Cyanopsitta

The newsletter **Loro Parque Fundación**

2020
118

PERIODISTA DIGITAL ACKNOWLEDGES LORO PARQUE AS THE WORLD'S NO. 1

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN EUROPE!

39 REINTRODUCED IN ECUADOR

LORO PARQUE FUNDACIÓN AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CANARY ISLANDS ANCHOR THEIR FIRST SCIENTIFIC BUOY

Poema del Mar AQUARIUM

25 LORO PARQUE FUNDACIÓN Canary Islands - Spain WE CARE

LORO PARQUE ANIMAL EMBASSY

Cyanopsitta # 118 - 2020

COVER:
CanBIO scientific buoy
Photo: Moisés Pérez / LPF

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LORO PARQUE FUNDACIÓN WE CARE

Dear friends,

Given the exceptional circumstances in which we all find ourselves, we have decided to issue this edition of Cyanopsitta digitally. This serious, worldwide pandemic is taking thousands of lives while also changing the whole of humanity. We are going through times of great uncertainty, with most of the big zoos around the world closed because of the disease. Nonetheless, we are convinced that we will emerge renewed from this grave crisis, equally determined to continue fighting to save species in danger of extinction, as we have been doing up to now.

Indeed things did not bode well from the start of 2020, which early on saw the breaking of three sad records. Last January proved to be the hottest ever since weather records began back in 1880, with the temperature in the Antarctic passing the 20ºC mark for the first time. An event that serves to confirm the omens of the devastating fires that scourged Australia and the Amazon last year. It is estimated that in Australia alone some ten million hectares went up in smoke —an area the size of Portugal— while also doing away with the lives of a thousand million animals. Clearly the global climate change we are causing on Earth is going to test the resistance of its ecosystems, as it will that of the all the animal and vegetable species known to us. There is no doubt that the most vulnerable are those that are already under threat, which explains why we at the Foundation are focusing our biggest efforts on them.

In spite of these troubled times, we wanted to bring a light of hope to the Cyanopsitta front page by showcasing the first scientific buoy that Loro Parque Fundación has ever anchored, courtesy of the CanBIO project, which was co-financed to the tune of € 2 million by Loro Parque and the Regional Government of the Canary Islands. As is that case with those already operating on commercial ships and others to be fitted to automated underwater vehicles over the next few years, the scientific instruments carried by these buoys are already generating open data for the big scientific networks worldwide. Scientific knowledge is essential to the protection of those species most endangered by the global climate change we are forcing on the planet.

This issue contains details on the return of a new group of red-masked parakeets to the Ecuadorian jungle that had been rescued from illegal trafficking. There is also an interesting feature on the voices of parrots in Mexico, not to mention the latest success stories from our breeding centre. We also bring the latest news about Loro Parque, which has opened a magnificent African parrot facility. Moreover, the zoo has once again been acknowledged to be the best in world.

Announced at the Travellers Awards as part of Madrid's International Tourism Fair, this new prize serves to confirm the Loro Parque animal welfare model of excellence, which is further complemented by its work in conservation, investigation and environmental education. Given by the Periodista Digital, this award is extremely important as it comes from direct and independent journalist sources that report on current affairs, thereby attesting to its overall worth.

As is the case with each reward we receive, it serves to encourage us to continue our daily efforts to save endangered species and afford our children a chance to continue to enjoy the marvels nature has to offer. A nature that in these days of confinement is coming that much closer to our towns, villages, ports and coasts, perhaps surprised, not to say relieved, by the fact that noisy humankind seems to have disappeared by magic. On account of the extraordinary marine biodiversity to be found along the coastlines of the Canary Islands, members of the cetacean species have been sighted close enough to enable us to witness their interactions.

I would like to finish by sending you all my best wishes for your health and safety and that of your loved ones in these difficult times. I am convinced that, together, we will beat this pandemic. Meanwhile, the Loro Parque Fundación will not let up in its fight for animals, persisting in our actions in favour of species wherever they may be needed; a battle that we will continue to wage in the future. In the meantime, keep following us on the social networks: #EnCasaConLoroParque

WE CARE

Christoph Kiessling.
President of Loro Parque Fundación

IUCN

2011-2020 United Nations Decade on Biodiversity

Periodista Digital acknowledges Loro Parque as the world's No. 1

Loro Parque was awarded the best zoo in the world prize by the on-line newspaper Periodista Digital.

The award was received by Christoph Kiessling, Chairman of Loro Parque Fundación and Deputy Chairman of the Loro Parque Group, at an event held at the Rioja Centre in Madrid attended by a host of illustrious authorities.

