

PSITTAScene

Magazine of the WORLD PARROT TRUST



Summer 2025



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ABOUT THE WPT

Capture for the live-bird trade, habitat loss and other factors put wild parrots at risk. Nearly 30% of all parrot species are considered by IUCN to be globally threatened.

As an international leader in parrot conservation and welfare, the World Parrot Trust works with researchers, in-country organisations, communities and governments to encourage effective solutions that save parrots.

Since 1989, the WPT has grown to become a global force that moves quickly to address urgent issues and support long-term projects. Over that time the WPT has led or aided conservation and welfare projects in 45 countries for more than 80 species of parrot.

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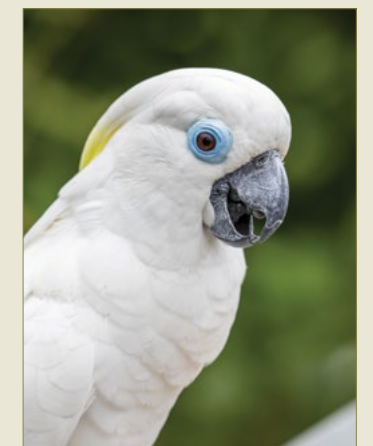
Scaly-headed Parrot

ON THE COVER

Blue-eyed-Cockatoo Photo © Yezhenliang,
Dreamstime.com

These snowy-white birds are endemic to the island of New Britain in Papua New Guinea. These relatively unknown birds are at risk of extinction in the wild.

Read more in '*Parrot Conservation in Indonesia and Papua New Guinea*', page 5.



2025
PARROT
OF THE **YEAR**

Thanks to your
incredible energy
and participation,
World Parrot Day
2025 was our most
successful yet!



BLUE-THROATED MACAW!



Launched in 2004, **World Parrot Day began as an awareness initiative to highlight the growing threats parrots face**—habitat loss, illegal trade, and environmental change.

Over the years, it has evolved into a global celebration of action and advocacy, uniting conservationists, parrot lovers and communities around the world.

This year, thousands of you joined in—casting your votes, sharing touching stories and photos, and engaging with our partners' posts on social media.

Native to Bolivia, the critically endangered **Blue-throated Macaw soared to the top of our Parrot of the Year contest**—a powerful call to action for its survival.

But it wasn't just about one bird—each nominee represented a vital thread in the tapestry of biodiversity. **Here's a look at the other incredible contenders you helped bring attention to:**

ULTRAMARINE LORIKEET



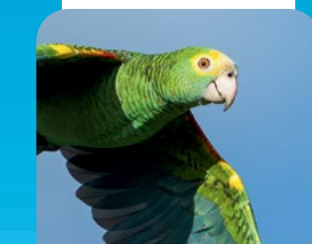
This striking lorikeet clings to survival on Ua Huka Island amid efforts to halt invasive species and habitat loss.

GREY PARROT



Community-based programs are working to safeguard this parrot from habitat loss and the wildlife trade.

Conservationists are striving to protect this iconic African native from habitat destruction and illegal trade.



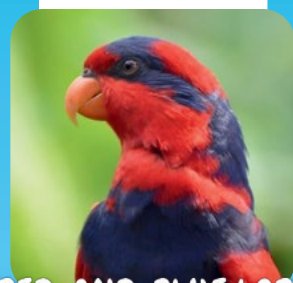
YELLOW-SHOULDERED AMAZON

KEA



This clever alpine parrot of New Zealand faces serious risks from lead poisoning and human-wildlife conflict.

Concerted efforts are underway to preserve this species' habitat and protect it from poaching.



RED-AND-BLUE LORY

TOGETHER, WE'RE MAKING A DIFFERENCE

World Parrot Day has grown into a powerful rallying cry for parrot conservation—and 2025 showed what we can achieve together.

Thank you for being a voice for parrots. Let's keep this momentum going—not just on World Parrot Day, but every day.

Parrot Conservation in Indonesia and Papua New Guinea

WORDS AND PHOTOS BY WPT STAFF

Over the last couple of years, the Parrot Conservation Foundation (Yayasan Konservasi Paruh Bengkok) has been solidifying its position as the World Parrot Trust's representative in Indonesia.

