



The Flying Monkey



March 2021 | The Official NEWSLetter of Foster Parrots & The New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary

The Quaker Parrot Story:

A Naturalized Species Under Siege by Karen Windsor, Executive Director, Foster Parrots Ltd.



It was in 2003 when nurse practitioner, Alison Evans-Fragale, took a stand against New Jersey's utility company, PSE&G, as crews arrived at Veterans Park in Edgewater to remove a large Quaker parrot nest from one of the power poles. The chatty, industrious little birds had colonized the park more than 30 years earlier, mostly to the delight of local residents and the many tourists who would visit to see the spectacle of wild parrots in the northeast USA. The utility company had been systematically destroying nests and harming the birds for years. This time they would not be successful. Alison chained herself to the power pole and refused to budge. It was this incident that, shortly thereafter, compelled Alison to found the non-profit organization "Save the Wild Quakers of New Jersey," the advocacy and action group that would embody Alison's mission and herald the start of what would become her nearly 2-decades long mission to protect the state's Quaker parrots.

Quaker parrots, also known as "monk parakeets," are one of 56 non-native parrot species to have colonized the US, with the vast majority of these naturalized birds being found in the warmer, southern regions of the country. What gives hardy little Quakers an edge is their unique distinction as the only parrot species to build external nests. These multi-chambered, multi-family "condominiums" made

of sticks aid in their success in the less temperate regions of the country like the northeast. Because of their ability to adapt and establish roots just about anywhere, Quaker parrots are illegal to keep in 14 states, with 6 other states requiring permits or other control stipulations. New Jersey is one of the states that outright prohibits Quakers, classifying them as a "dangerous, non-native, invasive species." This classification not only excludes the birds from any level of legal protection in the state, but renders it unlawful to even help an injured Quaker.

The definition of an "invasive species" includes destruction to crops and agriculture and displacement of native species. However, Quakers in the northeast are guilty of neither of these charges. They are primarily urban dwellers, choosing to settle in close proximity to cities, waterways and humans. In places where Quakers have settled they are commonly observed at backyard bird feeders, foraging on sidewalks and grazing the grass in parks. They are not agricultural pests. Because they are external nest builders they do not compete with native bird species for nesting holes. In fact, other bird species such as sparrows and starlings have been observed taking up residence in the large stick nests. Lastly, at least in the northeast, severe weather and predation by raptors and humans appear to keep population-increase at a slow trickle.

(cont'd on page 2)

FOSTER PARROTS MARCH MATCH*



WATCH WATCH

We cannot do the work we do without YOU.

Thank you for your support!

*** All donations received on or before March 31, 2021 will be generously matched up to \$20,000!**

Foster Parrots launches 3 fundraiser events every year. We hope you will choose to support at least one.



See page 10 for details.



Far left: Natural Quaker parrot nest;
Center & below: Homeless Quakers
after their nest was destroyed.



(Quaker story cont'd from the cover)

In fact, virtually the only verifiable negative impact of the monks in this region of the country has been their attraction to power poles as nesting real estate, which the utility companies have claimed to be responsible for dozens of power outages each year.

In New Jersey, at the hands of the utility company, lives were being lost. Baby Quakers in the nests were being tossed to the ground with no more regard than the sticks that had been so carefully and protectively woven around them. Alison knew that establishing a cooperative relationship with PSE&G would be necessary to abate the killing. Joined by Foster Parrots founder, Marc Johnson, Alison met with utility company representatives to negotiate guidelines that would help protect the birds. Negotiations were initially successful. PSE&G agreed to practice a regular regimen of power pole maintenance to impede nest building progress. They agreed to tap on the poles to alert the birds so that they could flee before being harmed. They agreed to avoid nest tear-down activity during seasonally sensitive times, like the dead of winter when the sudden loss of shelter would subject the birds to freezing, and during the breeding season when the nests would be full of babies. PSE&G also agreed to inform Alison when a nest tear-down was scheduled so that she could be present to take any babies or injured adults, which she would then transport for veterinary care or to a local parrot rescue group.

Initial agreements with the utility company were encouraging but conflicts with utility representatives ensued and

the killing didn't stop. Alison realized that the only way to protect Quaker parrots in New Jersey was to get them legally reclassified so that, just like other wildlife in the state, they too would have protection under the law. "Right out of the gate I was told it would take at least 15 years to get legislation passed in the state. I didn't believe that," said Alison. "But as we began to try to file bills they would end up stalled in committee or shelved by the senate. I kept hearing the phrase, 'more research is needed,' which was just infuriating. 'More research is needed' should never become a euphemism for 'failure to act.'"

