

from trapping to supply both the domestic and international cage-bird trade. In response to these issues, from 1994 to 1999 the then BirdLife International Indonesia Programme collaborated with the Indonesian Directorate General of Nature Protection and Conservation in a project, also financially supported by the LPF, to identify priority areas for parrot and biodiversity conservation on Halmahera. This led directly to the declaration of Aketajawe-Lolobata National Park in 2004.

However, Aketajawe-Lolobata NP has remained a “paper park,” with very weak management capacity and few management resources, and therefore illegal logging and bird trapping have continued. The current project aims to set up an effectively managed protected area that will secure the long-term future for White Cockatoo, Chattering Lory and the other threatened and endemic biodiversity and ecosystems of Halmahera.

This first period of the project has been important for Burung Indonesia to establish communications and collaboration with the Aketajawe-Lolobata National Park Office and the Ternate Natural Resources Conservation Division (local

district), especially to monitor the current wildlife trade in North Maluku. Field observations and additional data collection have identified parrot trapping and trading locations in North Maluku, as well as the points of exit for the parrot trade. This is happening despite that the authorities have issued no domestic or export trade quotas for parrot species in North Maluku between 1999 and 2008.

Monitoring conducted by the North Maluku Nature Conservation Foundation on the trapping and trade of White Cockatoos between 2002 and 2004 showed fewer individuals of this species were being trapped in the wild each year.

The monitoring will continue, as will raising public awareness and support, but current emphasis has been to determine training priorities and provide training for staff members from the Aketajawe-Lolobata NP Office, the Ternate Natural Resources Conservation Division and related partners in North Maluku. This contributes to the goal of building capacity for effective protected area management, and ultimately to help the parrots.

*David Waugh,
Loro Parque Fundación*

Asociación Armonía

First protected area established for critically endangered Blue-throated Macaw

The Bolivian conservation organization Asociación Armonía, with the support of American Bird Conservancy and World Land Trust-US, has created the world's first protected area, to be named the Barba Azul Nature Reserve, for the Blue-throated Macaw, a critically endangered species with a population estimated at just 300 birds. The group purchased an 8,785 acre ranch in the grasslands of eastern Bolivia, a site with 20 Blue-throated Macaws during the breeding season.

“This is a huge conservation achievement,” noted George Fenwick, President of American Bird Conservancy. “The main threats to the Blue-throated Macaw are capture for the pet trade and habitat destruction for cattle ranching, and, until now, the species’ habitat was completely unprotected.”

The Blue-throated Macaw is endemic to savannas in the Beni province of Bolivia, and depends on motucu palms for nesting. These palms occur in palm “islands” embedded in the extensive seasonally-flooded grasslands. The entire known population of the species exists on private ranches which undergo yearly burning and heavy grazing by cattle.

“In the face of this development pressure, there is an urgent need to expand the new reserve to conserve a viable population of this spectacular macaw and the many other vulnerable species within it,” said Byron Swift, Executive Director of World Land Trust-US.

The Barba Azul Nature Reserve also protects excellent Beni savanna habitat with good populations of vulnerable species, such as the Sharp-tailed Tyrant, Cock-tailed Tyrant, and Black-masked Finch. Healthy populations of the Near Threatened Greater Rhea and Orinoco Goose are common in the area.

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Research in the area of the new reserve found the highest known density of the Blue-throated Macaw with a roosting site in the dry season holding 70 individuals and 20 during the rainy season. The birds inhabit a remote area with poor access, and the large group roosts in the forest islands. Armonía/Loro Parque Fundación have identified a further five ranches for sale that are at risk of being developed and that are essential for the expansion of the new private reserve, to protect 41% of the of the known Blue-throated Macaw population.

“This work builds on the Armonía/Loro Parque Fundación Blue-throated Macaw Conservation Program which has supported both research on the macaw and public outreach, including a pride campaign to build awareness of the macaw and support its conservation,” said Bennett Hennessey, Executive Director of Armonía. “Raising public awareness to



Raising public awareness to build local support for the macaw is our most potent tool.

build local support for the macaw is our most potent tool to halt the illegal taking of these rare birds for the pet trade.”

Armonía is planning the development

of a research station and ecotourism facility with access by airplane at the site to help support the project, and through Bird Endowment and Loro Parque Fundación

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Barba Azul Nature Reserve.

support, the organization has also been experimenting with nest boxes for the birds. The macaws are taking to them readily and this provides an exciting opportunity to boost macaw breeding success while habitat restoration is underway. It should also be possible to expand macaw habitat by creating new tree islands. Removing grazing pressure will improve habitat within existing tree islands and improve conditions for other savanna species. Similarly, controlling fire will enhance habitat for all grassland species and prevent degradation of the tree islands.



Blue-throated macaw in flight photo by Joe Tobias.

American Bird Conservancy, www.abcbirds.org, is the only organization that

works solely to conserve native wild birds and their habitats throughout the Americas.

ABC is consistently awarded a top, four-star rating by the independent group, Charity Navigator.

Asociación Armonía, www.armonia-bo.org, is a Bolivian nonprofit organization dedicated to the conservation of birds and their habitats in Bolivia.

World Land Trust–U.S., www.worldlandtrust-us.org, is an international conservation organization working to preserve the world's most biologically important and threatened lands.

*Bennett Hennessy,
Asociación Armonía*



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