



Foster Parrots, Ltd.
Annual Report 2020

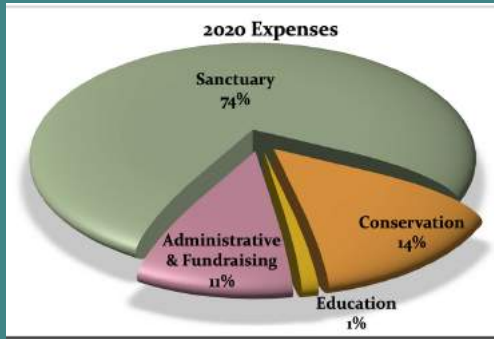
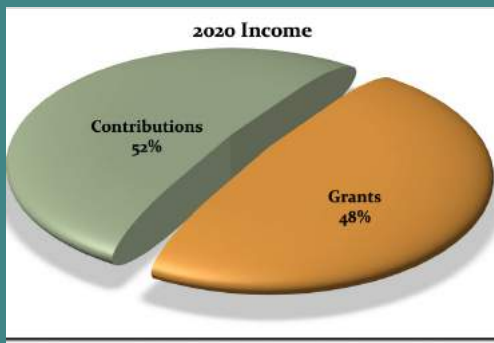
*Providing place, peace and protection for captive parrots;
working from the belief that
parrots and all wild animals should be free.*

Foster Parrots, Ltd.

Foster Parrots, Ltd. was founded over 25 years ago to address the overwhelming problem of unwanted pet parrots in the U.S. and to help alleviate the suffering of parrots in captivity. Since our inception, Foster Parrots has provided direct care to thousands of parrots through a medley of services that include emergency rescue aid to birds in need, an adoption program that places unwanted birds into safe homes, providing permanent sanctuary for parrots who are ineligible for adoption, and investing in conservation work that protects parrots in the wild. Education and advocacy are the threads that wind through all the work of Foster Parrots. Our message is clear: parrots do not belong in cages; wildlife should be wild. Whether we are leading educational tours through our sanctuary, presenting to classrooms of children throughout the community or engaging students at the college level, our goals are to connect people empathetically to the lives of parrots in captivity, to instill animal welfare values that motivate action, and to increase public awareness of the human impact on parrot species all over the world.

No Cage is Big Enough

Financial Highlights 2020



Income:

Grants = \$372,572

Contributions = \$398,647

Misc = \$1,016

Total Income = \$772,235

Expense:

Programs = \$468,924 (89%)

Sanctuary = \$388,080

Conservation = \$74,834

Education = \$6,010

Administration & Fundraising = \$57,226 (11%)

Fundraising

Total Expense = \$526,150



Financial Highlights

Nuts, Pellets, Produce - \$59,045

Diet forms the foundation for avian health, and yet, industry standards have promoted nutritionally deficient and harmful avian diets for decades. Many parrots come to the sanctuary with health issues that reflect chronic malnutrition. Foster Parrots customizes diets for optimal health and continually evaluates, adjusts and improves our avian diets to ensure complete and proper nutritional support.

Veterinary Care - \$30,738

Every bird who arrives at the sanctuary receives a preliminary health exam and testing, and every parrot is guaranteed emergency veterinary care in the event of illness or injury. Foster Parrots' outstanding avian veterinary team includes lead sanctuary veterinarian, Dr. Ann Bourke, supporting veterinarian, Dr. Hank Wietsma and the fine vets at Tufts University who provide emergency services.

Utilities - \$40,139

The New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary is a large facility at over 20,000 sq. ft. Heat and electricity costs are daunting. Additional utility costs include security, fire safety and waste management.

Avian Supplies & Enrichment - \$6,329

Many of our enrichment items are pulled from nature! But there are no substitutes for items like large, climbing rope-nets, bungees, cloth rope perches and colorful wooden chew toys, all of which are thoroughly enjoyed by resident parrots. Many items like this are donated, which helps keeps our costs down. But of course, those formidable beaks destroy everything. Toys and enrichment items must be regularly replaced.