Eighteen years after chaining herself to a utility pole in Edgewater, Alison Evans-Fragale's mission on behalf of the Quaker parrots of New Jersey may be close to bearing fruit. Forming a coalition of regional parrot and animal welfare groups, and working with the Animal Protection League of New Jersey and the New Jersey chapter of the League of Humane Voters, Alison is rallying support behind Senate Bill 2640/Assembly Bill 4324, now pending in the legislature. This bill would eliminate Quakers from the Department of Environmental Protection's list of "potentially dangerous species," thereby qualifying the birds and their eggs for protection under New Jersey law. New Jersey's Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), however, stands steadfastly in opposition to changing the classification, citing the same unsubstantiated justifications that have been recycled over and over again for 50 years by officials who have not done the research.

PLEASE! Do Not Set Your Quaker Parrot Free!

The survivability of Quaker parrots in the wild is dependent upon on flock support and on adult generations teaching offspring where to eat, who the predators are and how to navigate the complex and dangerous world of humans. People who set exotic pet birds free are not only in violation of the law, but are sentencing their birds to death. If you have a parrot you no longer want, please contact your local parrot rescue organization or humane shelter for assistance.



Above from left to right: Marc Johnson & Alison Evans-Fragale examining a Quaker chick; Marc Johnson surveys babies that have been pulled from the nests; Close-up of baby Quaker parrots seen in previous photo; Below: These same Bronx Quaker chicks — now adults — thriving at the NEEWS.

The Quakers of Throgs Neck, NY: 2007

by Karen Windsor,
Executive Director,
Foster Parrots Ltd.

The Throgs Neck community in the Bronx, New York, loved its wild Quaker parrots. The industrious little birds had been nesting on the light poles surrounding the Throgs Neck Little League Field for more than 15 years. But the aging lighting systems were in need of repair, and as New York's Department of Design and Construction (DDC) surveyed the situation it became clear that several major Quaker nests would have to be removed in order to accomplish the task. Unlike other utility outfits, the DDC was motivated to avoid causing harm to nesting Quakers or to any babies that might be present in the nests. Alison Fragale and "Brooklyn Parrots" founder, Steve Baldwin, were called in as expert consultants and they were adamant that the project be pursued by early March to avoid the presence of springtime babies in the nests, but the DDC was unable to coordinate the effort quickly enough. The final scheduled date of nest removal would be June 7th. Unfortunate timing. The nests promised to be full of fertile egg, chicks and fledglings at the height of breeding season. Foster Parrots, Ltd. was called in to participate in the rescue event to take any babies that were pulled from the nests.

On the morning of June 7th, four nests in Throgs Neck were targeted for destruction. Two of these were massive structures. We watched adult Quakers, unaware of how quickly their world was

about to change, flying to and from their nests, carrying sticks to reinforce their homes and carrying food for their young. Dressed in hazmat suits and accompanied by a bucket truck, DDC crew members ascended in the lift and began to carefully disassemble the first complicated nest structure amidst the frantic cries of adult Quakers. The first nest produced twenty-seven baby Quakers. As the day progressed and the nests were dismantled, one after the other, more and more babies were collected and gently placed in the holding tanks by Foster Parrots' Founder, Marc Johnson. At the end of the day the grounds surrounding the Throgs Neck Little League Field were littered with piles upon piles of thin black sticks, and forty-two babies had lost their chance to be free.

At the New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary, preparations to accommodate a sizable Quaker parrot colony began while Marc Johnson and Foster Parrots' Executive Director, Karen Windsor, commenced to raise 42 baby monks at home. A schedule of round-the-clock hand-feeding would consume all of Marc and Karen's time for the next month as the babies matured. Despite the hand-raising, it was important that human-imprinting was discouraged to the greatest possible extent, and this measure was supported by the fact that the babies had each other to anchor them securely to their own species.

2021

At the New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary, little green and gray birds chatter emphatically and dart like busy little bullets through their aviaries. They carry in their beaks thin twigs and strands of hay that they will weave in and out of the aviary wire. No one had to teach them how to do this. Industrious nest-building behavior is written into their DNA. The Quaker colony at the NEEWS quite possibly represents the largest single captive Quaker colony in the U.S. As a non-native species in this country they are both loved and loathed by opposing factions, and the controversy surrounding their "belonging" rages on. Inside the refuge of Foster Parrots' sanctuary, these little green birds, at least, are safe. They have never known the bars of a cage. But fourteen years after being pulled from their nests in Throgs Neck, they also have no understanding of how close they came to truly being free.





Domestic Ducks in the Wild: Why Releasing Your Duck Can Be a Death Sentence

It is often assumed that domestic ducks are similar enough to their wild counterparts that they can survive being in the wild, but can and should they?

