

Foster Parrots, Ltd.

The New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary



2018
Annual Report

Foster Parrots, Ltd.

Sanctuary, Adoption, Conservation, Education

Dedicated to the rescue of unwanted, languishing and abused captive parrots, and to the protection of those who still fly free. Working from the belief that parrots and all wild animals should be free.



Founded in 1989 and formally incorporated in 1999, Foster Parrots, Ltd. is accredited by the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries and is the largest parrot rescue organization in the northeast. One of the country's most prominent avian welfare advocates, Foster Parrots has worked collaboratively with organizations such as The Jane Goodall Institute, Born Free USA, and The World Society for the Protection of Animals to bring assistance to captive parrots who have long suffered the consequences of pet trade exploitation and public misinformation.

In 2007, Foster Parrots established The New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary on the abandoned site of what was once known throughout southern Rhode Island as "Chickadee Farms", a chicken egg and meat factory farm. What was once a place of unspeakable suffering for millions of birds has been transformed into 23 acres of peace and safety for over 400 parrots and other displaced exotic animals. Over the years the NEEWS has grown exponentially as a regional center for humane education and avian/animal care services, and serves as home base for all of the programs of Foster Parrots.

Meet Our Staff...



Marc Johnson - Founder & CEO, Marc Johnson has stepped back from sanctuary operations and now focuses primarily on the conservation programs of the organization.



Karen Windsor - As Executive Director, Karen shapes the vision, future and programs of Foster Parrots and acts as chief administrator and director of development.



Danika Oriol-Morway - Foster Parrots' Sanctuary Director, Danika heads the New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary, managing the care of over 400 sanctuary residents. Danika also takes the lead on Project Guyana.



Rachel DeFronzo
Adoption Manager
Avian Care Specialist



Bradley Kay
Cockatoo Manager
Avian Care Specialist



Isaiah Duarte
Bird & Animal Care Manager
Avian Care Specialist



Dan Tacey
Facility Operations Manager
Avian Care Specialist



Stephanie Young
Volunteer Manager
Avian Care Specialist



Monica Armstrong
Special Care Coordinator
Avian Care Specialist

Meet Our Veterinary Team...

Dr. Hank Wietsma, DVM, MS, ABVP obtained his Bachelor of Science degree from Fairfield University (1978), his Master of Science in Reproductive Immunology from Ohio State University (1981) and his doctorate in Veterinary Medicine from The University of Florida (1985). He earned his ABVP (Avian) certification in 1997 and was re-certified in 2007. A member of the American Board of Veterinary Practitioners and the Association of Avian Veterinarians, Dr. Wietsma's expertise in avian medicine has earned him recognition as a leader in his field. He is one of the original founders and the current president of Rhode Island's Companion Animal Foundation, an organization dedicated to providing low cost or no cost veterinary services for low-income pet guardians in the state. He is a former president of the Rhode Island Veterinary Medical Association and was voted RIVMA's Veterinarian of the Year in 2012. His private practice at Coventry Animal Hospital is a full-service, state-of-the-art veterinary facility offering care for cats, dogs, birds and other exotic pets.

With a specialized interest in the plight of captive parrots, Dr. Wietsma joined Foster Parrots as the Lead Sanctuary Vet in 2008. Here he invests his extensive knowledge, his skills and his commitment to avian welfare as he oversees the care of over 400 parrots and other exotic animals at the New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary.



Gary Block, DVM, MS, DACVIM, is a 1991 graduate of Cornell University School of Veterinary Medicine. Following graduation he completed an internship in small animal medicine and surgery at Angell Memorial Animal Hospital in Boston and a residency in small animal internal medicine at Purdue University. He became board-certified in small animal internal medicine in 1994. In 1997 he received his Masters degree in Animals & Public Policy from Tufts University, with his thesis focused on the teaching of veterinary ethics. Dr. Block is an active member of and has served as past presidents for both the Rhode Island Veterinary Medical Association and the Society for Veterinary Medical Ethics. In 2011 he was voted Rhode Island Veterinarian of the Year by the Rhode Island Veterinary Medical Association. He is incoming President of the Humane Society Veterinary Medical Association. He is a founding board member of the Rhode Island Companion Animal Foundation and currently serves as Treasurer for this non-profit that provides financial assistance to individuals whose pets are in need of veterinary care.

