

Canopsitta

The Loro Parque Fundación newsletter

30 YEARS OF CONSERVATION
FROM THE CANARY ISLANDS TO THE WORLD

2024
 # 127



12 SPECIES SAVED FROM EXTINCTION



Poema del Mar
AQUARIUM

El "must" de Canarias
LORO PARQUE
 ANIMAL EMBASSY



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 12 species saved from extinction. Graphic: LPF

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Dear friends,

During the holiday season, we often seek meaningful gifts, making it the perfect time to support nature conservation. At Loro Parque Fundación, we proudly dedicate 100% of contributions to protecting animals and their habitats. That's why the foundation's annual card makes a perfect gift.

This year is special as Loro Parque Fundación is celebrating 30 years of unwavering commitment to conserving the world's biodiversity. Over three decades, from Puerto de la Cruz in Tenerife, Canary Islands, Spain, we have achieved remarkable international milestones in species protection. As a matter of fact, we have managed to save from extinction 12 species of parrots and advanced efforts to establish a marine reserve in Macaronesia, a significant initiative we have been promoting since its inception.

Her Majesty Queen Sofia's visit to the Foundation's facilities was a great honour, and we were delighted to share our efforts and achievements in nature conservation over the past decades. Her deep sensitivity and genuine interest in the welfare and conservation of animals have encouraged us to persevere in our mission. From the bottom of our hearts, we extend a heartfelt THANK YOU.

Dismayed by the recent catastrophe in Valencia, which caused unprecedented destruction, and highlights the profound impact of climate change on human lives. These events also serve as a stark reminder of the toll on ecosystems. Our thoughts are with the victims, and we want to extend our deepest and unwavering support.

The Loro Parque Fundación Board of Trustees has reaffirmed its commitment to conservation and research for the year 2025, allocating a total of 1,745,774 USD to conservation and research projects. This brings our total investment in nature preservation to over \$29 million over the past 30 years.

I would like to thank the extraordinary reception of the charity gala held at the Hotel Botanico to celebrate our 30th anniversary. The overwhelming participation, combined with the success of the "World Ocean Day"- dinner at Poema del Mar in Gran Canaria, highlights the commitment of the people of the Canary Islands to nature conservation. These environmental awareness events are a perfect example of union and solidarity in the shared mission to protect our planet.

At Loro Parque Fundación we work tirelessly every day to ensure that animals, wherever they are, are protected and well cared for. We focus on deepening our understanding of them, sharing this invaluable knowledge with society. Together, we can contribute to preserving nature in all its splendour.

WE CARE

Christoph Kiessling
 President of Loro Parque Fundación



Royal Visit to Loro Parque Fundación

This year Loro Parque Fundación had the great honour of receiving H.M. Queen Sofia. She visited the Animal Embassy facilities and saw first-hand the projects that have saved from extinction twelve species of parrots.

During her visit, she explored our advanced laboratory and state-of-the-art veterinary clinics, as well as the hand-breeding station. Additionally, she engaged with the scientific work of the Max Planck Institute for Animal Cognition, showcasing their research to park visitors. This work utilizes the world's largest parrot gene pool to advance understanding in the field.

A pleasant tour of the Animal Embassy's premises led to interesting discussions with the foundation's management and technical team. They shared anecdotes about global nature conservation projects initiated and developed from the Canary Islands.

We are grateful for her presence and special sensitivity towards animals, which serves as a great source of inspiration for our staff and motivates them in their daily efforts to conserve endangered species and their ecosystems. ■



H.M. Queen Sofia and Wolfgang Kiessling. Photo: LPF



From left to right: Mrs. Brigitte Kiessling, H.M. Queen Sofia, Mr. Wolfgang Kiessling and Mr. Christoph Kiessling. Photo: LPF

The Canary Islands prepared for the rescue of stranded cetaceans



LPF handed over the cetacean rescue equipment in Lanzarote to Samuel Martín, Regional Councillor for the Biosphere Reserve and Environment. During the event, teams from the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria provided training sessions for both Council staff and the fire brigade, teaching them how to effectively use the equipment in emergency situations. Photo: LPF

Loro Parque Fundación presented the Canary Island Councils with a rescue pontoon for stranded cetaceans, along with other specialized equipment for helping these animals. The material includes a special hammock for dolphins, mattresses to reduce the pressure on the animals' bodies and a blanket to prevent overheating and sun damage. This equipment has been strategically distributed on several islands of the archipelago, ensuring a rapid response whenever and wherever it is needed.

These devices are intended to help cetaceans of manageable size, such as dolphins, pilot whales and others that may become stranded on the coasts of the Canary Islands. **The equipment includes rescue pools and a large tent,**



Training and simulation of potential stranding situations are conducted alongside the delivery of the rescue equipment. Photo: LPF

suitable for live specimens needing a recovery period

before being released back into the sea.

The team assembled by LPF will be managed by specialised professionals who will travel to the place where it is required.