The fledgling organisation enables the WPT to work with local groups to advance critical parrot conservation projects and to provide resources to fight rampant illegal wildlife trafficking, improve rehabilitation and release programs and conduct field studies to uncover the wild habits and population status of little-known and highly threatened species.

Here we bring you up to speed on some of the Parrot Conservation Foundation's on-the-ground activities in this enormous archipelago, and WPT's work in neighbouring Papua New Guinea.





Photo: WPT's Indonesia Manager Angela D'Alessio gives a presentation at the WARN Conference in Thailand.

Wild Animal Rescue Network: Networking to Combat Illegal Trafficking

Angela D'Alessio, WPT's Indonesia Manager, in November represented the World Parrot Trust at the Wild Animal Rescue Network (WARN) Conference, hosted by the organisation Free the Bears in Laos in Southeast Asia. WARN is a network uniting animal rescue centres, wildlife enforcement groups, and officials from across East and Southeast Asia working together to combat illegal wildlife trade on a regional scale. Angela spoke about WPT's work in the region, focusing on its commitment to strengthening resources and supporting rescues facing the intense demands of wildlife trade. During her presentation, she introduced the WPT's First Responder Guidelines (available in English and Indonesian), a publication that serves as a how-to guide for responding to wildlife confiscations. It has become a vital manual for organisations across Asia struggling with limited resources and growing pressures from illegal trade.

In March, the WPT participated in the Southeast Asia Illegal Wildlife Trade workshop hosted by Wild Friends Foundation Thailand, the largest rescue centre in Southeast Asia. This marked Angela's second time networking with WARN and others, and an important opportunity to plan for viable, long-term solutions to wildlife trafficking. Her talk focused on the role of empowering communities in addressing trade at its source, and that by offering sustainable alternatives for people living near protected

areas, it is possible to reduce local poaching pressure and build safe environments for the reintroduction of birds back to the wild. Angela shared insights from WPT's recent release in West Papua as a real-world example of this model. The successful conference strengthened regional partnerships, increased visibility of the WPT's conservation work, and set the stage for many collaborations going forward.

Support for Wild Blue-eyed Cockatoos

Blue-eyed Cockatoos (*Cacatua ophthalmica*) are found on only one island: New Britain, near E Papua New Guinea. Over a span of 20 years, about 9% of nesting and foraging habitat was lost in their small range, exacerbating previous losses.

Compounding the issue is that little is known about the birds' nesting



Blue-eyed Cockatoo © Yezhenliang

behaviour and breeding outcomes, including wild nest dynamics (factors influencing the creation, use, and survival of nests by animals, such as birds, in the wild). What is known is that the species avoids oil plantations, which further limits habitat available for breeding.

In February, the WPT visited Papua New Guinea to explore a new conservation partnership with Mahonia Na Dari, a local NGO founded by the owners of Walindi Resort, in Kimbe Bay, New Britain. The trip focused on identifying opportunities to integrate parrot conservation, specifically for Blue-eyed Cockatoos, into the existing marine-focused environmental education work already happening in the region. Walindi Resort and Mahonia Na Dari expressed interest in building programs with the WPT to train in-country researchers, building in-country resources and reducing the dependency on external expertise. These local scientists would address gaps in conservation education by leading outreach and awareness programs across the region, and support ecotourism activities such as birdwatching.

For the future, WPT further plans to carry out activities such as installing camera-equipped artificial nests in primary and disturbed forests to assess nesting success and fledging rates, mapping and monitoring wild nests, documenting natural cavity breeding success, mitigating predation risks using protective measures and engaging local communities in tree-planting events to restore habitat.

IN THE LONG TERM...

Ongoing loss of biodiversity and the threat of trade in Indonesia and Papua New Guinea make the World Parrot Trust's presence in the area extremely important. Along with recent activities, there are more being planned to help protect the most at-risk parrots.

Endangered Red-and-blue Lories: Multi-faceted Conservation Actions

Red-and-blue Lory (*Eos histrio*) numbers have dropped dramatically in recent years due to wildlife trafficking and habitat degradation. With the rate of decline not slowing down, gathering new data on their numbers has been critical - the most recent population estimates of 1999 were in the tens of thousands. A recent proposal from BirdLife International to downlist the Red-and-blue Lory from IUCN Endangered to Vulnerable was countered by Tasikoki Wildlife Rescue Centre (representing WPT's project to the government), the in-country team from Pusat Informasi Sampiri and the World Parrot Trust by providing critical and updated documentation of the species' current population status.



