



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

The Faces of Foster Parrots: Your Support in Action By Karen Windsor



Scootchie

Rescued from an intense domestic abuse situation in which his life was directly under threat, **Scootchie's** resilience is demonstrated in his continued affection for humans. This dynamic Triton cockatoo is an asymptomatic carrier of the avian herpes virus. **Sapphire and Missy's** guardian had moved out of the house, leaving the pair caged in the basement. They were fortunate in that some level of care had continued in the form of a relative who would arrive several times each week

to provide food and water, but we were told by the caller that the level of care had not been much better than this even while the guardian was still present in the home. No provisions had been made for **Faye**, an old, wild-caught, Hispaniolan Amazon whose elderly guardian had passed away. Faye was discovered, caged alone in the empty home, by the company hired to clean out the house.

When people support the work of Foster Parrots, what many do not realize is that the majority of birds admitted into the sanctuary are those coming from the most abusive or neglectful situations, and parrots whose experiences in captivity have impacted them to the extent that they no longer have the capacity to live compatibly with humans. These survivors require a higher level of veterinary intervention and long-term supportive care. Integration into avian communities at the sanctuary is their first step to healing, though complex avian social dynamics often make integration a lengthy process. We cannot always reverse the damage that has been done; years of neglect, social

isolation and poor nutritional support take a physical and psychological toll on these birds. But we do everything in our power to make the "sanctuary years" the happiest years possible for these special birds. To see more of the faces of FP, turn the page.



It's the Foster Parrots' Annual

MARCH
Mini Match!

All donations dated in the month of March will be matched up to

\$20,000!

Resident birds and animals at the New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary depend on your support! The adoption, education and conservation programs of Foster Parrots cannot continue without you! We hope you will choose to make a donation in March!

See pages 7 & 8 for details



Sapphire & Missy



Faye



IT'S OUR ANNUAL MARCH MATCHING FUND DRIVE ISSUE!
ALL DONATIONS DATED IN MARCH WILL BE MATCHED UP TO \$20,000!

See pages 7 & 8 for details

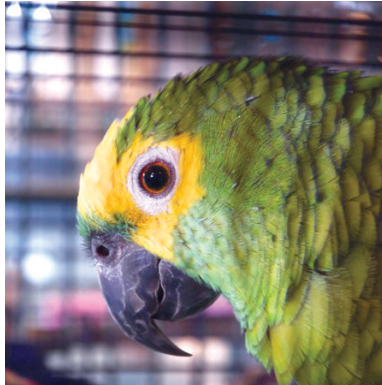


The Faces of Foster Parrots: Your Support in Action

(cont'd from the cover)



Removed from an abusive home at the age of seven, **Bebe** is a chronic self-mutilator who had actually chewed into his own keel bone.



Orson: Too Cool For School! In other words, too aggressive for adoption. Orson has found companionship at the NEEWS with Sam, another Amazon who prefers birds to people.



Berta – Caged without liberation or handling for a decade. Mislabeled as aggressive, she is actually an extraordinary bird who now lives cage-free at the sanctuary.



A special-needs Goffins cockatoo with deformed feet, **Digit** is a survivor from the notorious Scudders Breeding Ranch where hundreds of birds suffered and died.



Taters lived for 40 years, alone in a cage without liberation or handling. He now shares a large aviary with 3 other older, wild-caught Amazons.



Lucy, an older, wild-caught Moluccan cockatoo was found abandoned with her mate in a crate in the woods in the Bronx. While her mate, Desi, has since passed, Lucy lives a cage-free life in the open-concept cockatoo community.



PJ – The discovery of a tumor in this elderly Amazon's nasal cavity rendered him medically dependent and ineligible for adoption.



Green-winged macaw, **Beckett**, rejects human socialization and is most comfortable in the company of other macaws.



Unsocialized with humans, **Snowball and Crystal** were rescued along with 20 other birds from a hoarding situation in Vermont.

