



The Official **NEWS**Letter of Foster Parrots & The New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary

What is the Value of One Life?

By Karen Windsor & Marc Johnson



Mila, naked & helpless, soon after being transferred into MCCR's care in early May 2019.

In a world where conservation groups spend millions of dollars in efforts to save endangered species from the brink of extinction, what is the value of each individual life?

On May 4th, Foster Parrots conservation partner, Chris Castles of Macaw Conservation Costa Rica (MCCR) was contacted by Nature Guide, Javier Morasegura, from

Happy Feet Backpackers of Drake Bay on the Osa Peninsula. During a nighttime tour in the Corcovado Forest Preserve, Javier had been surprised to find a tiny, scarlet macaw chick on the forest floor. How she landed there is anybody's guess. Had the tour group startled a poacher, causing him to drop the stolen baby? Had her nest tree fallen? The chances of such a young chick surviving a fall from the forest canopy are slim to impossible. The truth will never be known, but when the tiny, naked bundle was placed into the hands of Chris Castles for emergency care, he was not optimistic. Chris estimated her to be between 2 – 3 weeks old. She had been cold and was severely dehydrated and under-weight. He named her "Milagro", which is Spanish for "Miracle", and hoped beyond hope that the miracle would continue, and keep this baby alive.

The financial cost of keeping Mila alive during her few weeks: \$3,000. The value of that single, fragile life: priceless.

Native to tropical forests from Mexico to Brazil, Scarlet Macaw numbers in the wild have declined dramatically throughout Central America due to rampant illegal poaching and habitat loss. Costa Rica boasts the most stable population of scarlets in all of Central America with an estimated 3000 remaining birds. Most of these are distributed across fragmented areas of the country. The strongest population of approximately 1200 birds can be found on the Osa Peninsula.

(cont'd on p. 2)



Mila's progression from her earliest days to her most current photo (taken in early June 2019) under the excellent care of Chris Castles & the MCCR team.



It's the 12th Annual FP Fundraiser Extravaganza, Saturday, Sept. 7th!



See pages 7&8 for details

What is the Value of One Life? (cont'd from the cover)

But poaching here, like everywhere in Central America is common and remains a formidable threat to the success of wild macaws.

MCCR's breed and release program is still in its earliest stage of development, with 7 pairs of scarlets only now beginning to explore their nest boxes, and learning the ropes of reproduction by producing their first, infertile "practice eggs", so the project was not prepared to suddenly care for a tiny, motherless baby. Experience and resourcefulness were vital while the MCCR team awaited the delivery of Harrison's Hand-feeding Formula from the U.S. Chris created a homemade concoction of blanched almonds, cashew nuts, Gerber baby food and probiotics. Nystatin was initiated to treat Mila's



Mila receiving care from Hasel Miranda, a project assistant with MCCR's rescue & rehab team.

crop stasis, which could prove to be fatal. Hot water bottles helped her through her first night. By day two, Foster Parrots had purchased a generator to power Mila's brooder around the clock to keep her at a consistently warm 86 degrees. **The financial cost of keeping Mila alive during her few weeks: \$3,000. The**

value of that single, fragile life: priceless.

Under the care of Chris Castles and project assistant, Hasel Miranda, Mila is growing and thriving, topping 600 grams at this writing. Her spiky red mohawk has begun to spread across the top of her head, and her wings are already beginning to sprout the brilliant colors of her species. MCCR's little Miracle reminds us all that every individual bird counts. 🌀

For updates on Mila's progress and the work of MCCR, visit Macaw Conservation's Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/macawconservation/



Each year I am fortunate to spend several months at Finca Paradiso, assisting **MCCR** while Chris Castles returns to New Zealand to spend time with his family, or must

travel to other parts of Costa Rica to rescue birds or pursue further conservation partnerships.

After nearly 30 years of working with birds in captivity in the U.S., having the privilege of watching parrots fly free, and participating in rescue efforts that return birds to lives of freedom is the salve my weary heart needs after decades of fighting for these refugees of the pet trade. But conservation work is difficult and heartbreaking as well, in so many ways. Witnessing the losses, struggling for funding to keep projects afloat...

And then there are people like our good friend, Dr. LoraKim Joyner, of **One Earth Conservation**, who risks her life to save the last remaining parrots in places like Honduras, Nicaragua and Guatemala where resources are always limited, and losses can be overwhelming. Surely, a few thousand dollars is a price well worth paying, not just to return birds like Mila back to the wild, but to assist in the rescue, rehabilitation and release of the many birds who will be fortunate enough to find their ways to organizations like Macaw Conservation Costa Rica and One Earth Conservation. Please keep them in mind when you feel inspired to help save a species for our planet.

