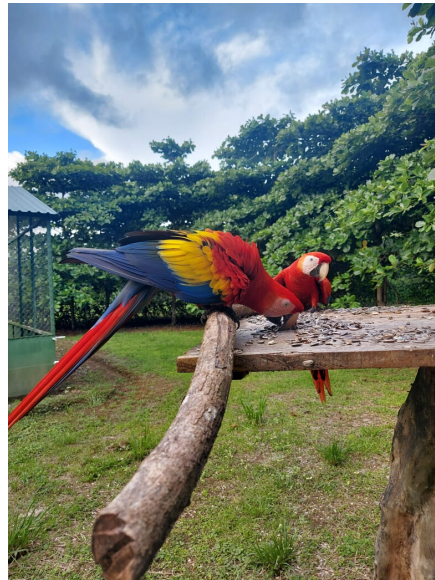




Spreading Their Wings: Macaw Conservation in Costa Rica Releases 3 Macaws

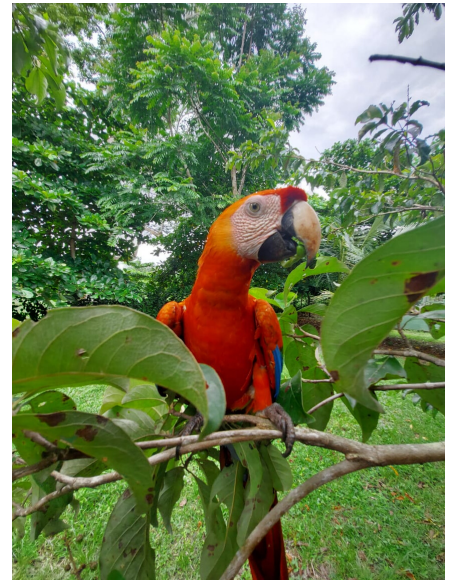


The inside door to the release hatch was gently lowered behind Monster, a young scarlet macaw raised from chickhood at the Macaw Conservation rescue center, and Chris Castles carefully opened the outside door that stood between Monster and freedom. The bird stepped cautiously to the edge of the hatch and took her first look at the world without aviary wire cutting up the view. She was nervous, but the sky beckoned. Or at least a nearby beach almond tree beckoned. Monster spread her wings, took a leap, and seemed surprised when she found herself in a sea of green leaves and branches at the top of the tree. Monster's aviary mates, Mike and Oscar, had been watching from inside the aviary. They would be next.



Illegally poached from her nest in 2017, Monster had been the first baby macaw to arrive at the Macaw Conservation Rescue Center. In the hands of her kidnapper, Monster had become very sick and was not going to survive. A local resident intervened and brought the baby to Chris. A year later the Rescue Center received Mike and Oscar, two mostly naked chicks who had survived a fallen nest tree disaster.

Monster, Mike and Oscar's time at the rescue center had prepared them for the day when they would be released back into the wild. They had been raised and socialized with other resident macaws, benefitting from daily lessons on how to be birds. Their large aviaries had accommodated flight so they could hone their flying skills and



strengthen their muscles. Daily visits and conversations with the wild macaws who enjoy visiting the property helped familiarize them with "the locals." Most importantly, as soon as they were weaned and old enough to eat big bird food, they had been conditioned to the naturally growing food sources they would need to know how to identify once they were set free.

Chris Castles has been releasing macaws in Costa Rica for 17 years, and the Macaw Conservation Rescue Center, established on the Osa Peninsula by Chris and Foster Parrots in 2013, has incorporated all of the elements necessary to give rescued macaws and other native parrot species the best possible chance of survival upon release. Chris has spent years planting

hundreds of beach almond trees on the property, as well as a variety of fruit trees offering guava, papaya, nance, water apple, passion fruit and jack fruit. These not only provide a food supply for released birds, but also attract wild macaws and other parrots who sometimes struggle to find food seasonally. The presence of the wild birds offers a kind of welcoming committee for released birds, and because so many different species visit the farm, there are multitudes of species-specific integration possibilities.

