

Activities for children

1. Catch me!

„Catch me!“ games are a good way to explain the impact of poaching and habitat loss in a simple and funny way.

There are two possibilities how you can run the game.

➤ **Poaching**

- **Material:** sashes with different colours for poachers and rangers

Round 1:

- If you have a lot of kids some of them can form a big circle to symbolise the habitat. You can also ask the parents to do that.
- Most of the children will be parrots. They don't need any mark.
- Choose some kids to be poachers. They get a sash.

→ Now start the game. Every caught parrot must leave the habitat because the bird is dead or sold on a pet market etc.

Round 2:

- Choose one or two new kids to become rangers. They get sashes with another colour.
- The game goes on like in the first round but now the ranger must catch the poachers → every caught poacher has to leave the game

→ The rangers try to slow the poachers down in catching/killing parrots. The parrot population does not decline as fast as in the first round.

Round 3:

- The government changes the system and now there are some new job opportunities. Because of that the poor people don't have to poach the birds for money.
- The rangers keep on hunting poachers. But now every caught poacher gets a new job and becomes a ranger.

→ After a while there won't be any poachers left and the parrots are safe.



➤ **Habitat loss**

- **Material:** no special material needed

1. Round:

- If you have a lot of kids some of them can form a big circle to symbolise the habitat. You can also ask the parents to do that.
- Most of the children will be parrots.
- Some other kids will be the nests. You need 2 kids to form one nest. The two kids stand in front of each other and hold hands
- The parrots now have to run around the nests. When the game leader gives a sign, the parrots have to reach a nest.
- If the nest is full, the parrots need to find another one.
- Parrots without a nest have to leave the game because they can't survive without a place to sleep and breed.

→ After two or three rounds the game leader removes one or two nests because people destroy the habitat of the birds.

→ Now, even more parrots won't find a nest. The parrots without a nest at the end of every round have to leave the game.

→ In every following round one more nest will be destroyed by deforestation of the rainforest.

More and more parrots can't find a nest until in the last round the parrots will be extinct.



2. Crafting artificial feathers

Most parrots are listed in CITES Appendix II and some of them are in CITES Appendix I. A lot of parrots are hunted because of their feathers. They are used, for example, for traditional clothes and headdresses.

With the help of artificial feathers there would be no reason to catch parrots from the wild for their feathers.



Below are some links about artificial feathers and also a video showing how to craft artificial feathers on your own.

- <http://armoniabolivia.org/programs/blue-throated-macaw/artifitcal-blue-throated-macaw-feather-indigenous-headdress-bolivia-armonin/>
- <http://armoniabolivia.org/2016/09/24/six-thousand-macaws-saved-by-armonias-alternative-feather-program/>
- <https://parrotsinternational.org/index.php/projects/alternative-headdress-project/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U8tD8dLsUp8>



3. Storytelling

Especially smaller children like stories and absorbs information that is integrated in them. Therefore you can use different kinds of storytelling.

- For small kids you can play a puppet theatre.

If the mascot of your zoo is a parrot, use him to get in contact with the children. Alternatively, one of your educators or keepers can dress up as a parrot.

- think about a simple story you can tell with simple gestures and few props:
 - breeding behaviour: use two people as parrot; one bird feeds the other one or take care of the plumage (mutual feather preening).
 - poaching: one as parrot and one as poacher; the poacher runs after the parrot to get feathers of him; a third person can be a ranger which try to save the parrot.
 - habitat loss: one is a parrot and another one destroys his habitat. He could walk around with a toy axe or hold a nest box to symbolise the loss of nesting sites.



- If you know Children's books about parrots (in your language) and the stories are not too long, you can read it (or a summary of it) to the kids, especially to kids from the kindergarten. Let us know if you recommend any books.



WORLD PARROT DAY - May 31st

4. Geographic distribution of parrot species

Parrots live on all continents except Europe and Antarctica. The main focus of distribution is however on the tropical and subtropical area. In order to explain the distribution of different parrot groups, like e.g. macaws (South America), cockatoos (Australia), Lovebirds (Africa) etc. you can use a world map puzzle.

- **Material:** laminated cards of parrots, world map puzzle
 - **Laminated cards**
 - Use typical representatives of the systematic group you want to use.
 - Note the IUCN status on the back of the card.
 - The IUCN status can also be marked in colour. From “least concern” with white, to “extinct in the wild” with deep red. This gives a colour gradient that becomes more intense the more threatened the species is.
 - **World map puzzle**
 - Cut up a world map according to the puzzle pieces you want to have and laminate it.
 - You can adjust the difficulty level by the number of pieces and the shape of the pieces.
 - You can also use other world maps than the classic world map from the atlas. This way, the children are forced to recall and rethink their knowledge about the continents.
 - Example: Europe is not in the centre of the map and America is east from Asia and not west of Europe (picture).



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→ **Game:**

- Children have to complete the puzzle.
- Children have to place the parrot cards on the continent where they are native.

→ It is clearly visible that parrots occur in the tropical and subtropical regions of the southern hemisphere. You can also see which groups of parrots live on which continents.

- Now turn over the parrot cards

→ Now the children see the extent of the threats to individual species and whether it is perhaps even particularly concentrated in certain regions. The group can discuss why parrots are threatened in general and what can be done to protect them.

In a more difficult variant, diversity hotspots can be focused. For example, parrots in South America have to deal with other problems than Australian birds.

