

Project: Building the foundation for effective conservation of Vinaceous Amazon Parrot (*Amazona vinacea*) in Paraguay.

Title

The Association Guyra Paraguay, BirdLife's Partner in Paraguay, has started a project towards the long-term conservation of the Vinaceous Amazon Parrot *Amazona vinacea*. This parrot is endemic to the Atlantic Forest habitat which is found in southeastern Brazil, northeastern Argentina and eastern Paraguay. Formerly common, the species is now considered Endangered on the Red List of the IUCN / BirdLife, mainly because their remaining populations are small and fragmented, due to they are a continuous and rapid decline of their habitat, compounded by illegal trade in the domestic pet market.

In the early 1980's, Paraguay was considered to have the species' global stronghold, but the samples taken in the late 1990's and in early 2000 suggested a remaining population of only about 220 individuals, found mainly at a few sites in northeastern Paraguay, east of Canindeyú and Alto Paraná department. These sites are protected areas that still have large tracts of Atlantic Forest. However, Vinaceous Amazon Parrot populations in these sites continue to decline, which may indicate that the birds are being captured (and their nests destroyed), continuing to adversely affect populations.

This project aims to lay the basis for effective conservation in Paraguay for the Vinaceous Amazon Parrot, first through a sampling of their populations to assess the status of the species. Through their participation in this process, the rangers will be trained in the identification and monitoring techniques, thereby facilitating a system of monitoring of the species in the long-term. This training will complement the theoretical design of monitoring systems.

The fieldwork will be accompanied by structured interviews to assess the threat posed by the domestic pet trade. An awareness campaign conducted through the local and national media will raise awareness of the plight of the species and the illegal trade.

At the same time, law enforcement officers will be trained in the correct parrot identification (always with a simple identification guide), as well as in relevant national and international legislation.

Finally, the feasibility of establishing a captive breeding program, with the long-term objective of reintroduction of the species in the reserves, will be assessed through an analysis of current threats, costs and opportunities.

This project is done in collaboration with Itaipu Binational, providing logistical support, ornithologists and reserve guards, since most the protected areas where the species is found is managed by Itaipu. In addition, we are working with volunteers and students from Department of Agricultural Sciences from the National University of Asuncion who are helping us in different aspects.