In his acceptance speech, he thanked the organisation for this important distinction for the zoo —while adding that it is also a *conservation centre and animal embassy— particularly at a time when its importance its thrown into even greater relief by the disastrous wildfires in both Australia and the Amazon,* where it has become patently obvious how much world wildlife is suffering and where it can be seen how important institutions like zoos are when it comes to protecting and helping nature when most needed. ■

Periodista Digital

TRAVELLERS AWARDS

The Antarctic is melting

King penguin chick with its parents at Loro Parque. Photo: A. Azcárate / LPF

Alarming reports of temperature rises at the poles are particularly worrying. *Temperatures of over 20ºC have been registered in parts of the Antarctic.* This marks a record for this part of the Earth, the temperature of which has risen by nearly 3ºC over the last 50 years.

The Antarctic ice sheet is 4.8 km deep and covers some 14 million km2 (which is approximately twice the size of Australia) and *contains 90% of the world's fresh water.* Were it to melt completely, water levels in the rest of the world could exceed a height of 50 m.

Changes such as these drastically affect those species that inhabit these extreme climes, where animal adaptation is very specialised. This is why penguins that are born at Loro Parque facilities constitute an important advance for many reasons. For example, such events generate data that are used to optimise breeding and handling results, which can be very useful in possible rescue or environmental recovery actions.

Penguins will be one of the species to suffer most from the effects of climate change owing to how directly they are related to the Antarctic environment, where even the slightest change to the same will impact on their population. Indeed, it is worrisome to see how even now they are modifying their behaviour to try and adapt to the changes coming about at present.

Several chicks of different species of penguins have been born in recent months at Loro Parque, which can normally be seen by visitors that wish to learn more about these species. In fact at our facilities you can really see how important it is to contribute to their protection.

AThe following link provides access to a scientific paper on the rising sea level:

Horton, B. P., Kopp, R. E., Garner, A. J., Hay, C. C., Khan, N. S., Roy, K., & Shaw, T. A. (2018). Annual Review of Environment and Resources Mapping Sea-Level Change in Time, Space, and Probability. ■

Parrots make the best gardeners

Yellow-shouldered parrots working the vegetation in Loro Parque Fundación aviaries. Photo: M. Kortmann / LPF

You may be surprised to know that parrots act as jungle gardeners. Moreover, this is the time of the year that they spend most time pruning and relating to their surroundings.

Parrots scatter seeds in forests. TThis is mainly due to them eating the fruit of a tree at a distance from where it was picked. Such a food carrying capacity also benefits ground inhabiting species, which otherwise would have great difficulty in accessing food of this type.

An increase in the hours of daylight, in temperature and the presence of new shoots, flowers and seeds in plants all act as a signal that prompts most species to start breeding.

Particularly in males, the rise of activity caused by an increase in hormones makes them seek to discharge their energy by picking at branches and tearing tree bark. By keeping themselves so entertained their attention is distracted from females, which if they are not yet on heat, can be pursued incessantly by the males, to such an extent as dangerously weakening them.

Given the opportunity, parrots will passionately dedicate themselves to transforming the shrub branches available to them. Consequently, it is very important at this time of the year that they have as much vegetation as possible available to them.

At Loro Parque and Loro Parque Fundación all parrots have a variety of vegetation available to them in their aviaries, which they work on intensely until the incubation stage, at which time, this activity ceases in most cases to enable the plants to grow to hide their nesting area and thereby better camouflage them. ■

Olive-throated parakeet *(Eupsittula nana)* carrying seeds a long way away from the original tree. Photo: J. L.Tella / CSIC

For the first time in Europe!

Loro Parque is the first European zoo to successfully reproduce the little lorikeet, which is endemic to Australia.

A small bird that feeds off nectar, it has rarely managed to survive outside Oceania.

Red faced, this little green parrot lives up to its scientific name "pusilla", which means tiny.

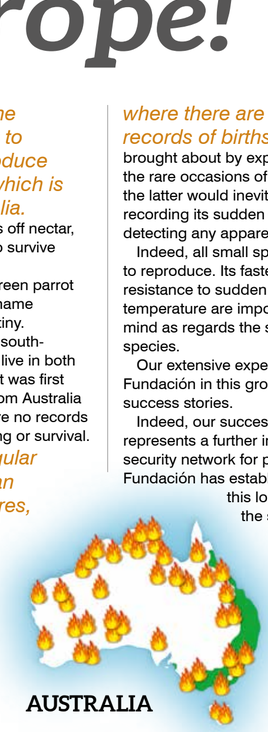
Native to eastern and south-eastern Australia, it can live in both dry and humid forests. It was first imported into Europe from Australia in 1877, though there are no records of its successful breeding or survival.