Red-and-blue Lory © Bli Gede, IDEP Media

The final 2025 Red List category will be published on BirdLife and IUCN websites in October 2025. In addition, Indonesia partner Pusat Informasi Sampiri will plan more field research after the installation of artificial nests in the protected area of Karakelang.

Off-site Breeding for Conservation

Plans are afoot to explore breeding for conservation at sites other than Karakelang, with the goal of establishing a genetically viable population for release on Karakelang once conditions allow. To begin, the WPT is investigating a collaboration with a regional conservation breeding program.

Community Empowerment and Ecosystem Restoration on Karakelang

WPT's Parrot Conservation Foundation staff are finalising another partnership to lead a community-based effort supporting a transition from poaching to eco-sustainable livelihoods. Addressing pesticide use for locust infestations, which threatens wildlife including Red-and-blue Lories, is also top of list.



Top: Community-led conservation at Vuru Falls with the village chief and community members. **Bottom:** One of the community Mangrove Nursery projects of Mahonia Na Dari in the Bialla Rural LLG region in West New Britain Province.

Parrot Welfare Program - Helping to Rehabilitate Birds Caught in Trade

The Parrot Conservation Foundation in 2025 will strongly build on its mission to build capacity for rescues, law enforcement, forestry departments and zoos, all of which are able to help lessen the devastating impacts of wildlife trade by improving rehabilitation and release outcomes. The Foundation formally launched this on World Parrot Day (May 31) and have information sessions organised for the coming months. The Parrot Welfare Program is an ongoing effort and since 2023, staff have given workshops and presentations for partners, university vet students, government officials, and now also expanding reach to Indonesian zoos. 📍



Assessing the Socio-Economic Status of People Living with Wildlife

Trapping for the wildlife trade remains one of the main threats to parrot populations in Indonesia. To better understand the underlying factors that drive this trade, the WPT is working to map local dynamics through targeted fieldwork. These efforts support law enforcement, inform international conservation strategies, and guide community engagement by identifying where external pressures may influence local poaching activity.

Recent field visits have informed the development of new initiatives, particularly in areas where trade pressures on Red-and-blue Lorries are known to be high. WPT is collaborating with a leading Indonesian organisation to deepen understanding of the socio-economic drivers behind wildlife trafficking.

The work is a study of community-level responses to economic incentives related to wildlife. The goal is to identify areas where communities may be more vulnerable to external demand and to inform future support programs, including alternative livelihoods. Local team members will be selected and trained in data gathering and community engagement, with the broader aim of building local capacity and trust. This knowledge-sharing approach ensures that data are used constructively while minimising risks to both people and conservation efforts.

YELLOW-NAPED AMAZONS: BREEDING SUPPORT FOR WILD BIRDS

The iconic green parrot with a splash of yellow across its nape and gregarious personality is facing an uncertain future.

The IUCN Critically Endangered Yellow-naped Amazon (*Amazona auropalliata*), found in a narrow range on Central America's west and east coasts, has declined rapidly from heavy trapping and habitat loss.

Hotter and longer dry seasons may also have an impact on forests, food availability and survival, and the invasion of nest cavities by Africanized bees has caused the loss of young. Together, these factors have contributed to a sharp population decline in recent decades: after just 12 years the species was uplisted to Critically Endangered from Least Concern.

