proyecto Ognorhynchus*, please visit www.ognorhynchus.com.

New Caribbean Environmental Poster Series Announced

The British High Commission office in the Eastern Caribbean recently approved BDS\$9,000 to design and print a new series of 5,000 wildlife education posters for school children on St. Vincent & the Grenadines.

The award was granted to the Forestry Department of St. Vincent & the Grenadines, and to Graeme

Hall Nature Sanctuary in Barbados, and will offset the costs of graphic design and printing.

The new educational poster series is being produced to highlight the unique plants and wildlife that exist only in St. Vincent & the Grenadines. The poster series will initially feature five unique endemic species; the St. Vincent Amazon Parrot (*Amazona guildingii*), the Whistling Warbler, The St. Vincent Whistling Frog, the St. Vincent Black Snake, and an endemic plant / flower which is unique to the high altitude slopes of Mount La Soufriere.

According to Roger Sweeney, Associate Director of the Graeme Hall Nature Sanctuary, the poster series is designed to increase local community awareness about the unique natural heritage of St. Vincent.

"We hope that increased local awareness will lead to greater appreciation of the islands natural history and promote greater species protection," said Sweeney. "We think this project will show how these species leverage national pride and promote conservation of the unique natural resources on our islands."

The poster series is being designed for distribution to schoolchildren as part of the on-going environmental education programmes supported by the St. Vincent forestry department. The education programmes of the forestry department are now being increased as part of a campaign to inform the local community about the aims of a new integrated forestry management and development project being developed in St. Vincent.

Artwork for the first two posters in the series, which will feature the St. Vincent Parrot and the Whistling Warbler, is being made available

courtesy Mr. Herbert Raffaele of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

Evolutionary origin of the rare Mauritius Parakeet

By DR. JIM GROOMBRIDGE, Project Coordinator, Maui Forest Bird Recovery Project, 2465 Olinda Road, Makawo, HI 96768, USA.

I am currently working on a publication of a *cytochrome-b phylogeny* of the *Psittacula* parakeets, which deals with the evolutionary origin of the rare Mauritius Parakeet. This work was part of my PhD which dealt with the rare avifauna of Mauritius, during which time I worked for the Mauritius Wildlife Foundation. I am looking to set up some additional work on the *Psittacula* parakeet phylogenetics, and I would like to obtain samples of all the *Psittacula* species and subspecies. The *Psittacula* genus is a good one to study extinction rates, because it includes continental species, island species, extinct species and recovering species, as well as non-endangered island species. I am aiming to sequence DNA from the two extinct museum species of the Seychelles and Rodrigues and add these on to the phylogeny, and study the evolution of the whole genus by looking at morphometric characters across the different phylogenetic clades, thereby revealing patterns of extinction and evolutionary processes. *Psittacula* species such as the Longtailed (*Psittacula longicauda*) and Moustached parakeets (*Psittacula alexandri*) have many different subspecies from different geographical locations. I realise that some of the subspecies will be difficult to get hold of.

Can anyone suggest any good contacts / collectors / suppliers (in / out of UK) that deal with *Psittacula* parakeets who I might be able to obtain blood samples from. Fresh (i.e. not museum) samples will be much easier to obtain DNA from. I am aiming to accumulate about 10-15 unrelated samples of each species and if possible, subspecies as well. I have one or two samples from the majority of species already, but to accomplish what I want to do, I need to extend sample sizes and fill in the taxonomic gaps.

Any help / advice / suggestions you may have would be great regarding contacts that may have large / small / diverse *Psittacula* collections and may be able to provide fresh (feather or - preferably- blood) samples.



Echo Parakeet, Paradise Park.

Photo: Paradise Park

WPT Members List - Please join

Since we have a very impressive collection of researchers, aviculturists, educators, and all around committed parrot owners among our ranks, we thought it might be helpful to have a venue for:

- Asking and answering questions about parrots, parrot care, and parrot conservation.
- Updating members on the latest news from the field, faster and with greater depth than in *PsittaScene*.
- Providing information on upcoming meetings and events that might be of interest to members.