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Avian Bornavirus & The Heartbreak of PDD

By Karen Windsor in consultation with Dr. Hank Weitsma, DVM



Brandy was 16 years old when I brought him home in 1999. He bonded instantly with my two young children, and soon we added a pit bull puppy to the mix. It was an oftentimes chaotic household, but kids and animals make a home, and it was the insanity of those years as a young family that we now remember as “precious”. And this is why, 18 years later, as I sat with Brandy in my lap, knowing I was about to lose him, it was so hard to let go.

PDD took Brandy’s life on July 9th, 2017. He was 34 years old.

One of the most devastating and enigmatic of all avian diseases, Proventricular Dilation Disease (PDD) has broken the hearts of thousands of parrot guardians since it was first identified in 1978 by Dr. Hannis L. Stoddard. Initially thought to be specific to macaws and termed, “Macaw Wasting Disease”, PDD quickly began to demonstrate that it was an equal opportunity offender, capable of infecting parrots of virtually any species.

PDD attacks the central nervous system and can take a variety of courses, with the most familiar pattern causing inflammation to the nerves supplying the gastrointestinal system. Loss of weight despite a ravenous appetite and the passing of undigested seed and food in the

droppings are some of the first symptoms to be observed. As the disease progresses, birds essentially starve to death as their digestive systems fail to properly absorb food and critical nutrients. PDD can also take a neurological path, resulting in loss of mobility and muscle control, head tremors, loss of equilibrium and inability to balance or perch.

In a breakthrough discovery in 2008, researchers at two separate labs were able to identify avian bornavirus as a causative agent to PDD, and this led to widespread hope that we were closer to finding cure for PDD, but the link between ABV and PDD remains as mysterious as ever. While findings substantiate a link between PDD and ABV, the correlation is tricky. In fact, not all birds who die of PDD will test positive for ABV. Furthermore, most birds who test positive for ABV will live full, healthy lives and never develop clinical symptoms of PDD.

Researchers have estimated that between 33 – 60% of all psittacines will test positive for Avian bornavirus (aka parrot bornavirus), but this figure comes into

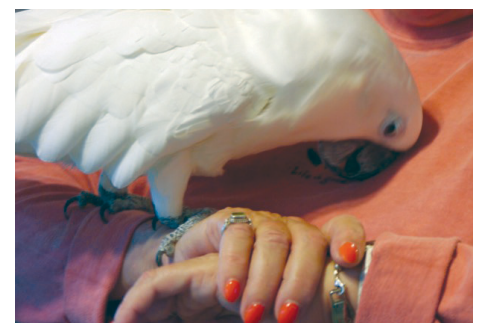
**Researchers have
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question because different diagnostic labs arrive at different results. Up to 14 different genotypes or “genetic varieties” of ABV have been identified, affecting birds worldwide. A negative test for one genotype does not rule out infection by another. Furthermore, the virus is shed only intermittently in droppings, increasing the chances of false negative test results. The high incidence of ABV infected birds suggests that this virus is extremely common in parrots, whereas the development of PDD is actually quite

rare. Consequently, it can be presumed that a cocktail of causative elements come together to give rise to the immune response in parrots that ultimately results in clinical disease. A combination of genotypes, stress and environmental factors, diet and individual auto-immune responses all may play a role.

The extent to which ABV is contagious also comes into question. It is known that ABV infected birds can live amongst healthy birds for extended periods of time without transmission of the virus. Infected parrots can have healthy offspring with no signs of virus present. Even when PDD fully manifests, there are numerous incidents where one bird will die of the disease while the mate lives on, never becoming sick.

So how do we manage a disease whose characteristics are so variable, and around which breakthrough research typically only leads to more questions? Disease management is especially challenging in sanctuary or rescue settings, breeding facilities and parrot retail situations where large numbers of birds are housed together. The fact is that exposure to virus and death from disease can and will happen in facilities despite proper quarantine protocols, high quality husbandry and adequate sanitation practices. Indeed, it can be assumed that any location housing large numbers of birds will have virus present. But avian bornavirus is not hardy outside its host. It is sensitive to common detergents, disinfectants and UV light. In large facilities or in smaller home environments, common sense practices like frequent handwashing, footbaths, general sanitizing and exposure to natural sunlight can help in the management of ABV while we await further research – and possibly a vaccine – that will someday make the devastating losses from PDD a thing of the past. ☺