Dr. Block is co-owner with his wife Justine, of Ocean State Veterinary Specialists, a 45-doctor emergency and referral veterinary hospital in East Greenwich, RI that opened its doors in 2001.

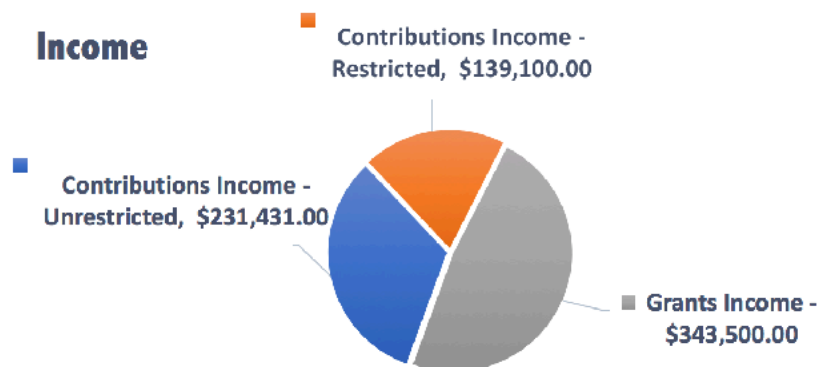
Lucy Spelman, DVM, DACZM, has an undergraduate degree in biology from Brown University and a doctoral degree in veterinary medicine from the University of California at Davis. In 1994, she became the 43rd member of the American College of Zoological Medicine, the first to achieve this milestone right out of residency training. Her work experience includes zoo, wildlife, and small animal medicine; public speaking; writing; teaching; zoo administration—she served as the first female Director of the Smithsonian's National Zoo from 2000-2005; and, conservation—she was the Field Manager for the Mountain Gorilla Veterinary Project from 2006-2009. In addition to scientific articles, she is the author of the National Geographic Animal Encyclopedia and The Rhino with Glue-on Shoes. As the founder of an exciting new non-profit organization, "Creature Conserve", Lucy has been exploring the interface between art, science, and one-health medicine since returning from Rwanda in 2009 after three years working with mountain gorillas.

She is currently based in RI where she teaches biology at the Rhode Island School of Design (since 2010); she also practices at Ocean State Veterinary Specialists.



2018 Financial Information

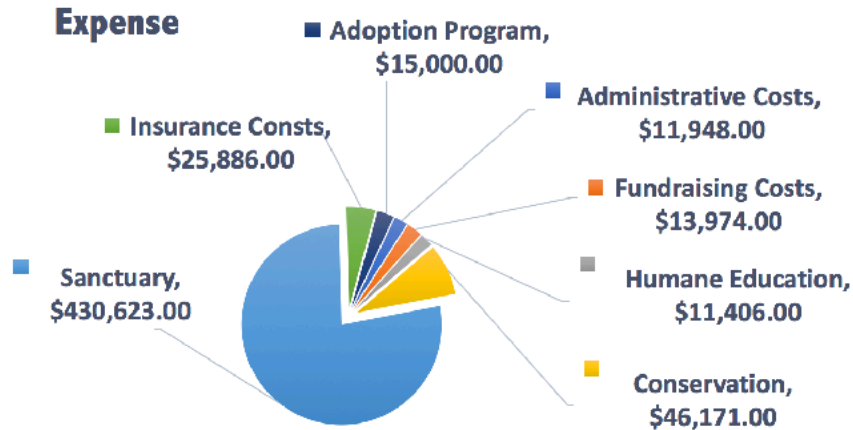
Income



Financial Highlights

- Total Income - \$714,031
- Total Expense - \$555,008
- Total Program Expense - 90.66%
- Total Administrative - 2.15%
- Total Fundraising - 2.51%
- Total Insurance - 4.66%