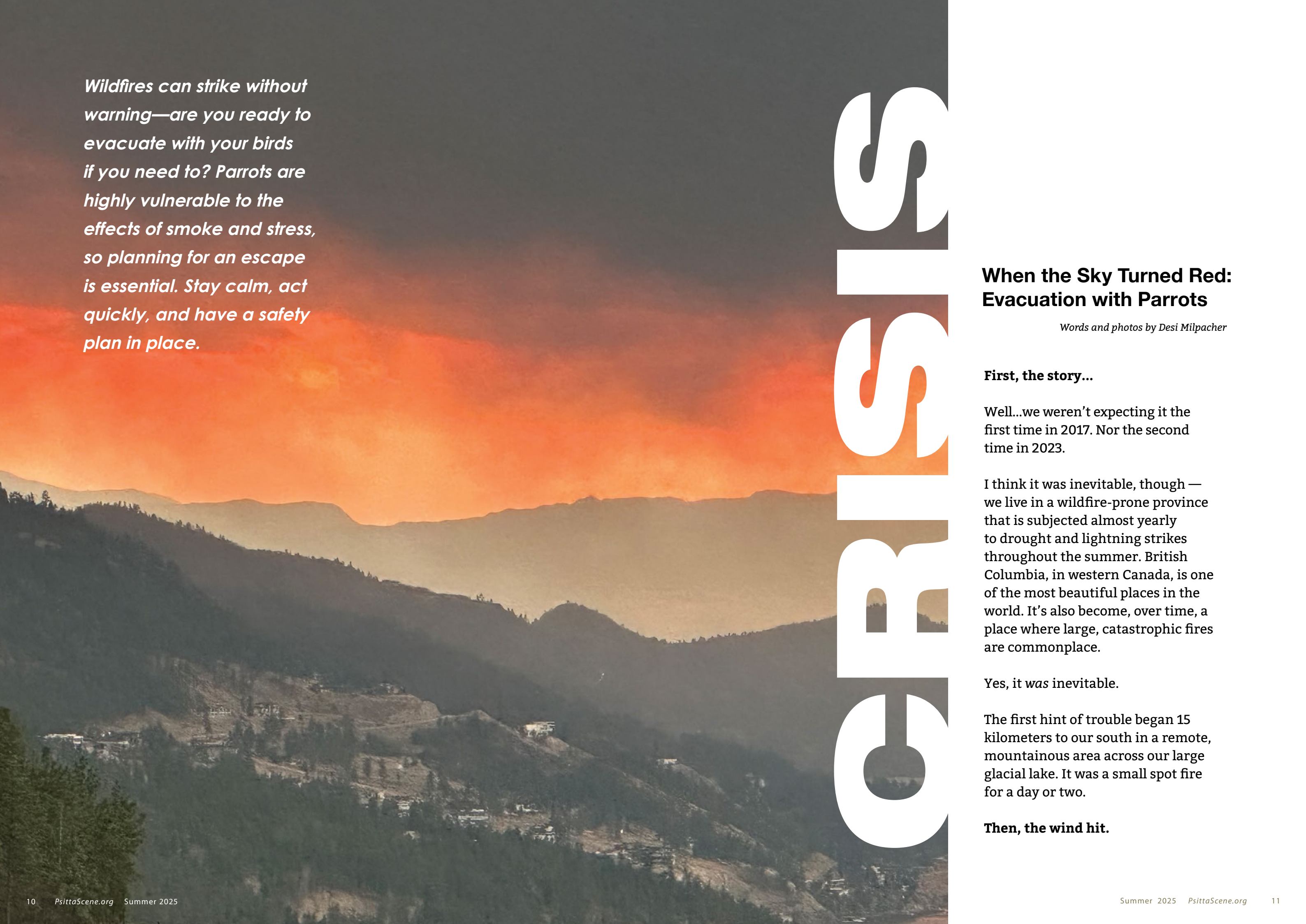
Beginning in 2007, WPT has supported critical work examining the Yellow-naped Amazon's population status, ecology and habitat use, as well as efforts monitoring and protecting nests in Costa Rica, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras and Mexico. Now, an initiative led by local communities is providing hope.

Dr. Noelia Volpe, WPT's Yellow-naped Amazon Coordinator, has begun a pilot program on Roatán, in the Honduran Bay Islands, where field workers install nest boxes on private land to provide safe breeding sites. The boxes give wild parrots a secure place to nest while community members monitor and report activity, allowing Dr. Volpe to track the progress of the parrots. By placing the artificial nests on private land and involving local people in their construction and monitoring, the parrots gain an added layer of protection from poachers. To date, a total of 44 nest boxes were installed this season, with over 80 people expressing interest in the program.

There have already been reports of Yellow-naped Amazons visiting some of the nest boxes, and one pair has been spotted staying near one of them multiple days in a row. Continued efforts to engage other communities on Roatán continue with the hope of more support for next year's breeding season. 📍



Top: Flyers aim to engage government officials and residents in Yellow-naped Amazon conservation efforts, including the launch of the nest box program. **Middle:** WPT staff prepares to install nest boxes. **Bottom:** A newly-installed nest box attracts an interested onlooker.



Wildfires can strike without warning—are you ready to evacuate with your birds if you need to? Parrots are highly vulnerable to the effects of smoke and stress, so planning for an escape is essential. Stay calm, act quickly, and have a safety plan in place.