Macaw Conservation Costa Rica Update

Lapita and David: Love Stories from the Osa Peninsula



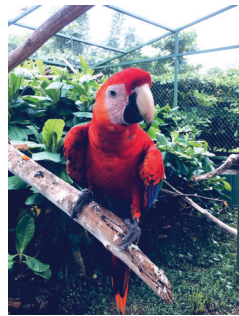
Poached from her nest as a hatchling over 20 years ago and kept illegally as a pet, **Lapita** had never experienced the company of other macaws. Nevertheless, her wildness had begun to surface. Despite being well-

cared for, Lapita began to exhibit aggression as she matured, becoming increasingly difficult for her human family to manage. When they happened to see a poster at their local veterinary supply store offering help to people illegally holding parrots as pets, they knew this was their chance to return Lapita to a more natural life in the company of other scarlet macaws.

Chris Castles, the head of Macaw Conservation Costa Rica (MCCR), arrived on a hot afternoon in August to retrieve Lapita and transport her to the MCCR sanctuary on the Osa Peninsula where 30 other macaws would

soon welcome her as the newest member of MCCR's breeding program.

With illegal poaching almost commonplace and the keeping of parrots deeply ingrained in the culture, countless parrots in Costa Rica lose their chance to be free every year. Many of these birds live poor quality lives in captivity. One of the most rewarding aspects of MCCR's work is helping to return birds like Lapita to more natural lives in the society of other macaws. Impacted by their human experience – and sometimes physically

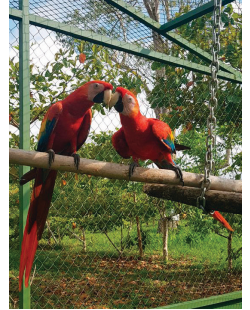


disabled – many of these former pets are not releasable, but their offspring will fly free, and will be instrumental in helping to strengthen Costa Rica's wild macaw populations.

After serving her required time in quarantine and receiving a clean bill of health, Lapita was introduced to the other macaws. Her demeanor changed almost instantly, as if re-

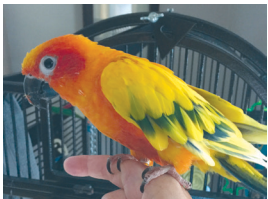
alizing for the first time who she really was. Abandoning her Spanish vocabulary, she began to mimic the language of her aviary mates, and when she was introduced to a handsome male macaw named

David, the connection was almost instantaneous. The two birds soon began the rituals of allopreening and mutual feeding that demonstrate they have formed an exclusive pair-bond. Before long, the nest box attached to their spacious aviary became their focus, with Lapita spending extended time inside and David dutifully guarding the nest. Despite both birds having been raised in captivity, Lapita and David show great promise as valuable contributors to the future of Costa Rica's wild macaws. ☺



To learn more or to support the important work of MCCR, visit their website at their new address, www.MacawConservationCR.org

Foster Parrots Adoption Corner



Mango : Sun Conure

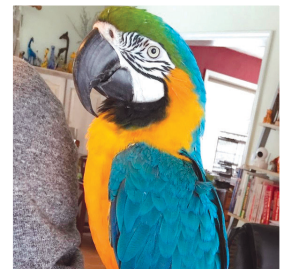
Mango is a handsome 4-year-old sun conure (aka, sun parakeet). He gives kisses and loves to be held and scratched. Mango has lived with a woman for all his life and has not had exposure to men, so he would like to live

somewhere where there's at least one female member of the household. Like all sun conures, Mango knows how to make noise! He is looking for a home with someone who has time to give him lots of attention and love.

Topaz: Blue & Gold Macaw

Topaz, a beautiful, 36 year old blue & gold macaw, has been on our adoption list since September 2018, and we can't believe she hasn't been scooped up yet! She is playful and loving with the people she bonds with, and she will speak to you in English and Portuguese! Topaz

wants to be the center of attention, and she will scream when her people are talking to each other or talking on the phone. She is looking for a home where her people will talk, play, and sing with her all day.



