

## **URGENT: Endangered Species Act Threatens Parrots in the USA**

*Putting non-native parrot species on the Endangered Species Act will threaten their continued existence in the United States. Speak up now or it will be too late.*

### **Situation**

Right now Friends of Animals and WildEarth Guardians are hijacking the ESA, administered by the Fish & Wildlife Service, to put 5 species of macaws (Scarlet, Hyacinth, Great Green, Military and Blue Throated) on the Endangered Species Act list. In the introduction to petition to the Fish and Wildlife Service to add 14 parrot species, Friends of Animals states that their goal is to end the captive bird trade in the United States. These species are recovering in most of their wild ranges due to a combination of effective international laws that protect them and steadily improving conservation programs in their countries of origin.

1. If a species is added to the Endangered Species Act, without a special rule being put in place, interstate commerce is not allowed except between approved conservation breeders with Captive-Bred Wildlife permits.
  - a. These species, which are doing well in aviculture, will no longer be bred in the numbers they are now since they will not be able to be sold as pets, which is the majority of the market for private aviculture. Aviculture is keeping the gene pool alive and vibrant. Breeders may no longer find it practical to continue breeding these magnificent birds and may eventually abandon their efforts. The birds will be left unproductive, be destroyed or be put into sanctuary. How does this help conserve species?
  - b. If you have a pet of one of these species, in most states you will be allowed to keep your bird if you can prove that you acquired your bird prior to it being listed (keep all your documentation!) If you have to take your bird to a veterinarian in another state you might be considered to be doing interstate commerce with that species. It may become impossible for rescues to place birds out of state. In some states (including Illinois, Virginia and Rhode Island) the Endangered Species Act is adopted immediately within the state as well, and there is no grandfathering. It will be illegal for you to keep your bird if it is one of the above species without a permit, which may not be possible for pet owners to get.
  - c. Commercial aviculturists and their customers contribute significantly to effective conservation efforts, provide visibility for conservation programs and participate in eco-tourism based on their personal experiences of species.
2. If the demand for these species in the international pet trade is not met by commercial aviculture, the demand for smuggled birds will increase, thus increasing poaching. How does any of this help conserve species in their native countries? Putting them on the ESA does nothing to fund conservation in their native countries. Incidentally, these species are, for the most part, recovering nicely in their countries of origin and their inclusion often hinges on their lack of recovery in a single small area.
3. A long list of additional species, including more macaws, cockatoos and other kinds of parrots are next up for review.... If your bird isn't on the list yet, it may be only a matter of time.

## Actions You Can Take NOW

We must all speak out now! As the old quote goes: *"...those who won't stand together will all hang separately...."*

1. Email, call or snail mail your elected representatives in Congress about your concern; let them know this is an important issue to you. Votes drive these people! You want them to be willing to discuss it, and to start a committee to investigate the use of the Endangered Species Act with foreign species, especially parrots which are bred in the USA successfully. Outcomes we want:

- a. Stop the placement of the existing proposed species, or else apply the special rule allowing interstate commerce to continue for all of them, pending congressional review.
- b. Create a committee to review the ESA with regard to parrots to:
  - i. List all parrot species approved with the special rule that allows continued interstate commerce, regardless of whether it is considered endangered or threatened.
  - ii. De-list previously-listed parrot species to stimulate aviculture to produce more of them
  - iii. Repeal the part of the Endangered Species Act that refers to Foreign Species
  - iv. I have a sample letter you can fine tune and personalize. Follow this link to find contact info for your representatives and senators:  
<http://www.usa.gov/Contact/Elected.shtml>

2. Respond to the request for input on the currently-open Fish & Wildlife ruling, this is only for Militaries, Hyacinths and Great Green Macaws, but SO WHAT? Speak up! You can even use your sample letter in this response; let's bombard everyone concerned with our feedback. You have until April 22 to post. To post a comment, go to this link, and click the COMMENT NOW button:

<http://www.regulations.gov/#!documentDetail;D=FWS-R9-ES-2012-0013-0072>

3. Participate in the petition I have made to Fish & Wildlife: Please join this campaign: [http://www.change.org/petitions/fish-wildlife-service-stop-putting-parrots-on-the-us-endangered-species-act-3?share\\_id=OpsgrblwPS&utm\\_campaign=mailto\\_link&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=share\\_petition](http://www.change.org/petitions/fish-wildlife-service-stop-putting-parrots-on-the-us-endangered-species-act-3?share_id=OpsgrblwPS&utm_campaign=mailto_link&utm_medium=email&utm_source=share_petition)

4. Write letters or send questions of your own to Janine Van Norman who is Chief of the Branch of Foreign Species, a unit of the Endangered Species Program of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Arlington, Virginia at 703 358 2171; fax: 703 358 1735; e-mail: [Janine\\_VanNorman@FWS.gov](mailto:Janine_VanNorman@FWS.gov)

5. Join PIJAC (Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council) at [www.pijac.org](http://www.pijac.org). The small individual membership fee of \$25 goes to support our pet industry lobbyists in Washington. They are aware of these legislative efforts (both HR 996 and the ESA) and are working on them, although these efforts are not currently reflected on their website.

6. Write to PIJAC and express your concern so they will get focused on this issue. There is a sample letter the President of PIJAC, Mike Canning, below under sample letters. His email address: [mcanning@pijac.org](mailto:mcanning@pijac.org)

7. Others to write:

a. President Obama since he has said he wants good science to go into governmental decisions, and how is it good science to discount the effectiveness of commercial aviculture in keeping gene pools alive and helping to preserve threatened and endangered species of parrot already in captivity?

b. Ken Salazar, Secretary of the Interior [exsec@ios.doi.gov](mailto:exsec@ios.doi.gov)

c. The Fish and Wildlife Service general email, directed to Dan Ashe, Director of Fish and Wildlife Service: [dan\\_ashe@fws.gov](mailto:dan_ashe@fws.gov)

8. WAS THIS HELPFUL INFORMATION? Do you want to stay informed? Help finance our fight? Please LIKE the following facebook page: <http://www.facebook.com/FightToKeepParrotsInOurHomes>

9. Other pending threats: HR 996, which says the only kinds of birds you can legally have are “common canaries”, ducks, chickens and geese. We must be vigilant and speak up about each and every one of these that affects our rights to keep and propagate the animals we love. And we need to effective conservation efforts in their countries of origin.

## Reference Documents – Check it out for yourself

[Background Fact Document](#)

[Hijacking the Endangered Species Act](#)

[First Petition from Animal Rights Group to Put 14 Species of Parrots on the Endangered Species Act](#)

[Summary of the Endangered Species Act](#)

[What Happens to ESA Listed Species?](#)

[Existing Legal Protection for Parrots](#)

[How Does ESA Listing Help Foreign Species \(or NOT\)?](#)

[Fish & Wildlife Service Responses to Questions \(A Letter from Fish & Wildlife Service\)](#)

## Sample Letters

Sample letter from owner of Hyacinth, Great Green (Buffons), Blue Throated, Military or Scarlet Macaw to your representatives and senators in congress

[Word Format](#)

[.pdf Format](#)

Sample letter from owner of other parrot species to your representatives and senators in congress

[Word Format](#)

[.pdf Format](#)

Sample letter to PIJAC

[Word Format](#)

[.pdf Format](#)