When the Sky Turned Red: Evacuation with Parrots

Words and photos by Desi Milpacher

First, the story...

Well...we weren't expecting it the first time in 2017. Nor the second time in 2023.

I think it was inevitable, though — we live in a wildfire-prone province that is subjected almost yearly to drought and lightning strikes throughout the summer. British Columbia, in western Canada, is one of the most beautiful places in the world. It's also become, over time, a place where large, catastrophic fires are commonplace.

Yes, it *was* inevitable.

The first hint of trouble began 15 kilometers to our south in a remote, mountainous area across our large glacial lake. It was a small spot fire for a day or two.

Then, the wind hit.

Authorities had planned for it, but in the experience of many who have preceded them and continued since, things got well and truly out of control. It began to rapidly advance north, chewing through the forest and leaping kilometres ahead with pine needles and branches alit. We watched it closely, thankful it was still at a distance. It was late afternoon a day later when it really blew up, and by 3:00AM the next morning we were all awake, watching its progress in fascination mingled with fear. In twelve hours it had burned 10 kilometres due north toward us, and flames had crawled down the hill to meet the shoreline.

We began packing our things.

The next day things took more of a turn. The now-massive fire, which

was creating its own weather, lofted chunks of burning debris across the five-kilometre width of the lake to our side, which began burning with speed. We hurriedly packed things into vehicles. Our companion animals were quietly gathered up and placed in pre-prepared carriers with towels draped over them. These became their small sanctuaries.

By noon we received the official word to go. Six adults (including one who had never experienced an event like this before) one frightened cat and eight confused parrots were all bundled into cars. We stole one last glance at our house and with that, our now-named travelling circus took to the road.

It was the height of tourist season, which is generally nutty, in the

Okanagan. There wasn't a hotel anywhere that could take all of us. Heading north, in a lineup with hundreds of other escaping residents, was our only route out. After a surreal trip we finally ended up in the mountainside town of Revelstoke, just over two hours away under normal circumstances. That day it took more than four. Luckily, there we found a place that could take all of us and our companion animals.

After eight days, two hotels and many sleepless nights, we were given the all-clear to return. We were exceptionally lucky: twice in six years we have had to escape fire and twice we came back to our home, undamaged thanks to the monumental efforts of first responders and a favourable change in the wind. No one was hurt; we were all alive. Many people don't have that

kind of luck. They run for it with the clothes on their backs and return to lost memories. Through this experience we watched our beloved family--feathered, furred and human--weather the experience like champions. I have mad respect for them all.

Now for the practical...

There is a reasonable chance that if you live in forested areas prone to drought and lightning, you will experience a fire evacuation at some point. And the need to escape doesn't apply just to fire; there are plenty of floods, hurricanes and other disasters to run from. **Having to evacuate with companion animals—especially parrots—adds extra complications.** Planning ahead minimises their stress and protects their health.

Hopefully this never happens to you or someone you love. But I hope I have made the process easier by telling our story and sharing our preparation checklists. If it does happen, good luck to all of you. As for us, we'll continue to be prepared during fire season and hug our family just a little tighter. 📖

*ADDITIONAL TIPS:

Know the risks: Understand the types of emergencies that can occur in your area, such as wildfires, floods and severe weather events. Familiarise yourself with them and how they can impact the community.

Make a plan: Develop a comprehensive emergency plan for your household. This includes identifying safe locations, establishing communication methods, and ensuring everyone knows what to do in case of an emergency.

Prepare an emergency kit: Pack essentials such as food, water, medications, and important documents for your people and pets. Ensure your kit is easy to grab in a rush and can sustain your family and companion animals for at least 72 hours.

Check insurance policies: Check your home insurance policy to confirm your coverage. Policies may include shelter and food allowances for residents that are out of their homes during an evacuation.

Subscribe to emergency notifications: Sign up to receive timely emergency notifications in your area (if available) via text, email or phone alert, ensuring you are always aware of the latest developments and safety instructions. Follow your local emergency services on social media for updates.

**Source: Central Okanagan
Emergency Operations Emergency
Preparedness newsletter, May 2025*

Parrot Evacuation & Care Tips

Be prepared. Stay calm. Keep your birds safe.