"It's truly rewarding to see macaws rehabilitated and released back into the wild," says Chris. "Seeing them progress every day and gain confidence is truly amazing. We use soft release techniques and whenever possible release the birds as a part of a flock, which greatly increases their chances of survival and successfully re-wilding."

There's a level of security inherent in that flock-like dynamic that provides each bird with a familiar social connection and helps as they become oriented to their new physical surroundings. Perhaps no one explained this to Mike, who flew off with a pair of wild macaws two days after his release. "Release Day is exciting," says Chris, "but it is a stressful time as well. We provide as much support as possible, but we always worry about their ability to survive in the wild. Mike was gone for a week. He returned and has stayed close to home ever since. He's not quite ready for independence. The rescue center is a safe place for the newly released macaws. They can find food and water if needed. As their foraging range and territories expand they will spend less time at the center, and as they mature they will begin to integrate with the wild population. If all goes well they will form pairs and successfully produce wild offspring, which may take up to 7 years. It's a

slow process but well worth the effort for a species that can live more than 40 years in the wild."

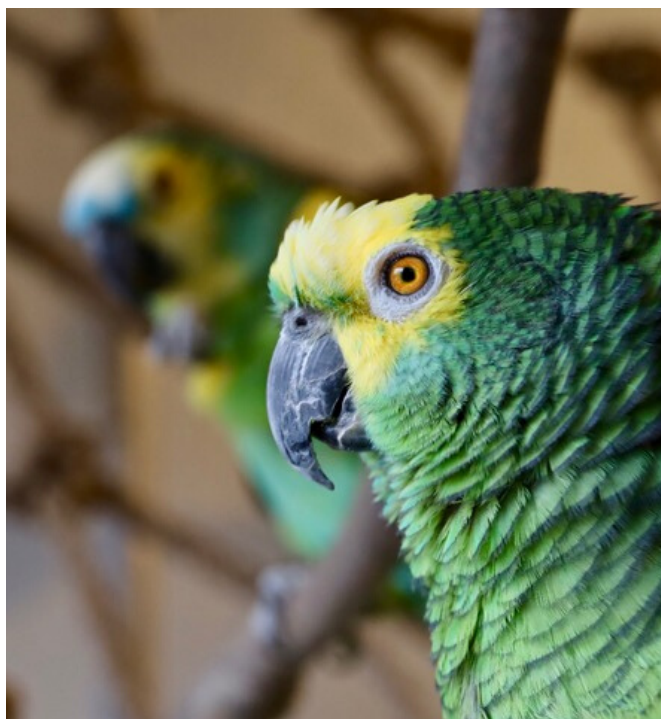
Like all conservation efforts, the Macaw Conservation Rescue Center struggles for funding. You can help! To make a one-time donation or to become a monthly sustainer, visit Foster Parrots' website at

<https://www.fosterparrots.com/support-us-page>

and designate your contribution to "Macaw Conservation." One Hundred percent of your donation goes directly to the project. To learn more about Macaw Conservation in Costa Rica, visit

<http://macawconservation.org/> Or follow us on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/macawconservation/>



Blue Fronted Amazon, Nico

Breaking Down Barriers

By Karen Windsor

Nico, a grumpy old blue-fronted Amazon parrot, had been on Foster Parrots' waiting list for close to a year before we were finally able to admit him in June of 2018. A perfect candidate for sanctuary, Nico was unhandleable and unadoptable. To say that he was "aggressive" might not be accurate. Rather, it appeared that Nico was resigned to his captivity experience, his lack of control, and his barriers. Biting had become his defense mechanism. He had been with the same family for over 30 years, and they cared about Nico. They just didn't know how to care for him. He had not been out of his small, table-top cage for over 10 years.

A female yellow-headed Amazon who had no name was admitted into our sanctuary in December of 2019. While it is impossible to know the full history of an old, wild-caught parrot, some of this bird's physical characteristics suggest she may be well into her 50s. In particular, she tends not to stand upright and instead maintains a squatting posture.

She is “white around the eyes” and her beak is somewhat misshapen. But what we do know about this Amazon is that, at least during the most recent years of her life, no one really cared about her. She had been passed through an indeterminate succession of homes, and we are aware that the last two did not even want her. She had just “happened.” The guardian who finally relinquished her described her as “worthless.” Indeed, she had long since shut down, stoically surrendering to her long and unhappy life. This old bird’s psychological walls were strong and impenetrable. She was the quintessential “unwanted parrot”.