Employee Wages - \$241,445

Ten dedicated employees pour their time, talent and passion into the care of the birds and animals at the NEEWS, and ensure that sanctuary operations reflect Foster Parrots' unwavering commitment to avian welfare.

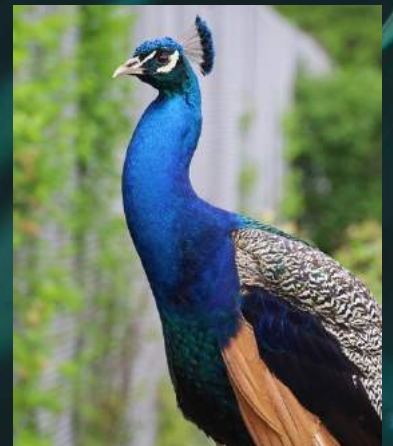
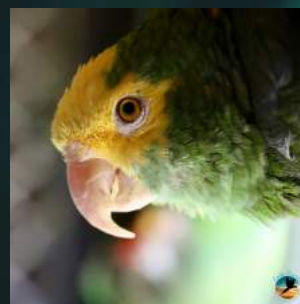
The New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary

\$388,080

The New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary is Foster Parrots' focus program, offering a safe, permanent home for over 400 parrots and other displaced exotic animals. The facility offers 40 spacious, indoor aviaries as well as 25 outdoor aviaries that enhance the lives of our birds during the warm weather months. At the NEEWS there is no one-size-fits-all care plan for resident parrots. Every bird comes from a unique set of circumstances. Every bird has a story. Every bird's individual experience at the sanctuary matters. This makes our job challenging. But so many of our resident parrots come from complicated and sometimes traumatizing circumstances. The sanctuary is structured to provide a supportive environment that promotes healing, well-being and happiness.



Scenes From the Sanctuary





Adoption Program - \$10,000

The world slowed down in 2020, but our adoption activity did not.

- **113** parrots were admitted into the sanctuary for services.
- **45** of these parrots found homes through our adoption program.
- **16** additional parrots were referred to our NEPPCO network partners for adoption services.
- **19** parrots were referred to our behavior training partner, Sheila Blanchette, for training focused on keeping them in their homes.



Of 537 requests for surrender we received in 2020, Foster Parrots was able to provide services for nearly 30% of these birds. What happened to the remaining 70%?

It is not unusual for people to contact Foster Parrots out of desperation, but then find placement for their birds on their own with friends or other family members. This is a great outcome. However, according to Foster Parrots' Adoption Director, Rachel Defronzo, "I'd estimate that close to 75% of people who submit a parrot relinquishment form do not follow through with our process, which generally includes a follow-up in-home or video visit with their parrot. It's important that we understand the true nature of the birds so that we can determine what services will best meet their needs."



Some people decide to try to make it work with their parrots and accept help through Foster Parrots' support services or through professional behavior training with our partner, Sheila Blanchette, whose agency, "Heart of Feathers" offers training guidance throughout the region. Behavior modification, of course, is a two-way street. Human guardians and parrots alike must change their behavior in order to achieve compatibility in the home, but when guardians can make changes that better support natural behavior and meet the needs of the birds, it can make all the difference.

Rescue Profiles 2020

Patagonian Cavies



Cricket Hollow Zoo in Iowa had a reputation for animal cruelty. This roadside establishment, where animals had been languishing and dying for years, had long been a major focus for the Animal Legal Defense Fund (ALDF). Finally successful in shutting down the operation at the close of 2019, they had begun removing surviving animals in December. In January of 2020 they contacted Foster Parrots, seeking placement for 3 Patagonian cavies (aka Patagonian "maras"). The New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary had been caring for cavies on site for many years. We were happy to step up for these distressed animals who, unlike many animals from Cricket Hollow, somehow made it out alive.



