

# Canopsitta

The newsletter Loro Parque Fundación

2018  
# 111

**LORO PARQUE**  
45 years of progress

**SUCCESSFUL  
REINTRODUCTION**

**THE INVISIBLE  
INVASION  
OF PLASTICS**

**SAVED FROM  
EXTINCTION**

 **IX**  
**INTERNATIONAL  
PARROT  
CONVENTION**

**LORO PARQUE**  
  
**FUNDACIÓN**  
Tenerife - Spain  
*WE CARE*

El "must" de Canarias  
  
**LORO  
PARQUE**



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## COVER:

IX International Parrot Convention  
Illustration: Tony Sánchez

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LORO PARQUE  
FUNDACIÓN  
WE CARE

Dear friends,

*What a great start to the year 2018 we have had. Our conservation projects are being carried out successfully, such as the one of the Great Green Macaw of Guayaquil in Ecuador. This rather rare macaw species was released into the wild as part of this conservation programme. The birds are getting along well in the wild and had started feeding themselves. We hope this reintroduction will help the population recover in the region. These kind of successes fills us with great joy and satisfaction.*

*It's almost time for our big reunion to start, the IX INTERNATIONAL PARROT CONVENTION. The registrations run at full speed, because this congress is considered world-wide as the most important meeting within the range of the parrot world. This event brings about 750 people from around the world every fourth year. Parrot lovers and experts get their money's worth here: they can acquire new knowledge and exchange ideas. Together we will work to protect biodiversity and ecosystems. The loss of habitats is still the greatest threat to animals. The IX International Parrot Congress will equip us with the necessary knowledge to act together for the benefit of our planet.*

*The wild is not only affected by danger, but also our seas. That is why we are also concentrating our efforts on the oceans. Both ecosystems must be preserved because they depend on each other to maintain the balance of nature. In this sense, the scientists of Elasmocan, in collaboration with the Loro Parque Fundación, marked the hammerhead shark in the Canary Islands with a device that shows us its movements, depth and temperature preference. This marking was carried out within the special protection zone of Natura Red 2000 in the sea grass meadows of the beach "Playa del Inglés" on Gran Canaria. In this issue we tell you the first exciting data of the project.*

*Finally, I would like to thank all readers for the warm welcome to our Cyanopsitta, which appeals to Loro Fundación fans of all ages and for your excellent feedback. This gives us hope and courage to continue fighting.*

WE all CARE

Christoph Kiessling,  
President of Loro Parque Fundación



# IX International Parrot Convention

There are only a few months left before the opening of the **IX International Congress of Parrots**, to be held from 24<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> September in Tenerife.

Experts and participants from

all over the world will meet for professional and friendly exchange about parrots. Once again this year we have invited top-class speakers, who we would like to introduce to you as follows. ■



## PROGRAM (this programme is subject to change)

DATE	TIME	LOCATION	TOPIC	SPEAKER
24.09	19:00	Hotel Botánico	Welcome cocktail and inauguration speech	
25.09	08:30 - 09:15	Centro Congreso Taoro	Ecology and conservation of cuban psittacines, 20 years of experience	Maikel Cañizares
	09:20 - 10:05		Lory Aviary Management	Chris Touchon
	10:10 - 10:55		Management and breeding of <i>Amazonas brasiliensis</i>	Volker Seidl
	10:55 - 11:30		COFFEE BREAK	
	11:30 - 12:15		Parrot conservation: 40 years of progress	Rosemary Low
	12:20 - 13:05		Present situation of mexican parrots in the wild and in controlled environment	Miguel A. Gomez Garza
	13:10 - 13:40		Ecogogical functions of the parrots	José Tella
	13:45 - 14:00		Audiovisual presentation: The incredible parrots of Australia	Robert North
26.09	08:30 - 09:15	Centro Congreso Taoro	Intelligence of parrots	Auguste von Bayern y Anastasia Krashenninnikova
	09:20 - 10:05		Foraging ecology of Lear's macaw and its conservation implications	Erika Pacifico
	10:10 - 10:55		Incubation and hand-rearing of parrots: More than four decades of experience	Tony Silva
	10:55 - 11:30		COFFEE BREAK	
	11:30 - 12:15		Selected actual veterinary problems in parrots	Gerry Dorrestein
	12:20 - 13:05		Improvement of protocols with parrots	Marcia Weinzettl
	13:10 - 13:40		Parrots of the Neotropic	George Olah
	13:45 - 14:00		Audiovisual presentation: Australia. Continent of the cockatoos	Robert North
	18:30		Hotel pick up and transfer to surprise dinner	
27.09	08:30 - 09:15	Centro Congreso Taoro	Psittacines paediatric	Nuhacet Fernández
	09:20 - 10:05		Importance of zoos as breeding and conservation centers	Denner Giovanini
	10:10 - 10:55		Saving Norfolk Island Green Parrots ( <i>Cyanoramphus cookii</i> , a critically endangered specie)	Luis Ortiz Catedral
	10:55 - 11:30		COFFEE BREAK	
	11:30 - 12:15		Knowledge about conservation and breeding of psittacines species	Rafael Zamora
	12:20 - 13:05		Presentation about systematic and taxonomic changes within the genus <i>Pyrrhura</i>	Thomas Arndt
	13:10 - 13:40		Aviculture in India	Anil Garg
	13:45 - 14:00		Audiovisual presentation: Curved peaks of Australia	Robert North
	20:30	Hotel Botánico	Closing Gala Dinner with a splendid menu in the exotic gardens of the Hotel Botánico followed by awards for the best speakers	



