

The Loro Parque Foundation

by John Stoodley, U.K.

The Loro Parque Foundation has been fortunate enough to engage Dr. David Waugh as its scientific Director. Many will recall that Waugh was for 12 years Education Officer at Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust and he has also carried out field work in many areas. Such experience will be invaluable in enabling the Foundation to spend its funds shrewdly in the field of conservation.

On a recent visit to Loro Parque, I met the people responsible for its day to day operation. Roger Sweeney, then Curator, is well known for his informative writings, and the birds at Loro Parque have achieved remarkable success in the short time he has been in charge. Sweeney, who worked in the United Kingdom before going to the Philippines to gain experience, escorted me through the impressive off-exhibit breeding facility. The whole layout is clearly designed to give the occupants confidence. The wire enclosures have good height to them to avoid any dominance by the keepers. They also contain a planted screen of palms between the units which gives privacy to each pair of birds. The servicing walkways are wide giving a real feeling of space. High above the vast expanse is a secured netting which excludes unwanted birds from entering. It also cuts down on wind penetration and provides tranquillity.

Feeding the units is easily carried out and there is a sprinkler enabling the inhabitants to bathe. Stainless steel feeding bowls reflect the high standard of cleanliness.

Natural wood for perches is unavailable in Tenerife as many forest fires have resulted in restrictions on wood gathering. Because of this, imported sawed wood is used.

Having visited parrot collections on several continents and having made my first visit to Loro Parque in 1984, I am in no doubt that in their pursuit of excellence, they are very successful. The beautiful climate in Tenerife must make it the envy of all bird keepers. There is sunshine most days and seldom a frost—what could be better?



Photo by John Stoodley

Note the wide walkways at the off-exhibit breeding center at Loro Parque.

There is a resident staff of veterinarians who have up to date equipment. Visiting consultants include a respected long time friend of mine, Susan Clubb, D.V.M., from the United States who, together with her husband Kevin, specializes in psittacines (of which they have a large collection). Dr. Clubb visits three times a year. Andrew Greenwood, M.A., Vet. M.B., M.R.C.V.S., another exotic animal consultant, visits several times a year. Greenwood is part of the International Zoo Veterinary Group and has many creatures (mammals and fish) as well as parrots to care

for. Another wonderful member of their medical staff is Helga Gerlach, DR MED VET HABIL. She is a faculty member of the Institute of Avian Diseases, at the Sudwig-Maximilians University, Munich, Germany.

This large avian collection has the very best professionals to monitor the health and well being of the birds. It was refreshing to see nest boxes being removed after the breeding season for repairs and sterilization by the flame of a blow torch.

Whilst I was visiting the breeding unit, a member of the Canary Islands

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(L-R) Miguel Caseres, Frank Enders, staff veterinarians, Susan Clubb, consulting veterinarian from the United States and vet assistant, Ute Porilne.



Roger Sweeney, Curator and Dr. David Waugh, Scientific Director (with the wild beard).

Director of Soivre (the Spanish branch of CITES) was in attendance to witness and log the banding of young parrots being carried out by Pedro, Roger Sweeney's assistant. The enclosed census is strictly adhered to and even in late October 1995, nestlings were still being monitored. I was impressed that 90% of the parrots were being parent raised. Sweeney is well aware of the importance of parent reared stock as he has expressed how erratic imprinted stock can be.

The pairing of parrots is given great attention, several birds are released into a large enclosure approximately 46 ft. long, 12 ft. wide and 16 ft. high. Small units have been constructed inside this spacious aviary and once two birds have paired off and claim a unit, they can be removed to their separate breeding unit. This way, the ideal self-selection has been achieved.

Close by, a truly giant aviary with impressive clear span roof trusses is provided for young macaws to fly in large flocks. This unit will surely develop young macaws in mind and body.

The following table represents a partial list of birds reproduced at Loro Parque during the 1995 breeding sea-

son, of which most have been parent raised. Under the management of Roger Sweeney, these figures have more than doubled the 1994 production numbers. The final 1995 totals were very near the 800 mark.