The 3 cavies were initially transferred to Iowa's Blank Park Zoo for health assessments and veterinary care under the supervision of Dr. June Olds. The eldest girl was in bad shape. Radiographs suggested an enlarged heart, showed severe degenerative joint disease in her hips, and revealed a serious oral infection. Surgery was performed at the Blank Park Zoo to remove a molar, but the infection would require aggressive measures.

The girls arrived at the sanctuary in February, joining our 3 resident cavies. Tragically, despite the commendable efforts of our veterinary team, the elder cavy passed away in April.

As spring of 2020 commenced, outdoor accommodations were prepared for the cavies. A safe, night time enclosure was filled with soft, fresh hay and a little cavy house was provided for denning. With the return of mild weather, the Patagonian cavies were finally introduced to their large, grassy yard. Possibly for the first time in their lives, our three new cavies were free to roam, explore and graze.



Emergency Rescues & Special Needs Parrots

The costs associated with exotic veterinary care are challenging and sometimes prohibitive for parrot guardians and rescue organizations alike. Consequently, elderly, sick and disabled birds often do not have access to critical veterinary services or long-term support. Because of Foster Parrots' strong support base and dependable grant funding, not only do we have financial resources that enable us to prioritize elderly, sick and disabled parrots for rescue, but we work with a team of some of the best avian veterinarians in the region. This can mean restoration of quality-of-life for many parrots. It can also mean the difference between life and death for birds who hang in the balance.



Red - Scarlet Macaw: Red came to Foster Parrots from the Wildlife Encounters Ecology Center in New Hampshire. They rescued her from an outdoor barn, where she had been kept with several other birds who were all killed off, one by one, by a predator. Red was the only one left. The Wildlife Center took her in with the intention of using her in their educational programming, but discovered they were in a little over their heads when they realized Red was almost completely blind. This information had not been disclosed by the original guardian, and it was assumed that, having had very little interaction with her birds, she may not have even been aware. Kept in a small, barren cage in the barn, Red reportedly had not been handled or touched at all in the 20+ years she spent under the care of this person. The Wildlife Center did a good job helping her to become more comfortable with people before they contacted us in late 2019. We brought her to Foster Parrots in early 2020.

Maui - Blue Fronted Amazon: Maui was one of the friendliest blue fronted Amazons we have ever met, but in her home, she had suffered from ruptured air sacs for many years. Engineered for flight, parrots have super-efficient respiratory systems that include a series of air sacs under their skin. These act somewhat like bellows, moving oxygen-rich air to the lungs. Sometimes air sacs can become ruptured, causing them to inflate dramatically. While this is not necessarily a painful situation, it is surely uncomfortable, impeding natural movement and putting a parrot at risk for further trauma. Maui was admitted to the sanctuary specifically so that we could help alleviate her problem. A stent was surgically inserted to “deflate” Maui, but the stent subsequently failed. Our vet will have to manually deflate Maui periodically over a period of time until her situation is finally resolved.



Emergency Rescues & Special Needs Parrots



Peaches - Moluccan Cockatoo: One of the most inappropriate of all parrots kept as “pets,” Moluccan cockatoos can be edgy, dominant and extremely difficult to manage in home environments. Consequently, when Peaches delivered one too many bites to his inexperienced guardian, she had finally had enough. She packed Peaches up in his carrier and brought him to the Cummings Veterinary Clinic at Tufts University where she requested that the bird be euthanized. A skilled veterinarian was called in to help handle the large cockatoo, and when he learned that this healthy, intelligent, vibrant bird was under a euthanasia order, he could not justify taking that life. The clinic contacted Foster Parrots and asked if we could offer sanctuary for Peaches. Having since been integrated into one of our large, cockatoo communities, Peaches is learning that simply being a cockatoo is a lot easier than trying to be a pet. Special thanks to the compassionate veterinary team at Tufts.