Rosemary Low  
Great Britain



Thomas Arndt  
Germany



Gerry Dorrestein  
Netherlands



Maikel Cañizares  
Cuba



Chris Touchon  
USA



Miguel A. Gómez  
Mexico



José Luis Tella  
Spain



Robert North  
Australia



Auguste von Bayern  
Germany



Anastasia Krashenninnikova  
Russia



Erika Pacifico  
Brazil



George Olah  
Australia



Denner Giovanini  
Brazil



Luis Ortiz Catedral  
Mexico



Anil Garg  
India



Volker Seidl  
Germany



Tony Silva  
USA



Nuhacet Fernández, Marcia Weinzettl and Rafael Zamora  
Loro Parque and Loro Parque Fundación

Limited places assigned in order of registration. We await you!

**CONVENTION REGISTRATION:**

<http://www.loroparque-fundacion.org/congreso/inscripcion.php?lang=en-gb>

**HOTEL BOTÁNICO RESERVATION:**

<http://www.loroparque-fundacion.org/congreso/index.php/en/registration-accomodation/accommodations>



# LORO PARQUE

## 45 years of progress

Rosemary Low.



Is a prolific author of numerous articles and books on parrots that have been translated into many languages. She was the first person to write a book about parrot conservation entitled *Endangered Parrots*. She is a tireless fighter for the conservation of birds and their habitats.

When Wolfgang Kiessling bought a small ground on the island of Tenerife no one could have foreseen that this action would put the then small village of Punta Brava on the map worldwide. The fledgling parrot park that he opened there in 1972 was the forerunner of what today has been voted the world's number one zoo by Trip Advisor. It has received countless other accolades.

When I was there in October I met an English couple who told me: "We don't like zoos. But Loro Parque is amazing. We loved it!"

The success of the park is due not only to its immaculate condition and exceptionally beautiful botanical garden setting, but to its constant upgrading of exhibits and the inauguration of new ones. However, it is what happens behind the scenes that makes Loro Parque a world leader. Its 4,000 parrots define it as the most important reserve of parrot species and sub-species anywhere on the planet. But, in my view,

*even more important is the work of Loro Parque Fundación.*

*Founded in 1994 to support parrot conservation, it has done so in a manner unrivalled by any other organization. Up to 2016 it had committed more than US\$17 million to conservation, mainly to parrot projects but also to cetaceans (dolphins and whales). At the 2017 board meeting held in October, it again allocated just over one million dollars to conservation for the coming year. Loro Parque is famous for hosting an international*

*parrot conference every four years, since the first in 1986. The conferences are a Mecca for everyone with a serious interest in parrots* and always a meeting ground of countless old friends.

Mr Kiessling once jokingly suggested to me of the event, "This is all your fault!" since it was I who mooted the idea of a convention on our first meeting in 1984.



Yellow-eared Parrot, *Ognorhynchus icterotis*.

I have many memories of these important meetings but there is one that stands out above all others. In 1994 I was moved almost to tears by the presentation of Dr Niels Krabbe. He spoke about the Yellow-eared Parrot (*Ognorhynchus icterotis*) – then called a conure. He showed a video of what was the last known population. Only 60 birds were known to survive. In that year Loro Parque Fundación (LPF) started to support the work of Dr Krabbe in Ecuador. He was trying to protect the land on which the last remnant population was known.

I feared that this would be the next parrot to become extinct. Sadly, the

Ecuador population disappeared soon after, possibly trapped, but the species was discovered in Colombia in 1997. The areas it inhabited were so remote that the tiny population could have died out, with only the local people noticing its disappearance.

The story of the Yellow-eared Parrot is without doubt the most remarkable in the whole history of parrot conservation and ranks near the top for bird conservation worldwide.

Today its population numbers over 2,500 individuals and its range has increased enormously. The reason I dwell on this species is because that without the funding from LPF, which has reached more than US\$1.5 million, and the personnel of ProAves who work in the field, there is no doubt that by now the charismatic Yellow-eared Parrot would be extinct.

It would be difficult to over-state the importance of the work of the foundation. No other organisation worldwide supports parrot conservation with even a fraction of the funding provided by LPF. Its projects are implemented by the staff of well-chosen NGOs, such as ProAves in Colombia and Aquasis and others in Brazil.

In the Philippines, the Katala Foundation, directed by the dynamic duo of Indira and Peter Widmann, is largely funded by LPF. It has almost certainly staved off extinction for the Red-vented Cockatoo (*Cacatua haematuropygia*) with its multi-faceted programme of field work

and education. Incidentally, the biggest genetic captive reserve of this cockatoo is at Loro Parque.

Other examples of successful projects are too numerous to mention here. But the foundation's work does not end in the field. *Scientific and veterinary research is also important. Veterinarian and vet students from the best universities in many countries have worked as interns in the clinic at Loro Parque*, learning so much that

assists in the health and welfare of parrots and enabling them to share the knowledge gained.

At the board meeting the curator Marcia Weinzettl reported on the 2017 breeding season to date. Outstanding successes included 23 Blue-throated Macaws (*Ara glaucogularis*), ten Yellow-billed Amazons (*Amazona collaria*) 27 Mount Apo Lorikeets (*Trichoglossus johnstoniae*) and eight Pesquet's Parrots (*Psittirichas fulgidus*).