Birdy: The Quintessential Unwanted Parrot

Integrating new parrots into established aviaries can be tricky – and frightening to birds whose ability to connect socially with their own species has been muddled by decades of conspecific isolation. When we began the very gradual process of introducing Birdy (the name given to her by Foster Parrots staff and volunteers) to her new avian community, her nervousness was apparent. But so was Nico’s interest in her. Through all the steps

of the integration process, Nico kept vigil over Birdy. Soon after she finally joined the group, Nico was beside her, tentatively reaching out to preen her.

It is not always easy to liberate an old parrot from a cage. In the mind of the bird, that cage may be as much a safe place in an unpredictable world as it is a prison. Fear, isolation, trauma, boredom, the inability to make a choice... all of these experiences converge to shape an old parrot’s relationship with the world and impact their ability to make social connections, even within an avian peer group. But helping fearful old birds learn how to live e freely amongst others of their own species is precisely why we exist.

Foster Parrots Adoption Corner

By Rachel Defronzo



Name: Lenore

Species: Red-Lored Amazon

Age: 30

Lenore is a sweet and friendly Red-Lored Amazon. She has been through a lot in her life, as is reflected by her habit of plucking her feathers. Lenore is looking for a home where she will receive lots of attention and can remain out of the cage most of the day. She sits happily on top of her cage or on her person’s shoulder. Lenore becomes stressed if she’s kept in her cage for extended periods of time. She takes time to warm up to new people but once she’s comfortable she will happily snuggle up with you. Lenore can be noisy if she’s not receiving attention, especially if she hears the family in a different room. She wants to part of all the action!

Name: Cyrius

Species: White Fronted Amazon

Age: 18



Cyrius is a little Amazon parrot with a big personality. He lived with one family for most of his life and was closely bonded with one of the women in the family. Cyrius is affectionate with his chosen person, but he gets jealous when she's holding certain objects and can become aggressive. He needs a home with someone who can recognize the warning signs in his body language. In his most recent home, Cyrius was allowed out of the cage all day and only went in the cage to sleep. He is a good flyer and needs to go to a home where he can remain fully flighted and will have the space and freedom to fly around. Cyrius enjoys singing with his humans in the morning and sits calmly with the family during TV time in the evening. He prefers women and would prefer a female-only home, but he will tolerate men who respect his boundaries. Cyrius is a wonderful, affectionate bird who needs someone to put in the time and effort to build a positive relationship with him

Name: Spock

Species: Cherry-Headed Conure

Age: 32

Spock is a special needs conure who's looking for a patient person to help him come out of his shell. Spock suffered two broken legs which were never medically addressed at some point in his life. He is unable to move his legs and feet, but it doesn't slow him down too much. He's able to use his beak to move throughout his cage, and he's a great flyer! Spock is a little nervous at first, but he becomes comfortable with people over time, and will allow



his person to scoop him up and onto their lap. He loves to have his head scratched. Spock cannot perch or climb well, so he needs a cage with a solid, padded bottom and some low platforms to climb onto. He will make a wonderful companion for someone who is able to assist him with his needs and be patient as he learns to trust.

**Think You Have what it takes
to provide a great life for a parrot?
Learn about Foster Parrots' Adoption Program by
visiting
www.fosterparrots.com/adoption-rescue**

Animal Rescue Work & The Impact Of Covid-19

By Karen Windsor

Even under the best of circumstances, animal rescue work is a balancing act between providing life-saving services and raising the funding necessary to make that work possible. Throw a global pandemic into the mix and the scale can tip precariously toward collapse for smaller non-profits whose efforts are vital to millions of birds and animals around the world. Covid-19 has not only impacted human lives everywhere, but has taken a devastating toll on animals in crisis. Financial support for rescue work evaporates in times of economic hardship, and because of the risk of Covid infection, the hands that would normally be there to help have also been lost.