Signing up is easy. Just send a message to wptmembers@worldparrottrust.org along with your name and member number (that's on your mailing label) and we'll send you a welcome letter with the details on how the whole thing works. Please give it a whirl, and we'll look forward to seeing you there!

WPWA - We Welcome Your Support

World Parrot Welfare Alliance - we want to be inclusive. If you care about parrots and want to help, we welcome your input and suggestions - whether you are involved with a large, incorporated sanctuary; a small, informal "Mom and Pop" shelter; a parrot breeder, or are "just" a parrot lover not directly involved in parrot welfare.

WPWA was created to bring together people in all countries who are concerned about the current crisis in the welfare of captive parrots, and to seek solutions. Our objectives are -- in brief--to fight for the well-being of all parrots and against abusive predatory practices.

Please Contact: Stewart Metz, M.D. ,
Chairperson (Steering Committee),
Email parrotdoc@msn.com, e-Fax 208-445-0898,
Web www.worldparrottrust.org/WPWA/wpwahome.html

Winning Bid for Grant Hackings Framed Original Painting of Golden Conure

(*Guaruba guarouba*)

£6,500

*Congratulations and many thanks:
John Watkins, UK*



Book Review *Advice on pet parrots*

A forty-page booklet based on the premise that if your parrot is correctly trained wing-clipping is unnecessary, Greg Glendell's *Pet Parrots Advice Direct* should be read by parrot owners. A substantial part is devoted to Obedience Training, with the emphasis on developing a relationship of trust. The essential commands are 1. Stepping up, 2. Stepping down, 3. Stay and 4. Go!

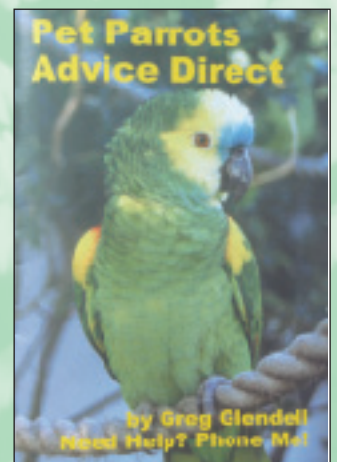
A parrot should never be punished for its behaviour. Fearful birds (which includes many which are wild-caught), cannot be trained until they are reasonably comfortable in the company of people. Bold or aggressive birds might bite but they are easier to train than nervous birds. The quickest way to stop biting is to show no reaction to a bite. Repeat the command and try again. Remain calm and confident.

The author makes some valid points on other aspects, such as: "Parrots cannot cope with solitude and often develop serious behavioural problems without the close company of either their owner or another bird." He suggests that if the parrot's cage is in the living room, the owner can consider placing a smaller cage for

sleeping only in a room that is not used during the night. A parrot needs 10 to 12 hours sleep at night. Many do not have enough sleep because they are kept awake by lights and television.

There are notes on a healthy diet, on feather plucking, first aid and vets and on wing-clipping. The latter is often carried out because owners erroneously think it is needed to have control of the bird. This useful and thoughtful booklet shows quite clearly that this is a fallacy.

It can be obtained from The Pet Parrot Consultancy, PO Box 227, Shrewsbury, SY4 5WU. The price is £4.90.



Our 50th issue of PsittaScene

At our recent trustees meeting in Cornwall, Mike pointed out that the upcoming *PsittaScene* - the one in your hands - is our 50th issue! For a quiet little NGO with mostly volunteer help, that feat alone is truly amazing and we owe a huge debt of gratitude to our Editor, Rosemary Low, for her unfailing support of this effort over the years. Her delicate hand with both the writing and editing pen has been the foundation of our newsletter-cum-magazine. And barely concealed behind the title 'Honorary Director' our founder and now chairman of trustees, Mike Reynolds, has been writing, designing, copy editing, and even modelling for the *PsittaScene* from Volume 1 No 1 onwards. As he has frequently stated that producing each issue is a bit like giving birth, I'm sure you'll agree that we're all very lucky that he's gone to the trouble of producing so many beautifully illustrated, very readable, and informative children! Finally at the center of each issue, our UK administrator, Karen Whitley, is there assembling text, scanning photos, and making sure it all comes together by the well-stretched deadline - we always get a good laugh when someone writes in with a comment and conjures up images of a whole staff of editors, art directors, and the like, when in reality we all just wear a lot of hats and somehow manage to get these issues out four times a year with as few errors as possible. During the meeting, we did of course discuss substantive issues such as the format of the cover and the content of the articles and we're looking forward to introducing some of those changes over the next several issues. We hope you will approve!

