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BORG:
My passion
for breeding
LILACINE
AMAZONS

The successful breeding
of *Eupsittula canicularis eburnirostrum*

Simon Degenhard: The return of the Spix's Macaw
to the skies of the Caatinga in Brazil

Causes of dry skin in parrots – risks and possible solutions





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DECADES IN THE MAKING



“The Return of the Spix's Macaw to the Skies of the Caatinga”

By Simon Degenhard

Turn the clock back to the early 1990s; my fascination with this special bird was ignited when as a young bird lover in Adelaide (South Australia), I came across a magazine featuring a photo of the last known wild male on the cover. I was immediately drawn to the plight of this small blue macaw and that image has since been permanently etched into my memory. From that point on, I have followed the story of the **Spix's Macaw** or **Ararinha-azul**, as it is referred to in Portuguese. Searching out updates on the breeding program that was being led by the Loro Parque Foundation (LPF) at the time. Reading with interest any info that I could find on the last wild birds that were tracked down in the 1980s – first 5 birds, but by 1990 only the solitary male remained.

Breeding LILACINE Amazons on Réunion Island

By Petra Pelikánová
Photos Sébastien Borg

In the past, the Lilacine Amazon (*Amazona lilacina*) was considered a subspecies of the Red-lored Amazon (*Amazona autumnalis lilacina*). In 2014, the organization BirdLife International recognised it as a separate species. Lilacine Amazons are critically endangered. The population in the wild amounts to 2,500 individuals (Dr. Martin Schaefer, CEO of Fundación Jocotoco, 2022) and is gradually declining due to severe habitat degradation and loss of breeding opportunities. The species occurs in south-western and western Ecuador. This 34 cm large member of the genus *Amazona* is not often represented in breeding facilities. **Sébastien Borg** from Réunion Island is going to share his experience and knowledge regarding breeding **Lilacine Amazons**.



Is the breeding of Lilacine Amazons widespread on Réunion Island?

It is a species that is not very well known and commonly bred in France or Réunion, which naturally intrigued me. I found out that the wild population in Ecuador was declining rapidly, and I became more interested in these Amazons in order to contribute to their conservation. I met several breeders on Réunion, but none of them knew the Lilacine Amazon. They do know, for example, Blue-fronted Parrots, Yellow-headed Parrots, and other more common species. Therefore, I contacted breeders in France who got me unrelated Lilacine Amazons to take to Réunion. This beautiful species had not existed on our island until then.

But let's go back to the beginning. When did you start breeding parrots?

I started breeding eight years ago when I was constructing my house and began building aviaries as well. At that time I already had one parrot as a pet, being able to sit on my shoulder, talk, etc.,

The breeding of Orange-fronted Parakeets

(*Eupsittula canicularis eburnirostrum*)

By Vojtěch Trhoň

The Orange-fronted Parakeet is overall a green bird, with the main distinguishing features being the orange forehead, dark blue on the crown, and olive throat and breast. The bill is horn-coloured, while the feet are grey with black claws. With a length of 24 cm and a weight of 75 g, it is classified as one of the smallest representatives of the genus *Eupsittula*. This species is often confused by breeders with the more common Peach-fronted Parakeet (*Eupsittula aurea*).

Subspecies

3 subspecies of the Orange-fronted Parakeet are recognized, occurring in Central America on the Pacific coast. The nominate form *Eupsittula canicularis canicularis* occurs from southwestern Mexico south to western Costa Rica. This subspecies is rare in European breeding.

The geographic range of the subspecies *Eupsittula canicularis eburnirostrum* is southwestern Mexico. Being the most widespread subspecies in Europe, it is still rarely bred though. This subspecies can be distinguished from the nominate form by the black sides of the lower bill. The subspecies *Eupsittula canicularis clarae* can be found in western Mexico. It is unlikely to occur in European breeding. This subspecies is identical in appearance to *E. c. eburnirostrum*, except that the orange colour on the forehead does not extend to the eyes and is therefore much smaller in extent.

Life in the wild

In its homeland it can be found in dry vegetation, shrubby areas, forest edges, pastures and plantations up to 1,500 m above sea level. Due to its occurrence in open landscape, the Orange-fronted Parakeet is a very good flier. Outside the breeding season, it also flocks with other parrot species. During the breeding season, it lives in pairs or small groups. In the wild, the parakeet feeds mainly on seeds and flowers of trees, shrubs and grasses, as well as fruit (mainly figs), berries, insects and their larvae.

What is unusual is its nesting method in active tree termite mounds, where the parakeet hollows out a hole from the underside inwards. The female usually lays 3–5 eggs. It is a species in the LC (Least Concern) class according to the IUCN.

Beneficial BERRIES



By Rosemary Low

"Berry: any small juicy or fleshy fruit" is the dictionary definition. We use it loosely to also refer to drupes such as hawthorn berries: drupes have a hard stone in the centre, as do cherries, for example. Berries are consumed eagerly by many species of softbills, parrots and finches. They are under-used items by most bird keepers. In my garden House Sparrows eat the tiny, bright red berries of a shrub whose name I do not know; they also consume the berries of *Pyracantha*. Watching them made me realise that more bird species eat berries than we might realise.