KEY STEPS:

Stay Alert: Learn when the peak fire/storm season is for your area—plan ahead.

Early Response: At the first sign of a nearby fire, begin preparations—it can spread fast.

Have a Plan: Coordinate with nearby family (if they're not also at risk of evacuation).

Assign Roles: Designate tasks (animal handling, packing, documenting belongings, etc).

Ready Carriers: Keep carriers accessible and practice stress-free loading with birds.

Fuel Readiness: Keep vehicle gas tanks full in case of long-distance travel.

Accommodation Planning: Identify pet-friendly hotels, ideally with food storage options.

Know Your Exits: Map out multiple escape routes in anticipation of road closures.

GATHER SUPPLIES:

Food & Water: Bottled water; Dry & fresh foods (pellets, seeds and nuts, favourite treats, whole fruits/veggies).

Safety: Portable (non-ionizing) air purifier; terry towels to cover carriers during transport (smoke protection and comfort) and handling (if necessary).

Comfort: Favourite toys; Non-tip food & water bowls.

Health: Medications/supplements, veterinary contact information; Avian First Aid Kit (see "Preparing for Avian Emergencies" on parrots.org).

Carriers: One per bird (plus extra to swap out during cleaning); absorbent substrate.

Sanitation: Bird-safe disinfectant; paper towels; tarps/sheets for hotel floors, broom/dustpan, garbage bags.

Cash: In case card machines are down.



DURING THE DRIVE:

- Speak calmly and normally—your voice reassures them.
- If smoke is present, keep vents closed.
- Keep temperature stable.
- Ensure water is available.



ONCE YOU ARRIVE:

- Settle birds in a quiet area to rest.
- If necessary, seal windows and doors against smoke using towels; run air purifiers.
- Offer food, water, and interaction for reassurance.
- Watch for signs of stress: rapid breathing, withdrawal, agitation, unusual vocalising, feather plucking, appetite loss, etc. *Stress and smoke exposure can cause dehydration.*
- Keep strangers away from the birds to minimise stress.
- Keep your veterinarian's number handy for advice.





2025 FlyFree Training Workshop: A Fellowship of Conservationists

In 2009, in response to an urgent need for action, the World Parrot Trust launched the *FlyFree* initiative to highlight and challenge illegal trafficking.

Since then the WPT, through *FlyFree*, supports frontline workers rescuing confiscated birds, providing emergency care, and helping healthy individuals return to the wild. After decades of dedicated effort by partners, individuals and NGOs to curb illegal trade, there have been positive and tangible results.

Fast forward to 2025: the FlyFree Workshop, which ran May 12-16 at Macaw Mountain Bird Park and Nature Reserve in Honduras, was specially designed for parrot conservation workers that are directly involved in the various stages of confiscation, rescue, rehabilitation, release and post-release population management. The goal was to strengthen the regional response to trafficking by improving rescue, rehabilitation and release efforts, and to foster long-term collaboration.

This immersive workshop combined in-depth lectures with hands-on practical training sessions at a working bird conservation centre, concluding with guided tours that explored the release sites and nesting areas in the nearby ancient Mayan ruins, home to a growing population of reintroduced Scarlet Macaws. The workshop was structured to

encourage both the sharing of practical experience and the building of a robust network, ensuring that everyone benefitted from the collective expertise of the group. Each day focused on a key theme, from how to respond to confiscations and manage disease risk to how to rehabilitate parrots and assess when they're ready for release. The sessions were grounded in real-world case studies and decades of collective experience.

Practical sessions allowed the participants to get hands-on experience in four rotating classes: Emergency Feeding Techniques (preparing critical care diets and administering feeds using best-care practices), Aviary Assessment (evaluating and improving enclosure conditions), Marking Birds for Post-release Identification, Feather Imping (demonstration and practice of

feather repair technique), and Release Suitability Assessments (hands-on evaluation of candidate birds for release, including criteria, protocols and common field challenges). In addition, there were hands-on demonstrations of tree climbing techniques, guided tours of ancient Mayan ruins that form the heart of the reintroduced birds population and an active breeding area and a walk-through/discussion session of the release aviary at Macaw Mountain.

Classes were led by WPT's Jack Haines (Neotropics Regional Manager), Dr. Marcela Franco Ochoa (Husbandry Specialist), and Dr. Noelia Volpe (Yellow-naped Amazon Coordinator), with special guest presenters from Aruba Conservation Foundation (ACF), ASM Cambaquara, and Pro-ALAS, who delved into case studies of their own projects and experiences with the FlyFree process.