Expense



Program Spotlight

- The New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary - 77.58%
- Conservation: Costa Rica & Guyana - 8.31%
- Adoption Program - 2.70%
- Humane Education - 2.05%

Sanctuary Review

\$430,623



Established by Foster Parrots, Ltd. in 2007, The New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary building encompasses 20,000 square feet and accommodates 400 parrots and other displaced exotic animals. Forty-four large, interior aviaries and twenty-eight outdoor aviaries offer customized accommodations outfitted to support natural behaviors like social interaction, foraging, play, exploration and flight. While our adoption program works to match human-bonded birds with knowledgeable and committed guardians, our primary focus at the NEEWS is permanent sanctuary for unadaptable birds and other exotic ex-pets who have run out of options. The majority of birds admitted into the sanctuary are those coming from the most abusive or neglectful situations, and parrots whose experiences in captivity have impacted them to the extent that they no longer have the capacity to live compatibly with humans. These survivors require a higher level of veterinary intervention and long-term supportive care. Integration into avian communities at the sanctuary is their first step to healing, though complex avian social dynamics often make integration a lengthy process. We cannot always reverse the damage that has been done; years of neglect, social isolation and poor nutritional support take a physical and psychological toll on these birds. But we do everything in our power to make the “sanctuary years” the happiest years possible for these special birds.

Foster Parrots, Ltd. is the only parrot rescue organization in the northeast - and one of only a handful of organizations in the country - capable of offering life-long care for parrots.

2018 Sanctuary Stats

- ◆ New Bird Intakes: 61
- ◆ Resident Parrots: 378
- ◆ Tortoises, Turtles: 21
- ◆ Patagonian Maras: 3
- ◆ Hedge Hog: 1
- ◆ Iguana: 1
- ◆ Geese, Ducks, Chickens: 9
- ◆ Total Sanctuary Residents: 413



Funded by a grant from The Albert Schweitzer Foundation, four new outdoor aviaries were constructed at the NEEWS in 2018, providing 20 sanctuary residents with access to natural sunlight, fresh air and rain.



Foster Parrots Adoption Program

\$15,000

Just as there are parrots who are ineligible for placement as companions to humans, there are parrots whose emotional and psychological well-being can best be supported through adoption. With space in sanctuary so limited, it is important to evaluate each parrot individually to assess how to best manage their care. Adoption enables us to provide rescue services for a larger number of birds in transition and reserve precious space in sanctuary for those birds who truly have no other options.

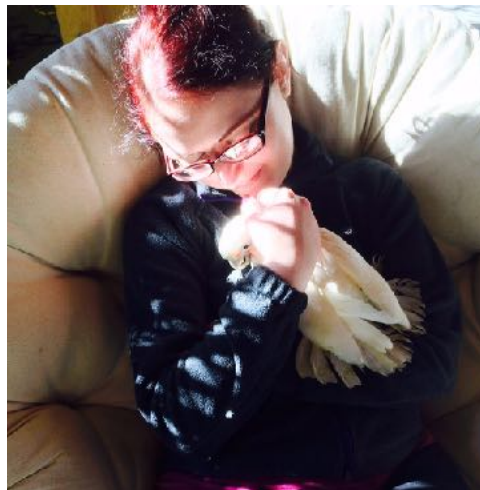
Parrot adoptions are tricky! Whereas dog and cat rescue organizations measure their annual adoption successes in the hundreds or thousands, parrot rescue organizations measure their successes in the dozens. Because a parrot's most fundamental physical, social, behavioral and nutritional needs are often so poorly understood by the typical pet guardian, there

are vastly fewer adoption opportunities for parrots than for other pets like cats and dogs, and a greater incidence of adoption failure. Furthermore, the risk of placing a parrot into a home where standard forms of neglect or poor care will persist is high. Consequently, guardian education is an essential part of any responsible adoption program, and must be offered at every stage of the adoption process.

In 2018, Foster Parrots successfully placed 38 parrots into loving, committed homes and orchestrated the placement of 26 additional birds through our regional adoption network, The Northeast Parrot Placement Cooperative (NEPPCO). Prior to adoption, applicants are thoroughly screened and home-checks are conducted to ensure homes are safe and have the ability to provide for all of the physical, social and psychological needs of a parrot. Ultimately, it is the parrot who will choose the guardian. Post adoption support and training services are available to all adopters in perpetuity.