- Domestic ducks are not fully flighted. They cannot migrate and survive cold winters, and often become frozen into pond ice when the wild flock leaves.
- They are dependent on humans for food. This is often a bread heavy diet that's nutritionally lacking and can lead to deformities.
- Their differing feather coloring, especially white, and lack of flight leaves them extremely vulnerable to predators.
- Domestic ducks bring disease risks to wild ducks who haven't built up immunity.
- Domestic populations often mate with wild ones creating offspring that are not suited genetically for wild life.

Dumping domestics into the wild is simply a death sentence for these birds, and illegal in many states.

Reference: <https://opensanctuary.org/article/domestic-ducks-how-we-got-here/>

Combating Easter Time Animal Impulse Buying

by Kelly Duker
Avian & Animal Care Manager



Easter has always been associated with eggs to symbolize new life, and this has evolved into chickens and ducks being Eastertime symbols. With the holiday approaching, many are preparing their celebrations. *However, rescue groups are preparing for a different kind of event: the impulse buying of chicks and ducklings as gifts this year.* Seller tactics to make birds more desirable and lack of consumer care knowledge cause long-term consequences for chicks and ducklings, but fortunately, many organizations are working to raise awareness on this issue and promote humane alternatives to the public.

Oftentimes, chicks and ducklings are dyed colors for Easter to make them appear more novel and "less like real commitments," which contributes to consumer impulse buying, as well as "possible stress to the chicks."¹ The decorative dye can overshadow the expensive nutritional, medical, and environmental needs of these birds whose lifespans can extend past ten years. These birds often end up abandoned when impulsivity comes before research and responsibility, with "the number of domesticated ducks dumped in city parks increasing during Easter season," which is a "death sentence" for these domestic fowl.²

Thankfully, there has been great legal progress opposing impulse buying, with many states, including Rhode Island, having criminalized the selling dyed

chicks.³ Many enacted laws also require a minimum number of birds to be purchased, preventing individuals from impulsively purchasing one chick, rather than a planned flock. The ASPCA has also enacted "annual pre-Easter crackdowns on pet shops that illegally sell baby bunnies and chickens" in order to reduce the unlawful supply of these animals and decrease accessibility to consumers, which can decrease impulsive purchases.⁴

Sanctuaries that house ducks and chickens, like the Michigan Duck Sanctuary, have also been more vocal about the increases in surrender and abandonment issues they have to deal with at Easter. Through the advocacy of sanctuaries and state legal actions, the public is slowly become more aware of the irresponsibility of buying chicks and ducklings at Eastertime.

Happily, there are many humane alternatives to gifting animals at Easter. One can sponsor a chicken, duck, or rabbit at a local animal sanctuary and even go on a tour to see their animal residents, many of whom may have been Easter time surrenders. Chocolate bunnies, stuffed animals, and faux egg hunts are also wonderful ways to pay homage to classic Easter animals without bringing in the responsibility of life long care.



1: www.audubon.org/news/colored-chicks-raise-concerns-after-easter-many-face-fates-worse-dye

2: <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/19/nyregion/ducks-city-parks.html> - article on domestic duck rescue problem in NY parks

3: <https://law.justia.com/codes/rhode-island/2014/title-4/chapter-4-1/section-4-1-8> poultry which has been dyed. No pet store shall sell, History of Section.

4: www.nytimes.com/1987/04/18/nyregion/about-new-york-cracking-down-on-duck-dealing-and-bunny-sales.html

Adoption in the Most Challenging of Times: Candi & Crackers Find Their Perfect Home!



Left: Candi, Rose-Breasted Cockatoo; Right: Crackers, Yellow-Naped Amazon. Photos by Brian Jones

By Rachel DeFronzo
Director of Adoptions & Education

This past year brought with it many challenges, some more difficult than others. It required nonprofit organizations around the world to rethink their operations in order to safely provide services to those in need. Through the chaos and the heart-break of 2020, Foster Parrots had to find a way to provide sanctuary and adoption services for hundreds of parrots.

Typical adoption procedures at Foster Parrots include an in-person interview, a tour of our facility, and a home visit. None of that was possible this year. Despite initial concerns that a virtual adoption process couldn't match our typical in-depth methods, we had one of our most successful years for adoptions to date. Interviewing applicants online allows us to screen adopters more easily and eliminates an initial barrier for those who have difficulty traveling to our remote facility several times. Coupling a video interview with a virtual tour of the home expedited the process and allowed us to find quality homes much faster.