To prove the effectiveness of the equipment and train the technical staff who will use it, we have carried out simulations in collaboration with veterinarians, rescue experts, biologists, environmental technicians, divers and emergency personnel. These simulations have provided valuable insight into how these devices can help in real cetacean rescue situations.

For this reason, Loro Parque Fundación, with the technical direction of the University Institute of Animal Health and funding from the Government of the Canary Islands, has developed this rescue material. The goal is to provide local authorities with the necessary resources for an adequate response in such situations.

Proper use of these pontoons and appropriate animal handling, as well as mandatory contact with emergency services (112), will prevent any attempt to return the animals to the sea without expert assessment. This will be crucial in preventing the death of stranded cetaceans. ■



+ info

Posthumous Appreciation

Loro Parque Fundación is grateful for the posthumous contribution of **Mrs. Dorothea Astrid Scheibel**.

She bequeathed her annuity to the conservation of species.

Just like her, many other people have anonymously relied on our institution to make saving

endangered species and their ecosystems a reality.

We are proud, every time this trust is placed in us, of all those who want to pass on their legacy for the protection of the living beings that need it most. ■



If you wish to make a lasting impact on animal protection and leave a legacy for safeguarding biodiversity, you can contact us at: lpf@loroparque-fundacion.org

Unprecedented births at LPF

Yellow-fronted Parrot chicks



Poicephalus flavifrons

Maroon-faced Conure chicks



Pyrrhura primeri

Rock Parakeet chicks



Neophema chrysostoma

Parrot breeding results in aviculture are constantly variable as most species do not breed in the first few years of life. Pairs need to be compatible, know each other, mature, perform well at hatching and feed the chicks. The combinations between individuals are very diverse and also depend on external factors such as climate and the attentions of their keepers.

With such a variety of species and more than 3,000 birds dedicated to breeding, careful attention is given

to the management and consistency of feeding, environmental changes, and the diet provided, according to the specific stage of each genus.

This year 2024 has been particularly fruitful, with more than 1,100 chicks born before the end of the year among the different species.

Three species have reproduced for the first time in an accredited zoo:

The Yellow-fronted Parrot, *Poicephalus flavifrons* of Ethiopia. A species to which the foundation has dedicated significant conservation efforts in the Kafa reserve, its native area. Reforestation has been carried out with indigenous plants suited to the species, and the forests, home to the oldest known natural coffee plantations, are being protected. We have now succeeded in breeding this species while studying

their behaviour and their unique vocalisation within the African parrot group.

Maroon-faced Conure, *Pyrrhura primeri*, was also bred for the first time this year. Native to Brazil's unique caatinga forests, this endangered species is little known under human care. The successful birth of several chicks is a significant milestone in Loro Parque's species breeding history.

Even more surprising has been the birth of two **Rock parrots, *Neophema petrophila***. This little-known species, native to the coastal dunes and rocky habitats of Australian islands, is rarely bred in human care. The successful breeding of this species for the first time at an accredited conservation centre in Europe is of paramount importance, as it is a rare species in aviculture.

With these three species Loro Parque and Loro Parque Fundación increase their record as leaders in in-situ parrot management worldwide. Providing more advanced management bases for new species to be added to the largest parrot gene pool in the world. ■

Worldwide conservation from the Canary Islands

In September, Loro Parque Fundación's scientific council meeting took place, where each year the allocation of financial and technical support is determined for the most successful conservation project proposals from around the world.

Each proposal is carefully analysed, focusing on the priority of endangered species and the specific goals to be achieved. This process requires extensive expertise in each field and an assessment based on accumulated practical experience.

For 2025, the LPF Board of Trustees has committed USD 1,330,099 to conservation and research projects. Together with the contribution of the CanBio project, the total funding for 2025 reaches USD 1,745,774, bringing the cumulative amount to USD 29,107,774. Almost 30 million USD dedicated to the conservation of the most vulnerable species, generating a direct impact on ecosystems and local communities they inhabit.

The foundation continues to support long-standing projects in favour of species whose conservation status needs continuous support. Some of these species such as the blue-throated macaw in Bolivia, the yellow-eared parrot in Colombia, the red-vented Cockatoo, the yellow-naped

amazon in Nicaragua, the red-tailed amazon in Brazil or the great green macaws in Ecuador and the orcas in Gibraltar need more than just habitat care. Research and education processes are key to conservation success.