Marcia's aim, since she assumed the position of curator last year, is to annually increase the percentage of parent-reared young. The policy of Loro Parque Fundación is to promote 100% parent-raised young, and only interfere into the breeding with auxiliary techniques if necessary. Other interesting statistics are that 190 new pairs were made up last year and 59.7% of the parrots in the collection are adults.

Loro Parque Fundación is strongly represented in the media. In 2017, up to October, 256 articles were published about its work; among others the personnel gave 33 radio interviews and twelve on television and spoke at 32 conferences. The foundation has thousands of followers on Facebook and the public interest for its activities does not stop increasing.

Thirty-six thousand copies of its newspaper *Cyanopsitta* were published, many of which were distributed in local newspapers, including colouring pages to attract the attention of children. Education, especially regarding threats to the planet and its wildlife are deemed extremely important. On leaving the park I, among countless other visitors, was extremely impressed to be handed a small booklet with information on human over-population, the increasing extent of deforestation, the killing of dolphins (more than 300,000 annually), plastic waste and other important issues. I do not know of any other organisation worldwide that cares enough to do this. As the booklet states: *"Nothing is more important to Loro Parque than love and respect for animals."* ■



International Parrot Convention in Loro Parque.

# Training for animal welfare



Chick of Eclectus parrot (*Eclectus roratus*) during the workshop at Loro Parque Fundación.

We are fully aware of the importance of education for future generations. That is why Loro Parque Fundación runs an educational programme throughout the year where thousands of students can get to know their environment better. Also adults can expand their knowledge of nature conservation. At our last workshop, which was organized together with the German magazine Papageien, expert and hobby breeders met to exchange experiences. *Most workshop participants are members and sympathizers of the foundation who pass the acquired knowledge forward. Due to these workshops, which take place every year, we acquire new members and our commitment to protecting the animal world increases.*

Prestigious speakers, such as Professor Petra Wolf, passed on their expertise on the topics of nutrition and veterinary medicine, enriching the transfer of knowledge among the participants. Professor Michael Lierz from the German Veterinary University of Giessen who is a permanent collaborator of the Loro Parque Fundación emphasized the importance of veterinary assistance in parrot breeding as a decisive factor for breeding success and for the health of the species being cared for. The team of Loro Parque and Loro Parque Fundación spoke on interesting topics such as the realities for parrots living in their natural habitat opposite to those living in care. The Loro Parque was presented as an outstanding example of a modern zoo.

Further lectures on the breeding station from the point of view of species conservation and husbandry as well as the direct relationship to educational work and its connection with on-site projects on species protection rounded off the event. Participants also had the opportunity to watch

our veterinarian Nuhacet Fernández undergoing veterinary surgery in the Animal Embassy. This is another example of the practical nature of this workshop. Another highlight was Marcia Weinzettl's session. The curator of Loro Parque Fundación introduced the participants to the latest advances in hand rearing.

Looking back, we feel a deep satisfaction with the outcome of the workshops.

Many of the participants have already confirmed their participation in the IX International Parrot Convention to be held in September 2018. ■



Participants and speakers at the LPF&PAPAGEIEN workshop.



# Successful reintroduction



The crossing of the river courses to reach the pre-adaptation aviary was one of the challenges to be overcome.

## A huge conservation success was achieved

in West Ecuador: the population of rarely occurring and fascinating Great Green Macaw of Guayaquin (*Ara ambiguus guayaquilensis*) was strengthened in the wilderness. The flight of this large Macaw species calls the most attention.

Unfortunately, its occurrence in the wild has become a rarity. One of the most important goals of this reintroduction was to transport the nine military macaws from the Jambelí Foundation to the Ayampe Reserve. The last trip was coordinated by the Jocotoco Foundation in cooperation with Loro Parque Fundación and the

"Comunidad de las Tunas", situated southwest of the Machalilla National Park.

For this purpose, we asked for the required compulsory permits from the environmental authorities. Once obtained, the expedition could proceed and the 9 Great Green Macaws were subjected to the strictest veterinary controls. These proved that their genetics were compatible with the species in the target area and also followed the premises recommended by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) for resettlement. It was also ensured that the reintroduction did not present a biological risk for the specimens themselves or for other free-living macaws, not even for the ecosystem of the Ayampe reserve.

**The direct and long-standing cooperation of Loro Parque Fundación with the Fundación Jocotoco made this amazing project possible.**

The ultimate goal was not easy, as reintroductions require a high degree of scientific

professionalism. In addition, compliance with regulations is key to ensure the final success of such a project. The release of a captive-bred animal into the wild is a very delicate process which must be carried out under expert supervision and with responsibility. Pre and post release preparation is also important for survival in the wild. This preparation requires a broad knowledge of both the macaw and the species living in the environment, with which they will interact. Therefore, prior contact with plants and fruits is part of the release preparation. The birds must also be in the best physical condition. The ability to identify predators is also one of the essential guidelines for successful reintroduction into the wild. In addition, the technical team must exclude the birds that are not suitable for release into the wild. This applies not only to the post release, but also during the preparation phase.