One part of the adoption process still needed to happen in-person: meeting the birds. We value the needs of the birds above all else, and they will let us know whether they want to go home with someone! Our staff is skilled at matching birds with adopters in advance based on what

we know about the birds. Do they prefer men or women? Have they lived with children or other pets before? Do they know how to fly? This information and much more goes into our matching process. However, even the most well-thought out and obvious matches don't always work in reality. Sometimes a parrot decides that they simply do not like a person for reasons that are a mystery to us all. It's vital that our adoption applicants spend time with the birds to ensure that a mutual relationship can develop.

In order to complete adoption visits safely, we have relocated our adoption center to the front of our building. Visitors arrive by appointment and meet with a staff member who provides instructions and observes from a distance. This procedure has helped us place more than 50 birds into loving homes in the past 12 months.

Meet Candi & Crackers!

Candi and **Crackers** are two of the birds who have recently found homes through Foster Parrots' adoption program. Candi is a friendly and sweet Rose Breasted Cockatoo, and Crackers is a grumpy old Amazon. They went home together and are both thriving with their new family!

Despite her sweet and loving nature, we were still very careful in selecting a home for Candi. She's a cockatoo, after all! She can certainly bring the noise when she wants to and is capable of a painful bite. Sometimes the birds that seem the easiest can be the toughest to match; we need to ensure that their adopters know what these birds are capable of. Even though Candi is generally well behaved, all her wild instincts are still intact, and we knew that she would be destroying the woodwork and screaming for attention in no time!

Crackers was also a challenge. Although he enjoyed attention from people in our adoption center, he had no interest in being touched and was even hesitant to take a treat from our hands at first. However, Crackers lit up when he first met his new family! It was a clear connection, but we still warned his adopters that he may never be interested in direct handling from people.

Candi and Crackers have been with their family for 9 months now. Candi, of course, provides endless love and laughter, but Crackers was the bigger surprise. He took to his people better than we could have imagined, and he is now an extremely affectionate bird! He loves being handled and spending time with his people. His family took a chance on him and they would have loved, accepted, and doted on him whether he wanted to be touched or not. By allowing him to take his time and by respecting his boundaries, they ended up with a bird who trusts them completely. Crackers and Candi certainly hit the jackpot with their amazing new family, and of course the humans are lucky to share their lives with these two happy birds.

PRION

A Futuristic Fable of Parrots, Pandemics and Promise-Makers

An Interview with Author, Dr. LoraKim Joyner by Foster Parrots' Executive Director, Karen Windsor

KW: Prion is a sci-fi, fantasy, futuristic story, but it springs from what's happening today. The story demonstrates how human relationships with wildlife can be catalysts for viral pandemics that threaten human life on the planet. This is not really science fiction, though, is it?

LKJ: That part of the story isn't science fiction. In fact, I attempted to ground much of the story in real science, such as the fact that the recent Covid-19 pandemic has its roots in the wildlife trade. Over 60% of human infectious diseases come from other animals and over 75% new diseases are those that come from animals. Also, harming the ecosystem and promoting intensive animal farming to provide food for people are drivers for emerging zoonotic diseases. Experts say it's just a matter of time before something much worse than Covid-19 comes along.

KW: As a veterinarian, a scientist and a conservationist, you have been personally invested in the struggles of indigenous communities to take back control of their lands, their resources and their futures. As Prion begins to unfold, the keas are struggling to do exactly the same thing. Can you comment on the kinship between indigenous communities of parrots and people?

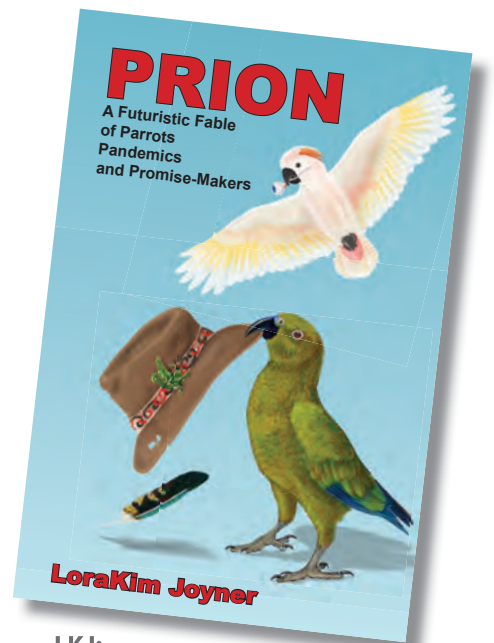
LKJ: I saw the keas, and the other parrots in the book, as a symbol of colonized peoples all over the world. Each has had their culture and well-being restricted by those who would, through power and domination, take from them what was theirs (the indigenous people and the parrots) so that it could theirs (those in positions of power). This is a very old story and the process and harm of colonization continues. I see it every day in my work as a parrot conservationist. I often say that if the people aren't doing well in

an area, it is likely that the parrots aren't either, and vice versa. Colonized people and wildlife suffer from oppression that has the same root causes. The characters in the book saw the parrots and indigenous people's struggle and suffering as their own and elected to risk their lives for the birds. This is what I believe we need to do today, and in fact, many are.