Pinochio - Moluccan Cockatoo: When the embattled “Wildlife Waystation” animal sanctuary in California was finally shut down in August of 2019, wildlife sanctuaries from across the country were called in to help evacuate more than 470 animals who had been suffering there under deteriorating conditions for years. This was a daunting prospect. Resident animals included large numbers of big cats, primates, alligators, wolves, raptors – and parrots. By mid 2020 most of the animals had been relocated. Parrots were one of the last remaining animals at the Waystation in need of rescue. Foster Parrots offered sanctuary for 3 Moluccan cockatoos. Two of these birds were able to find placement services through Best Friends Animal Sanctuary in Utah. The last remaining Moluccan cockatoo, named “Pinochio” by rescuers, arrived safely at the sanctuary in October of 2020. An ancient beak injury had resulted in a partial and misshapen beak, but this disability has not dampened the feisty spirit of this bird. He has been successfully integrated into one of our cockatoo flocks.



Suzie & Sam – Hybrid Quaker Parrots: Suzie and Sam, had produced dozens of beautiful blue babies for their breeder over the years. This woman had made a living for decades, breeding parrots like Suzie and Sam, and stealing away their babies to sell into the pet market. When a chronic illness finally forced her to close down her breeding operation, just like the hundreds of baby parrots she had sold during her career, she sold off all of her breeding stock, but Suzie and Sam could not be sold. They had no value. The two birds were aging... and Suzie was missing her upper mandible. Euthanasia was an option, but before she took the drastic measure, her daughter urged her to contact a rescue organization. Foster Parrots welcomed Suzie and Sam to the sanctuary in May of 2020.

Conservation Partnerships - \$69,774

In May of 2019, little Mila, a scarlet macaw hatchling who had been found on the forest floor by a nighttime tour group in Drake Bay, was brought to MCCR for rescue services. Skinny, tiny and cold, her chances of survival were poor, but Chris Castles' expertise pulled her through. Later that year 3 more tiny scarlet macaw chicks, Louisa, Fatty and Mishka, were brought to the farm to receive life-saving care by the MCCR team. In 2020 these 4 macaws, now "cheeky" juveniles, were successfully released along with 6 other rehabilitated macaws.

In 2020 MCCR also turned its attention toward the further development of infrastructure. Funding by the Wagmore Foundation launched the construction of MCCR's new medical clinic, which would enable them to meet strict Costa Rican regulations governing sanctuaries in the country. Additional support by contributors and benefactors funded the construction of workers quarters and a new well. These projects, predictably, were plagued by delays imposed by the pandemic. Businesses in Costa Rica were shuttered. Roads were closed, temporarily ending shipments of supplies and materials to the Osa peninsula. People were in isolation, rendering it difficult to engage laborers. But MCCR continued to push forward, with these development projects coming near to completion by the end of the year.

Meanwhile, oblivious to delays in construction or the problems of humans, 10 newly released macaws commenced to explore their freedom and to begin the business of learning how to be wild birds. Hundreds of beach almonds and other fruit-bearing trees planted by Chris Castles and Foster Parrots founder, Marc Johnson, only 7 years ago provide a dependable food source, not only for rescued birds, but also for wild macaws who frequent the farm. The newly released macaws soon began to mix with the wild scarlets, an important step in the rehabilitation process.



Above: Mila, Mishka, Louisa and fatty just prior to their release
Below: Free at last!



Conservation Partnerships - \$5,059



Normally, communicating with One Earth Conservation co-founder, Dr. LoraKim Joyner, is complicated by the fact that she's rarely in the U.S. One Earth's conservation projects and partnerships in Central and South America keep her in the field sometimes up to 10 months out of a year. But even a global pandemic can't slow this organization down. One Earth's field work was carried forward by the well-trained rangers and conservation partners whose commitment to the protection of parrots has been deeply inspired by LoraKim.