We are excited about the new projects that will receive support. Among them, the project for the endangered lilac-crowned amazon of Mexico stands out, whose decline in recent years is concerning, and will now have our support. Colombia's flame-winged parakeet will also be more thoroughly studied in the field, and will support efforts to increase their numbers in the wild. In Australia, the mysterious night parrot or the orange-bellied parrot will receive the support of LPF. Among the new marine projects, there are some as intriguing as the experimental design using ashes from the La Palma volcano to repopulate coastal macroalgae and regenerate underwater ecosystems. We will also invest in the development of new technologies for monitoring cetaceans in collaboration with the University of La Laguna. ■



LPF Scientific Director Rafael Zamora, Cybell Kiessling trustee LPF, Dr. Jon Paul Rodríguez LPF board member, Isabell Kiessling trustee LPF, Dr. Matthias Reinschmidt LPF board member, Prof. Dr. Vincent M. Janik LPF board member, LPF President Christoph Kiessling and LPF Director Dr. Javier Almunia. Photo: LPF

Pioneering strategy in the study of manta rays in the Canary Islands

123 specimens successfully tagged by the Loro Parque Fundación

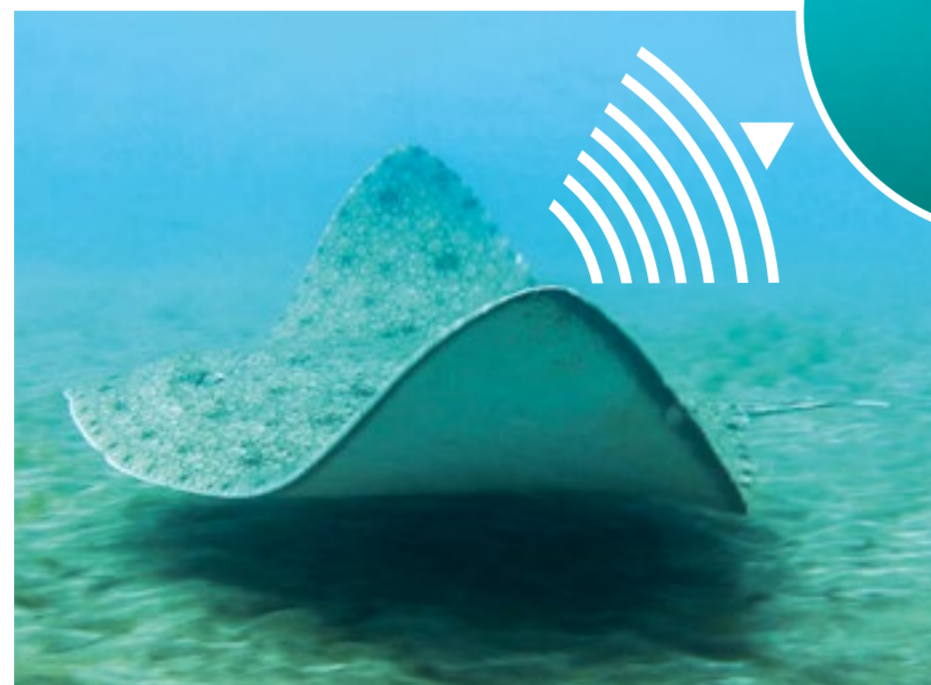


The experienced marine species veterinarian from Poema del Mar, Ángel Curros, during the tagging of a butterfly ray. Photo: LPF

Under the pioneering CanBio initiative, led by Loro Parque Fundación and the Government of the Canary Islands, the BioMar project has achieved unprecedented progress in the study of butterfly rays, an emblematic and endangered species. Thanks to the collaboration between Loro Parque Fundación, Poema del Mar, the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (ULPGC) and the Rays of Paradise association, 123 specimens have already been tagged since the start of the project, thus consolidating a record in the monitoring of this fascinating species in the Canary Islands.

Last September, only five new specimens were tagged off the coasts of Tenerife and Gran Canaria. These are the same places and time of year where the species was previously found in greater abundance. This is a fact of significant scientific interest, serving as foundation for future studies aimed at better understanding their movements. The extensive record of specimens developed over previous years has given us a better insight into the biology of this species. **This achievement places the Canary Islands at the forefront in the monitoring and**

conservation efforts for this species in the Atlantic, consolidating a pioneering study strategy that will provide in-depth knowledge of its biology and population status.



The acoustic tag transmits an identification code to the receivers anchored at different points of the archipelago, allowing to track the movements of these animals. Photo: LPF

The methodology implemented in this project stands out for its ethical and respectful approach to the marine environment. Researchers have designed a minimally invasive tagging protocol that makes it possible to identify and study each specimen without significantly

altering its natural environment. **It is a revolutionary method in the protection of marine species.**

The process takes less than eight minutes and includes an exhaustive measurement of the specimen, a precise weighing and an ultrasound scan to identify its state of gestation. In addition, a tissue sample is taken to obtain genetic information, which will enrich conservation studies of the species worldwide.

The use of acoustic transmitters, an advanced monitoring technology, allows tracking the movements of each butterfly ray individually and continuously, providing crucial data on their migration and breeding patterns in shallow waters. This is particularly relevant as manta rays tend to breed in these areas in late summer, when water temperature and environmental conditions are ideal for the survival of their young.