KW: The scientists in the story worry that releasing information publicly about this avian prion disease will result in a violent backlash against parrots everywhere. This reflects the reality of the human impulse to destroy what they fear without acknowledging it is their own activity that has unleashed the threat.

LKJ: We do lash out at what scares us, don't we? And in this time of climate change, loss of biodiversity, fracturing community cohesion, increased pressure from internationally funded businesses that seek to extract remaining resources, and polarized and autocratic politics, the anxiety level keeps ratcheting up. Humans evolved to see the outsider as "other" and "different" and somehow wrong and worthy of our contempt and violence. So there is always risk when a group feels threatened that they will take it out on another group, even if it isn't the targeted group's fault. So, with heightened anxiety and fear, there is a chance that situations around the world might get a lot worse. This is why we have to work hard on clamping down on this biologic propensity to "other" people and species, and see their health and well-being as intricately related to our own, as is their beauty.

KW: "None are free until all are free" is One Earth Conservation's mantra and it is also incorporated into the book. What is the meaning and the hope surrounding these words?



LKJ:

These words are adapted from Emma Lazarus who wrote, "Until we are all free, we are none of us free," and of which Dr. Martin Luther King spoke, "Until we are all free, we are none of us free." I take my direct inspiration from Tomas Manzanares, a Miskitu indigenous leader in La Moskitia Honduras who told me his story of how he nearly died from an assassination attempt. Criminals who were stealing his ancestor's land, felling the forest, and trafficking in parrots, wanted to kill him because he had reported their names to the authorities. He was pointing to his scars of where bullets had been removed and where some still remained when I asked him, "Why are you willing to risk your life for the parrots?" He replied, "Doctora, everything is at risk, so I am willing to risk everything. If the macaws don't make it, neither will my people." I think Tomas saw that his people cannot be whole without the parrots, and if the parrots are gone, an essential part of him will disappear as well. And what I see is that the systems of oppression strike each demographic differently, but we all are suffering from the same root causes. So, to free ourselves and others, we have to fracture the basis of our domination-based society. We can't work on it piecemeal with only some benefiting from the harm caused to others. The burden of the system weighs heavy on us all, even those who on the surface seem to benefit, because they are living lives less fully intimate with the beauty and power of life on earth, including themselves. I feel this rather

(cont'd on page 11)

Species Profile: The Sun Parakeet, AKA The Sun Conure (*Aratinga solstitialis*)

Endangered in the Wild, Unwanted in Captivity

by Karen Windsor,
Executive Director,
Foster Parrots Ltd.



In a photograph recently taken by Parrot Ranger, Andrew Albert, in Guyana, at least five adult and fledgling sun parakeets (aka sun conures) are spilling out of the opening of their nest cavity in a tight, orange and yellow cluster of color (*see above*.) It seems impossible that so many birds could occupy such a small nest cavity, but observations by the research team have established the intense communal nature of the parakeets. With close knit family groups and a dynamic flock structure, the birds forage together, play, roost, nest and communicate constantly. Social dependency is built into the genetic fabric of these and all other parrot species.

To say that every baby parrot bred for the pet market has an equal chance of finding love, commitment and social fulfillment with a human family would be incorrect, but from an evolutionary standpoint, it would be safe to say that every baby parrot innately has the same expectation that they will have a

social connection to *someone*. In the retail pet market, though, it's the luck of the draw, and this could not be better exemplified than by the plea for help recently received by our adoption network partner, Caryn Cullen at "For the Love of Birds" in New Jersey. A lonely sun conure was in need of rescue. The little bird had been living in his tiny cage, by himself, in a back bedroom for 15 years. Fifteen years is an awfully long time

for a little bird, whose feathers are drenched in the colors of the sun, to wait for the sun to shine on him.

Sun conures are arguably one of the most attractive parrots in the pet market. Their brilliantly colored feathers draw people in, and their small size leads consumers to believe that they are a perfect "starter bird." But the fact is that sun conures, with their shrill, ear-splitting calls, are one of the species most likely to end up on the doorstep of a parrot rescue organization. It is the ultimate irony that the pet market in the U.S. is saturated with a species almost unconditionally destined to become unwanted while their kind in the wild are hanging by a thread as one of the world's most highly endangered parrots.