For the reintroduction, the macaws were housed in a large outdoor aviary at the release site where they can hide from predators. We provided the aviary with hanging feeding bowls and water troughs. This way, they can train their abilities and stimulate their muscles. But, above all, the aviary is a viewpoint in order to explore the environment, which will become their new habitat. The reintroduction involves a variety of adaptation and acclimatization techniques. For instance, the width and height of the aviary in order to practice ascending flights to peer over the horizon. The perception of the surrounding nature, like sounds and climate fluctuations, are a crucial aspect of the adaptation.

The birds are not forced to release. Therefore the large entrance of the aviary will remain open, so the birds can come and go as they please. We still continue to place food and water. This allows the birds to be prepared before they start foraging for food in the wild.

Observing the first macaws venturing into the wild fills the research staff with enthusiasm. The other macaws will soon follow them and they will communicate via contact calls. In this way the group sticks together despite the distance. This experience is associated with many emotions, such as the excitement to see them develop; to observe how they eat their first wild fruits or how they encounter other species. These observations provide us with important



One of the released macaws enjoying the fresh bark of the trees of the AYAMPE Reserve.

information that we will use for the macaw conservation program and the managing of other species.

The construction of the aviary was a challenge due to the distance within the Ayampe reserve.

this species and its environment to future generations. Visitors can observe the surroundings first hand

and pass on valuable information to the researchers. The protection of fauna by the local population becomes part of their culture, of which they are proud.

Ecuador has an indescribable variety of flora and fauna which

requires different types of protection. In Ecuador, the number of bird species exceeds 1,500, hosting the most birds in terms of area. 45 of them are parrot species, among them, the Great Green Macaw of Guayaquil, which is considered one of the jewels of nature conservation. With the support of the Loro Parque Fundación, the population of this species has now the opportunity to recover in the Ayampe reserve. ■



The place of reintroduction could only be reached on foot. So the materials and also the birds had to be carried through the wilderness. The local engagement and education programmes play an important role in such conservation projects. The locals learn to recognize the species and were made aware of the occurrence of the birds in their environment. Awareness of the importance of the Great Green Macaw, within its biodiversity, is an important key to ensuring that the new generations also pass on the conservation of



The local engagement plays an important role in order to ensure the prosperity of the species in the environment.



# MICRO-PLASTICS

## OCEANS OF INVISIBLE PLASTICS

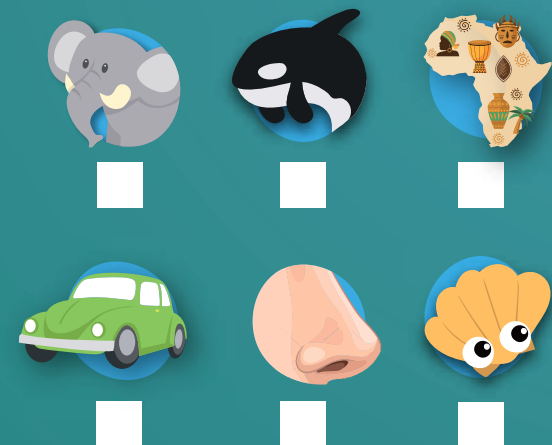


### DO YOU KNOW WHAT MICRO-PLASTICS ARE?

We usually hear about how we contaminate our planet and see large quantities of garbage, but we should also worry about the smallest part (the one we can't hardly see): the micro-plastics

### DISCOVER THE WORD

Write each image's initial to find out where a lot micro-plastics are



### DON'T WORRY!

We can still brush our teeth, but we should take a look at the labels of the products we use, so they do not contain ingredients as polyethylene and/or polypropylene. Every year, about 8 million tons of plastic go into the ocean, much of it in the form of micro-plastics that come from:

- The degradation of other plastics
- Personal care products

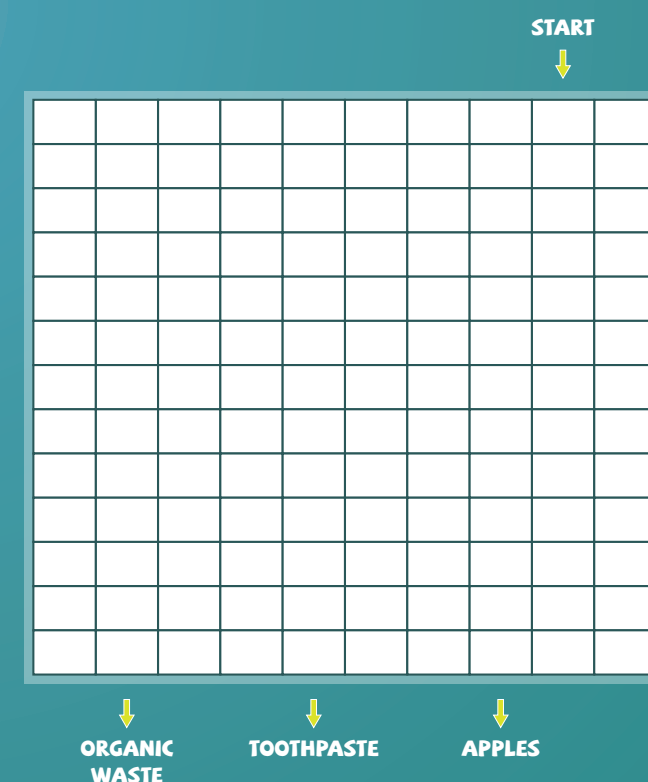
**WE MUST BE RESPONSIBLE CONSUMERS! IT AFFECTS US ALL.**

### LET'S FIND OUT WHERE THE MICRO-PLASTICS ARE

FOLLOW THIS INSTRUCTIONS AND FILL EACH BOX. YOU MAY BE SHOCKED TO KNOW YOU CAN FIND THEM IN DAILY-USE PRODUCTS!

#### INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE START BOX

1. Go down two boxes
2. Go left as many boxes as school days has a week
3. Go down half of six boxes
4. Turn right the same number of boxes
5. Go down three more boxes
6. Go five boxes to the left
7. Go down two boxes
8. Turn three boxes to the right
9. Go down half of six boxes and you will find the answer!



# THE HAMMERHEAD SHARK

**YOU CAN PAINT ME IF YOU WANT TO!**

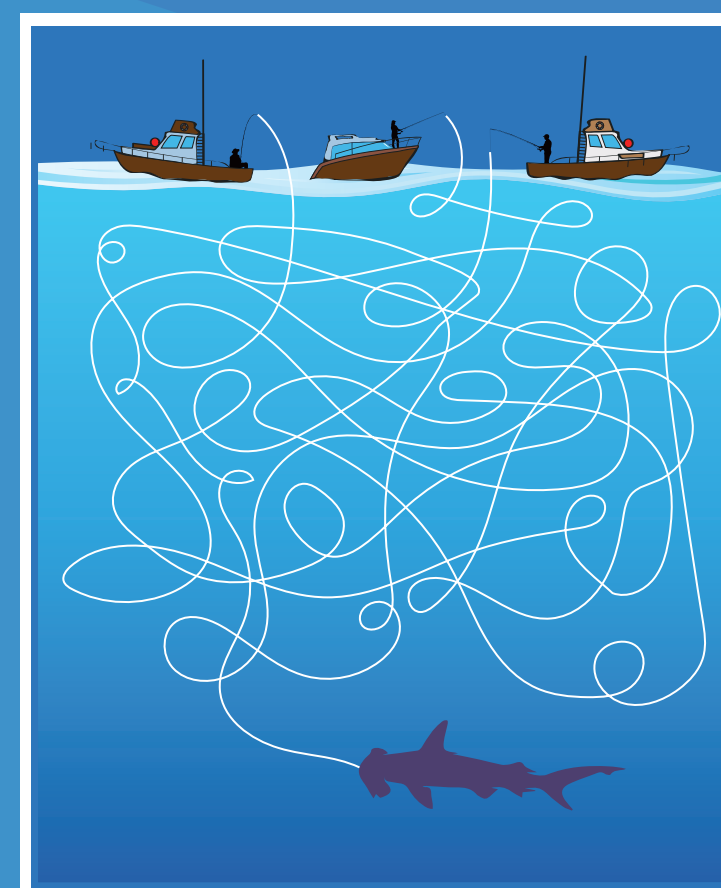


**HAMMERHEAD SHARK HAS A 360° WORLD VIEW!**

The Hammerhead shark gets its name from the strange T shape of its head, with the eyes on each tip, which allows it to have a greater vision forward and backward

### FIND OUT WHO CATCHES THE HAMMERHEAD SHARK

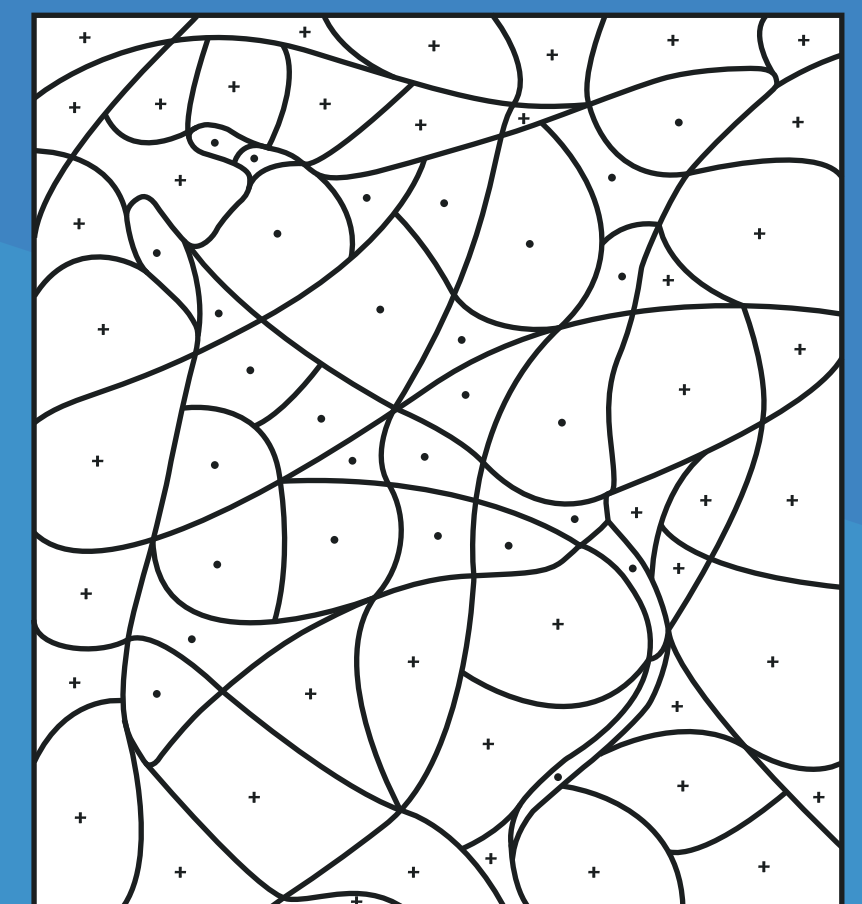
Hammerhead sharks are threatened by fining, which is terrible! Follow the lines to find out who catches the shark



### PAINT AND DISCOVER!

**HAMMERHEAD SHARKS FEED ON SQUIDS, FISH, CRUSTACEANS AND STINGRAYS**

Fill the boxes with a dot in it and discover which is the favorite meal of Hammerhead sharks





# First satellite tag on sharks in Spain



Hammerhead shark during the tagging process.