The BioMar project is part of CanBio, an ambitious public-private partnership initiative between the Government of the Canary Islands and Loro Parque Fundación, committed to marine biodiversity in the context of climate change. This internationally significant programme, coordinated by Loro Parque Fundación, marks a milestone in the protection of endangered species,

with an investment of 3,000,000 euros to date. It

underscores the Canary Islands pivotal role as a stronghold in the defence of the marine ecosystems. This initiative exemplifies a steadfast commitment to biodiversity in the face of climate change.

For LPF, this project represents our absolute commitment to nature, highlighting the importance of preserving not only endangered species, while also educating and inspiring future generations about the importance of these ecosystems. ■



+ info

Outstanding results under human care and in the wild

Five more Lear's Macaws have hatched at Loro Parque Fundación bringing joy as always to see new fledglings of such an iconic species thrive. **Loro Parque Fundación reaches a milestone with 50 chicks hatched in Tenerife since 2007!** Of these, 22 have been sent to Brazil, 8 have been successfully reintroduced into the wild, and 4 offspring have already been born in their natural habitat. This brings the total to 54 Lear's macaws brought into the world thanks to Loro Parque Fundación as part of its breeding and reintroduction programme.



A reintroduced Lear's macaw flying while carrying licuri fruits. Photo: C.Prate/LPF

This remarkable achievement underscores the effectiveness of combining ex-situ and in-situ conservation strategies, which continue to be the foundation of successful species recovery efforts.

Loro Parque Fundación collaborates with excellent field biologists in Brazil, led by Dr. Erica Pacífico on behalf of the Lear's Macaw Research and Conservation Group. This group maintains ongoing partnership with the most relevant governmental and scientific institutions, both within Brazil and internationally.

Field work with Lear's Macaws in a remote area of the caatinga is one of the cornerstones of this project. The full adaptation to the environment of the macaws born in Tenerife has been a historical achievement in conservation, in which these biologists are tenacious observers who take care of the whole process in the wild.

During the month of September, Loro Parque Fundación sent three more birds for their next reintroduction in the caatinga. After a period of socialisation, flight stimulus, personality analysis, health checks and prior isolation, they were transferred to Brazil.

In a careful transport operation that has had great impact in their country of origin, given the worldwide importance and success of this project.

The strict quarantine period was successfully completed, and the three specimens are now settled in the large reintroduction aviary, from where the first Lear's

macaws from Loro Parque Fundación started their first flights in the wild.

Now, field biologists monitor the birds from the outside to see their behaviour, which significantly changes in their habitat.

The environmental parameters are different, and these macaws sense that something is going to change in their lives forever.

One of the most striking events of this project occurred when the birds born in Tenerife independently found the cliffs where they could breed, in an area with a long historical presence of the species.

The difficulty of adapting to the environment is already an indescribable challenge for birds born under human care. But that they manage to get their food, survive in a complex environment to finally be able to breed and successfully raise their own chicks, is a stunning event in the world of conservation. ■



Macaw hatched at LPF, in an area with historical presence of the species. Photo: T. Filadelfo



From left to right: Dr Erica Pacífico with the field team, Máximo Cardoso, Thatiana Andrade and Gabriela Favoretto. Photo: GICGL



Biologist and curator Marcia Weinzettl with four Lear's Macaw chicks born this year at LPF. Photo: LPF



Biologist Tiago Filadelfo during the in-situ microchip check. Photo: G. Favoretto



Ex-situ



In-situ

Extraordinary turnout at the LPF 30th Anniversary Charity Gala



The gardens of Hotel Botanico provided the backdrop for the evening's widespread commitment to nature. Photo: LPF



During the dinner, the Founder of the Loro Parque Group and President Emeritus of Loro Parque Fundación received recognition for his conservation work. In the photo the scientific board of the foundation. From left to right: Antonio Fernández IUSA, Jon Paul Rodríguez IUCN, Christoph Kiessling President LPF, Matthias Reinschmidt from Karlsruhe Zoo, Wolfgang Kiessling President Loro Parque, Vincent Janik Scottish Maritime Institute of the University of St. Andrews, Kerstin Urban LPF Secretariat, Raquel Afonso Educator LPF, Javier Almunia Director LPF and Rafael Zamora Scientific Director LPF.



Christoph Kiessling, President of LPF, expressed heartfelt gratitude to all the foundation's collaborators for their support over the past 30 years in a message shared with the media. Photo: LPF

For the 30th anniversary of the Loro Parque Fundación, more than 700 people attended a great charity dinner in support of endangered species and their ecosystems.

The event, held in the gardens of the Hotel Botanico & The Oriental Spa Garden, brought together hundreds of nature lovers, who contributed their valuable support to further boost the organisation's conservation efforts.

Since its creation 30 years ago as a non-profit organisation dedicated to the protection of endangered species and their habitats, **Loro Parque Fundación has supported more than 276 conservation projects in 40 countries**, with an investment of more than 29 million dollars.

These projects include in-situ and ex-situ conservation actions, public awareness and education programmes, as well as research into the species and the dangers that threaten them.