Partial List of Birds Raised at Loro Parque in 1995

Number	Type of Parents
• 52	20 types of lorries/lorikeets
• 41	8 types of cockatoos.
• 07	3 types of Eclectus.
• 11	2 types of <i>Tanygnathus</i> .
• 03	2 types of fig parrots.
• 42	10 types of Australian & New Zealand parrots.
• 16	4 types of <i>Psittacula</i> .
• 4	Philippine Hanging Parrot
• 29	5 types of lovebirds.
• 11	2 types Vassa Parrots.
• 38	7 types of <i>Poicephala</i> .
• 76	11 types of macaws
• 88	12 <i>Aratinga</i> & larger conures.
• 150	10 types <i>Pyrrhura</i> .
• 09	2 types Caiques.
• 25	1 <i>Forpus</i> & 3 <i>Brotogeris</i> .
• 12	4 types of Pionus.
• 76	18 types of <i>Amazona</i> .
• 01	<i>Triclaria</i> (Singing Parrot).

International Action for Parrots by the Loro Parque Fundacion

by David R. Waugh, Ph.D.,
Scientific Director
Loro Parque, Tenerife, Canary Islands

The Loro Parque Fundación (LPF) is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation legally registered with the Ministry of Education and Science of the Government of Spain since 1994. Based at Loro Parque, Tenerife, Canary Islands, which accommodates the world's largest and most diverse parrot collection, it operates on an international basis to promote conservation of parrots, the environment and sustainable development. As a member of the IUCN, the World Conservation Union, the LPF adheres to consensus guidelines for the best conservation outcomes for combined *in-situ* / *ex-situ* programmes. The LPF has inherited the support provided to some long-term conservation programmes from that given previously by Loro Parque, particularly in the period 1987 to 1994. Recent review of these programmes now enables the LPF to focus on high priority conservation and welfare needs for parrots, in accordance with what are accepted as priority issues by the broader conservation community.

Objectives and Operations

Community-based Conservation:

The LPF approach to conservation has the intention to integrate the needs of people and parrots, by encouraging local community initiatives which bring permanent benefits through wise use of the local environment. The LPF focuses on parrots, for several very good reasons. Parrots are good indicators of the health of the environment in which they and often needy rural people live. Furthermore, because they are generally very charismatic birds, parrots can be very effective as "flagships" to attract more assistance to projects



which integrate natural and human rural communities with environmental safeguards and economic improvements.

Education Programmes: An essential part of the process to empower people to care for the environment is to inform them of the benefits that will result. Using parrots as environmental emblems, the LPF directly supports grass-roots, community education programmes in countries where parrots occur. It also strongly assists with the continuous development of the education programmes based at Loro Parque, which use the animal collection as an educational resource.

Field Projects: Also based in the countries where parrots occur, the LPF finances comprehensive field projects which produce the information for conservation management and for local communities to use for improved land and natural resource use. Ecological studies, parrot population monitoring, reintroduction, protection measures and defining habitats for preservation and extractive uses are all essential components of these projects.

Captive Projects: In cases where parrot species have become seriously depleted in the wild state, the LPF organises and participates in coordinated programmes to establish and maintain sufficient populations in captivity as a safeguard against their extinction. Meanwhile it works to help recover them in the wild state. Furthermore it promotes and implements all sensible measures which, by informed consensus, will materially improve the welfare of parrots in captivity. It fully endorses the concept of responsible aviculture and of continuing education for people keeping parrots as pets and companions.

Training and Research: Using the parrot collection at Loro Parque as a valuable resource, the LPF provides excellent opportunities for dedicated people from around the world to gain very effective experience in parrot care and conservation, as well as for researchers to make discoveries which will assist this process.

Dissemination of Information: It is essential to inform the widest

possible audience about the conservation needs of parrots and how local people can be the best custodians of them and their environment. Thus, the LPF has an informed membership, produces a quarterly publication called *Cyanopsitta*, publishes popular and scientific articles, and every four years organises and hosts International Parrot Conventions which constitute an excellent global forum to discuss all issues affecting parrots and their habitats.