To us the word berry conjures up popular cultivated fruits such as strawberries, raspberries and blueberries, also redcurrants and blackcurrants. The general health-giving benefits of these fruits for humans has long been known. I would like to emphasise these benefits, for our birds - and for ourselves.

Recent research indicates more specific advantages. Scientists in Boston, USA, suggest that the risk of heart attacks in women can be reduced by almost a third by consuming just three handfuls of either fruit every week. (*Apparently this research has not been carried out on men.*) Even those who ate a lot of other fruits and vegetables were more likely

By MVDr. Helena Vaidlova

Causes of dry skin in parrots

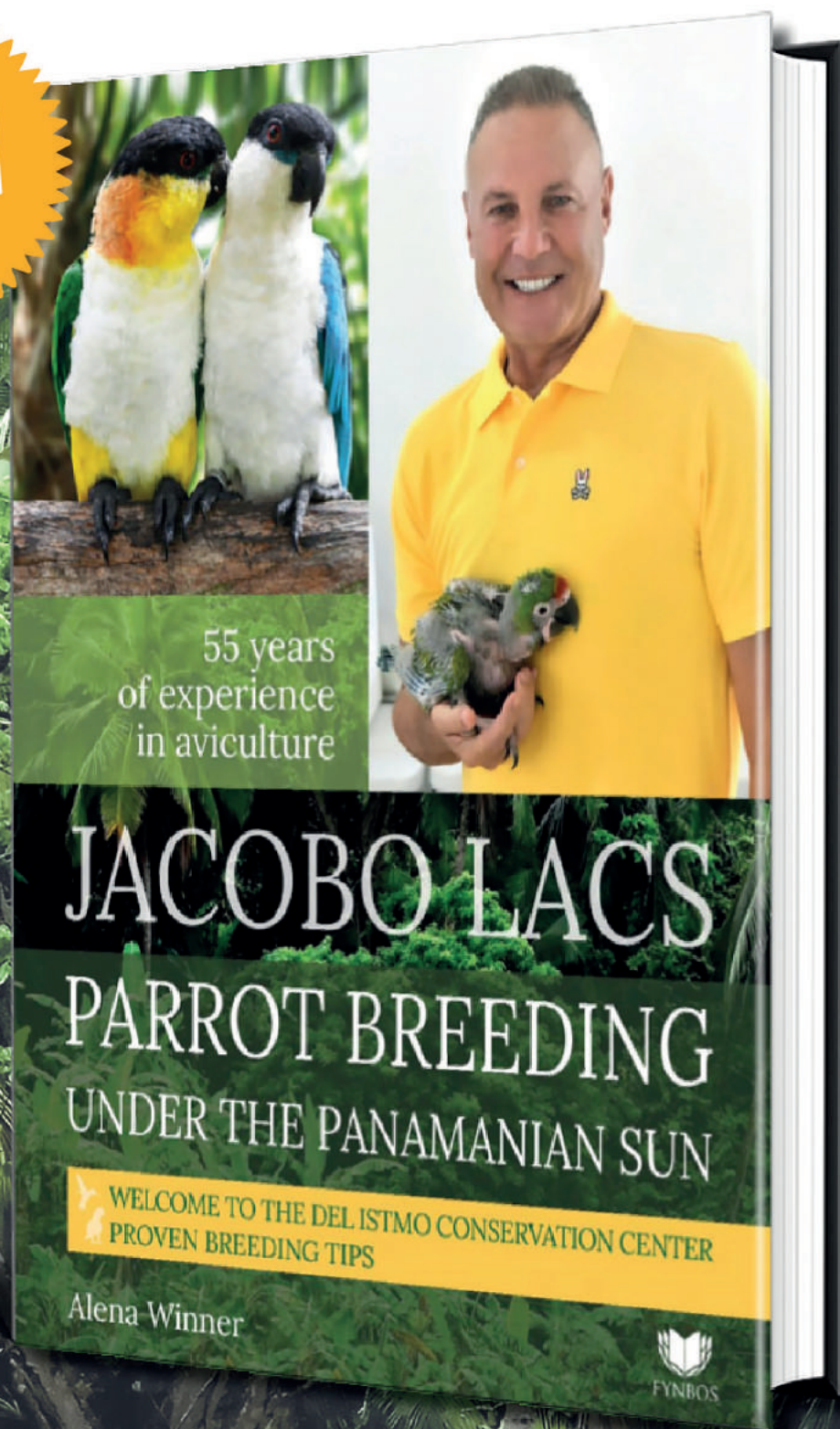
risks and possible solutions



Parrots naturally scratch and preen their feathers. It's their natural behaviour. During moulting, this behaviour can become even more intense, and some owners find it difficult to discern whether it is already a problem to be solved or a normal activity. Abnormally dry skin or xerosis in parrots can have many causes and sometimes it is difficult to identify the right one.



NEW



This publication will take you to the romantic Caribbean coast to Puerto Lindo in Panama. Located here is an extraordinary conservation centre, including a breeding facility and zoo, called the "Del Istmo Conservation Center", where 450 species and subspecies of birds and 50 species of mammals are taken care of. Get a glimpse into the interesting life of its founder, the famous bird expert **Jacobo Lacs**, who shares the best breeding methods as well as many useful practical tips, drawn from his 55 years of experience.

Hardcover book

**JACOBO LACS PARROT BREEDING
UNDER THE PANAMANIAN SUN**

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