Sanctuary Manager, Bradley Kay and NEEWS Veterinarian, Dr. Ann Bourke work on an avian patient

In this new Covid-colored world, life at The New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary also looks quite different. With 2/3 of our volunteers forced to step away from the sanctuary, our small staff struggles to manage a vastly increased workload. Educational tours, visiting school and community groups, and the onsite activities that normally fill our spring and summer calendars have been suspended, leaving our building strangely quiet despite the calls and voices of 400 birds and animals. Food stocks have been doubled or tripled out of concern that staple items may soon become difficult to find. Our biggest fundraising and community-building event of the year, Foster Parrots' Annual Fall Fundraiser, has had to be cancelled, and the management of our already tight budget has become even more restrictive as we look toward the second half of the year, not knowing the extent to which funding may or may not continue. Like non-profit organizations everywhere, Foster Parrots' commitment to the welfare of animals cannot stop regardless of the difficulties we face. Despite the interruptions in our lives and routines, the kaleidoscope of human activity around the world that displaces or harms animals never rests. Covid-19 hurts animals, too.

BWRC Veterinary team saving the life of a kinkajou



Belize Wildlife & Referral Clinic

Under the direction of founder, Dr. Isabelle Paquet-Durand, the Belize Wildlife & Referral Clinic (BWRC) is a non-profit organization providing free rescue and rehabilitation services for up to 1,000 birds and animals annually. Also serving as a teaching clinic for veterinary students, BWRC's intern and volunteer programs play a major role in keeping the clinic funded and staffed while also honing the skills of people pursuing careers in the service of animals. When Covid-19 hit, BWRC's internship program was forced to close, which was a crippling blow

to the clinic. "This year's baby season has brought us record numbers of baby coatis, baby birds, crocodiles, armadillos, squirrels and others, including a young howler monkey with skull fracture who is on his way to recovery despite his srious injury," explains Dr. Paquet-Durand. "When Belize went into lockdown [due to Covid-19], BWRC had 40 patients in care. Aside from the fact that our income was eliminated, we also had to go into the busiest time of year with only the 4 core staff."

When wildfires set Belize ablaze in April, BWRC scrambled to provide life-saving medical care to victims of the fire while watching the flames advance, threatening the clinic and the safety of all. Tragically, with Covid-19 lock-down restrictions in place, there were sad losses of some animals who could not be transported to the clinic.

BWRC is also an active force in conservation work in Belize, and the economic downturn due to the pandemic has had a significant impact on conservation efforts in the country. Dr. Paquet-Durand explains, “We anticipate and have already detected a rise in parrot poaching due to the economic impact on people's livelihoods. The largest macaw bust for our country so far happened recently when poachers were arrested with 7 macaw chicks, shortly before crossing the border into Guatemala. Thankfully we received 5 of those birds still alive at BWRC, we were able to stabilize, and after 5 days of observation found them in overall good enough condition to send them into the in-situ field lab. There they will continue for another 60 days under the care of trained keepers, before their hopeful soft release back into the wild. We were elated to have a story of rescue and return to the wild of these critically endangered birds in our country, during these times of crisis.”

ARCAS Guatemala

Next door in neighboring Guatemala, the Wildlife Rescue and Conservation Association (ARCAS) struggles with similar issues. ARCAS is Guatemala's primary rescue and rehabilitation center for injured, orphaned and confiscated wildlife. Their conservation work to save struggling species like sea turtles and critically endangered yellow naped parrots brings vital attention, both locally and internationally, to the devastating human impact on the birds and animals of Guatemala. In a single blow, Covid-19 has shaken the foundation of the organization,

ARCAS veterinary team providing support for a rescued margay



“ARCAS relies heavily on its volunteer and veterinary training programs to keep afloat, “ARCAS representatives explain. “The coronavirus pandemic has brought these programs to a halt and ARCAS is currently in a deep financial crisis,” The sudden disruption of these programs has not only created a serious deficit in funding, but also in human resources. It takes many hands to provide services to so many birds and animals. Regardless of the global human health crisis, birds and animals in need of help keep arriving unabated, and the recent wildfires in April and into May increased the volume of injured animals at a time when life-saving resources have been in short supply.