Project Illustrations

Spix's Macaw: The LPF is principal financial supporter of the recovery effort for the critically threatened Spix's Macaw *Cyanopsitta spixii*, endemic to the dry northeast region of Brazil where only one wild male exists and where a female was recently reintroduced to the wild. This project encompasses habitat protection, local community involvement and education as well as the exacting process of re-establishment of birds to the wild. From a low of only 11

birds in captivity in 1988 there are now 37 (75 percent captive bred) registered in the International Studbook, and this encouraging increase in the total world population has occurred under the close management of the reports the Permanent (International) Committee for the Recovery of the Spix's Macaw (CPRAA), of which the LPF is a founder member in collaboration with the Brazilian Government wildlife authority, IBAMA. In addition to the Brazilian Government, the Committee includes representatives from Brazilian and international aviculture, and the zoological and scientific communities. Grass-roots support of the local community in Curaçá has firmly establishing the Spix's Macaw as the unique emblem of the region.

Management of the single global population is facilitated through the acknowledgement and endorsement of the CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species) Secretariat and Authorities, and includes captive birds in Brazil and other countries. The field effort

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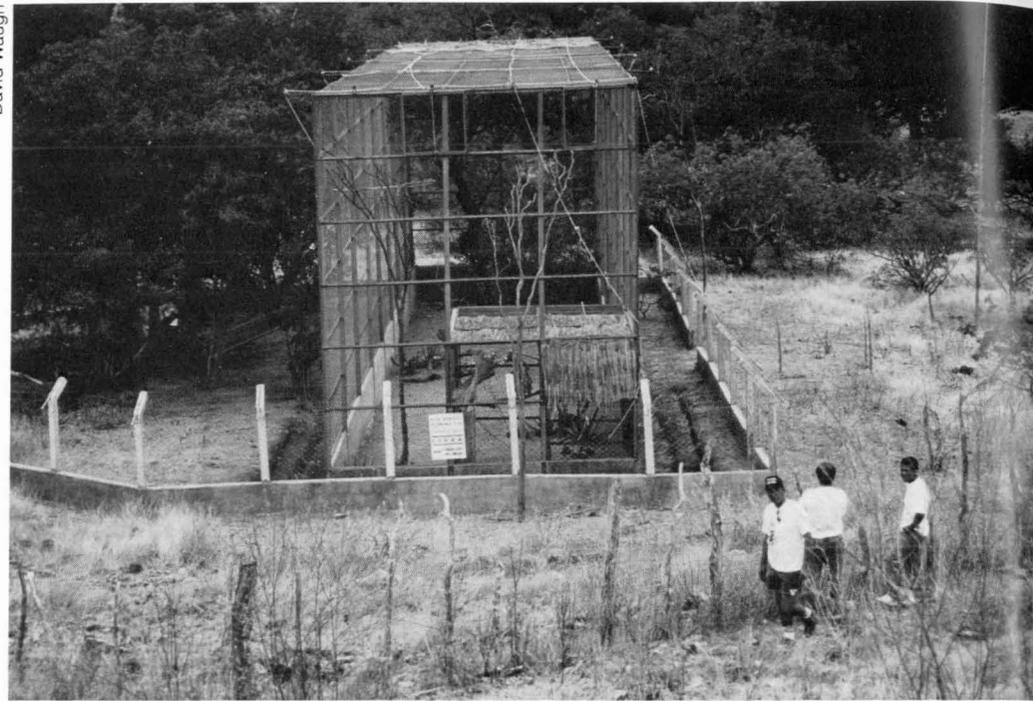
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since 1990 has involved research and conservation management, including identifying the wild bird as a male, monitoring and protection of him and the released female plus habitat assessment protection and management in partnership with community-based efforts. Reintroduction of the female from captivity has been just one step in the recovery programme for the Spix's Macaw, and was implemented as one way to try to realise the breeding potential of the wild male and utilise his experience of free-living. For the same end, further techniques are soon to be implemented within this project to help bring the Spix's Macaw back from the brink.

Halmahera, Indonesia: This island in the North Moluccas contains no less than nine species of parrot some of which, like the White Cockatoo *Cacatua alba* and Chattering Lory *Lorius garrulus*, are globally threatened. The LPF has funded a comprehensive species and habitat survey, implemented by Birdlife International and the Indonesian Directorate General of Forest Conservation and Nature Protection. By careful attention to the scarcity of some species in forest found on ultra-basic substrate, and



In-situ acclimatisation and release aviary for Spix's Macaw in northeast Brazil.