—Wally, *The Militant Parrot* (Aka: MJ)

P.S. Here's how you can help—visit our conservation partners' websites to learn more about the vital work they do.

MacawConservationCR.org
OneEarthConservation.org



Our Special Guest: Emerson Urtecho



(LOCO) in Nicaragua. On the strength of a small grant, Emerson traveled to the U.S. to speak at Foster Parrots' Conservation Mini Conference and to volunteer at the sanctuary to gain insight on operations in a large facility caring for hundreds of parrots.

Emerson's organization, LOCO, works in partnership with our good friends at One Earth Conservation to save the highly endangered, yellow-naped Amazons of Nicaragua. Operating on scant financial resources and facing threats of violence, LOCO's dedication to the lives of the birds is truly a labor of love. Poaching is so rampant in Nicaragua (as in all countries in Central America), active nests must be monitored around the clock to give chicks the chance to fledge. 🌀

To learn more about LOCO's work, visit their Facebook page at:

www.facebook.com/Loreros2016/

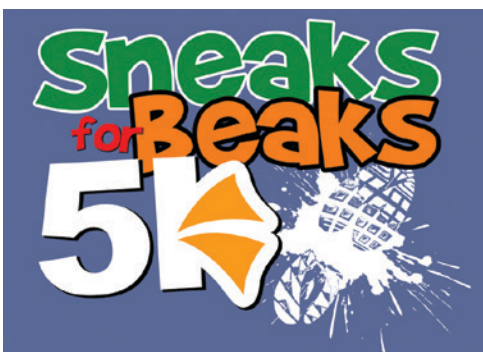
To make a donation, please visit One Earth Conservation's website at:

www.oneearthconservation.org



Emerson Urtecho, presenting at FP's Mini Conservation Conference & volunteering at the sanctuary. (Photos by staff)

This past March, Foster Parrots was honored to host a 10 day visit from Emerson Urtecho of the conservation organization, Loreros Observando y Conservando en Ometepe



Scenes from Foster Parrots' 2nd Annual Sneaks for Beaks 5k!



The 2nd Annual Sneaks for Beaks 5k was on Saturday, May 18, 2019 in Misquamicut, RI. Awards & Post Race Party was at The Andrea. (Photos by Marjorie Drew)

Foster Parrots Adoption Corner



Josie: Timneh African Grey

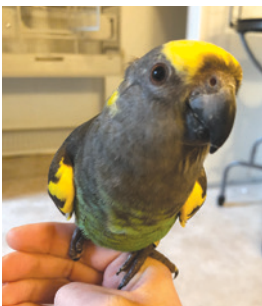
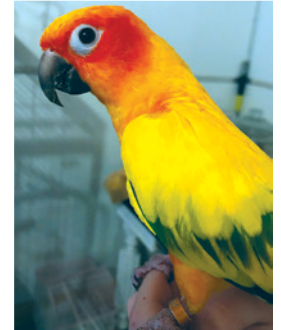
Josie is a 5-year old Timneh African Grey. She is a sweet and funny bird once she warms up to people. She takes her bond with her caretaker very seriously and gets upset when she's not receiving enough attention from her favored person. Josie needs someone who's prepared to spend lots of time with her every day. She prefers women but will bond with a man if he is her primary caretaker. She doesn't seem

to enjoy the company of children but will tolerate them in the home. Josie is a good mimicker and will show off her skills with the sounds of a truck backing up and the fire alarm. Josie is playful and sweet and just needs a dedicated caretaker to keep her company. She'll do best with someone who has parrot experience and is willing to be patient with her as she gets comfortable in her new home.

Ozzie: Sun Conure (Sun Parakeet)

Ozzie is a friendly 11-year-old sun conure. He is a great little jumper and will hop onto your shoulder as soon as you're in range. He is fully flighted and enjoys the freedom of flight throughout the house. Ozzie tends to bond most strongly with one person at a time, but he will enjoy the company of others when his favorite person isn't

available. He can be quite noisy with typical sun conure vocalizations. He needs lots of attention and stimulation to keep him occupied. Ozzie loves to be handled, loves human attention, and will make a great companion for someone who can devote lots of time to him and tolerate the noise level of a vocal sun conure!