Foster Parrots, Ltd. partners with IAABC Certified Behaviorist, Sheila Blanchette, and her agency, Heart of Feathers, to offer behavioral training services to new or seasoned parrot guardians who may be experiencing difficulties with their birds. Training can help support long-term adoption success. Sometimes training can be applied to help a parrot keep its home. If motivated guardians cannot afford the fees for professional behavior training services, Foster Parrots will cover the fees.



Humane Education & Community Outreach \$11,406

Foster Parrots' educational programs are utilized by schools and community groups throughout the region and are offered on-site at the sanctuary as well as off-site in classrooms and public venues. While parrots are our specialty, our animal welfare values embrace all animals, everywhere. Our message is rooted in empathy and respect, promoting the rights of all wild animals to be free. **No Cage Is Big Enough.**

Higher Education

Foster Parrots partners with universities throughout New England – and beyond. The New England Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary acts as an extension of the college classroom, providing tours and lectures that complement a wide variety of curriculum applications. The sanctuary offers opportunities for research and internships for students majoring in fields such as veterinary medicine, animal science, biology and animal ethics. Furthermore, our work and partnerships in conservation enable us to act as a “conservation connector”, linking students with field work opportunities in Central and South America. Foster Parrots works frequently with Tufts University School of Veterinary Medicine, The Rhode Island Veterinary Technician Association, the New England Institute of Technology, Brown University, the University of Rhode Island, the Rhode Island School of Design and Lesley University.



NEEWS Sanctuary Director, Danika Oriol-Morway, gives a TedX talk at the Franklin Park Zoo.



Foster Parrots Founder, Marc Johnson (right), and Emmy award winning Film Producer, Allison Argo, speak to an audience about the film, Parrot Confidential, and the issues facing parrots in captivity.



Students from Rhode Island College volunteering at the NEEWS and learning about captive parrot issues for Martin Luther King Service Day.

Grades K – 12

Classroom presentations for children are exponentially enhanced by the sanctuary tour experience. Foster Parrots promotes experiential learning as a key strategy for connecting students to the lives of animals in a deeper, more meaningful way. Visiting children not only get an up-close experience with resident parrots, but also become involved in their lives through activities such as toy-making, art and enrichment projects. Understanding that children represent the next generation of animal care-givers and environmental conservators, Foster Parrots programs are fashioned to instill lasting animal welfare and earth-friendly values in children of all ages.



Hopkinton Boy Scouts spend an afternoon learning about parrots and making toys.

Feral Arts at the NEEWS

Feral Arts is a unique program of Foster Parrots, providing artists of all ages with a platform for expressing animal welfare and environmental values through art! Our 3,000 sq ft studio supports applications like painting, sculpture, glasswork, silk-screening, metal work, wood-carving and pottery. Traveling artists can earn studio time through volunteering at the sanctuary. Resident birds and animals become the inspiration for creativity and beautiful works of art that are often donated to the sanctuary.

In 2018, Feral Arts launched, “**Summer Movie Nights**”, a once a month event scheduled from June through September inviting individuals and families from surrounding communities to enjoy an outdoor, drive-in style movie feature and art experience. Films are selected to promote animal welfare, environmental and “cultural inclusivity” values. Resident artists are on hand to display and discuss their work. Visiting children and their parents can work on art projects together while waiting for the feature film to begin!



Family art project during Feral Arts Movie Night featuring “Zootopia”.



Visiting artist, Christina Poblador creating glass art.

