



Rufous-fronted Parakeets Back on the Rocks

by David Waugh
Loro Parque Fundación



The Rufous-fronted Parakeet (*Bolborhynchus ferrugineifrons*) is a threatened species endemic to the central Andes of Colombia, inhabiting open habitats mainly above 3,200 m elevation. Although it is reported to roost and nest in cliffs, in 2007 Fundación ProAves biologists in a project supported by the Loro Parque Fundación discovered the first ever nest in epiphytic moss in a tree.

However, in February 2008, Colombian biologist David Bejarano-Bonilla reported another first. He found a nesting colony of about 200 Rufous-fronted Parakeets in a rock-face, some 1,200 m long and 100 m high, located in the buffer zone of Los Nevados National Park at 3,550 m elevation. He scaled the rock-face, but at the time did not find evidence of breeding, although he will continue to monitor the site as part of his studies as a postgraduate student at the School of Biological Sciences, University of Plymouth, UK.

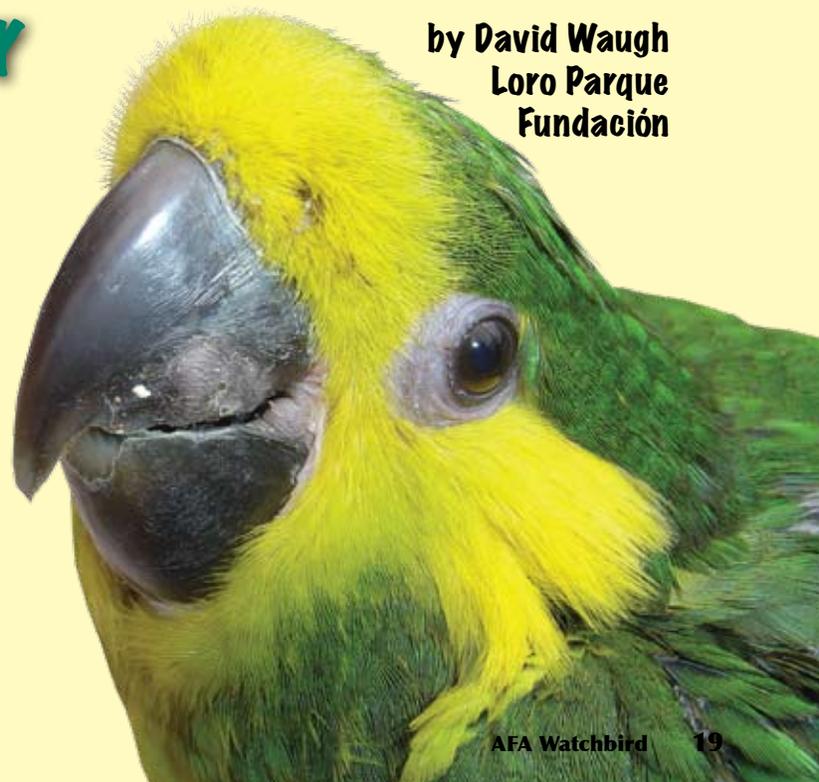
Photos by David Bejarano-Bonilla: (top) Scaling the rock-face. (middle) The Rufous-fronted Parakeet. (bottom) View of the entire rock-face where the Rufous-fronted Parakeets occur.

The Yellow-eared Parrot Reaches A Record Number

by David Waugh
Loro Parque Fundación



The critically endangered Yellow-eared Parrot (*Ognorhynchus icterotis*) disappeared from Ecuador in the mid-1990's, and in 1999 only 81 could be found in Colombia. Since then, the Loro Parque Fundación has supported Colombian NGO Fundación ProAves to bring this species back from the brink of extinction. The project has had great success, reinforced in 2007 with 60 nests producing 132 successfully fledged juveniles, the most ever. This excellent production has raised the global population to a minimum of 724 birds, and ProAves believes it may exceed 850. Although still confined to the central Andes of Colombia, the ProAves team registered two new areas visited by the species, as well as a new roost site, all indicative of an expanding population. The increase is partly due to an increased number of cavities in dead Wax Palms, the tree essential in the ecology of the parrot, but also due to the multiple conservation efforts of the project with local people. These include a nationwide awareness campaign, the negotiation of private protected areas, and the production of 14,155 seedlings for re-forestation of neglected land.



Photos courtesy of Fundación ProAves/LPF: (right) One of the 132 juvenile Yellow-eared parrots fledged in 2007. (left) Wax Palm forest.