
ST. VINCENT PARROT 98 Fact Sheet (10/1/98)

St. Vincent Parrot (*Amazona guildingii*)

Description: The St. Vincent parrot, also called the St. Vincent amazon, is a large colorful bird with a green, blue, and orange barred tail. Its body and wings are marked with purple, green and orange.

Range: St. Vincent parrots are found only on the island of St. Vincent in the Lesser Antilles.

Habitat: The parrot lives in the tropical mountainous forests of the island. It requires nest holes for breeding.

Diet: Fruit, seeds, and other vegetation make up the diet of the St. Vincent parrot.

Social Organization: St. Vincent parrots live in small groups except during the breeding season when the pairs become solitary.

Conservation Status: The St. Vincent parrot is listed as an endangered species by the IUCN Red Data Book and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and is an Appendix I Species under CITES. There are an estimated 700-800 St. Vincent parrots left in the wild. The wild population has stabilized and is slowly increasing as a direct result of better protection for the birds and the forests in which they live. Additionally, education programs and governmental enforcement of laws have also contributed to this increase.

Threats to Survival: Illegal collection and export of the parrots for the pet trade are a serious threat to the small population. It is thought that 10 to 20 young parrots are captured each year, despite laws regulating private ownership of parrots on the island and requiring permits for their export. Habitat destruction through agricultural clearing or logging is also a problem on the small island of St. Vincent, while natural disasters such as Hurricane Allen in 1980 and volcanic eruptions also threaten the parrot and its habitat.

Zoo Programs ñ SSP Consortium: There are 30 St. Vincent parrots in North America, and 30 birds in government-run aviaries on St. Vincent. Four zoos (2 in the U.S. and 2 in Europe) are participating in the Consortium program. Much research is devoted to the diet of the birds, as overweight parrots are difficult to breed. Lack of participation by holder is

one of the major problems of the SSP. The SSP currently consists of two zoos, a third is applying and one private aviculturist.

Conservation: The St. Vincent parrot is the national bird of the island nation, and extensive measures have been made to protect it. All land in St. Vincent above 1,000 feet in altitude is in a forest reserve.

Education: A very thorough education program led by the Rare Animals' Relief Effort is underway on the island. Posters, T-Shirts, and buttons have been distributed, and a local brewery has now adopted the parrot on its labels. "Vincey" the parrot has become a popular weekly cartoon character. In the U.S., the AZA and the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) have developed a brochure warning people not to buy parrots or other birds illegally imported from the wild. The International Council for Bird Preservation and TRAFFIC of the World Wildlife Fund also have educational materials on the wild bird trade.

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