Thirty-six conservationists and field workers took part, representing efforts to protect 37 parrot species including rare and endangered macaws, Amazons, and parakeets, reflecting the extraordinary diversity of parrots in Latin America and highlighting the scope of illegal trade. For the participants, it was an intensive week of learning, skill-sharing, and forging new collaborations - essential steps in scaling up the rescue and recovery of parrots across the region.

This workshop is part of FlyFree's broader mission: not just to rescue individual birds, but to rebuild wild populations and put an end to the trafficking that threatens parrots everywhere. 📍

Right, top: A workshop participant learns to climb.
Right, middle: WPT staff and others present training lectures.
Right, bottom: Attendees take part in a practical demonstration.



Macaw Mountain



WORLD PARROT TRUST



FROM DROPPINGS COMES DATA

HARNESSING GUT MICROBIOMES TO COMBAT THE ILLEGAL PARROT TRADE

by Steven Janssen, DVM, WPT Wild Parrot Rescue Coordinator and Rowan Martin, PhD, WPT Director for Africa and Bird Trade Programmes

In a pioneering project, the World Parrot Trust has been working with partners to develop novel tools for fighting wildlife trafficking. The effort saw its beginnings in western Nigeria in an oil palm plantation near Okomu National Park, one of the largest remaining tracts of rainforest in Nigeria. The project has just received a major boost with financial backing from the European Union.

As the sun set and the cacophony of hundreds of Grey Parrots died away, we silently moved into action. Working with dimmed head torches we made our way to the base of the tree laden with parrots and carefully spread out a sterile plastic sheet over the ground. Once safely secured, we retreated to our tents to wait for the morning.

After what seemed like only a few minutes, our alarms jolted us awake and we watched from a distance as the parrots headed out to forage in the rainforest of the nearby Okomu National Park. Around us a low mist was rising. The low-angle sun gave a golden and eerie glow to the oil palms across the plantation. We set to work, donning sterile gloves, carefully scooping parrot faeces into small plastic vials.

We did our best to explain to bemused plantation workers how these samples could pave the way for game-changing new technology in the fight to tackle the illegal and unsustainable trade in parrots.

In 2019, the World Parrot Trust initiated a collaboration with scientists at the University of Colorado, Boulder, on a project to explore the potential for using gut microbiomes to distinguish Grey Parrots taken from the wild from those bred in captivity. Rapidly advancing genomic sequencing technology has opened the door to analyse gut microbiomes (the bacteria, viruses, parasites and other things that live in our intestinal tract) and it has become apparent that our diets, the environments in which we live, and our physical condition all have a major influence on our microbiomes.

“The analyses conducted to date show dramatically different microbiome signatures, indicating that the technique can determine if parrots were reared in the wild or in captivity.

Research has shown that by “profiling” gut microbiomes we can tell a lot about a person, and in theory we could also tell a lot about parrots.

Since the transfer of Grey Parrots to Appendix I of CITES, which saw the end in the legal trade of wild Grey Parrots for commercial purposes, over 200 “commercial breeding operations” have been registered with CITES to supply birds for export. Breeding farms set up to supply birds to domestic markets (which do not need to register with CITES) have also proliferated in a number of countries.

The scale of this trade has created major challenges for regulators and enforcement agencies both in exporting and importing countries due to the “laundering” of parrots taken from the wild. Wild parrots are cheaper to obtain and often preferred as breeding stock on farms. Effectively these “legal supply chains” have created opportunities for traffickers to legalise parrots taken from the wild. It is a problem that is difficult to control due to the complexity of international criminal networks and the often-limited capacity to perform checks on export locations. These checks require resources and expertise.

The research project, led by Associate Professor Valerie McKenzie, set out to compare the gut microbiomes of wild Grey Parrots, collected from beneath roost sites and via parrots seized from traffickers, against those reared in commercial breeding facilities in South Africa – the largest exporter of captive-bred Grey Parrots. The innovative technique is based on DNA extraction followed by marker gene sequencing. The analyses conducted to date show dramatically different microbiome signatures, indicating that the technique

can determine if parrots were reared in the wild or in captivity. In contrast to other forensic tools, the collection of faecal samples can be done non-invasively, without the need for handling animals. In many countries, faecal samples do not require CITES permits, which can expedite their movement to forensic labs.

