

World Parrot Trust Projects

Past, present and future by MICHAEL REYNOLDS

When the World Parrot Trust was founded in 1989 - by Andrew Greenwood, David Woolcock, my wife Audrey and myself - we realised that, to have any credibility, we would have to find ways of supporting the conservation of parrots in the wild. Today, this seems an almost absurd statement of the obvious, but it wasn't so obvious ten years ago. Some of the major bird protection organisations funded studies of ecosystems and habitats that were helpful to some parrot species, but direct, focussed investment in the parrots was a considerable rarity.

Our friends and mentors at the Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust (JWPT) brought to our attention the desperate plight of the Echo Parakeet in Mauritius. Only 12 or 15 birds were left, but Carl Jones and his team were then beginning a programme that has now raised numbers to almost 100. Together with the Parrot Society we helped buy a vitally needed four wheel drive vehicle, and both specialist parrot organisations have helped the Echo ever since.

The way it seems to work for WPT is that first, we provide some funds for a parrot project, then we tell people what we are doing and ask them to help build up our funds. When funds come in we adopt a new parrot project, tell the world about it, and ask for more financial help. In this way we stack one brick on top of another, and try to build a thriving, expanding commitment on behalf of the whole 'parrot community' to put some of their money where it ought to be, out there in the wild helping the parrots to survive despite the many deprivations of man.

In our PsittaScene for August 1998 we listed 22 species of CITES Appendix 1 parrots that had been helped by funds from WPT. These were:

Spix's Macaw
Lear's Macaw
Hyacinth Macaw
Blue-throated Macaw
Buffon's Macaw

St. Vincent Amazon
Imperial Amazon
Red-necked Amazon
St. Lucia Amazon
Red-tailed Amazon
Cuban Amazon
Red-spectacled Amazon
Green-cheeked Amazon
Moluccan Cockatoo
Red-vented Cockatoo
Goffin's Cockatoo
Red-tailed Cockatoo
Palm Cockatoo
Kakapo
Cape Parrot
Black-cheeked Lovebird
Echo Parakeet

To the above list of 22 we can now add a further eight species from the group of Neotropical parrots described on pages 4 and 5 of this issue of PsittaScene as being 'new to WPT'. We should also add some we had temporarily forgotten; these are Golden-plumed Parakeet, White-necked Parakeet, and Red-faced Parrot (all studied by field biologist Jeremy Flanagan in Ecuador, with funding from WPT), and the African Grey Parrot. Also to be added is the Cuban Conure *Aratinga euops*, funded for three years by Canadian WPT.

So let us now add:

Scarlet Macaw
Blue-winged Macaw
Yellow-eared Parrot
Mealy Amazon
Black-billed Amazon
Yellow-billed Amazon
Yellow-headed Amazon
Blue-fronted Amazon
Golden-plumed Parakeet
White-necked Parakeet
Red-faced Parrot
African Grey Parrot
Cuban Conure

This brings us to 35 species helped during the first ten years of the World Parrot Trust. So if anyone asks you what WPT is doing, you could tell them about that, and suggest they join us so they can add to our ability to save the parrots from extinction.

To close this report I would like to let you know about two additional 'new' projects for WPT. The first is:

Golden Conure
Guaruba guarouba



We have long been concerned about this Brazilian species, which has suffered from tremendous loss of its rainforest habitat, and being a highly sought after bird for trade. While at the Tenerife convention last September I met up with Glenn Reynolds (no relation) of Springfield, Virginia, USA, and found we had a mutual interest in this species. We decided to set up a WPT 'Golden Conure Fund', and members can consider this launched right here and now.

We have contacted Dr. Carlos Yamashita, Brazil's leading parrot biologist who has conducted previous research into the Golden Conure and its needs, and is anxious to do more to help its preservation. Funds from WPT would be very welcome, and the sooner fresh studies can begin, the better. We will publish a detailed proposal from Dr. Yamashita in the May 1999 PsittaScene.

The Golden Conure Fund will be based in our WPT-USA office (see new address on page 19), and Glenn Reynolds (8338 Terra Grande Ave., Springfield VA 22153, USA, fax: 703.644.6415, email: goldenconurefund@breedersblend.com) will be pleased to hear from anyone who has a special interest in this species, or wishes to contribute in any way. We suggest that everyone who holds this species should consider sending \$20 or £15 for each bird to our new fund. (We have five at Paradise Park, UK, and have already sent \$100 to get the fund started.) WPT-USA will match the first single donation of \$1000 to this fund. The outstanding wildlife artist David Johnston has agreed to provide a painting of the Golden Conure, and tee-shirts will be available by May 1999.

The second species is:

Citron-crested Cockatoo
Cacatua sulphurea citrinocristata



This project is already partly funded by a generous donation from a member in Switzerland, but more is needed during 1999. We received a proposal from Drs. Margaret Kinnaird and Tim O'Brien, already working in Ceram for the Wildlife Conservation Society. A group of 12 cockatoos is being held by the Indonesian conservation authority PHPA, and these provide an opportunity to fit them with radio collars and study their movements and behaviour on release. We expect to include a full report on this project in the May 1999 PsittaScene. The latest information on all the white cockatoos is extremely worrying, and the Citron-crested in particular appears to be moving close to a 'critical' position.

A NEW TOTAL

These two projects bring us to a grand total of 37 species helped by funding from WPT. You can take it that the trustees and committee members of all WPT branches are pleased to have achieved so much with the invaluable support of the membership. The steady flow of membership fees is vital, but in the last couple of years we have been greatly helped by an increasing number of unexpected DONATIONS. For example, we have today received a cheque for £1000 from members who have just sold their apartment in London and wish to 'share their windfall with WPT'. This is so generous and heartwarming, and helps us to 'keep up the good work' as requested by many who write to us.

In addition to making donations when possible, our membership could also consider leaving a legacy to the WPT in their wills.