

## NEWS FROM LORO PARQUE FUNDACIÓN SEPTEMBER 2013

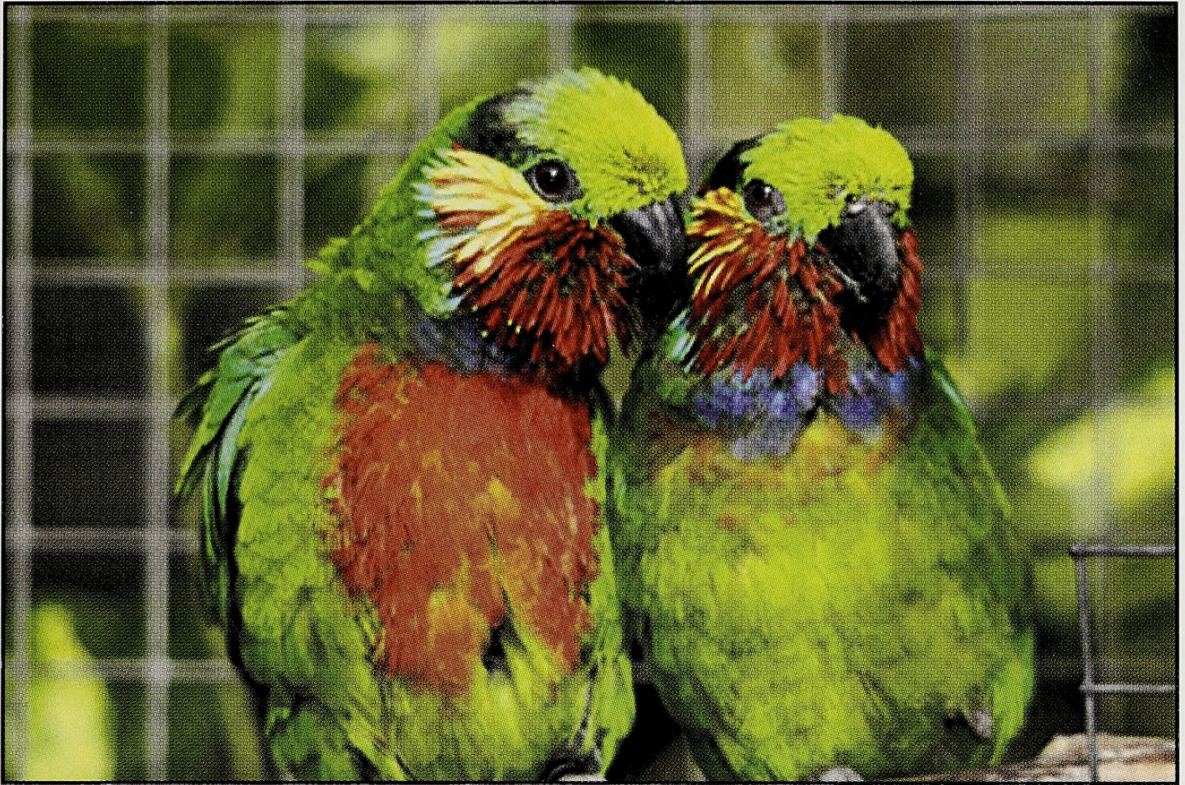
by Dr. Matthias Reinschmidt

It is the autumn and so the breeding activities are slowing down, but there are still some pairs incubating eggs or rearing young.



Yucatan Amazons *Amazona xantholora*.





Pair of Edward's Fig Parrot *Psittaculirostris edwardsii*.



Edward's Fig Parrot emerging from the nest.



We are very pleased about two young Ouvea parakeets *Eunymphicus uvaeensis*. The female incubated three eggs and the two chicks which hatched are now reared to juveniles that have now been ringed. So we hope that both will fledge in a few weeks and will increase slightly our small population of this species.

Currently, a pair of Edward's Fig Parrot *Psittaculirostris edwardsii* is rearing two chicks that have also been ringed. This food specialist, as its name suggests, eats figs, and is now among the very rarely held parrot species that few parrot specialists breed in their collections. As such, all offspring are important in order to maintain them long term in captivity.

The last latecomers among the Amazons are this year two Yucatan Amazons *Amazona xantholora*, also now ringed. The genus *Amazona* is in the LPF very seasonal, the first eggs being laid in February, and usually by July or August they are all finished. The Yucatan Amazons laid again at the end of the season in August, and two chicks hatched, that are now being well cared-for by their parents.

There are also still some young in the nests of the large macaw species. The macaws tend to be in better breeding condition in the second half of the year. Currently, two young Great Green Macaws *Ara ambiguus* are being reared by the parents, and are already ringed. There are also two chicks in the nest of the Chestnut-fronted Macaw *Ara severus*, cared-for perfectly by the experienced parents.

In late August we had already started the stock control of our birds. This means that every year, after the breeding season, each bird is caught-up in the aviary, blood samples for all common virus tests, pharyngeal and cloacal swabs are taken, the body weight is recorded and the general plumage conditions are checked. This has given us over the years an excellent overview of the health status of each bird, and emphasises our high standards. The stock control usually ends in December when the veterinarians, together with the curator and the chief keepers, have checked the entire installations in the breeding station and in Loro Parque itself. With nearly 4,000 parrots this is a big undertaking.



## HELPING THE GOLDEN-PLUMED PARAKEET

by Dr. David Waugh

The Golden-plumed Parakeet *Leptosittaca branick* is found in Colombia, Ecuador and Peru, mainly in Andean Cloud Forest between 2,400 and 3,500m above sea level. In the Central Andes of Colombia, the LPF has for the last decade supported studies on its ecology and a programme for its conservation implemented by Fundación ProAves. The conservation effort is focused on two protected areas, the 2,035 hectares El Mirador Municipal Reserve and the 657 hectares Fuertes's Parrot Natural Bird Reserve. Within these areas the species is sparsely distributed, an average of 20 birds being counted on each survey at the beginning of 2013. The successful campaign of ProAves in Colombia, related to conservation of the Yellow-eared Parrot *Ognorhynchus icterotis* and wax palms *Ceroxylon* sp., has also been beneficial for other palms and Golden-plumed Parakeets.

However, overall in Colombia and Ecuador the population of the Golden-plumed Parakeet has declined significantly, mainly due to loss of habitat, and it is a threatened species classified by the IUCN as vulnerable to extinction. In Ecuador it is reported from the northern and eastern Andes, south to the eastern Andes of northern Peru. In fact, the 146,280 hectares Podocarpus National Park and the 700 hectares Tapichalaca Reserve of Fundación Jocotoco located in the south of Ecuador are the only places in the country that protect the habitat of this species. The parakeets nest mainly in natural cavities made by woodpeckers, but in 2008 the Loro Parque Fundación supported a project of Ecuadorean biologist Mery Juiña to install some artificial nests in Tapichalaca Reserve, to discover more about the reproductive biology of this species.

The artificial nests were successful, but there is still a need for better understanding of the population status, reproductive biology and ecological needs elsewhere within its geographical distribution in Ecuador. Therefore, the Loro Parque Fundación is now supporting Mery Juiña, in collaboration with the Yanayacu Biological Station, to contribute to the existing knowledge of the species further north in Ecuador, including to assess the current population and study reproductive biology. This also involves detecting nesting sites and installing artificial nests where natural cavities are scarce. For conservation measures, the key areas and main problems must be identified, as well as the socio-economic concerns of the inhabitants of the region.

To date Mery has visited 16 sites, and in eight the presence of Golden-plumed Parakeets was determined by observation and hearing their calls,



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