Neither is it a regular feature in Australian reproduction centres, where there are hardly any records of births except for those brought about by expert breeders. On the rare occasions of achieving success, the latter would inevitably find themselves recording its sudden death soon after without detecting any apparent sign of illness.

Indeed, all small species are particularly difficult to reproduce. Its faster metabolism and lower resistance to sudden changes in humidity and temperature are important factors to be borne in mind as regards the survival of such a delicate species.

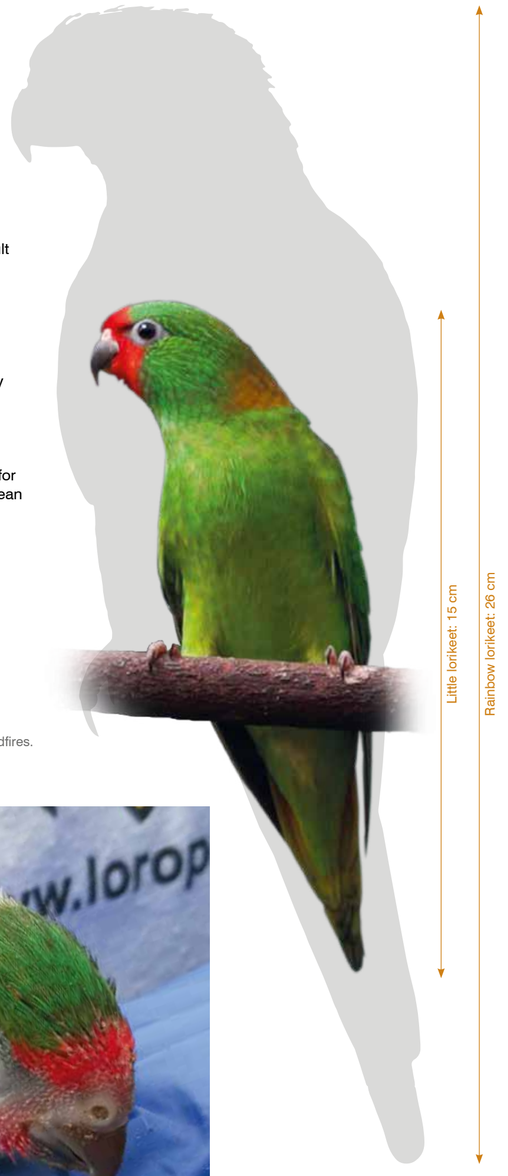
Our extensive experience at Loro Parque Fundación in this group of lories has led to many success stories.

Indeed, our success with the little lorikeet represents a further important step in the security network for parrot species. Loro Parque Fundación has established advanced protocols for this lory, which could very well mean the survival of its species. ■



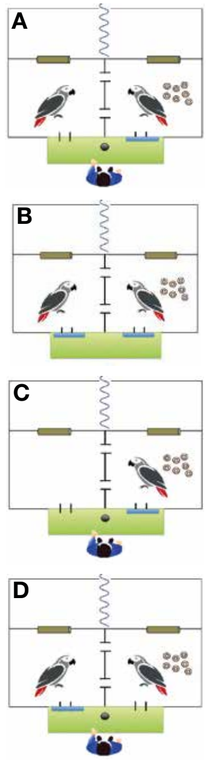
The little lorikeet, one of the smallest family members, has still not been directly affected by the wildfires. However, were this to happen, its survival will depend on centres like Loro Parque Fundación.

First little lorikeet chick at Loro Parque Fundación. Photo: LPF



Comparison of the sizes of the little lorikeet and the rainbow lorikeet. Photo: A. Azcárate / LPF

Parrots understand the concept of sharing



Tests consisted of making it possible for one of a pair of birds to obtain food in separated albeit communicated compartments. It was seen that grey parrots who had tokens to obtain food offered them to the one who could not obtain it. Photos: Max Planck Comparative Cognition Research Station, Loro Parque Animal Embassy.

A study at the Max Planck Comparative Cognition Research Station at Loro Parque Animal Embassy, received worldwide attention on foot of the researchers Désirée Brucks and Auguste von Bayern demonstrating that African grey parrots help both family members and others.

The study was published in the prestigious Current Biology scientific journal at the beginning of the year. Moreover, the article also refers to the first evidence of the use of tools to meet goals by non-mammal species.

Worldwide coverage of the news item served to *highlight the great importance of the Max Planck Comparative Cognition Research Station at Loro Parque Animal Embassy, where visitors can see the work being done by the research team* with the different parrot species that belong to the biggest genetic reserve of the Psittacidae family of true parrots in the world.