Foster Parrots has partnered with One Earth Conservation in Guyana, the home of some of the last standing sun parakeets on the planet. Prolific in the pet trade, hundreds of thousands of sun parakeets (aka "sun conures") in captivity give a false impression of their abundance, and yet this species is being driven to the brink of extinction by poaching and trapping activity in their native range. Populations studies carried out by the "Parakeet Rangers" of Karasabai suggest scarcely more than 400 parakeets remain in this area. Across the border in Brazil, the last documented assessment nearly a decade ago estimated about 2,000 birds in the state of Roraima, but this has not been recently verified and numbers are likely to be significantly lower.

Despite Covid-19 and the absence of Dr. Joyner, Karasabai's Parakeet Rangers remained dedicated to the cause and continued the work, tracking the parakeets, documenting numbers and collecting data throughout the year. The commitment of these young men could potentially tip the scales in favor of the sun parakeets' survival in Guyana.



Above: Sun parakeets foraging at the river's edge



Above: Sun parakeet family

Below: Foster Parrots rep, Dexter Dasilva, charting data



Humane Education - \$6,010

There are no programs of Foster Parrots that do not carry a heavy educational component, and The New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary serves as the central hub for much of our educational work. Tours for individuals or families convey the same quality of educational information as tours for schools, universities and community groups. On-site events are always opportunities to explore dynamic avenues for disseminating information and sharing our avian welfare values. With a sanctuary on lock-down through virtually all of 2020, none of these activities were physically possible, but our commitment to the message never falters.



- Foster Parrots' Tri-Annual Newsletter is a lot like an educational sanctuary tour. Readers are able to meet the birds, hear their stories and learn about the captive parrot experience. Additionally, our newsletters strive to disseminate useful information for readers about common avian health issues, legislation activity, conservation efforts, avian behavior in captivity, improvements in parrot care – and more! If one cannot be at the sanctuary, "The Flying Monkey" newsletter is the next best thing.
- Online Educational Programs covering a variety of topics and customized for a variety of age groups have been developed in 2020 by Foster Parrots' Director of Adoption & Education, Rachel DeFronzo, and are available on Foster Parrots' website.
- Parrot Care Advice and Information for New and Seasoned Parrot Guardians is always available through Foster Parrots.
- Foster Parrots' 2020 Virtual Fall Fundraiser was one of the most educational presentations we have ever done. Sanctuary videos provided an opportunity to educate people about the physical, social and biological support required to care for parrots, as well as the difficulties they encounter in captivity. It enabled us to disseminate information about the work of our conservation partners and it gave us a platform for communicating the philosophies and animal welfare values that drive this organization forward. No Cage is Big Enough!



Our Amazing Donors

Foster Parrots' work is given wings by the incredible love and generosity of large and small donors alike. Our supporters make this work possible.

\$500 - \$999

Apple, Nancy
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\$40,000 - \$150,000

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Girl Power (And Michael!)

MEET THE STAFF



Karen Windsor
Executive Director



Jennifer Yordy
Sanctuary Director



Rachel DeFronzo
Director of Adoption &
Education



Kelly Duker
Avian & Animal Care
Director



Stephanie Young
Personnel Manager



Danielle Cope
Reptile Specialist
Avian & Animal Care
Specialist



Briana Robertsom
Amazon Specialist
Avian & Animal Care
Specialist



Amanda Coleman
Adoption Manager
Avian & Animal Care
Specialist

Special Thanks!



Monica Armstrong
Special Care & Hospice



Michael Teets
Construction &
Maintenance Manager



Brian Jones
F.P. Photographer
& Graphic Artist
NEEWS Volunteer for
13 Years



Dorian DeSimone
F.P. Graphic Artist
& Newsletter Production
NEEWS Volunteer for
8 Years

Foster Parrots Embraces Equality, Diversity and Acceptance at the Sanctuary and Everywhere in the World

Foster Parrots Board of Directors

MEET THE BOARD



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Foster Parrots Founder
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