Pucky: Meyers Parrot

Pucky is a spunky little 19-year-old Meyers parrot. Pucky adores people and wants to be on your shoulder all day. She's good at making human friends and will most likely enjoy attention from everyone in the family. Pucky can be very playful and affectionate once she trusts someone. However, she can be extremely noisy during the times of day when she needs to be caged. Pucky needs a family who can tolerate her noise level and can have

her out of the cage with them for most of the day. She is also an excellent chewer and needs to be supervised to prevent the destruction of doors, window frames, and any other woodwork she can find! She may be quirky, but she is so loveable! Her family will need to understand the challenges that come with her, but we think she's well worth it.

Featured Bird: Peanut Species: Blue-Fronted Amazon Age: 30+



Peanut: before and after air sac surgery

In March of this year, we were contacted by Casey Fredette and our friends at "Forever Paws Animal Shelter" in Fall River, seeking our assistance on a special case. An Amazon parrot had been brought to their shelter in very poor condition, with raw, bleeding masses all around her neck and upper back. "This is not normally a situation we would have been able to take on," Casey explained, "but due to some miscommunication, here she is. I hope we

can offer this poor bird some relief from whatever suffering she has endured."

Peanut looked terrible! But her condition was more uncomfortable than painful. The masses around her head and back were not lipomas or tumors. The swelling was the result of ruptured air sacs.

Air sacs are a unique part of a bird's respiratory system. In humans and other mammals, the diaphragm is the mechanism that expands and contracts to move air into and then out of our lungs.

Because they are engineered for flight, birds have had to evolve a much more efficient means of respiration, possessing a system of posterior and anterior air sacs that move fresh, oxygen-rich air in an "unidirectional" pattern into and out of the lungs. Sometimes an infection or injury can result in an air sac rupture, causing air to escape and become trapped under the skin. Very often this can be treated easily by a veterinarian, who will pierce the bubble with a

sterile needle and release the air. The injured area may inflate again, but typically the tear or puncture to the air sac will heal without further problems.

Peanut's case was a bit more problematic. After two visits with Dr. Wietsma at Coventry Animal Hospital, Peanut's air sacs continued to inflate the skin miserably around her neck and upper back. Finally, Dr. Wietsma performed a light, surgical procedure, inserting a stent to provide lasting relief. She is now on her way – we hope – to a full recovery.

Peanut is a sweet old girl and would be happy in a loving, adoptive home. Foster Parrots will continue to care for her for a period of time to ensure that her health problems will not reoccur. If the stent does its job, Peanut will soon begin to seek a guardian with enough experience to support her need for consistent companionship and ensure her health long into the future.



Interested in Adopting a Parrot?

Welcoming a parrot into one's family is a challenging but rewarding, life-long commitment. If you think you have the love, time and patience to invest, please visit our website at

www.fosterparrots.com/adoption-rescue to read about our requirements for adoption and to fill out an application. There are so many parrots in need!

When There's No Place Like Home

By Rachel DeFronzo,
Adoption Coordinator

“I want him to live with other birds” –

This is a sentiment we hear almost daily from people looking to relinquish their parrots and place them in our sanctuary. It is one of the most common phrases we see on requests for surrender. While we believe that there is no better companion for a parrot than another bird, aviary life is not for everyone. Sanctuary can be a difficult place for human-bonded birds who desire human attention and companionship.



Joey

Joey is a 15-year old conure who was purchased from a pet store in 2004 when he was just a few months old. He was raised alongside his human siblings and he thought of them as his flock. When they could no longer care for Joey, they placed him with a friend who had an aviary filled with small birds. Joey's family was thrilled that they'd found him a new home where he could be social with other birds and make friends with others of his kind. Little did they know that Joey would completely reject his new life in the aviary. He failed to recognize the other birds as options for companionship, and shouted all day long in search of a human to latch on to. That's how he ended up at the NEEWS and was deemed a perfect candidate for adoption.

In the wild, parrots form complex relationships with their flocks and are rarely separated from their mates. For birds like Joey who view people as their flock mates and desire constant attention and companionship from people, placing them permanently in sanctuary can be difficult for them. Every bird we meet has a unique history and personality. Many of these birds have been misunderstood and inaccurately deemed aggressive or excessively loud.