However, the blue-headed macaws are not given to helping each other out. Even when there is a reward in play. Differences in social tolerance could very well explain the divergence in behaviour of diverse species.

Study findings suggest that more socially oriented behaviour has developed in a convergent fashion among birds.

Nonetheless, the experiment proper was rather complex. Parrots learned to use a token —as if it were money— in return for food. What turned out to be truly amazing was that they voluntarily passed the token on to their partners so that they could also exchange the token for food whenever those partners had no tokens left.

In the case of the blue-headed macaw, however, these were generally very reluctant to share tokens with their partners to receive the reward from the researcher.

When translating this behaviour into human terms, we should avoid considering this to be an example of selfishness or altruism. Rather, they are strategies adopted by each species depending on their adaptation to the environment.

Grey parrots in Africa live in large flocks that enable them to escape from predators. It is always much more difficult to surprise a large number that communicate well with each other than a small one with much less members available to alert to imminent danger.

Blue-headed macaws in Peru and Bolivia do not form large flocks. Moreover, their call is much more discrete than that of other parrots. Their survival strategy is based more on camouflage and not drawing attention to themselves. It may be that its evolution has converted it into a more individual species.

Depending on the environmental conditions and behaviour of each species, it may be more beneficial for them to ensure nourishment individually than in extremely sociable flocks where communication between members can be useful for detecting food and fleeing predators.

Photos of this project can be viewed using the QR code: ■

39 reintroduced in Ecuador

We've done it again! *Nineteen red-masked parakeets have been able to return to the wild in Ecuador.*

Last year, we were able to release twenty specimens of this highly sought after species in local markets into the wild, as a result of the collaboration between local authorities and our ally the Fundación Jocotoco. On account of its attractive colouring, *this type of parrot is normally captured* locally *for exploitation on the illegal pet market.* After they were seized by police officers, it was possible to recover them to avoid their death.

Unfortunately, there is a high rate of mortality among these birds due to the unhealthy conditions in which they are kept in captivity. Arenillas zoo kept them in quarantine to ensure their full recovery. They were subsequently identified by their corresponding microchips and rings that will enable their tracking in the future to avoid them falling into poachers hands again.

Reintroduction processes like these are very complex matters. They require recovery phases, isolation, advanced handling, behavioural knowledge, appropriate facilities, veterinary checks, adaptation prior to release and complicated red tape to ensure licences and project viability. Many months of collaborative work involving a multi-disciplinary team based on a previously successful project the year before were required this time round.

Thirty-nine specimens have now been returned to the wild in a joint project undertaken by Loro Parque Fundación and Fundación Jocotoco, *courtesy of the collaboration of zoos* that have both the facilities and specialist staff to successfully complete actions of this type. ■

Veterinary checks prior to release is essential to guarantee that the specimens are in full health. Photo: F. Jocotoco / LPF

Photos of this project can be viewed using the QR code:

Building bridges with nature in Uruguay

One of the key jobs of a zoo is to establish bridges to connect the animals we keep in our facilities with all the populations in the wild that need help to survive in an ever-changing environment and one increasingly being encroached upon by humankind. One of the most obvious ways of building bridges of this type is that of raising funds to help finance conservation projects, though there are many other subtle ways, which are no less important. Another means of bridge-building with nature is *transferring all the knowledge and experience that has been accumulated over centuries at zoos to effectively protect populations living in the wild.*

This is the work that Loro Parque Fundación has been doing in Uruguay through the person of our vet, Francesco Grande, who has been teaching advanced veterinary techniques for handling animals, particularly sea mammals, to two lecturers at the Universidad de Montevideo: Martin Lima and Virginia Méndez. Both studied at the Loro Parque Veterinary Clinic in 2019, in Loro Parque in Tenerife as well as in Poema del Mar in Gran Canaria.

Our vet, along with the distinguished ambassador for Loro Parque Fundación, Juan Villalba, gave several conferences in which they presented the park and the foundation. The subject matter of these dealt with preventive medicine for sea mammals in controlled environments and their advanced handling in zoos. For their part, the Uruguayan vets explained *how important it was for them to have had experience of ex-situ handling with the Loro Parque Group,* given that the daily use of advanced veterinary tools and the ready-to-hand biological parameters has opened the doors on an extensive field of knowledge and skills to them that can be further developed in natural surroundings.