Photo: Filip Osaer - ElasmóCan

For the first time, and thanks to the financing of Loro Parque Fundación, the ElasmóCan scientists were able to mark a shark on the Canary Islands with a satellite dispositive.

It was a young male of the genus *Sphyrna zygaena*, known as the smooth hammerhead. This species is classified as endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). There have been so far only two species of hammerhead shark registered on the Canary Islands.

Although this species of shark is common all over the world, there is hardly any biological information about it. There is particularly on the Canary Islands a lack of specific

information on the species or the population in addition to individual data for viewing.

All types of hammerhead sharks are currently in danger due to numerous fishing methods around the world, such as the practice of finning, which refers to the removal of fins from sharks. The fins are highly valued in Asian markets but this practice causes the death of approximately 100 million sharks a year. In the case of the Canary Islands, where shark hunting is prohibited in principle and where there are only few tuna left, sharks occasionally fall victim to sport deep-sea fishermen. The survival of these and other shark species is seriously endangered; shark

populations are declining worldwide. Therefore, it is important to dispose of good knowledge of these animals in order to be able to undertake effective measures to ensure the protection of species at local and international level.

*With the support of the Loro Parque Fundación, ElasmóCan has developed the research project "Hammerhead Shark Research", which focuses on marking campaigns activities in various islands. With the help of the project, the researchers want*

to learn more about the smooth hammerhead shark and thus better control the local population. For the first time, a telemetry technique consisting of a PSAT (Pop-up Satellite Archival Tag) device that stores and transmits remote information was used.

Unlike other marking techniques, they can record movements, geographical location, depth, light intensity and sea temperature during the movement of the animal. The instrument detaches from the shark after six months and floats on the surface to be picked up or to transmit further collected data via satellite. In this way we get comprehensive information about the habits and preferences of sharks, as would not be the case with conventional trackers.

In addition, the aquarium Poema del Mar carries out, through Loro Parque Fundación, an ex situ research programme of sharks, which allow us to get a better approach to the sharks. This programme multiplies the number of studies on their biology, physiology, behaviour, reproduction, etc. and thus strongly promotes the development of scientific knowledge on elasmobranchs in the Canary Islands.

Furthermore, the conservation of these animals is key to Poema del Mar. For this reason, a programme has been established that combines the exhibition of the species in the aquarium with awareness-raising and educational activities, both inside and outside the facilities.

These measures are intended to involve visitors and the external public to receive more donations to support this project and new ones for endangered species. ■

# First video conference on sharks in Poema del Mar

The Aquarium Poema del Mar has started its videoconferencing program. The first video conference took place in the Deep Sea. This attraction has the largest curved viewing window in the world and offers a unique opportunity to discover the wonders of the underwater world. The schools invited to the videoconference already had the pleasure to enjoy it. Live from their classroom the students could learn more about the biology and protection of sharks. The sharks living in the aquarium are considered ambassadors for their fellow sharks in the oceans. Thanks to them we can learn more about their characteristics

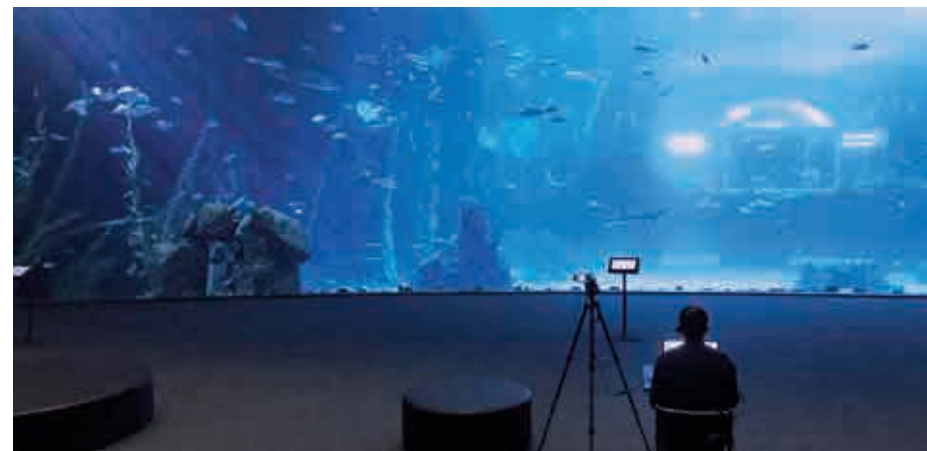
and behaviour. Sharks are often labelled as dangerous human killers, although in the year only a few humans die as a result of shark attacks.