The call of a sun conure relative to its size is impressive at 120 decibels. To provide some perspective, Moluccan cockatoo screams have been measured at 120-135 decibels. The largest of all parrot species, the

Hyacinth macaw, puts out a call that measures merely 106 decibels. The volume of a sun conure's call is not far behind the sound of a 747 jet, which has been measured at 140 decibels.

Vocalizations serve a purpose for parrots. It is their language. In the wild, parrots call to exchange information and to maintain a vocal connection with family or flock members, oftentimes over considerable distances. This behavior does not cease to exist for captive parrots in the home environment, but it can intensify when a parrot is trying to express a need that is not being met. The most common unmet need for parrots in captivity is the need for social connection. Until human guardians can meet the social expectations of a parrot on the parrot's terms, parrots will continue to land on the shoulders of the rescue community. Or end up relegated to lonely back bedrooms, like our unfortunate little sun conure, whose cage, according to the report, was most often covered for 15 years.



Rescued from 15 years of isolation, this is likely a sun conure/jenday conure mix.



MACAW CONSERVATION COSTA RICA

MacawConservation.org



MCCR Welcomes a New Girl!

by Chris Castles, MCCR President

One week into February, Macaw Conservation welcomed a new scarlet macaw to the farm. Originally captured in Drake Bay, this young bird had been harassing and attacking people, quite possibly looking for a hand-out. Her lack of fear of humans is evidence that she was a poached bird

who had been raised and kept as somebody's pet, and this is an all too common problem in Costa Rica, representing a dangerous situation for released and escaped pet parrots. Fear and avoidance of humans is a survival tool for wild parrots. Parrots who do not recognize the boundaries are at risk for harm or for being recaptured and sold into the illegal trade. Without skilled rehabilitation services parrots like this have little chance of successfully integrating back into the wild.

Now in quarantine, our **new girl** is familiarizing herself with other resident and free-flying macaws

on the farm through vocal communication, and this is an important part of the integration process. Also, even as she waits in quarantine, we have begun to familiarize her with the foods she would find in the wild. Her first introduction to a beach almond, which is a staple food for wild macaws in Costa Rica, demonstrated that she had no experience with a food item like this. We watched her unsuccessfully — but adorably — attempt to juice it like an orange. In time she will learn. (*Look below!*)

Last year MCCR successfully released 10 scarlet macaws back into the wild and it has been both uplifting and fascinating to observe and document the re-wilding process. Watching them form pairs and alliances, seeing hierarchies develop and observing how they have begun to mix with the wild macaws are all social situations necessary to establish a foundation of independence under the birds. Initially reliant upon the support of the farm, the birds gradually decrease their dependency and until they become one with the Osa Peninsula's wild scarlet population.

Left: Macaws enjoying supplemental meals to help keep them healthy as they establish independence after release. All photos courtesy of Chris Castles.



Hi! I'm new here!

"New Girl" awaiting her new name!

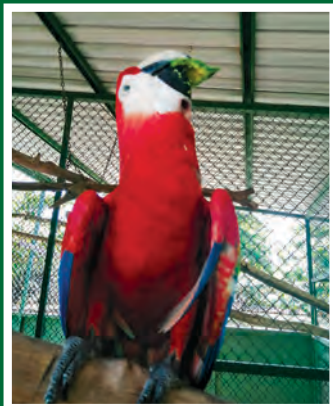
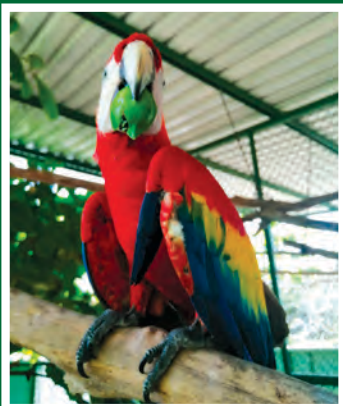


Name That Macaw!

Our New Girl Needs A Name!

Every person who makes a donation of \$100 or more in support of Foster Parrots' March Matching Fund Drive and enters the name of their choice on the form on page 12 or in the message box on our website will be entered into the contest.

The winner will not only get to name our new girl, but will become her Official Sponsor for the year ahead! Sponsorship packages include an Official Certificate of Sponsorship, a biography of your macaw, species specific and geographic distribution information and frame-worthy color photos!



Above: Unfamiliar with wild food sources, "New Girl" attempts to "juice" a beach almond. She'll learn!



Left: Izzy, Blue and Gold Macaw; Center: Mia, Eastern Rosella; Left: Poe, Lesser Vasa Parrot. Photos by Brian Jones.