Wolfgang Kiessling and the Mayor of Puerto de la Cruz, Leopoldo Afonso during the evening. Photo: LPF



Prof. Antonio Fernández, Director of the University Institute of Animal Health and Food Safety (IUSA), stated the importance of the participation of the foundation from the Canary Islands in advancing research and conservation efforts for species. Photo: LPF

Each year, the organisation receives hundreds of applications for funding for conservation projects. An advisory committee of scientific experts evaluates and prioritises the proposals, based on the degree of threat to the species according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature's Red List of Threatened Species.

The profits from this charity gala will go to support the CanBio project. An initiative developed in collaboration with the Canary Islands universities, which includes 8 projects focused on the protection of endangered Canarian species and their ecosystems. Its goal is to create a network to monitor climate change, ocean acidification and marine noise.

The celebration evening was well attended by more than 700 nature lovers and was supported by another 300 people who made voluntary contributions.

The president of the foundation, Christoph Kiessling, stressed the importance of having made impressive achievements in the last three decades thanks to people like the participants of the charity gala, all doing their bit so that we can continue to save species from extinction. Loro Parque Fundación has turned Tenerife into a world reference for biodiversity conservation, taking the name of the Canary Islands to every corner of the planet.

We are especially grateful to our collaborators, whose unconditional support marks an important reality for the protection of species through the Loro Parque Fundación's approach to helping animals. ■

We are grateful for the support of the companies that have participated in this event and to the partners of Loro Parque Fundación who have accompanied us:

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- World 2 Meet
- Würth

Exciting monitoring of sea turtles in the Canary Islands

After the rescue and recovery of sea turtles, the veterinary teams from the Council's Environmental Department of the Canary Islands and the Loro Parque Fundación collaborate when necessary, in the diagnosis and recovery of the turtles. Some specimens, depending on size and age, can be fitted with a satellite tag.

The Canary Islands are frequently visited by loggerhead turtles, which can travel long distances during their lifetime. Their distribution covers the temperate waters of tropical and subtropical areas of the world.

The rescue of individual animals by Canary Islands environmental authorities is relatively common. Loro Parque, Poema del Mar and Loro Parque Fundación provide assistance whenever needed. The veterinarians of the different institutions work together to solve problems in patients who may need the most modern clinical technology, as is the case of the CAT (Computerised Axial Tomography) located in the Animal Embassy.

Also, in the recovery processes prior to reintroductions to the sea, the convalescent specimens can recover under supervision in the large marine spaces available both in Loro Parque and in Poema del Mar. These facilities allow them to coexist with other species during their recovery and regain their strength to return to the ocean and complete their life cycles.

The tagging process requires a series of steps to ensure the tag's durability and functionality throughout its lifespan. The veterinarian must select a suitable area of the carapace, that ensures proper attachment of the transmitter, which must be calibrated previously both in dry and wet conditions. The best tests are carried out in the aquatic areas of Loro Parque until they give good depth and temperature data.

It is fascinating to watch their routes over time, as until now it has remained a mystery as to how this species moves in the ocean. Research is being done on how their movements vary according to age and sex. By knowing their biology, we can learn more about marine ecosystems.

Loro Parque Fundación is financing a project that includes



Loggerhead sea turtle successfully reintroduced with its tagging. Photo: LPF

the placement of these satellite tags on rescued loggerhead turtles that are returned to the sea, which allows us to collect essential information about their migration. We can track the daily journeys of these incredible marine creatures, gathering data that was a true mystery until now. The tagged individuals have even reached the coasts of Cape Verde on unpredictable routes, which we can follow to better understand them. All this information is essential

to determine the risks they may face, and the protection measures we can apply, as well as to better understand the marine ecosystems surrounding the Canary Islands. ■



+ info



Trajectories transmitted by the satellite tagging of rescued turtles. Photo: R. Heidrich /LPF



From left to right, Rafael Zamora (Biologist LPF), Pascual Calabuig (Biologist and veterinarian of the Wildlife Recovery Center of the Council of Gran Canaria), Francesco Grande (Veterinarian LPF), Sara Capelli (Veterinarian of the Tahonilla Recovery Center Cabildo TF), Felipe Trujillo (Veterinarian CRFS Tahonilla Cabildo Tenerife), Richard Heidrich (Veterinarian LPF) Ana Hernández (Veterinarian LPF). Photo: LPF



CT images are very important to determine the status of each turtle prior to reintroduction into the sea. Photo: LPF

30 years of Loro Parque Fundación

Saving many species from extinction

In October 1989, in Lausanne, Switzerland, a Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) was held. On the sidelines of the event, Wolfgang Kiessling, president and founder of Loro Parque, Tenerife's internationally recognized zoo, met with Dr. Obdulio Menghi, then CITES Scientific Coordinator, and Juan Villalba, Director of TRAFFIC (Wildlife Trade Monitoring Network) South America at the time. They discussed the role of Loro Parque beyond the boundaries of the park, in the sense that animals visible to visitors could play a role in protecting their own species and other threatened species in their natural habitats.