A Proposal for the Responsible Management of the Wild-caught Bird Trade in the European Union

A Campaign of the World Parrot Trust

One of the strongest messages we can send to the European Union is the fact that there are thousands of people from Europe and around the world who feel that it's time to stop this unacceptable exploitation of the natural resources of developing countries. The EU has now become the largest importer of wild caught birds and the existing legislation in Europe is ineffective at stopping the inhumane and unsustainable harvesting of these wild birds.

Although we plan to take several approaches to see this campaign through to its rightful conclusion, you can help a great deal by simply signing the petition below to add your voice to thousands of others in support of our goal of allowing wild birds to remain where they belong ... in the wild.

Please take a moment to fill out the petition at <http://www.worldparrottrust.org/trade.html> or complete the tear off section below and return to WPT UK and let your voice be heard.

Thank you very much for your support on this critical issue.

Petition Signature Total so far: 2,531

A Special Thanks to 'Rüdiger Wohlers, Ian Hinze, Monica Engebretson Animal Protection Institute and Paradise Park' for their support and promotion of this Trade Ban

I support the proposal to ban the importation of wild-caught birds into the European Union

First Name*

Last Name*

Street Address

City

State/County/Province

Zip/Postcode

Country*

Age

Email

Principal Interest*

- Aviculturist
- Parrot / Bird Owner
- Environmentalist
- Animal Welfare Advocate
- Animal Rights Advocate
- Conservation Biologist
- Biologist / Scientific Researcher
- Behaviourist
- Birdwatcher / Birder
- Other (please specify)

Comments

.....

.....

*An asterisk * denotes fields that are required*

Please tear off and return to: WPT, Glanmor House, Hayle, Cornwall, TR27 4HB, UK.

If you would like additional copies of this or the actual Proposal to Ban the Importation of Wild-caught Birds into the European Union (PS Vol 13 No 3) then please do not hesitate to contact me on Tel: 01736 751026

Aims of the Trust

With thousands of members in over 50 countries, our branches work to achieve the stated aims of the World Parrot Trust, which are:



The survival of parrot species in the wild

The welfare of captive birds everywhere

To Achieve these Aims, We:

- Restore and protect populations of wild parrots and their native habitats
- Promote awareness of the threats to all parrots, captive and wild
- Oppose the trade in wild-caught birds
- Educate the public on high standards for the care and breeding of parrots
- Encourage links between conservation and aviculture

Member, Donation or Legacy

If you become a member of our Registered Charity you will receive a new member package, 4 of our *PsittaScene* magazines per year which contain all the up to date information on the projects that we are involved with and one free entry to Paradise Park in Cornwall per year with your membership card. As a member you can also join an email list and gain access to many other members for parrot information and support. Each renewal year you will receive the 4 quarterly magazines and one free entry into Paradise Park.