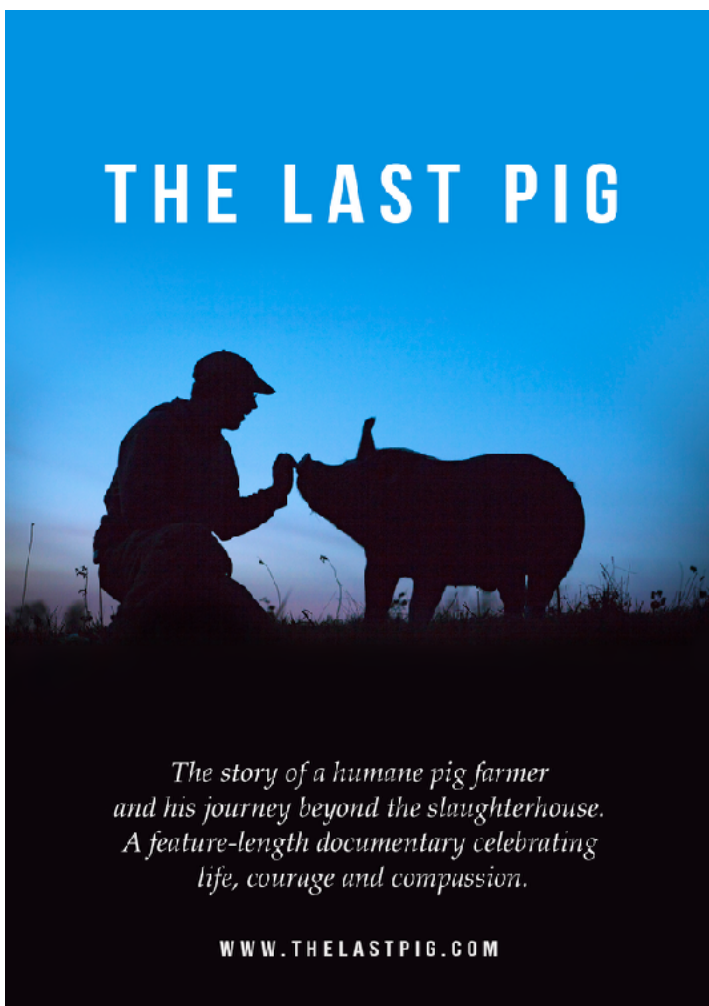


Bradley Kay works on a wall mural featuring a macaw in flight.



Resident artist, Travis Moonschein works on a large-scale sculpture & welding project

Special Events & Activities



The Screening of “The Last Pig” with Film Producer, Allison Argo

In June of 2018 we were honored to host a screening of “The Last Pig”, the latest documentary film by six-time Emmy award winning film producer, Allison Argo. “The Last Pig” is an emotional and cinematically beautiful journey through the lives and hearts of former pig farmer, Bob Comis, and the animals who defined and ultimately changed the course of his life. No matter where one stands in their relationship with animals, “The Last Pig” will forever impact its audience’s understanding of the sentience of pigs and all animals who are farmed for food, forcing viewers to own their values - and their choices. Ms. Argo was present at the screening to answer questions and talk with the audience about her journey through the production of the film.



Special Events & Activities (con't)



Foster Parrots' First Annual 5K Run for Parrots!

Foster Parrots was proud to launch its First Annual Sneaks for Beaks 5K Run on May 6, 2018 in Westerly, RI. Spearheaded by Foster Parrots board member, Dr. James Hahn, who is a seasoned runner, Sneaks for Beaks is a new fundraising event that promises to engage increasing numbers of enthusiastic athletes of all levels over the years to come. More than just a fundraiser, the Sneaks For Beaks 5K Run is an opportunity to engage and educate! The "after party" at The Andrea Seaside Bar at Misquamicut Beach offers good food and drink to weary runners, and provides a platform for disseminating information about the work of Foster Parrots.



NO CAGE IS BIG ENOUGH

Nearly 1/3 of all parrot species are threatened with extinction. Half of all parrot species worldwide are in decline. Captive breeding does not decrease the assault on parrots in the wild. It perpetuates the market and fuels the demand. As long as parrots are regarded as "pets" and the demand persists, illegal poaching will continue and wild parrot populations will continue to be exploited with devastating consequences.

Parrots are not exclusive in their suffering! The global trade in wildlife harms countless species and perpetuates the destruction of natural eco-systems and indigenous cultures world wide. We feed an insatiable consumerist demand for exotic pets, animals kept for exhibition and entertainment, trophy animals and lab animals without acknowledging the sentience and the experience of each animal we commit to life in a cage. It's time to open the doors - and stop the suffering.