In 1987 a meeting had been convened at Loro Parque, under the auspices of the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) Conservation Planning Specialist Group (CPSG), to take urgent action to save the Spix's Macaw (*Cyanopsitta spixii*). At that time, it was already functionally extinct in the wild, with a small number of specimens of this species kept in private centres under human care, also in Loro Parque. In 1988, through IBAMA (Brazilian Institute of Environment and Renewable Natural Resources), the "Committee for the Management of the Spix's Macaw" was created with the support of Loro Parque. These first steps were impressive, but Kiessling knew there had to be a better way to help nature and so he decided to create the Loro Parque Fundación (LPF), which became a reality in 1994.

LPF was created to promote biodiversity conservation and animal welfare through its own projects and in collaboration with environmental organizations in the home countries.

LPF's activities also include advanced psittacine breeding. Loro Parque donated its entire psittacine collection - the largest and most diverse in the world - to be managed for the benefit of the species, transforming it into a global conservation asset. Furthermore, Loro Parque covered the costs and built the LPF breeding centre, which spans 30,000 square meters and currently houses the largest living genetic reserve of parrots in the world, with more than 4,000



Meeting of the first LPF Advisory Council in 1994. From left to right: Wolfgang Kiessling, John Stoodley, Susan Clubb, Inge Feier and David Waugh. Photo: LPF



LPF breeding station. The largest living psittacine gene pool in the world. Photo: LPF



than 56 million visitors the park has received during its 52-year history have also played a part in protecting the planet's biodiversity.

LPF has always focused on the protection of endangered parrots worldwide, and since 2007, marine environment projects, particularly in the field of cetaceans, have been added. In recent years, the Foundation has expanded its work to other species native to the Macaronesia region, as well as to species in sharp decline in the wild, such as lions in Africa, elephants in Asia and other species that benefit from the Foundation's active and successful conservation model.

As early as 2007 Loro Parque Fundación contributes to the WATCH initiative for the conservation of small cetaceans in Macaronesia, also celebrating the "Year of the Dolphin" in Tenerife and holding a parallel event to promote the Macaronesia sanctuary.

In 2017 Christoph Kiessling was appointed new president of LPF taking over the responsibility from the founder.

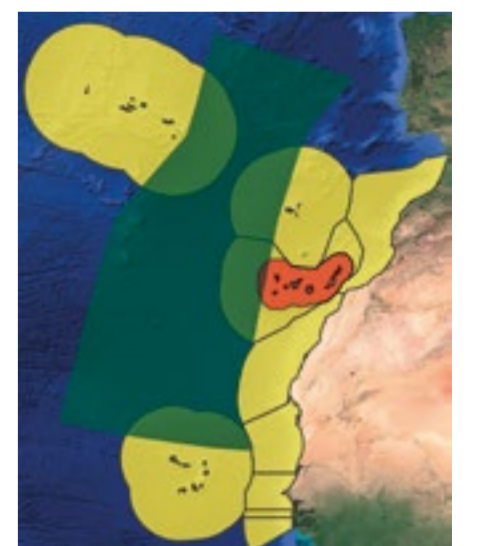
In the following years, marine conservation projects led to the launch of the **CanBIO project** in 2019, aimed at **monitoring the effects of climate**

change and underwater noise on marine biodiversity in the Macaronesia. In 2020, the first oceanographic buoy, funded by LPF and the Government of the Canary Islands, was deployed to monitor ocean acidification.

An important trajectory that culminates in 2024 with the signature of the rectors of all the universities of Macaronesia in support of the creation of the Marine Biodiversity Sanctuary.

Over the past 30 years, LPF has supported more than 300 conservation projects around the world and provided more than \$29 million in financial, technical and logistical support from the Canary Islands. The projects aimed at helping psittacines have focused on 80 species in the wild, but many other species that were not the primary target have also benefited. Notably, new species have been discovered for science, such as in Ecuador, as a result of the protection of a nature reserve.

LPF has made a decisive contribution to saving twelve species of psittacines from extinction, reversing their trajectory toward imminent danger. Thanks to these efforts, these species have been removed from the list of endangered species or are clearly on the path to recovery. LPF projects combining ex-situ and in-situ knowledge are now examples of resounding success at the international level. ■



● Potential area for the Macaronesia Marine Biodiversity Sanctuary.
● National jurisdictional waters
● MFA sonar moratorium zone

specimens across 350 species and subspecies. The center primarily breeds endangered species and conducts scientific research to provide technical support for field projects.