Efforts to impact illegal poaching and trapping activity are a big part of the work of ARCAS. Yellow-naped Amazons are a major focus. According to Development Director, Colum Muccio, “Although there is a lack of data, according to parrot counts that have been carried out in COLORS, as well as historical legal trade data, we estimate that the population of the yellow-naped amazon in Guatemala has dropped from 30,000 - 50,000 individuals in the 80s and 90s to a current population of approximately 500 individuals. Most of these remaining parrots are found in southwestern Guatemala, in the departments of Retalhuleu and Mazatenango. The yellow-naped parrot is one of the most sought-after species by parrot buyers and traffickers, being one of the species that best mimics the human voice and other sounds. The habitat of the yellow-naped parrot is the Pacific coastal plain, an area that, since colonial times, has suffered from intensive agro-industrial exploitation and where few natural areas remain.”

BWRC and ARCAS are associates of Foster Parrots and fellow members of the Parrot Conservation Alliance. To learn more about their work or to make a donation, please visit: www.arcasguatemala.org & www.belizewildlifeclinic.org

One Earth Conservation

Transformative Conservation

By Dr. LoraKim Joyner

There are constant reminders that the way we conduct ourselves as human societies lays waste to people, species, and ecosystems. The coronavirus epidemic shows how the confluence of stressed ecosystems, lowering biodiversity, lower human health and welfare, and human predation on wildlife harms the earth and all her beings. Many are calling for a complete transformation of how we relate to nature, other species, and our own kind, especially conservationists.

Last December, before the pandemic, I gave a presentation on Transformative Conservation, knowing that so much was at a breaking point. I experience devastation daily in my work with the people and parrots of the Americas, and it seems even more clear now that we must not abide all those that have died. I also see much, much more beauty in the people fully committed to caring for the earth, their families, and their fellow species.

Motivated by both beauty and tragedy so regularly these days, perhaps we can collectively see that now is the time for Transformative Conservation. Transformative Conservation means we strive to keep our hearts open to our pain and to that of others. This compels us to do the inner work so that we have the awareness, resilience, and power to do our outer work on behalf of all the people who are caught in an unjust societal system. We accept the tragedy so, paradoxically, we change it through transformative parrot conservation, or transformative social action of any kind. It's transformative because the outer societal transformation only comes about accompanied by an inner transformation based on beauty, tragedy, and its result, love. We are not talking about some minor change, but a complete revamping of how we think and live. Through work and

experiential immersion in beauty and love, we come out as completely different people on the other side, for we have shed the stories that don't result in our freedom or the liberation of others.

A discussion paper from the IUCN entitled, "Transformative Conservation in Social-Ecological Systems," defines Transformative Conservation as "conserving biodiversity while justly transitioning to net negative emissions, economies and securing the sustainable and regenerative use of natural resources." They go on to explain:

*Conservation must combine societal transformations of the social and ecological relations, technologies, and institutions that bind local places to global networks, with personal transformations of people's values, identity, and behavior. We must strongly link societal and personal transformations. **TC in the context of climate change depends on such "outer" (societal) and "inner" (personal) transformations***

Supporting and reinforcing one another, and creating unprecedented ways of living within nature.

They seem to have captured One Earth Conservation's mission, part of which reads:

We combine work directed outward toward other beings and outward towards nature with work directed inward toward one's own human nature, as outer well-being and inner well-being are inseparable and mutually beneficial.

One Earth emphasizes Transformative Conservation in our parrot conservation projects throughout the Americas, but we cannot do this alone. We need you to take up the challenge of transformation, and have designed a program, the Parrot Conservation Corps, just for that reason. It's a new program we designed last year, but it seems to have captured ever more so what the earth needs today. Our Parrot Conservation Corps seeks to meet these dire challenges of our times by giving people the tools, understanding, and ability to preserve life on this planet no matter where they are, at home or in the field. Join us and learn to be a parrot conservationist, become part of a vibrant and impactful digital community, and learn to "let the beauty you are be what you do."

The program begins August 1, 2020 so get your applications in today! We are extending our deadline until July 15, 2020.

Make a difference from wherever you are...join us!



