

# Media Release

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**For Immediate Release**



## **Global coalition formed to fight wild caught parrot trade**

Hayle, Cornwall, United Kingdom  
December 11, 2009

After hundreds of years of active trade in wildlife, a coordinated global effort has been initiated to end the trade in wild caught parrots and return the birds to the wild.

The World Parrot Trust (WPT) announced today the launch of the FlyFree Campaign, an international alliance of animal welfare and conservation groups working together to halt the unsustainable trade in wild caught parrots - a first in the global effort to save parrots, one of the most endangered groups of birds on the planet.

### **Campaign urgently needed; 300 illegal parrots confiscated**

"This campaign really couldn't have come at a better time to help save parrots," stated Dr. James D. Gilardi, Executive Director for the World Parrot Trust. "In the last few days we were notified of a massive confiscation of 300 Grey Parrots at an airport in Cameroon." As part of the new FlyFree movement these birds are receiving emergency funding for their care and release, which is taking place at Limbe Wildlife Centre in Cameroon, Africa.

Over the past several decades the trade in wild caught birds has caused the suffering and loss of millions of birds. Legal and illegal harvests for the domestic and international pet trade are destructive to wild parrot populations and few birds survive from trapping to the point of sale. Those that do survive can often carry diseases, some of which are dangerous to humans, are costly to manage, and can lead to disease outbreaks in the importing countries.

### **A fresh approach fosters global cooperation**

This unique alliance builds bridges between individuals and organizations in relatively affluent developed countries with animal rescue and rehabilitation agencies struggling to find resources in developing nations.

The initiative serves a broad mandate addressing the immediate short-term needs for the birds caught in the trade including food, shelter and housing

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while also addressing the longer-term issues of better enforcement of existing wildlife laws, and public awareness. The FlyFree mandate includes:

- Helping to rescue, rehabilitate and release individual birds caught in the trade
- Furthering efforts to confiscate illegal shipments of parrots, as a deterrent to future trade
- Encouraging the adoption and enforcement of laws that protect parrots
- Supporting global awareness and education programs for school-aged children and the general public
- Funding research into better understanding regional aspects of the trade
- Finding viable economic alternatives to the trade for individuals in developing countries
- Developing broad-based coalitions to advocate on behalf of parrots

## **Building on success to send a strong and lasting message**

The World Parrot Trust is proving that a fresh approach of international cooperation and dedication can work to end the trade. The FlyFree campaign is a continuation of a massive effort begun by WPT in 2000, which led to the end of the importation of wild caught birds into the European Union. This legislation, permanently enacted in 2007, resulted in the protection of approximately 16 million wild birds.

The new FlyFree effort ([www.parrots.org/flyfree](http://www.parrots.org/flyfree)) is supporting front-line fieldwork in Brazil, Belize, Guatemala, India, Nepal, Indonesia, Cameroon, Kenya and South Africa. As new partners are found, they are added to this rapidly growing network.

The World Parrot Trust is confident that the FlyFree Campaign will continue to send a powerful message to would-be trappers, to law enforcers and to the general public. Ultimately, confiscating and freeing birds helps stop trade itself, and highlights the inherent value of these birds in the wild.

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## **About the World Parrot Trust:**

The World Parrot Trust (WPT) is dedicated to the conservation and welfare of parrots, worldwide. Founded in 1989, the WPT has regional branches in North America, Asia, Australia and Europe. Now in its 20<sup>th</sup> year, the WPT has aided 47 parrot species in 27 countries.

## **Notes:**

1. High resolution images of parrots caught in the wild bird trade are available at: <http://www.parrots.org/flyfree/pressphotos.html>
2. Detailed information about the wild bird trade, FlyFree campaign partners, and related information can be found at: <http://www.parrots.org/flyfree/about.html>
3. Video footage of the FlyFree program and wild-caught bird trade can be viewed at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=32xAVh3NSYg>
4. Recent updates from FlyFree field partners including information on active confiscation, rehabilitation and release efforts can be found at: <http://www.parrots.org/flyfree/media.html>
5. Reports, research findings and information about trade-related export quotas can be found in the 'Resources' section of this page: <http://www.parrots.org/flyfree/media.html>
6. Media interviews with the above contacts are available upon request