From the very beginning, Wolfgang Kiessling ensured that Loro Parque would cover all of LPF's operating costs, guaranteeing that 100 percent of any contribution - whether from individuals or organizations - goes directly to conservation projects. In addition, this agreement means that the more

Cuba's parrots protected by Loro Parque Fundación



Institute of Ecology and Systematics of Cuba. Photo: LPF

Cuba is home to two species of parrots, unique to the world: the Cuban conure and the Cuban amazon. Both were subjects of specimen export in the past, from a limited territory where the species' locations are very specific. Their decline became evident, leading to their classification as threatened species in recent decades. Particularly the small Cuban conure, *Psittacara euops*, which now inhabits highly fragmented and specific areas, placing the species in a vulnerable situation.

Loro Parque Fundación supports

this conservation project together with the Institute of Ecology and Systematics of Cuba, in which the continued use of artificial nests is bearing impressive results. In fact, the project works directly with the communities themselves, who are the guardians of the species.

Research has focused on all biological aspects of the 2 species, including diet, courtship, breeding behaviour, year-round patterns

and any threats to them. Cuba is, like many other places in Central and South America, a place where people like to keep pets and parrots have always been very popular house birds.

With the small Cuban conure, locally called Catey, Maikel Cañizares and his team found a way to increase the number of hatchlings surviving the critical nesting period. They discovered that the Cuban conure likes to nest in cliffs that are very difficult to access. Several pairs often nest just a few meters apart, so the field biologists took advantage of this opportunity to improve nesting success on the cliff walls. Using climbing equipment and with the brave collaboration of young students, they climbed the steep cliffs to secure artificial nest boxes to the rocks, thus providing a safe environment for breeding. **Over the years, the number of these small parrots has significantly**

increased, as they feel more protected from predators in a group.

Our emeritus advisor Povl Jørgensen was recently there witnessing a surprisingly abundant group of 50-70 Cuban conures. They were high up in trees feeding on small seeds and did not seem particularly shy. Somewhat startling, but it seems to be related to their group dynamics. The whole flock was paired up even at a time of the year that was 5 months before breeding season started. Very unusual behaviour and perhaps one of the reasons why this species has always been difficult to breed under human care. These field observations, well interpreted by expert eyes, are very important and more so for endangered species that always need a safety backup from their peers in accredited zoological centres. ■



Biologist Maikel Cañizares with LPF Advisor Emeritus Povl Jørgensen. Photo: Institute of Ecology and Systematics of Cuba



The Cuban amazon is one of the species protected under this project. Photo: LPF

Illustrious Gorilla Awards 2023

Gabriel Mato and Miguel Castroviejo

The prestigious Loro Parque Gorilla Award, one of the most important international environmental awards, was granted to Gabriel Mato and Miguel Castroviejo Bolibar. A recognition of their permanent and constant commitment to the conservation of ecosystems and endangered species. The award ceremony, created by Wolfgang Kiessling, president of Loro Parque, to recognize personalities and institutions with outstanding careers in environmental protection, took place at the headquarters of the Presidency of the Canary Islands Government in Santa Cruz.

The event was attended by the Vice President of the Government of the Canary Islands, Manuel Domínguez; Lope Afonso, Vice President of the Council of Tenerife; and Leopoldo Afonso, Mayor of Puerto de la Cruz. Domínguez stressed the importance of promoting a sustainable development model that responsibly manages natural resources. He also highlighted the figures of Gabriel Mato and Miguel Castroviejo for their contribution to creating greater social awareness of the importance of protecting nature.

Wolfgang Kiessling, President of Loro Parque, and Christoph Kiessling, President of Loro Parque Fundación, presented the awards. They emphasized the importance of joining efforts to safeguard global biodiversity and protect ecosystems that are under constant threat and highlighted the need for sustainable initiatives, such as those led by Loro Parque and Loro Parque Fundación, which from the Canary Islands promotes conservation projects of global scope.

Christoph Kiessling stressed the importance of recognizing the work of conservation centres such as zoos and aquariums, which are "true animal embassies that contribute to halting the extinction of species". He mentioned as the best example the 12 species of parrots that Loro Parque Fundación has been able to save from extinction.

Since 2003, Loro Parque has awarded this recognition to personalities and organizations committed to scientific work, research and environmental responsibility. The award honours the work of individuals, institutions and companies in the conservation of biodiversity.



XXI Edition: Wolfgang Kiessling, Gabriel Mato Adrover, Manuel Domínguez González, Christoph Kiessling, Lope Afonso Hernández and Leopoldo Afonso Hernández. Photo: LPF



Gabriel Mato, an MEP in the European Parliament since 2009, has an outstanding track record in defending marine biodiversity. As the coordinator of the Fisheries Committee, he has promoted multiple initiatives that encourage responsible practices, protecting the natural resources of the Canary Islands.

In his thank-you speech, Mr. Mato highlighted the significant recognition of the momentum gained in the parliamentary building in Brussels regarding the proposal by Loro Parque Fundación to create

a marine sanctuary in Macaronesia. This is a key initiative to establish a safe corridor for cetaceans and other marine species in an area recognized for its environmental richness.