This collaboration has led to the establishing of a vital networking of vets who attend to the needs of wildlife, both at rescue centres and in the managing of protected areas. All the knowledge and experience of the Loro Parque Veterinary Department will now serve to enhance the conditions of thousands of wildlife species in Uruguay. ■

Nuhacet Fernández, Veterinary Director at Loro Parque, with Virginia Méndez and Martín Lima during a training activity at Loro Parque Clinic. Photo: LPF

Lecturers Martín Lima and Virginia Méndez with Francesco Grande and the illustrious ambassador for Loro Parque Fundación Juan Villalba at the Universidad de Montevideo. Photo: LPF

Loro Parque Fundación and the Regional Government of the Canary Islands anchor their first scientific buoy

The CanBIO project successfully completed phase one with the *anchoring of the first scientific buoy* to the *north-east of Gran Canaria*, in the Gando Bay. Indeed, it has been a truly productive year: one in which *a start was made on collecting ocean acidification and CO2 flow data between the atmosphere and the Atlantic ocean in the Macaronesia archipelagos*; tests were done with autonomous vehicles; drone patrols were used to search for traces of sea turtles; and specimens of some of the critically endangered species in the Canary Island waters were tagged.

Nonetheless, there is little doubt that the project highlight was the positioning of a buoy along the coast of Gran Canaria in an exclusion zone close to Gando air base, *on foot of the extraordinary collaboration with the Canary Island Air Force Command and the Ministry of Defence office in the Canary Islands.* In the first few months of the year the buoy has been fitted with state-of-art technology to study climate change and ocean acidification. Specifically, it was equipped with the "MASE", an acoustic instrument developed by the Universidad de La Laguna based on the work done for more than a decade at Orca Ocean. *The important role played by killer whales in developing this acoustic surveillance technology* inspired us to name each of the buoys being positioned after the killer whales at Loro Parque: the first of which is to be called Morgan. Indeed, there is a certain poetic irony in the fact that the buoy that is to carry the metering instrument to monitor underwater noise in Macaronesia is named after a deaf killer whale. A gesture that also draws attention to underwater noise, one of the emergent problems in our oceans, and one that represents a serious risk for something as vital to the survival of cetacean species as is communication.

Furthermore, the buoy also carries climate change surveillance instruments, like the ones that were already navigating Macaronesia waters on board platforms early in 2019 thanks to the collaboration of Fred. Olsen and Nisa Marítima shipping companies. As a result of this collaboration, scientists from the Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria have already obtained data that has been shared on the international networks, Global Ocean Acidification Observing Network (GOA-ON) and Surface Ocean CO2 Atlas (SOCAT). Acoustic sensor results are also to be shared over the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) which is part of the UNESCO International Quiet Ocean Experiment (IOQE), an initiative through which *CanBIO will position the Canary Islands at the international forefront of studies in underwater noise* and one in which very few research centres around the world are taking part.

Information on ocean acidification is extremely important at present as carbon dioxide emissions continue to increase year after year. The more CO2 released by power stations, industry, cars ships and planes, the more it concentrates in the atmosphere. This in turn is responsible for the well-known greenhouse effect, which is the main cause of global warming, the depletion of the glaziers, the loss of ice in polar regions and climate change. However, there other less commonly known effects, but which greatly impact on the environment and which could have serious consequences in the future.

There is a chemical balance between the gases dissolved in the air and those dissolved in the sea. Accordingly, when the CO2 concentration increases in the atmosphere, part of it tends to be dissolved in the sea to balance the said concentration. That's the good news, because this reduces the greenhouse effect. Consequently, it is important to measure the effective CO2 absorbed by the ocean, which not only depends on chemical issues but also on the biological characteristics of each region. All the CO2 absorption data measured by the CanBIO sensors in the Gando Bay will enable us to accurately establish the amount of CO2 absorbed by the Canary Island coastal waters and the speed with which it does so. Such data will be of vital importance in calibrating the mathematical models that predict climate change and in improving their accuracy in the Macaronesia region.

Nonetheless, there is also a negative side to the absorption of CO2 by the sea. On dissolving in water it transforms into carbonic acid, thereby reducing the pH of the water and increasing its acidity. An increase in sea water acidity has serious biological effects, particularly on the stability of the structures built by an endless number of organisms out of calcium carbonate. Water acidification tends to dissolve calcium carbonate crystals and has the power to destroy structures such as mollusc and crustacean shells, plankton exoskeletons and even coral reefs. Ocean acidification, therefore, poses a serious threat for marine ecosystems at all levels, from microscopic organisms to the large predators through the food chain. Accordingly, the measuring of increased sea acidification is especially important, which explains the enormous significance of the role played by the recently installed sensors on the CanBIO buoy in calibrating ocean acidification models.