The students were also made aware of the endangered sharks in the Canary Islands' Sea. For instance the Angel shark and the Hammerhead shark. The students were able to experience the Deep Sea attraction and its marine life, as well as the rich biodiversity of the Canary Island coastline, live from their classrooms.

*The Aquarium Poema del Mar, in collaboration with the Loro Parque*

*Fundación, will continue to hold video conferences from its facilities and bring the sharks directly to the*

*classrooms. These video conferences are available to all schools in Spain.* In this school year we will also report about the jellyfish and the sea turtles. We cordially invite you to discover the hidden beauty of the marine world, but also its dangers. ■



Video conference of sharks from the Deep Sea Attraction.

Photo: LPF

# Are parrots able to control their impulsive reactions?



What would you do if you want to get a cookie that is placed in the centre of a transparent plastic cylinder with openings at its both ends? Probably, and that is what you are expected to do, you would reach inside the tube with your hand. However, many other animals fail this task by bumping into the transparent barrier in the attempt to reach directly for the visible treat. This simple task, the so-called cylinder task, is a standard way to test for motor inhibition, i.e., the ability to inhibit or control an impulsive reaction. This ability is also a core component of a complex cognitive mechanisms like self-control, the ability to forgo an immediate treat in favour of a higher profit in the future. Recently, a large-scale study, comparing 36 species, found that

the competence in motor inhibition is best predicted by absolute brain size, with great apes as the best performers. This view we challenged by a later study in which different crow species were found to parallel great apes despite having much smaller absolute brain sizes. This was in line with recent findings suggesting that it is the number of specific neurons rather than absolute brain size per se, that correlates with levels of motor inhibition. *Like corvids, many parrots have relatively large brains, high numbers of neurons, and solve challenging cognitive tasks.* Therefore, the researchers

at the Max-Planck Comparative Cognition Research Group (CCRG), a research lab based in the Animal Embassy at Loro Parque in collaboration with the Loro Parque Fundación, tested four parrot species with the cylinder task and published their results recently.

The results however surprised the researchers. The four parrot species performed relatively poorly in the cylinder task despite having large brains and high neuronal densities, and although other parrot species have demonstrated good self-control in other studies. However, when the researchers examined the pattern of the failures more carefully, they noticed that a good proportion of mistakes (touches of the cylinder) did not appear to be directed toward the reward but could have been the result of exploration or accident. Considering that touches not directed toward the reward behind the barrier are unlikely to be inhibition failures the team ran additional analyses on the failure patterns.

They revealed that most failures by two of the species tested (the Blue headed macaws, *Primolius couloni*, and the African grey parrots, *Psittacus erithacus*) appeared to be attempts to reach directly for the reward, thus representing true errors,

Solving the test successfully requires control of impulsive reactions by the parrots. Blue headed Macaw (*Primolius couloni*)

Photo: LPF



Max Planck Institute  
for Ornithology



Transparent cylinder, used in the tests.  
Blue-headed Macaw, *Primolius couloni*.  
Photo: LPF

whereas the other two species (the Great green macaws, *Ara ambiguus*, and blue throated macaws, *Ara glaucogularis*) also frequently touched the cylinder in a manner that did not seem to be food-directed.

Interestingly, the frequency of such non-food-related failures increased across trials constituting the majority of their failures in later trials, so it is unlikely that the failing individuals did not know the correct solution of the task. Instead those failures might have occurred due to exploration or boredom resulting from an exposure to repeated trials requiring an identical response. The CCRG team suggests that the cylinder task is a problematic comparative test, since it can easily generate false negatives if the tested animals touch the cylinder to explore the surface rather than in an attempt to reach for the reward, which might happen especially since touching the cylinder does not infer any cost. The present study provides important results as it sheds light on motivational aspects that can influence a species' performance in this and other motor inhibition tasks which need to be considered in the future work. ■



# The invisible invasion of plastics

The Loro Parque Fundación team has observed for years the increase in plastic waste on the Canary Islands beaches. The islands are a potential barometer for the floating synthetic polymer waste due to their location in front of the Atlantic Ocean currents.

In the past we could see logs and branches floating to the shore. Today, other floating waste reaches the Canary Islands, which often goes unnoticed.

The tide washes up the formed stains of small pearls and coloured microfibers; sandy coasts with a certain cardinal point are particularly affected.

*Thanks to the commitment of the Loro Parque Fundación, about 7,700 students*

*were able to get to know the real situation of their surroundings. In particular, they learned how plastic pollution affects marine biodiversity.*

Three years ago, we launched, in collaboration with the Canary Island Ministry of Education, an ambitious project called "Maritime Biodiversity Week", which draws attention to

the problems of marine pollution through its actions. More than 30 primary schools from all Canary Islands have already participated in this multidisciplinary project.

Unfortunately, the seas are exposed to multiple threats. In particular, we would like to emphasize the danger of micro plastics. These types of particles are smaller than 5 mm in diameter and pose a threat not only to marine biodiversity, but also to human health. Due to their small



size, micro plastics are ingested by the marine animals and thus we can see it come back to us on our dinner plates. In addition, toxins accumulate on the surface of plastics, which act as a sponge for these pollutants increasing their dose of toxins over time.