The Northeast Parrot Placement Cooperative

The Fine Art of Networking in the Northeast USA

 by Karen Windsor

The four Blue & Gold Macaws arrived at Manhattan’s Center for Avian and Exotic Medicine (CAEM) dirty, sick, malnourished and extensively plucked. Confiscated by authorities from a home in which the conditions were so deplorable, it was a wonder that the birds had even survived. The veterinary team at CAEM was able to provide medical care, stabilize the birds and restore their health. Re-socializing the birds, however, and locating homes for them would take time and training beyond their means. Hospital Administrator, Lorelei D’Avolio, contacted adoption network partners, Bob and Jill Lewis, at Northeast Avian Rescue (NEAR), and NEAR welcomed the birds. They were eventually able to locate outstanding adopters for all four macaws.

Bob and Jill Lewis have a keen understanding of avian behavior and run a highly successful adoption program in upstate New York. They are especially well versed in understanding the complex personalities of cockatoos and finding outstanding homes for these difficult parrots. Foster Parrots, Ltd. has relied heavily on NEAR for assistance when faced with unwanted cockatoos. There hadn’t been many birds that NEAR couldn’t socialize and find placement for, but when Blue & Gold Macaw, Izzy, was surrendered to their rescue, it soon became clear they had met their match. Izzy was extremely smart, edgy, unpredictable and took an almost diabolical pleasure in outwitting his human caregivers. Adoption was not going to be in the cards for this macaw. Bob contacted Foster Parrots. The New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary exists to accommo-

date birds like Izzy. Izzy was welcomed as a permanent sanctuary resident.

Connecticut Parrot Rescue (CPR) has great success placing small birds and can often accommodate these when help is needed. Sheila Blanchette of “Heart of Feathers,” an avian behavior training agency, has a direct relationship with the Quaker Parrot Society and is often able to help with Quaker parrot placement. Rhode Island Parrot Rescue has worked cooperatively with Foster Parrots for many years, each offering resources for adoptable or unadoptable parrots in tandem. The Parrot Club in Connecticut connects their members to parrot placement services, “For the Love of Birds” in New Jersey is our southern-most network partner, and Dr. Ann Bourke of the Northeast Bird Clinic uses network partners frequently when clients can no longer care for their birds.

Co-founded by Foster Parrots, Ltd. and NEAR in 2013, **The Northeast Parrot Placement Cooperative (NEPPCO)** is a collaborative network of parrot rescue groups, humane shelters and veterinary clinics created in order to increase adoption opportunities for parrots throughout the region. Rescue organizations vary in how they operate and execute policy, but NEPPCO partners share a basic value system that prioritizes the welfare and the needs of each individual parrot. All NEPPCO member organizations screen adoption applicants thoroughly and employ contracts to govern adoptions. Member organizations honor widely accepted standards in regards to guardian education, veterinary care and social support for

parrots in home environments. One of our most important collective values is respect for bonds between mated parrots. The relationships between birds matter. Parrots lose so much in captivity. Being separated from a mate is the ultimate assault on a captive parrot’s emotional well-being.

The unwanted parrot problem in the country is massive. Nothing we do alone can compare to what we can do together. When avian and animal rescue organizations compete with one another, our effectiveness is diminished. When we work regionally and nationally as a unified force, more birds and animals can be saved. Now in force for 8 years, NEPPCO is an encouraging example of the power of solidarity.



NEPPCO Member Organizations:

- Connecticut Parrot Rescue | CT
- Northeast Bird Clinic | CT
- The Parrot Club | CT
- Foster Parrots, Ltd. | RI
- Rhode Island Parrot Rescue | RI
- Heart of Feathers Education | NH
- Center for Avian & Exotic Medicine | NY
- Northeast Avian Rescue | NY
- For the Love of Birds | NJ

FOSTER PARROTS MARCH MATCH*



WATCH WATCH

IT'S HERE!

THE FOSTER PARROTS ANNUAL MARCH MATCHING FUND DRIVE

FEATURING A

\$20,000

MATCHING POOL!



Foster Parrots launches **3** fundraiser events every year. We hope you will choose to support at least one of these fabulous fundraisers!

1

The March Matching Fund Drive!

Foster Parrots' oldest and most important fundraising tradition, this fabulous event offers an incredible matching fund of \$20,000 for every donation dated in the month of March! This fundraising event has engaged our supporters for more than 20 years and has been instrumental in creating The New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary. Whether you have been with us for decades or have recently joined the family, the March Matching Fund Drive puts more power under your support!