In fine, the new "Morgan" buoy is cutting edge scientific equipment at the disposal of the Canary Islands owing to the *two-million-euro investment co-financed by Loro Parque and the Regional Government of the Canary Islands.* A project that will continue with its scientific activities in the Canary Islands and Macaronesia until the end of 2022. ■

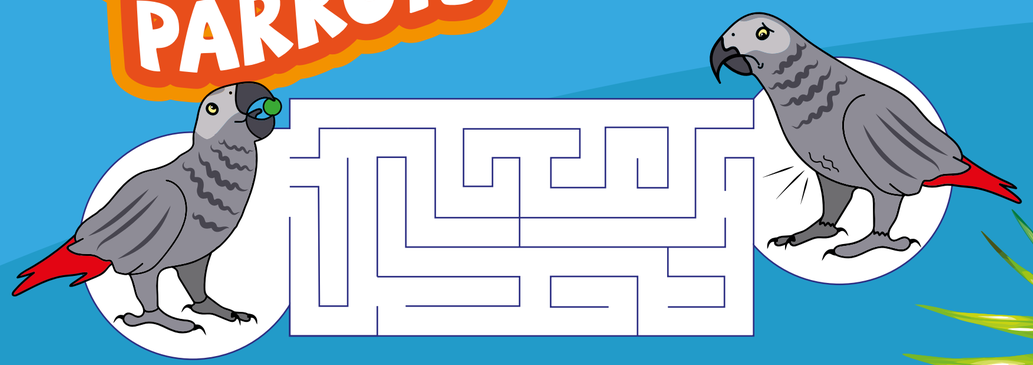
Launching of the first CanBIO project buoy. Staff from the specialist company, ECOS, who fitted the instruments and integrated the communication systems, alongside Prof. Melchor González Dávila and Dr. Aridane González, researchers from the QUIMA group attached to the Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, can be seen on the left of the photo. Dr. Javier Almunia (Director of Loro Parque Fundación) alongside Prof. Fernando Rosa and other members of the Bioacoustics and Distributed Multi-sensor Group attached to the Universidad de La Laguna can be seen on the right of the photo. Photo: M. Pérez / LPF

Initial installation of the buoy at Taliarte quay for phase one testing and to verify scientific and communication instrument functioning. Photo: M. Pérez / LPF

GENEROUS PARROTS

At **Loro Parque** we have discovered that African grey parrots **are very generous!**

They're good friends to have and whenever they can, they help each other out to get food without expecting anything in return.



How about that! Could you help these two African greys to share their food?

PARROT VOICE

There are loads of sounds to be heard in the jungle, with each species having their own voice.

But, did you know that within the same species, two parrots can have a different voice? This is the first sign that they are changing and evolving separately.

Perhaps one day they'll turn into different species!

Colour in the drawing with your favourite colours!

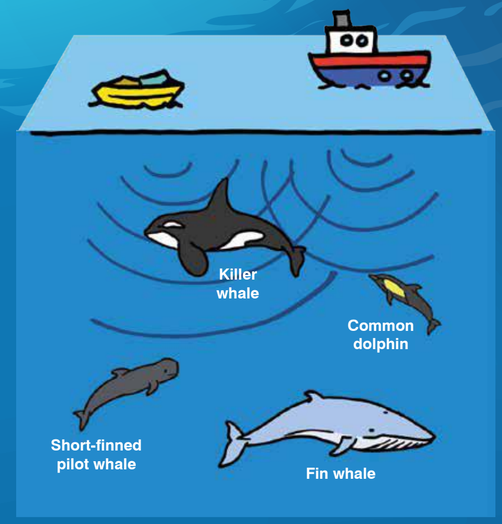
SEA NOISE

Have you ever thought of what can be heard underwater?

It may be very relaxing for us underwater, but for other animals it can get very noisy. Our boats and ships, big and small alike, cause deafening noise for whales and dolphins, as these animals use sound to communicate and hunt for food. This is called echolocation.

Learn more about the cetacean species found in Canary Islands waters by using arrows to join species with their main characteristics:

Common dolphin	Big, bluish-grey and an enormous mouth.
Short-finned pilot whale	Big, black and white and a large dorsal fin.
Fin whale	Dark with a tall spout.
Killer whale	Black with a yellow stain and long spout.



SEND YOUR BEST DRAWING

to loroparque-fundacion.org and take part in a draw for free tickets to visit the animals at Loro Parque when we re-open!