In 2018, Foster Parrots, Ltd., in partnership with One Earth Conservation, formally launched the "No Cages" Campaign, a global initiative to alter public perception to the extent that, someday, the sight of a bird or any wild animal in a cage will be offensive and unacceptable to all. **No Cage Is Big Enough.**

Conservation Program Review

Macaw Conservation Costa Rica & The Finca Paradiso Land Conservation Trust An MCCR-Foster Parrots Partnership \$39,575

With 2 additional macaws joining the new macaw breeding program in 2018, MCCR's resident macaw count increased to 20, and a large new, "dating aviary" was constructed, providing an environment conducive to social bonding behavior and supporting the process of "natural mate selection". At this writing, 6 bonded pairs have now been established – and the Waiting Game begins! While these macaws are not eligible for release, their offspring will fly free someday and help strengthen wild macaw numbers in Costa Rica.



Looking out at the hundreds of lush beach almond trees, palms, fruit trees, flowering vines and shrubs that wind between MCCR's aviaries and enhance the surrounding areas, it's impossible to imagine that only 4 years ago this was a nothing more than a dirt field. New programs take time, but our progress has been steady. While we continue to wait for breeding activity to commence inside the aviaries, we are inspired by the ever-increasing presence of wild macaws, Amazons, monkeys, sloths, anteaters, otters, cats and reptiles that are attracted to our newly re-forested compound.



Before and after: Returning rice fields to forest on the Osa Peninsula.

In 2018 the "Finca Paradiso Land Conservation Trust" was formally incorporated in Costa Rica, and an additional 2.5 hectares were purchased by the trustees, bringing the conservation area to 12 full acres. This is a small but significant victory. By all accounts, the surrounding rice fields look beautiful and green, with slender grasses gently rolling across the landscape, attracting a myriad of wild bird species like tiger herons, Roseate spoonbills, white egrets, cranes, raptors and ducks who visit the fields daily to dine on a rich, culinary palate of arthropods, rodents and small reptiles. In reality, the environmental impact of rice production is devastating. Fertilizers, pesticides and fuel-waste poison the fields, the soil and the ground water. These pollutants contaminate watershed areas and rivers, they corrupt the soil... and they poison countless bird and animal species who depend on these fragile, tropical eco-systems for food.

Purchasing additional land and expanding protected areas not only helps reduce pollution, it also protects forests from illegal logging activity, and protects animals from illegal hunting and trapping, all of which we have witnessed first-hand in the land surrounding our project. Despite logging and hunting being strictly prohibited by Costa Rican law, illegal extraction of wildlife and old-growth trees persists. Our goals here are to continue to expand the Land Trust and restore the forests upon which Costa Rica's parrots and all wildlife depend.



Deceptively verdant rice fields belie insidious environmental hazards that don't stop at ground and water pollution. Illegal logging and hunting are pervasive crimes that threaten birds and animals of every species. The Finca Paradiso Land Conservation Trust seeks to bring protection to larger tracts of land in the years to come.



Project Guyana: Saving the Endangered Sun Parakeet
A Foster Parrots, Ltd. & One Earth Conservation Partnership
\$6,096

Once wide-spread throughout Brazil, Venezuela, Southern Guyana, Surinam and French Guiana, sun parakeets have all but vanished throughout their natural range. They are classified as Endangered on the IUCN Red List, and could further be upgraded to Critically Endangered as further surveys are conducted. Working in partnership, Foster Parrots, Ltd. and One Earth Conservation returned to Guyana in December of 2018, continuing efforts to establish an accurate profile of the extent of decline in wild sun parakeet populations. With One Earth's Dr. LoraKim

Joyner as the lead scientist on the project, and Foster Parrots' Danika Oriol-Morway positioned as research assistant and community advocacy and outreach director, a 6-day workshop was held in the village of Karasabai, attracting 20 participants from 3 different villages. Team members were trained to conduct fixed transect counts to assess the minimum number of individual birds in a given area. Alarming, the team documented only 137 distinct, individual sun parakeets during their survey.

