

Media Release

For Immediate Release



Parrot Charity Rushes to Send Emergency Aid for Largest Ever Group of Confiscated Parrots

Hayle, Cornwall, United Kingdom
February 8, 2010

The World Parrot Trust (WPT) has sent emergency funds to aid in the treatment and housing of over 1000 Grey Parrots (*Psittacus erithacus*), the largest group of illegally trapped Grey Parrots ever seized in the country of Cameroon. The seizure, which occurred in early February, is the third such confiscation of this species in the country since December 2007. The aid is being directed to Limbe Wildlife Centre (LWC) and the Last Great Ape Organization (LAGA), two independent African wildlife rescue groups working with government officials to coordinate the seizures and subsequent care of the birds - in an attempt to reduce the trade in this species. This aid follows closely on the heels of emergency funding sent by the WPT in response to a smaller seizure of 300 birds in November of 2009.

Funds needed immediately; wildlife centre inundated

The parrots were delivered to the Limbe Wildlife Centre shortly after the confiscation, which was spearheaded by the Last Great Ape Organization. The shipment, which was scheduled to leave for Kuwait and Bahrain International Airports, respectively, was without proper documentation from international authorities. Upon arrival at Limbe it was discovered that 47 of the birds were already dead, with another 30 dying of thirst and stress on the first day. Simone de Vries, manager of Limbe, stated "It makes you sick to see how the parrots are packed in the boxes, the weaker ones trampled by the strongest." The centre has been inundated with the sudden appearance of the Greys, still having to deal with the remaining birds of the shipment from November of last year. The current group of parrots is being kept in ape quarantine enclosures, as there is nowhere else to house them.

Parrot populations declining

The Grey Parrot is listed as near threatened by the 2009 IUCN Red List, as evaluated by Bird Life International. Their threatened status is due to the persistent heavy trapping of these parrots for the wild bird trade. Illegal trapping continues in Cameroon, in spite of measures being taken by local and international communities.

International groups working together to end trade

The World Parrot Trust and its partners have recently launched the FlyFree program (www.parrots.org/flyfree), the first international campaign aimed specifically at providing support to front-line wildlife rescue groups working to end the wild-caught bird trade and return parrots to the wild, in more than a dozen locations worldwide.

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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 20th 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 found in the 'Resources' section of this page: <http://www.parrots.org/flyfree/media.html>