The biggest photographic record of parrots in the world

Rainbow lorikeet at Loro Parque Fundación. (*Trichoglossus sp.*) Photo: Joel Sartore / National Geographic PHOTOARK

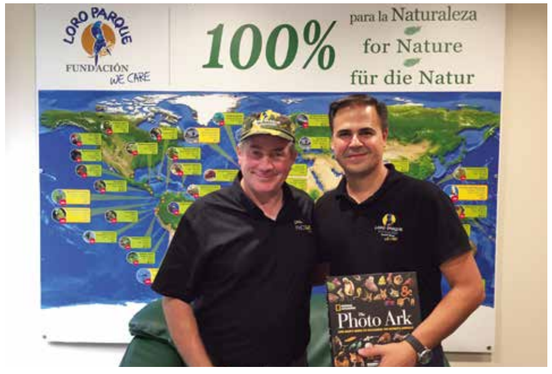
The prestigious photographer, Joel Sartore, has been working with Loro Parque and Loro Parque Fundación to put the biggest genetic reserve of parrots in the world on photographic record, along with other species that comprise his impressive photo archive of world animals.

Over 50,000 photos are 80% of the species that are in human care: *"Photo Ark" is the name given to the work of this famous National Geographic photographer.*

This study is of immense scientific and informative value. Recording known species makes it possible to capture details about animals that would be impossible to detect in the wild or in museum exhibits.

Such a complete photo archive means that it will be open to scientific consultation to define particular aspects of species when having to describe new species or subspecies. A powerful tool that even helps field biologists to make observations that would otherwise be difficult in the wild.

The fact that Joel Sartore has worked with species in human care all around the world serves to highlight the importance of *zoos*, which in addition *to acting as a live reserve for species* can *also be used for investigation and informative purposes.* Indeed, a lot of people around the world will only be able to learn of these animals through this impressive international project. ■



Rafael Zamora with the famous photographer, Joel Sartore, who learned first-hand about ongoing Loro Parque Fundación projects around the world in the course of his work there. Photo: LPF

Important births at Loro Parque

Loro Parque, as an animal embassy and wildlife conservation centre *has been successful once again in breeding jaguars.* The biggest feline on the American continent and third biggest in the world is a species facing a rather uncertain future owing to deforestation, the fragmentation of habitats in Latin America and poaching.

The mother, who can be seen with her cubs at Loro Parque, *forms part of an important conservation project under the European Endangered Species Programme (EEP)*, to which the zoos in the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA) are signed up. Called Naya, she was brought to Tenerife in 2019 from a zoo in Martinique in the Caribbean with a view to increasing the genetic diversity of the programme.

The jaguar, which can live in habitats as different as the tropical Amazonian rainforest to the dry steppes of southern South America, now has two of its best ambassadors in Tenerife, which will serve to raise public awareness of its biology and the problems the species is facing in the wild.

Their descendants are destined to play a key role in the species programme.

Jaguars have lost over 50% of their natural habitat. Accordingly, any scientific information that can be obtained from them will be priceless for their short- and long-term survival.

You can see photos of these births using the following QR code:

The female jaguar from Dominica with her cubs at Loro Parque. Photo: LPF

Do parrots have regional dialects?

As part of the project supported by *Loro Parque Fundación in Mexico, in collaboration with the Universidad Nacional Autónoma in Michoacán*, to conserve the military macaw, the researcher Alejandro Salinas has published an interesting scientific article in the journal Bioacoustics. The article *explains the geographic variation in military macaw vocalizations.*

Three different populations of macaws were studied along the Jalisco coast and the calls between them analysed. Findings show that the distance between populations influences the types of calls made by each macaw group.

Macaws develop their own culture when living in isolated areas, which suggests that differences gradually arise with respect to other groups of the same species.

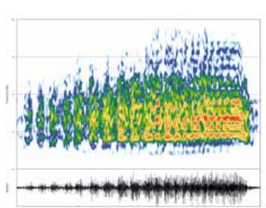
Changes in song or vocalization *is one of the first signs of the evolution of a species.*

A total of 1,777 vocalizations of 156 military macaws were recorded for the study, which were later computer analysed to see in which frequencies differences occurred.

Supporting these field studies makes it possible to obtain extremely important data on parrot biology. More information to be taken into account in species conservation projects.

Click on this link to access the scientific article:

Alejandro Salinas-Melgoza & Katherine Renton (2020) Geographic variation in vocalizations of the Military Macaw in Western Mexico. ■



Spectrogram of birds from the different regions studied. Photo: A. Salinas /Covidec

Military macaws develop their own communications in different regions. Photo: M. Kortmann / LPF

Teaching in the United States of America from Tenerife

This was the title of the lecture given by *Montse Buch* representing Loro Parque *at the latest annual convention of the Avicultural Society of America* (ASA) held *in Miami.*

Her over 30 years of experience in training Psittacidae parrots was warmly received at the event, as she explained that, apart from the technique required to work with these animals, it is extremely important that they be shown affection.