Mango

Mango the macaw was sent to us from a home where she was confined to the cage for many years, screaming and plucking out her feathers. We were told that she disliked everyone apart from her primary caretaker, and that she would not allow handling. Mango's caretaker wanted the best care possible for her and couldn't recognize the neglect she was facing in his own home. He wanted her to live with other parrots. At first, this sounded to us like a bird that would need to live permanently at the NEEWS. We wouldn't be able to place an excessively loud, aggressive, bald macaw into an adoptive home. We wanted to do right by Mango's former guardian, who was misguided in the ways he cared for her but truly loved her and believed he was doing what was best for her all those

Even birds that we think are candidates for life in our aviaries can surprise us. We are constantly evaluating the needs of each bird, and often find that they thrive in adoptive homes. Parrots are wild animals who deserve so much more than the life we've forced them into by placing them in cages inside people's homes...

years. However, when Mango arrived at the NEEWS we realized the report we'd received was based on Mango's behavior in a neglectful environment. Once she was

provided freedom from the cage and given the option to bond with other birds, it was clear that her preference was for humans – despite her rocky history. Mango wants nothing more than to sit on the lap of her favorite people, spreading her plucked wings and singing a song. Mango was happily adopted and has already begun re-growing some of her fuzzy first layer of feathers.

Even birds that we think are candidates for life in our aviaries can surprise us. We are constantly evaluating the needs of each bird, and often find that they thrive in adoptive homes. Parrots are wild animals who deserve so much more than the life we've forced them into by placing them in cages inside people's homes, but for many birds who were never given the opportunity to create relationships with other parrots, adoption is their best hope. 🌀



The Success of Parrots in the Home Environment: An Investment of Time, Creativity and a Focus on Social Support

- Provide as much out-of-cage time and direct social support as possible.
- Create a living environment beyond the standard cage with hanging nets and play stands.
- Place the cage in a high-traffic area of the home such as the living room or family room.
- Make training sessions using positive reinforcement part of your daily routine.
- Make sure your bird has the chance to exercise and fly each day.
- Provide toys, puzzles, and shredding opportunities.
- Learn your parrots' body language and respect their boundaries.

Join us this summer for Feral Arts Movie Nights at the NEEWS!

Bring the family or bring your friends!

Feral Arts Movie Nights is a free, monthly, community event taking place at the NEEWS from June through September, inviting individuals, students and families to come together for a drive-in style film experience promoting animal welfare, environmental stewardship and cultural diversity!

Bring your own chairs, blankets, pillows, snacks and drinks!

Festivities Commence at 6:00 pm

- Art Projects for Kids!
- Feature Film starts at Sundown!

June 29, 2019:	FernGully: The Last Rainforest
July 27, 2019:	Avatar
August 24, 2019:	Moana
Sept. 28, 2019:	Parrot Confidential

Feral Arts Movie Nights are made possible by a grant from the Rhode Island Foundation!



Will Evans, Annual Fundraiser New Musical Guest

For the first time in 8 years, the Adam Ezra Group will not be headlining Foster Parrots' Annual Fall Fundraiser Extravaganza. But never fear! Wait until you meet Will Evans! This artist is going to rock your world.



Will Evans has spent the last decade as the primary songwriter, drummer, and front man for the Roots Rock outfit Barefoot Truth. The band released four full-length albums and has surpassed over 20 million plays on Spotify. With BFT on an extended hiatus, Will has opened a new chapter in his musical journey. In 2018, Will joined his good friend Trevor Hall as a member of his touring band. Together

they have performed to passionate crowds across North America and Europe.

On Election Day in November 2018, Will released his third full-length solo album "RISE". His deepest and most personal album to date, songs contain topics of humanity, compassion, and a reflection of the current political times. In a time when many are looking for words of inspiration and reassurance, the singer-songwriter is once again speaking from his heart, advocating his own brand of socially-conscious messages of love and inclusion. A lifelong surfer and environmentalist, his songs also speak to the importance of connecting with and protecting the earth. The album features guest appearances by Trevor Hall, Mihali of Twiddle, and more.

In his live performances, Will uses his impressive looping skills to combine his drumming background with his highly energized and entertaining acoustic style. A technical tactician on the stage, crowds always get to their feet and he always gets to their hearts. 🌀

SATURDAY SEP 7, 2019 — 12 TO 6:30 PM — \$65

In support of the birds and animals at New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary and all the programs of Foster Parrots, Ltd.

Open Beer and Wine Bar

Vegetarian Buffet Dinner

Champagne Welcome

Spectacular Raffle

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2019

FOSTER PARROTS FALL FUNDRAISER EXTRAVAGANZA!

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by
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EVANS**



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GOLD FEATHER \$5000

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10-Person Table Reservation and 10 Raffle Tickets

SILENT AUCTION / RAFFLE DONATIONS WELCOME!

Please contact karen@fosterparrots.com

Tickets in advance only — www.fosterparrots.com, or check to Foster Parrots, Ltd., PO Box 650, Rockland, MA 02370



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www.fosterparrots.com
It's safe, secure, and so easy!