WPT National Contacts

United Kingdom

Karen Whitley, Administrator, Glanmor House, Hayle, Cornwall TR27 4HB UK.
Tel: (44) 01736 751026 Fax: (44) 01736 751028, Email: uk@worldparrottrust.org
Chairman: reynolds@worldparrottrust.org

Africa

V. Dennison, PO Box 1758, Link Hills, Natal 3652, S. Africa.
Tel: (27) 31 763 4054 Fax: (27) 31 763 3811, Email: africa@worldparrottrust.org

Asia

Catherine Carlton, Hong Kong
Tel: (1) 415 430 2160 ext 6445, Email: asia@worldparrottrust.org

Australia

Mike Owen, 7 Monterey St., Mooloolaba, Queensland 4557, Australia.
Tel: (61) 7 54780454, Email: australia@worldparrottrust.org

Benelux

Peter de Vries (Membership Sec.), Jagershof 91, 7064 DG Silvolde, Netherlands.
Tel: (31) 315327418, Email: benelux@worldparrottrust.org
Belgium enquiries: Romain Bejstrup (32) 32526773
Netherlands enquiries: Ruud Vonk (31) 168472715

Canada

Sandra Metzger, PO Box 29, Mount Hope, Ontario, L0R 1W0, Canada.
Tel: (1) 519 823 8941 Fax: (1) 519 823 8941,
Email: canada@worldparrottrust.org

Denmark (Scandinavia)

Michael Iversen, Hyldevang 4, Buresoe, 3550 Slangerup.
Email: denmark@worldparrottrust.org

France

New Rep: Olivier Arnoult, 16 Chemin du Peyronnet, 06500 Menton, France.
Mobile: (33) 62 026 1957 Email: france@worldparrottrust.org
J. & G. Prin, 55 Rue de la Fassiere, 45140, Ingre.
Tel: (33) 2 38 43 62 87 Fax: (33) 2 38 43 97 18

Germany

New Rep: Marcus Kreft, Riemenschneider Weg 32, 12157 Berlin, Germany.
Email: germany@worldparrottrust.org

Italy

Cristiana Senni, Email: italy@worldparrottrust.org
Freddi Virili, via Matarus 10, 33045 Nimis, Udine

Spain

New Rep: Ricardo Sobrino, Novás, 36778 O Rosal (Pontevedra) Spain.
Tel: (34) 986 625 918, Fax: (34) 986 626 165, Email: spain@worldparrottrust.org

Switzerland

Lars Lepperhoff, Lutschenstrasse 15, 3063 Ittigen, Switzerland
Tel: (41) 31 922 3902

USA

Joanna Eckles, PO Box 353, Stillwater, MN 55082, USA.
Tel: (1) 651 275 1877 Fax: (1) 651 275 1891, Email: usa@worldparrottrust.org
Director: gilardi@worldparrottrust.org

WPT Web Sites:

Main: <http://www.worldparrottrust.org>,
Canada: <http://www.canadianparrottrust.org>,
Italy: <http://www.worldparrottrust.org/italy>

YES, I WANT TO HELP SAVE THE PARROTS OF THE WORLD

SUBSCRIPTION RATES (please tick)

- Student membership £10 / US\$15
- Single membership £20 / US\$30
- Joint membership £27 / US\$40
- Club membership £100 / US\$150
- Fellow (Life Member) £300 / US\$500
- Conservation membership (Life Member) £1,000 / US\$1,500
- Additional donation of

(or equivalent exchange currency, credit card payments by Visa/Mastercard only)

Name

Address

.....

..... Zip/Postcode

Telephone

Fax

Email

We heard about the World Parrot Trust from

Please charge my Mastercard / Visa No.

Expiry date /

Name on Card

Total Amount £/US\$

Signature

OR:

Enclosed cheque made payable to World Parrot Trust

Please send me some information on:

Bankers Orders

Legacies

'The WPT 12' projects

Join Us Now on our website or see our online sales items at: www.worldparrottrust.org

Parrots in the Wild

Psitta Scene

Ring-neck Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

By KIRSTY SWINNERTON

Ring-neck Parakeets are common cage birds and have been introduced to many parts of the world. In some countries they are pests, in Mauritius they compete with the endemic Echo Parakeet (*Psittacula eques*). But this Parakeet was photographed in its native country in India, in the Keoladeo Ghana National Park at Bharatput in Rajasthan, in October 1989. The reserve is world famous for its birds, and over 300 species have been recorded. Birds can be easily observed very close up and I was only 3m (10ft) away from this female as she came out of her nesthole.