2

The Fall Fundraiser Extravaganza

Wow! Every September this incredible, all-day, festival-style event provides an opportunity for us to give back to our family of friends and supporters whose faith, love and generosity have made this work possible. The Fall Fundraiser Extravaganza puts the "Fun" back in Fundraiser. You've gotta go!

3

The Year-End Fund Drive

'Tis the season for warmth, generosity and inclusion! The Year-End Fund Drive has grown as an essential fundraising event. It closes the gaps in Foster Parrots' budget and helps to propel us into the New Year!

When You Support Foster Parrots:

- You provide specialized avian veterinary care, nutritional diets, toys and enrichments, and environmental upgrades for over 400 parrots and other displaced exotic residents at the sanctuary.
- You facilitate an adoption program that locates safe, committed, loving homes for parrots in transition
- You support our conservation partnerships in Central and South America that help protect wild parrots in their wild places.
- You enable Foster Parrots to succeed as a force in avian education and in standardizing humane education values.

THIS WORK IS NOT POSSIBLE WITHOUT YOU! PLEASE CONSIDER DONATING IN MARCH

Donate on-line: fosterparrots.com It's safe, secure, and so easy!
Or, mail your donation to: Foster Parrots, Ltd. PO Box 34 Hope Valley, RI 02832



FOSTER PARROTS
 NEW ENGLAND EXOTIC WILDLIFE SANCTUARY
5K ROAD RACE

This year's SNEAKS FOR BEAKS race is VIRTUAL!
 Anyone can run between May 1 and 15, 2021.

Raise money to support the birds and animals at Foster Parrots and The New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary by having friends and family members make a pledge for each mile you run.

INFO, REGISTRATION:

www.fosterparrots.com/events

- Prizes for the top three fundraisers
- Foster Parrots 5K T-Shirts for all registrants



Run or walk anywhere in the world — have fun and send us your photos!

("Prion" Interview cont'd from page 6)

personally – no being should live a life less fully lived according to the desires of another.

KW: In Prion, you introduce the concept of "Unconditional Solidarity" (US) as a worldwide movement. Is this the biggest fantasy of all, or can we hope to achieve this?

LKJ: Isn't it both? An impossible utopian dream and an aspiration to work towards? I believe we can get so much closer than we are now, and that's what is important to me: that lives are lived more fully now and there is less suffering and pain, now. We can save lives now by holding up the vision of US and working concretely towards it with our promises and fulfillment of action.

KW: Always in your work and in your writing, you emphasize the inevitable duality of life. Beauty and tragedy, blood and beauty, the good and bad in the human soul, the hope that rises out of destruction. In Prion this is a constant thread - all the way up to the shocking end! Did you originally intend this to be thematic in the book?

LKJ: I did not intend much in the book – the characters and the power, beauty, and tragedy in life wrote the book. I just listened to what the people and the parrots were saying, and wrote it down. And yet, what they say in the book is what they have been saying to me my entire life. Perhaps I have internalized the messages so much that there is no way that I could write anything else but what I did. I'm almost embarrassed by how much I see the hope and possibility of what we humans have yet to achieve - and could, and how that played out in Prion. Yet, humans are achieving it in fact. I work with teams of people who are risking so much and accomplishing so much, and they exhibit US, while also being fully human with

dysfunction, "othering," and ego defenses that harm themselves and others around them. My conservation efforts are mired in the paradox of the binary – we humans are so mightily beautiful, and yet we might kill off ourselves and much life on this planet, and in the process, we could also save ourselves. But what will that saving look like? I guess you will just have to read the book to find out.

Parrot Humor!



Foster Parrots & The New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary

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FOSTER PARROTS MARCH MATCH*



YES!



I WANT TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE
ANNUAL MARCH MATCH FUNDRAISER!
All donations made in
March will be matched up to **\$20,000!**



Your contribution to Foster Parrots, Ltd. helps provide care for over 400 parrots and animals at The New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary. It supports our humane education and adoption programs, and it helps to protect the freedom of wild parrots and natural habitat. **Help us meet our fundraising goal. Every bird counts. Every dollar counts! THANK YOU!**

Yes! I want to support the work of Foster Parrots, Ltd. with a tax-deductible donation of:

- \$25 \$50 \$100* \$200 \$250 \$500 Other \$ _____

***Every donation of \$100 or more during our March Matching Fund Drive can enter the macaw name of their choice below, or in the message box online and will be entered into the contest! (See p.8 for more details.)**

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

E-mail: _____ **Macaw Name** _____

Please mail checks to:



Foster Parrots, Ltd.
PO Box 34
Hope Valley, RI 02832



Donate on-line by visiting:
fosterparrots.com
It's safe, secure, and so easy!