Erik: African Grey

Erik is a 22-year-old African Grey parrot. He'll be celebrating his 23rd birthday in March! Erik is a little nervous at first, but once he warms up to you he enjoys attention and will happily sit on your lap. Although he doesn't speak human words, he knows how to mimic

whistles and noises like water dripping and the smoke alarm. Erik needs a patient guardian who will take the time to get to know him on his terms. Once he gets comfortable he's very funny and interactive.



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!

Guyana: The Sun Parakeet Project

A One Earth Conservation & Foster Parrots Collaborative

By Danika Oriol-Morway



In single file we make our way across the meticulously planted rows of farmed cassava with slender, twisted trunks stretching towards the sun. The small, leafy tops offer little in the way of shade or cover as we sneak quietly across the dusty fields. I look nervously between the sky and my feet, still fearful of stepping on an unsuspecting snake or scorpion, but also not wanting to miss my chance to see the rare sun parakeets (aka, sun conures). We are speaking in whispers as we follow our guide to the back of the farm, and just as we hit the tree line we hear a faint call, “skree-skree-skree-skree-skree”. One of our ranger trainees turns back to me and points to the sky with a big smile on his face and says in a low but excited voice, “ke’sse”, or as we know it “sun parakeet”. We all look to the sky as a rush of orange, yellows, greens and blues come screaming out of the trees just a few meters above our heads. I revel in this chance to witness these beautiful birds, free and totally unaware they are, in fact, the last of their kind.

Once wide-spread throughout Brazil, Venezuela, Southern Guyana, Surinam and French Guiana, sun parakeets have all but vanished throughout their range. They are classified as Endangered on the IUCN Red List, and could further be upgraded to Critically Endangered as further surveys are conducted. As we wind our way through the rugged terrain, up the Ireng river and through the dense primary forests of the Pakaraima mountains, it is hard not to feel as though these birds have gone into hiding, tucking their families far away from human reach in a final attempt to save the last of their species. The demand for the sun parakeet as pets

has continued to fuel their decline in the wild, despite the thousands of captive-bred sun parakeets already persisting in cages around the world. The problem surrounding the sun parakeet, however, is not just about extracting birds from the wild. It is also about what happens to the communities, cultures and environments when people have limited economic choices, and the external pressures and market demands that commodify the natural resources of a region.

In January, working in our target village of Karasabai, we (Dr. LoraKim Joyner of One Earth Conservation and Danika Oriol-Morway of Foster Parrots) hosted a six-day workshop that involved 20 participants from 3 different villages. We trained team members to conduct fixed transect counts to assess the minimum number of individual birds in a given area. Alarmingly, our January population survey documented only 137 distinct, individual sun parakeets.



Continuing to research village attitudes and interest in parrot conservation efforts in Guyana, we visited the villages of Rewa, Surama, Annai, and the conservation research center at Iwokrama. Much of our work focused on community engagement, working directly with local youth wildlife clubs within each village, offering population censusing and parrot identification training, and spending time listening to people as they relayed the history of Home and their relationships with their native parrots. As of January 2019, we (One Earth and Foster Parrots) have officially established two parrot monitoring projects, one in Karasabai and the other in Rewa village, hiring wildlife guides, local parrot conservationists and ex-trappers. We will continue to



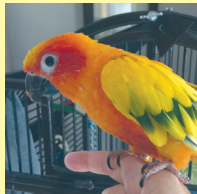
build these relationships in Guyana so that we can begin to piece together a full understanding of the health and distribution of parrots across the country.

The art of conservation comes not from the proselytizing of westernized ideologies of human animal interaction, but instead is about learning from the communities we want to work with. Our work in Guyana is rooted in the fundamental belief that what we offer are simply tools and methodologies to support the work and expertise of the indigenous communities who know their land and animals better than anyone else. Conservation must be in-situ, managed by the indigenous communities or else we are in danger of perpetuating modernized colonialist archetypes under the guise of conservation. 🌀

To learn more about One Earth Conservation, visit: oneearthconservation.org



Photos and sun parakeet logo provided by Danika Oriol-Morway.