Parrot Conservation Corps
<https://www.oneearthconservation.org/parrot-conservation-corps>

When Are Birds Important Enough?

AAVS & AWC Lawsuit Victory

Back in the early 2000s, driven by the intensity of the mission, Foster Parrots founder, Marc Johnson, pushed to bring captive parrot issues to the attention of the national animal welfare community. The head of an internationally recognized animal rights organization told him, "Parrots just aren't important enough."

Not important enough? Parrots are one of the most highly traded animals on the planet, with the legal trade fueling an illegal black market that has resulted in nearly 1/3 of all parrot species being classified by the IUCN as threatened or endangered. Regarded as both companion animals and wildlife, they bridge the gap between domestic and wild animals with the potential to connect people to a full spectrum of animal welfare ethics, and yet they are subject to some of the poorest standards of care as pets, and have been bred, traded, kept and exhibited in the U.S. without the benefit of any meaningful legal regulation or protection. Whereas regulations governing standards of care for animals are largely enacted on the state and local levels, birds have been omitted from the language of legal protections in most states and cities. On the federal level, the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) of 1966 mandated humane standards of care for lab animals, zoo animals and animals bred for commercial markets, but birds were notoriously not covered by the AWA.

The American Anti-Vivisection Society's (AAVS) efforts to establish regulatory protection for birds not bred for use in laboratories began in 2000 with a petition to the USDA to draft official standards of care under the AWA. Perhaps the unique physical and cognitive needs of birds were not well understood by the USDA, or maybe birds were simply not important enough to be prioritized for legislative attention, but for whatever reason, the USDA failed to follow through.

Joining forces with AAVS, in 2004 the Avian Welfare Coalition (AWC) formally drafted species specific standards of care for birds, focusing on issues including lighting, access to clean water and food, enrichment,

and accommodations for flight and/or wing span. The AWC's standards were drafted primarily to target large-scale commercial breeding operations (parrot mills) that have opposed legal regulations and defied humane breeding, transportation and sales practices for decades. The standards were submitted to the USDA, which once again failed to initiate the regulations.

The USDA's 16 year failure to act culminated in a lawsuit by AAVS and the AWC. In January of 2020 the U.S. District Court of D.C. mandated action on the part of the USDA to finally publish regulations governing standards of care for birds in accordance with the Animal Welfare Act. This historic event represents the first ever federal regulations of the pet parrot industry in the U.S.

Maybe now parrots are finally important enough.



The Government's Devastating Disregard for America's Wild Birds

By Karen Windsor



While we're all busy struggling with a virus that's claiming lives all over the world, and while our attention is riveted on the biggest civil rights movement in the history of the U.S., we may not have noticed the government's continuing crusade against animals and our planet. One of the most current items on the table is the move to make permanent regulatory changes to the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) that will open the floodgate for oil companies, industries, developers and private individuals to kill mass numbers of birds as operational casualties without consequence,

Enacted in 1918 in response to the extinction of several bird species due to the fashion feather trade, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act rendered it unlawful to hunt or kill birds in the U.S. This was one of the first animal protection legislations in the United States. In the 1970s, provisions of the MBTA were expanded in a bi-partisan effort to include "incidental take", which is the accidental killing of birds by companies or individuals during

the course of their activities. This made oil companies, mining and timber companies, industrial operations and construction projects accountable for bird deaths and the destruction of vital nesting habitat, requiring violators to pay restitution and heavy fines for rescue, restoration and conservation. Riding on the strength of bi-partisan support for decades, the MBTA has been the primary deterrent against reckless industrial management practices commonly responsible for the deaths of millions of birds and the destruction of natural habitat in the U.S.

In 2017 an "Opinion" by the Department of the Interior altered the interpretation of the MBTA to eliminate "incidental take" as a prosecutable offense. This means that companies would no longer be held accountable for operational practices resulting in the decimation of birds and the natural environments upon which those birds depend. In effect, industry and oil companies can now accidentally kill as many birds as they

must during the course of operations without consequence. This means they don't even have to try not to kill birds or destroy habitat. The pending 2020 governmental proposal will formalize the 2017 interpretation, setting it in stone and making it difficult to reverse by future administrations.