The demand for sun parakeets as pets has continued to fuel their decline in the wild, despite the abundance of captive-bred sun parakeets legally available in the pet trade worldwide. The problem surrounding the sun parakeet, however, is not just about the extraction of the birds from the wild. It is also about what happens to the communities, cultures and environments when people have limited economic choices, and the external pressures and market demands that commodify the natural resources of a region.



Continuing to research village attitudes and interest in parrot conservation efforts in Guyana, Dr. Joyner and Ms. Morway visited the villages of Rewa, Surama, Annai, and the conservation research center at Iwokrama. Much of their work focused on community engagement, working directly with local youth wildlife clubs within each village, offering population censusing and parrot identification training, and spending time listening to people as they relayed the history of their relationships with their native parrots. As of January 2019, parrot monitoring projects have been officially established in the villages of Karasabai and Rewa, employing Amerindian wildlife guides, local parrot conservationists and ex-trappers. We will continue to work in Guyana to piece together a more complete understanding of the health and distribution of parrots across the country, and most importantly, to further explore the status of the sun parakeets, and create strategies for turning their story around.



Danika Oriol-Morway and Dr. LoraKim Joyner conducting fixed transect counts to assess the status of sun parakeets in Guyana



Danika and children from the village of Karasabai; Future parrot protectors and conservationists of Guyana.

Our Contributors

The work of Foster Parrots, Ltd. could not be accomplished without the faith and dedication of our supporters. While we honor our more prolific donors here, we never forget that our work is largely fueled by the many smaller donations from average people who give what they can on behalf of the birds. For the support we receive in donations both large and small, we can never thank you enough.

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Rippy's Marketplace
Jane Schnitzer

Our Amazing Volunteers

With a sanctuary facility exceeding 20,000 sq. ft. and over 400 resident birds and animals depending on our care every day, none of this work would be possible without the love and devotion of over 50 volunteers, many of whom have been with us for years. These people give themselves to the parrots. They are the Heart & Soul of the organization.



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Matt Borys

Joelle Caiola

Laura Castagna

Alyssa Christian

Jess Cotter

Wendy Davis

Rachel DeFronzo

Dorian DeSimone

Jess DiCenso

Marjorie Drew

Jimmy Dushkewich

Michael Emma

Madison Gardiner

Sarah Griffin

Maegan Hawley

Frances Hester

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Bob LeBoeuf

Sarah Lefoley

Bev Lewis

Bethany Lewis

Eric Lewis

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Michelle Mahoney

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Sarah Lefoley

Bev Lewis

Bethany Lewis

Eric Lewis

Mary MacDonald

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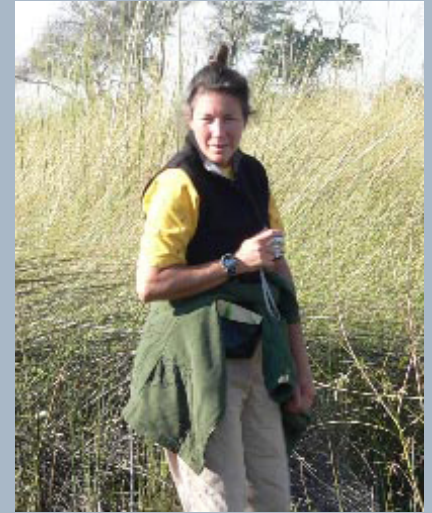
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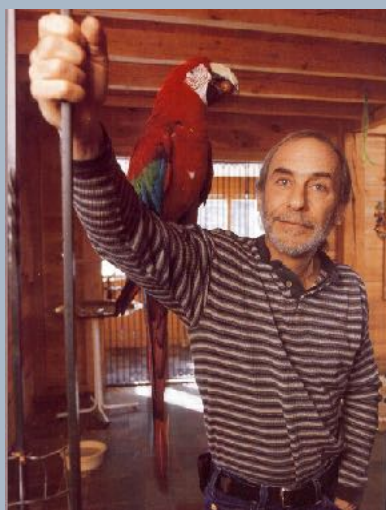
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