Loro Parque has what was the first ever parrot show in Europe, but it has not lost the essence that has made it a byword worldwide. And even though it may have developed as regards its educational content for the public, there is one thing that makes it unique: the strong emotional bond that exists between the keepers and the parrots.

Parrots are very sensitive to change. Generally, depending on the species, they respond in the same way to certain stimuli. Nevertheless, each individual has a particular attitude: their peculiar preferences, qualities and, quite often, whims. Only the preferred keeper can perceive these subtleties.

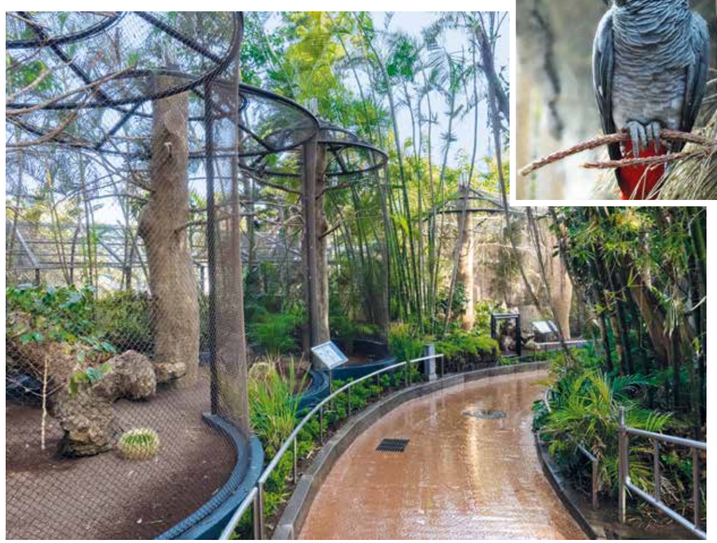
Training is extremely valuable for animals in controlled environments, because through the training *it is possible to scientifically study their skills* and keep them mentally and physically fit, in addition to forming a close communicative bond with them.

Medical training is another of the great benefits, as this allows for routine check-ups on the animals without this becoming uncomfortable in any way. All of these processes work on the basis of positive awards that enable the parrots to understand what is going on. ■

Training makes it possible to scientifically record the skills that parrots have. Photo: M. Pérez / LPF

Montse Buch at the Avicultural Society of America convention. Photo: LPF

New African exhibition at Loro Parque



The new African parrot aviaries offer a panoramic perspective. Photo: LPF

Loro Parque opened a *new African parrot exhibition* that offers a unique insight into this species. Visitors are presented with a panoramic overview of these species in which the beauty of these extraordinary parrots can be appreciated in all its splendour.

As a rule African species depend on the colours of their plumage as camouflage. This enables them to survive and go unnoticed on a continent where they have to face up to numerous predators every day. Visitors to the exhibition have a chance to see how the African grey parrot, considered to be one of the species that best imitates the human voice behaves in groups; or how they unexpectedly emit vocalizations directed at someone passing by who, confused, thinks they may have heard their phone ring, without having received any missed call. It may well have been one of the parrots. But it will be impossible to identify which one as they remain stock still thus precluding identification of the culprit.

Once again, *Loro Parque spearheads the zoo community by bringing together ten species of African parrots,* all of which are integrated into a lush vegetation exclusive to that continent. According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species, *it is becoming increasingly unusual to come across these species in their natural habitat.* This is undoubtedly a unique opportunity to see some of the rarest bird species of Africa that should not be missed. ■

Pig-nosed turtles at Poema del Mar

One of the species that particularly draws the attention of visitors to Poema del Mar is *the pig-nosed turtle, also known as the pitted-shelled turtle or Fly River turtle.* Native to Papua New Guinea and northern Australia, this soft shelled turtle has become one of the main attractions at the Canary Island aquarium. People are immediately drawn to them on first sight on account of their surprising appearance in the crystalline waters of their environment, the water quality of which makes it possible to showcase this species, not to mention the fact that it shares its habitat with a host of multi-coloured fish that magnificently enhance the surroundings.

Charismatic pig-nosed turtles at Poema del Mar. Photo: Gerardo Ojeda

Biologically speaking, this species is quite odd given that, though it is a freshwater turtle, it displays many similar characteristics to sea turtles. Its feet are adapted to water environments; thus it tends to be quite awkward on land, which is not helped by the fact that it may end up weighing over 20 kg.

Pig-nosed turtles are classified as vulnerable in the endangered species category. Their preference for a specific environment makes them sensitive to change and to the encroaching of humans on their territory, thus the presence of three specimens at Poema del Mar has converted them into important ambassadors for their species.

On presenting them on social networks, they received a particularly warm reception among our followers. These photos can be seen using the following QR code:

■

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