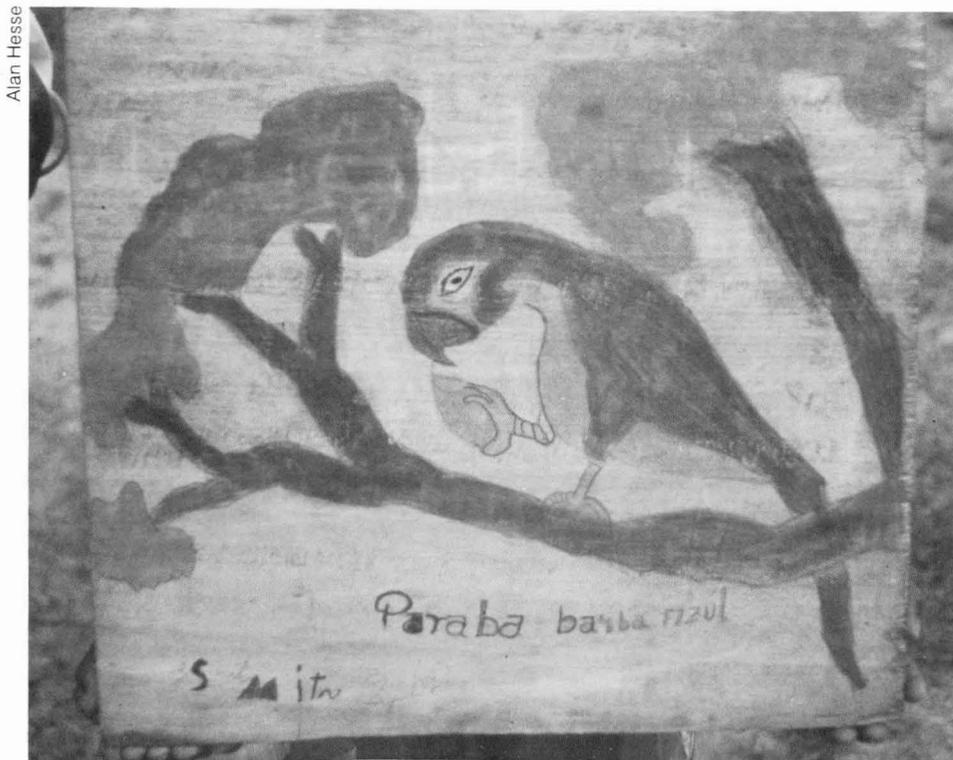
the decline in bird densities above 700m altitude, preliminary results form a strong case for the gazettement of 350,000ha of prime habitat as a new national park.

PDD Research: Proventricular Dilatation Disease (PDD) poses a serious threat to aviculture and the management of threatened parrot species in the wild. Currently there is

no known way of combatting this disease and it is extending to become a global problem. The disease has now been recognised as infectious, probably with a viral causative agent, and no birds with confirmed PDD have survived. In the order Psittaciformes alone, PDD has been reported in more than 50 species, including cockatoos, lovebirds, conures, amazons, macaws and parakeets. The LPF is thus providing major collaborative funding, with the International Avian Research Fund, Inc., of the Psittacine Disease Research Group (PDRG) at the University of Georgia, USA.

The PDRG has deservedly acquired an excellent reputation for its research into psittacine diseases. Due to its previous work, Psittacine Beak and Feather Disease (Pbfd) can now be prevented by use of a diagnostic test and polyomavirus, a major cause of death in young parrots, can be prevented with an effective and safe vaccine. The LPF provides this support with the conviction that it will help in the conservation of parrots and in all sectors of aviculture.

Dominican Parrots: The threatened Imperial Parrot *Amazona imperialis* and Red-necked Parrot *A. araucariaca* are principal beneficiaries of continuing LPF support for ecological studies which form the basis of a sus-



Painting of the Blue-throated Macaw by local school child in Beni, Bolivia.

tainable forest and agriculture management scheme, land purchase for forest protection, and development of national park infrastructure including boundary definition, trails and tourist and educational facilities. This has been achieved through support to the Dominica Multiple Land Use Project run by Dr. Peter Evans of Oxford University, and to the Forestry and Wildlife Division of the Government of Dominica.