According to U.S. Fish & Wildlife, industry is responsible for the killing of an estimated 450 million to 1.1 billion birds annually in the U.S.

What are these numbers going to look like if oil and development companies are permanently protected from culpability?

The public comment period for this governmental atrocity ended on March 19, 2020. However, the battle rages on as 8 states and several conservation organizations have filed a lawsuit challenging the 2017 evisceration of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and demanding that the protective power of the Act be restored. A final determination is expected in the fall of 2020. You can add your voice!

Visit the National Audubon Society Action Center and file your letter of opposition:
<https://act.audubon.org/a/dont-let-interior-department-gut-migratory-bird-treaty-act>

Visit Defenders of Wildlife website to file your petition
<https://defenders.org/migratory-bird-treaty-act>

Write a personal letter to your state representative, urging them to cosponsor H.R. 5552

New Resident Cavies at the NEEWS

In February of this year, after a long battle and many negotiations, the Animal Legal Defense Fund (ALDF) was successful in closing down the Cricket Hollow Zoo in Iowa. The zoo's animals were finally liberated from a situation of long-term poor care. Because Foster Parrots already had Patagonian cavies (aka "maras") on site, we agreed to take the 3 female cavies that emerged from that rescue event. The cavies were initially transferred to the Blank Park Zoo in Des Moines. Evaluations revealed that one of them was quite old and in desperate need of medical attention with a severely abscessed molar (very serious in cavies) and hips so compromised, no one quite understood how she was still walking. The Blank Park Zoo made arrangements for surgery on the old girl's infected molar prior to transferring the cavies to the care of Foster Parrots. All medical and transportation expenses were paid by ALDF.

Sadly, the old female cavia passed late in April, but her sisters have joined Foster Parrots' small herd, and are enjoying a summer of sunshine, green grass and safety at The New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary.



Feral Arts Movie Nights Are Back!



You are invited to join us at the sanctuary this summer for monthly Movie Nights. Free to the public, this drive-in style, outdoor event invites people of all ages for a night of art, food and friendship! Films are selected to promote animal welfare, environmental responsibility and cultural diversity. (...ok... and witches for our October Halloween film...)

Bring your own chairs, blankets, snacks and beverages. Samplings of vegetarian and vegan foods will be provided by Foster Parrots. Gather at 6:00pm to enjoy art projects, food samplings and fun! The film starts when the sun goes down.

For questions or information email Info@fosterparrots.com

Wear your mask! Social distancing will be enforced!

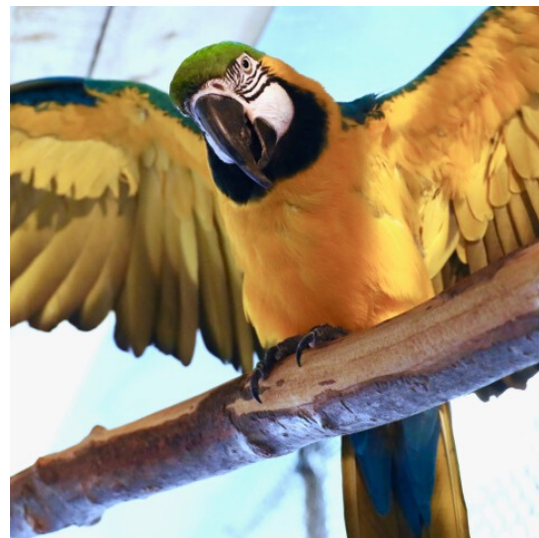
What??

No Fall Fundraiser Extravaganza at the NEEWS this year? Never fear, all is not lost!

We hope you will join us in September for a live Virtual Fundraiser Extravaganza featuring:

- Signature cocktail and vegetarian meal tutorials
- Videos from the sanctuary
- Silent auction
- Parrot toy-making demonstrations
- Sponsorship opportunities

Please stand by for dates, times & further information!





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

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Email Address: _____

Please Mail Checks to: Foster Parrots, Ltd PO Box 34 Hope Valley, RI 02832 or
Donate online by visiting www.fosterparrots.com It's safe, secure, and SO easy!