Although he was unable to attend for scheduling reasons, Miguel Castroviejo Bolibar also received the award for playing an active role in the European Parliament, where he promotes sustainable policies to protect the biodiversity and environmental wealth of the Canary Islands the world.



Miguel Castroviejo,

PhD in Environmental Ecology, began his career as director of the Teide National Park. During this period, he worked in defence of the natural heritage of Tenerife and the Canary Islands in general.

It was at this time that he learned about the work of Loro Parque and Loro Parque Fundación and became a strong advocate of the same, facilitating the work of the NGO to shine before the experts of the permanent representations of the environment of all EU member countries, at a meeting held in Tenerife. **Mr. Castroviejo sent an appreciation message in which he expressed his gratitude for the continued and sustainable commitment of Loro Parque and its Fundación to the environment** and felt honoured by this recognition.

The Gorilla Prize was awarded at a time of unprecedented environmental challenges, and the awardees, Mato and Castroviejo, are active personalities in the European Parliament, where their support for sustainable policies to protect the biodiversity and environmental wealth of the Canary Islands and the world is proving fundamental. ■



+ info

More than 600 veterinary students have been trained at LPF

Many of them are now working internationally in the field of animal welfare

For more than 30 years, veterinary students from the University of Giessen have received two weeks of advanced training at Loro Parque and Loro Parque Fundación. The first week of theory serves to introduce the young students to concepts such as animal welfare, ex-situ handling, clinical training and advanced animal handling. Applied veterinary medicine, in an accredited zoological centre at the forefront of technology, is very broad and varied, illustrating the new professionals in the field of preventive medicine and direct application.

The foundation provides training related to field conservation projects where veterinarians also play a significant role. In fact, field biologists and veterinarians, in the countries where conservation projects are carried out, are nourished by the practical and scientific support provided by Loro Parque Fundación.

Students also receive training on evolutionary concepts, related to the Canary Islands' biodiversity. During their stay they have the chance to understand how biodiversity and island ecosystems have developed. This allows them to better understand the different biologies of the most diverse exotic animals.

During the second week, the training is hands-on working side by side with the animal care teams. Participants share their time with caregivers from different sectors, to understand key concepts about



The students from the University of Giessen, along with Bärbel Köhler, watch live as the veterinary team at the center prepares a macaw for a CT scan at the Loro Parque Animal Embassy facilities. Photo: LPF

nutrition and hygiene, as well as the sensitivity and skills necessary for caregivers to provide animals with the highest level of welfare.

This training has enabled more than 600 veterinarians to boost their skills before going to work in rescue centres, veterinary hospitals and clinics or accredited zoological centres. ■



+ info



Dr Yulán Úbeda, in charge of animal welfare, gave a lecture on concepts relating to animal behaviour and correct handling. LPF



Chesco Hernández, in charge of hand-rearing, comments on the details of growth and guidelines to be followed during the hand-rearing process with the youngest parrots. Photo: LPF



Diagnosis, ultrasound and preventive clinical management with different species is part of this advanced training at Loro Parque-Animal Embassy. Photo: LPF



Bärbel Köhler from Zoetis teaches the students about clinical diagnosis. Photo: LPF

Resounding success of the exhibition of cetaceans in the archipelago

Thanks to the overwhelming success of the first edition of the traveling exhibition of cetaceans of Macaronesia, which toured the islands throughout this year until the summer, Loro Parque Fundación, with the support of CaixaBank, the collaboration of Fred Olsen and Archiauto, has begun a new tour that will take this fascinating educational exhibition throughout the archipelago. This time, the exhibition began in October on the island of La Palma and will tour around the islands until reaching its final destination in El Hierro in February, with a special stop at Fuerteventura airport for an additional month.

The first edition of the Macaronesia

Cetacean Exhibition left an unforgettable impression: on a tour of 7 islands and 13 municipalities. More than 10,000 visitors had the opportunity to marvel at life-size replicas of the most emblematic cetacean species.

In addition, the exhibition became an unparalleled educational platform, with some 5,000 students from all over the Canary Islands participating in scientific workshops on these animals. Around 390 teachers got involved, attending talks and hosting the exhibition in their schools or

municipalities, adding their voice to this cause of conservation and learning.

For the Loro Parque Fundación educational team, one of the most gratifying moments was seeing the children's expressions of amazement and joy when they discovered the cetacean replicas first thing in the morning, ready to be explored in their own schools. "The moment of telling them they could be inside a sperm whale was the highlight of the workshops," the educators poignantly commented. Through these experiences, the students were able to appreciate the magnitude and majesty of the cetaceans, connecting with nature in a way that only the exhibit could offer them.

Thanks to this great acceptance and the significant demand generated by the first edition, the new tour seeks not only to be repeated, but to surpass the educational experience.

Get ready to live an unforgettable experience and discover the greatness of cetaceans on your own island! ■



+ info



Orca



Beaked whale



Sperm whale



Common dolphin

30 ANNIVERSARY

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