Sun parakeets are known in the U.S. as ‘sun conures’. Check out Mango’s profile in our Adoption Corner on page 4!

Sneaks for Beaks 5k

It's the 2nd Annual Sneaks for Beaks 5k Run for Parrots!

Saturday, May 18, 2019
at 10:30 am

Misquamicut State Beach
257 Atlantic Avenue
Westerly, Rhode Island 02891



- Post-Race Party at The Andrea www.andreaseaside.com
- Super Cool Swag, Prizes and T-Shirts
- USATF Certified Course and Event
- All Proceeds to Benefit Foster Parrots & The New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary!

Walk or Run!

Online Pre-Registration is just \$37.00
Race Day Registration is \$45.00

Save the date and register today by visiting
<https://www.fosterparrots.com/sneaks-for-beaks-5k/>

Nearly 1/3 of all parrot species on the planet are threatened with extinction. More than 1/2 of all parrot species are in decline.

KEEPING OUR PARROTS FLYING FREE

Join us at The New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary
on Saturday, March 16th 2019 at 9:30 am for our
Conservation Mini-Conference



Featuring Presenters:

Ermenson Urtecho from Loreros Observando y Conservando en Ometepe (LOCO) in Nicaragua, triumphs and challenges protecting the endangered yellow headed parrot

Dr. LoraKim Joyner – Executive Director of One Earth Conservation detailing their work & partnerships in Central and South America

Danika Oriol-Morway – Sanctuary Director of Foster Parrots, Ltd. working in Guyana to protect the last wild sun parakeets

Dr. Lucy Spelman - Founder of "Creature Conserve" at RISD, blending science and art to raise awareness about endangered species issues worldwide

Seating is strictly limited!
Tickets are \$15.
Breakfast and Lunch will be provided.
Visit www.fosterparrots.com/conservationconference/
to reserve your space!



It's the Foster Parrots Annual

MARCH Mini Match!

All donations dated in the month of March will be matched up to

\$20,000!

The birds and animals at the sanctuary and all the programs of Foster Parrots, Ltd. depend on you. Every dollar makes a difference!

YOUR SUPPORT ensures that 400 parrots & other displaced exotic animals at The New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary can depend on outstanding, nutritious diets, and specialized veterinary care in beautiful, enriched aviary environments.

YOUR CONTRIBUTION strengthens our rescue efforts, helping us to alleviate suffering, restore dignity, and truly support the individual needs of every bird who comes into our care.

YOUR DONATION supports our humane education, adoption and art programs, all of which work to promote animal welfare values and a culture of compassion and respect for parrots and all wildlife.

YOUR PARTICIPATION ensures the effectiveness of our conservation partnerships in Central and South America as we work to protect the freedom of wild parrots and all animals in their natural ranges.

Never underestimate the impact of your gift!

Foster Parrots launches 3 fundraising events each year — we hope you will choose to support at least one of these!

Donations can be made on-line by visiting www.fosterparrots.com
It's safe, secure, and so easy!



Mail your check to:
Foster Parrots, Ltd.
PO Box 34 Hope Valley, RI 02832

On behalf of all the birds and animals at the sanctuary and those who fly free because of your support — THANK YOU! Without you, none of this would be possible.





**Foster Parrots &
The New England
Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary**

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Hope Valley, RI
02832

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YES! I want to contribute to the March Match!
All donations made in March will be matched up to **\$20,000!**

Your contribution to Foster Parrots, Ltd. helps provide care for over 400 parrots and animals at The New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary. It supports our humane education and adoption programs, and it helps to protect the freedom of wild parrots and natural habitat.

Yes! I want to support the work of Foster Parrots, Ltd. with a tax-deductible donation of:

_____ \$25 _____ \$50 _____ \$100 _____ \$200 _____ \$500 _____ Other

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

E-mail address: _____

Please mail checks to:



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Donate on-line by visiting:
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