Within the project scope, we collected sand samples from over 20 beaches from the Canarian Archipelago, which were analysed together with the students. On the facing north beaches we found a

large amount of garbage and thus also concentrated micro plastic. This plastic is driven to our shores from various places on the planet by the Gulf Stream and the ocean currents of the Canary Islands. Therefore, the situation on beaches exposed to these ocean currents is alarming. This is the case of the

Famara beach on Lanzarote or the Porís bay, on Tenerife. Above all, we want to sensitize the younger generation to take the importance of the oceans seriously. This is why the Loro Parque Fundación strives to raise the awareness of the future generation for the protection of marine ecosystems. ■



	Presence of micro plastic
	Canarian water currents



The students could see the 5 millimetre fragments under a binocular glass, which contained one of the most common micro plastic fibres



## We found micro plastic on the following beaches

### 1 Playa Arenas Blancas



### 2 Playa del Arenal - Bajamar



### 3 Playa de Benijo



### 4 Playa El Porís



### 5 Playa Dos Roques



### 6 Playa de la Laja



### 7 Playa del Hombre



### 8 Playa Caleta del Caballo



### 9 Playa de Famara



### 10 Playa De Órzola



### 11 Playa Caleta Beatriz



Students of the Gran Tarajal school (Fuerteventura) during a sand sampling activity.



# Saved from extinction



Author: Tony Sánchez

Loro Parque Fundación contributes to the conservation of the golden-plumed parakeet (*Leptosittaca branickii*) in the Andes of Ecuador, where the foundation, in cooperation with ProAves, supports studies on the biology of this species, as well as their distribution and the plants that occur in its habitat. *The Podocarpus National Park, in the province of Cañar, hosts the largest population known until now of this species. Thanks to this occurrence, we have been able to develop protection strategies for the golden-plumed parakeet.*

Many species go extinct unnoticed. Among them, some parrot species whose imminent extinction goes

unnoticed for years. It often takes too long for ornithologists or local naturalists to notice its rarity. They will only become aware when studies are initiated. When they do find out, it is often too late to act. This involves not only knowing a single species, but also the species that live in the same ecosystem and on which the conservation stock depends.

Due to the many years of experience, Loro Parque Fundación has been able to save nine species from extinction. But we want to save more. This commitment is only possible thanks to the support of the loyal members and sympathisers. *Support us and become part of the Loro Parque Fundación team to ensure an effective protection of nature.* ■

# Baby-Boom at Loro Parque

One of the best barometers of animal welfare is their ability to reproduce. *Loro Parque is celebrating many baby animal births from the beginning of this year.* The zoo welcomed the offspring of the Chinstrap penguin, which is growing up in Planet Pinguin. Loro Parque is now also home to a cute black swan chick. The proud parents are touchingly caring about their nestling.

The Scarlet ibis which is a bird species that inhabits the ecosystem

of South America has been busy building their nest. The new born squabs still carry their dark plumage that serves as camouflage in the wild and which will later turn red as the adult one.

The baby boom at Loro Parque continues with the birth of pigeons of the most varied species of parrots. Under the watchful eyes of their parents, the chicks hatch out of their nests. The couples are taking loving care of their offspring, which is as well a healthy stock for the nature. ■



Chinstrap penguin chick (*Pygoscelis antarctica*)

Photo: LPF



Black swan chick (*Cygnus atratus*)

Photo: LPF



Cloncurry parrot chick (*Barnardius barnardi macgillivrayi*)

Photo: LPF

# Emergency aid for the parrots of Dominica

Due to the severe devastation caused by the huge hurricanes on the Caribbean island of Dominica, the parrot species Imperial amazon (*Amazona imperialis*) and Red-necked amazon (*Amazona arauiaca*) have been put in a precarious situation. Both species, which are adapted to such natural

phenomena for centuries, have been afflicted this time by an excessive force of nature, which severely damaged their habitat.

In recent field monitoring, we discovered individuals in remote areas where they do not always find enough food, and the access to help them is very complicated.

*Thanks to this pickup, which is financed by the Loro Parque Fundación through the RSCF (Rare Species Conservatory Foundation), it is now possible to carry out field research and thus help these parrots, and at the same time contribute to a proper species conservation.*

Dominica is now in a very vulnerable situation since her nature is now subject to speculation. Only applied research will achieve the right analysis to protect these endangered species. ■



## NEW MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM

The new membership program "We Care" entered into force on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018. It is a new member structure that will recognize your contribution through multiple advantages. It will make more visible your contribution recognition by introducing new formulas and novelties that are related with the opening of Poema del Mar and the

needs that we have detected in the evolution of daily activity.

We hope, this new change will be for you a pleasure, as the included advantageous will allow you the access to the aquarium Poema del Mar, while the membership is valid. It will be also established a transitory arrangement for those members who, at the date of entry into force,

still have the current membership. It will be adapted to them for enjoying the advantages and new conditions till end of the year.

We remain at your complete disposal for any additional questions you might have.

Thank you very much for continue trusting Loro Parque Fundación!

## HELP US:

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LORO PARQUE  
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### PERSONAL MEMBERSHIP FORM:

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Surname: .....  
DNI: .....  
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Address: ..... Post Code: .....  
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Phone number: .....

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Bank account number (IBAN): ES85 0182 5310 61 0016356158  
BIC: BBVAESMM

Expiring date of previous membership: .....

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Note: From the beginning of March until the end of August, unfortunately it is not possible to visit our breeding center in La Vera due to the breeding season of our parrots, in order not to disturb them in their protected surroundings.





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