Blue-throated Macaw: The Bolivian NGO, Armonía, receives funding from the Loro Parque Fundación to census the population of the highly threatened *Ara glaucogularis*, and to develop conservation management measures involving local people. The latest reports from Armonía indicate an alarming situation where there could be fewer than 100 individuals of this species remaining in the wild state, whilst habitat destruction continues and illegal removal of young birds from the nests is a persistent threat. With continuing support from the LPF, Armonía will increase its positive working relations with local landowners to curb habitat loss and to improve protective measures. At the same time it will further develop its educational programme for the local people of the Beni, the native region of this enigmatic species.

Red-tailed Parrot: *Amazona brasiliensis* is a species endemic to the coast of Southeast Brazil, also suffering from heavy nest-poaching and even the capture of adult birds. The LPF is continuing to finance work to combat this problem in Paraná State, through Pedro Scherer Neto of the State Natural History Museum. This work includes regular monitoring of the population (about 3,500 birds in total), increased opportunities to hinder the activities of illegal removal of the birds and nest-tree destruction, and expansion of the educational programme which can target local people as well as tourist visitors to the area.

Rusty-faced Parrot: This parrot, *Hapalopsittaca amazonina*, is little-known but sufficient evidence exists to include it in the IUCN category of endangered. For this reason the LPF, jointly with Fonds Für Bedrohte

Papageien, is funding important surveys and fact-finding investigations in the Venezuelan Andes by Provita, and NGO of the same country.

Loro Parque Fundación Income

Income to the LPF comes from a variety of sources, and more funds are always needed to ensure that we can achieve the best possible results in a world of change that threatens so much wildlife. Financial sponsorship from major corporations operating in Spain and the Canary Islands provides a considerable proportion of the annual income. To add to this are the funds derived from subscription payments by the dedicated membership of the LPF, as well as sales of a range of promotional goods distinct to the LPF. The importance of Loro Parque as a constant supporter must be highlighted. Loro Parque provides all operating facilities to the LPF *gratis*, as well as all or a percentage of income derived from some of the attractions available in the park. Furthermore, Loro Parque has donated the entire parrot collection, some 2,500 birds, to the LPF which is a further means to secure income for direct *in-situ* conservation projects. The LPF and Loro Parque carefully monitor sales of surplus birds to ensure that direct use of the funds for *in-situ* conservation remains compatible with cooperative breeding programme agreements and the welfare of all birds.

Conclusion

The LPF is moving ahead to make an effective contribution to the conservation of parrots in the wild state, and to ensure that the role of responsible aviculture in this regard can be enhanced. This advance on the part of the LPF is to always put the interests of the parrots first, and thus increase the chance that no species will disappear from planet Earth before its natural time.

For More Information: Please contact: About membership, donations, promotions –The Director, About projects, research, training, education –The Scientific Director, at Loro Parque Fundación, 38400 Puerto de la Cruz, Tenerife, Canary Islands, Spain. Tel: +34 22 374081; Fax: +34 22 375021 ➔

Book Review ...

Kingfishers and Related Birds

by Rae V. Anderson,
Sierra Madre, CA

Kingfishers and Related Birds is a truly monumental ornithological and art work due not only to its complete and highly informative scientific text and superb illustrations but also its exceptional presentation.

This three part, six volume work has presently been issued only as a limited edition of 1,000 copies for worldwide distribution. Its price is high. This situation is expected to change within the next few years, however, with the publication of a trade edition. The reformatting for the trade edition has already been largely completed by Mr. Forshaw.

The author of this sumptuous work is the world renowned ornithologist Joseph M. Forshaw. The illustrator is internationally acclaimed natural history artist William T. Cooper. Mr. Cooper is acknowledged as one of the world's leading painters of birds.

Work on this enormous project was commenced in 1978. The first volume was published in 1983 with the announced expectation of one volume per year thereafter to completion. Due to normal publication delays the project actually required 12 years, the final volumes 5 and 6 being published in