In 2025, WPT received funding from the EcoSolve Project of the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organised Crime, as part of a major initiative funded by the European Union’s Global Illicit Flows Programme, to adapt the lab technique for real-world situations. The project collaborates with government partners, NGOs, and private businesses in Iraq, the UAE, and South Africa. Iraq and the UAE are two of the largest importing countries of captive-bred Grey Parrots, while South Africa is the largest exporter.

Over the course of the project, we will work together to develop protocols for the collection, storage and analysis of samples,

and a transparent chain of custody that will ensure samples can serve as forensic evidence. Importantly, inspectors, law enforcement agents and lab technicians will receive training in how to apply the new tool. During the project, samples will be collected at strategic locations along legal supply chains that reflect the current trade routes (breeding and quarantine facilities, import and export airports, marketplaces, pet shops and other points of sale), shining a light on the extent of trade in wild parrots at key locations.

There is satisfaction in knowing the parrots at one of the few sites in West Africa where Grey Parrots still come together in their hundreds are helping secure a future free from trapping, not just for them, but for all parrots. Indeed, there is huge potential for the technique to be applied to trade in other live animals.

Their droppings might not “just” save a species; they could change the game for all animals threatened by illegal wildlife trade. ■

The team with their overnight tents near the roost.



Glossy Black Cockatoos could veer closer to extinction in Victoria if burns go ahead

Australian conservationists and ecologists are concerned that if the Victorian government conducts prescribed burns of 13,000 hectares of black she-oak forest, vulnerable Glossy Black Cockatoos could be pushed further into extinction. Glossy Black Cockatoos feed almost exclusively on the cones of black she-oak trees. When nearly two-thirds of their habitat in Victoria was lost in the 2019-20 Black Summer bushfires, the species became almost entirely dependent on 48,000 hectares of coastal forest 350km east of Melbourne. Research published in Australian Field Ornithology estimated that the cockatoos' Victorian population had declined by three-quarters. The Victorian government is being urged to abandon the burn, which is intended to reduce future bushfires.

Read the article:
tinyurl.com/3bjx7hkr

Belize Bird Rescue's Nikki Buxton honoured by HM King Charles III

Since 2004, WPT partner Belize Bird Rescue has worked with local communities to lessen the impact of bird trapping and human-wildlife conflicts in Belize with careful consideration of cultural practices and sensitivities.

Very quickly the facility became the country's only multi-species avian rescue centre, with a focus on parrots rescued from illegal trade.

Nikki Buxton, the centre's stalwart leader since the beginning, recently received from HM The King in his 2025 Birthday Honours an MBE (Member of the British Empire) for "Services to Conservation, Education and Preservation of Bird Life in Belize." She said, "I am honoured and deeply grateful the work of Belize Bird Rescue has been recognised in such a personal way. Thank you so much to the person who nominated me for this award and for those who provided the references." Buxton was also recently awarded an International Fund for Animal Welfare Animal Action Award in 2023.



Glossy Black Cockatoo
© Corey Raffel

What will be your legacy?

Let your dedication to parrots live on! Leaving a legacy gift to the parrots through your estate may be one of the most fulfilling contributions you will ever make.

Visit our website at parrots.org/legacy or contact an office near you (see page 19.)

Leave a Legacy

Book Review: KoTo

KoTo is a Timneh Parrot that, like so many others of his kind, is captured for the wild bird trade. It is a tragically familiar story, but it has a surprising ending.

This gentle, beautifully illustrated tale is at once heart-wrenching and hopeful. KoTo is a determined, barely-fledged chick that is taken from his family tree and transported away to an unknown place. He endures loneliness and fear but his memories of his family sustain him. In the second chapter of the book, we learn about the lives of wild Timneh Parrots and the challenges they face. A highly recommended volume for young and old alike.

Find the book on Amazon:
tinyurl.com/kotobook



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PARROTS IN THE WILD:

Scaly-headed Parrot

(*Pionus maximiliani*)

As green as its surroundings, the Scaly-headed Parrot is seen up to 2000 metres in lowland dry forest, dry caatinga and seasonal cerrado savannas. This parrot is also found in more humid gallery woodland and subtropical forests.

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