




AFRICAN GREY PARROT REHABILITATION AND SOFT-RELEASE PROGRAMME



South-west region, Limbe, Cameroon



Cameroon Charity #034/G,37/D14/VoIII/SAAJP

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OVERVIEW

The **Limbe Wildlife Centre** was created in 1993 as a result of the rapid decline of animal populations in Cameroon due to habitat degradation, poaching, and the illegal wildlife trade. Run in partnership between the non-profit organisation Pandrillus and the Government of Cameroon, our project is unique in Central Africa. Our mission is to ensure the survival of Cameroonian wildlife. Our team is composed of local and international wildlife ecologists and veterinarians, and a highly experienced and qualified local animal care staff. The Limbe Wildlife Centre is a founding and accredited member of the **Pan African Sanctuary Alliance**, and the only recipient of a **Clark R. Bavin Wildlife Law Enforcement Award Winner** (2019).

CORE MISSIONS

1. Support law enforcement efforts
2. Raise awareness on the value and fragility of biodiversity
3. Engage the community to support nature conservation
4. Promote animal welfare

CONTEXT

For more than two years, the **African grey parrot** has been our **flag species** and significant investment in infrastructure, capacity building and human resources were made to enable us to enhance the management of rescued individuals. The centre was upgraded to provide the best possible care to all rescued parrots and give them the best chance to be released back into the wild. On average, a **6-9 months**

rehabilitation period is required before the birds can be released back into the wild using parrot adapted soft-release methodology. Therefore, we can provide high-quality care for and rehabilitate **300-400 individuals per year**, for a minimal budget of **45K EUR** per year.

It was a great achievement and the consecration of several years of efforts to develop the reference national rescue, rehabilitation and release programme for the species in Cameroon. By doing so, the **Limbe Wildlife Centre**, with support from Pandrillus and several sponsors, became **the only governmental institution** in the country with the facilities, expertise and resources to bring a positive change for the conservation of the species nationwide with regional and international impact.

Out of the **395 parrots seized** from illegal trafficking in 2019 and 2020, **236 survived (60%)**. Throughout 2020, we successfully transferred 215 individuals from quarantine to the large rehabilitation aviary (93% of survivors) and then **171 parrots** were moved to the soft release aviary and **released**. All of them were successfully released back into the wild by **March 2021**.

TIMEFRAME

After the heavy stress of their capture and transport, it takes several weeks of treatment in quarantine for most of the African Grey parrots to be brought back to health. **6 to 9-month** in the main aviary will be necessary for them to regain a correct weight, a full grown plumage and flight skills so as to be considered fully rehabilitated. They will then be moved to a **soft-release aviary**, situated in the **Limbe Botanical Garden**, and be fed there for two weeks, to become accustomed to their new surroundings. Finally, the **hatch of the aviary is opened**, allowing the birds to fly out whenever they are ready. The hatch will **remain open** for another week and food will be provided, in case some of the birds would like to **come back** for food or shelter, making this a **soft-release**.

ACTIVITIES

We provide **diverse and rich food every day**, a salad mix of vegetables, fruits, seeds, nuts and complements ensuring a complete diet. **Optimal nutrition** is important for the **growth, healing and recovery** of individuals. It



is essential that food offered meets the highest nutritional requirements and is easily recognized and digested by the parrots. It will also help to **reduce** abnormal behaviours, competition and aggression and facilitate the **recovery process** hence reducing the time in captivity and **optimizing** the rehabilitation process.

At least **2 health checks** are done on each parrot during its rehabilitation time at the Centre, and a final health check is always completed prior to release. Veterinary procedures consist of ringing for

identification, weighting, body and feather condition assessment, plucking of damaged feathers, injection or application of **antiparasitic treatment**, and blood sampling. The blood analyses serve to assess the **individual stress index**. The arriving flocks are also receiving specific antibiotics and multivitamins treatment in the first weeks to enhance survival chance, reduce the risk of disease outbreak and speed up the recovery process.

FUNDING GOALS

Currently, we have **52 parrots** in our care, of which **40 birds** which are currently in rehabilitation before being released.

Phase	Object	Total Cost (€)
Release		
	10 GPS harnesses	12 000
	Installation and testing of the GPS tags (expertise, transport, sampling, adjustment and equipment)	3 482
	Data processing staff x 2 month	3 000
	Security @ EUR 152.34 per month per person x 3 full-time x 2 months	914
	Animal care staff @ EUR 228.51 / month per person x 1.5 full-time x 2 months	686
	Veterinarian @ EUR 632.21 / month x 15% time x 2 months	187
Rehabilitation		
	Food @1.6 EUR/week per parrot	2 163
	Vet care @0.5 EUR/week per parrot	676
	Veterinary supplies @4.90EUR per HC and per ind	255
	Veterinarian@ EUR 632.21 / month x 15% time x 6 months	569
	Animal care staff @ EUR 228.51 / month per person x 1.5 full-time x 6 months	2 057
	Project coordinator @ EUR 630 / month x 10%	378
	Transport for food purchase	20
	Material food preparation and storage	55
	Cleaning material (broom, brushes, buckets...)	100
	Management fees and contingency (6% of total budget fixed cost)	1 592
Total		28 134 €

The remaining **12 parrots** will unfortunately have to stay in our care **permanently** as they have **disabilities** such as damaged wings or missing eyes. Sadly, this hinders them from thriving or surviving back in the wild, therefore they will remain at the centre for their health and safety. They will have to be continuously fed and cared for, including their medical and veterinary care.

OUTPUTS

Rescue, rehabilitation and release of the African Grey Parrots in Cameroon will make a huge difference for the conservation of the species as a whole. Not only does parrot rehabilitation help individual animals in the immediate ecosystem, but it can serve as a powerful tool for education and awareness.

The LWC is also committed to engaging the community through education: we emphasize to the public about the role they have and how they can minimize their negative impacts on local wildlife. We will create further awareness in the Limbe Community of the risk of extinction of this highly threatened species.

Output 1: Health checks on all individuals including anaesthesia, stool test, blood smear checks, deworming, physical examination, weight and feathers plucking.

Output 2: Creation of an adequate biosecurity protocol including training for the staff members; disinfection materials, gloves and masks in quarantine area

Output 3: Creation and provision of a complete diet that includes at least 10 different items per day to provide options and selection.

Output 4: All the individuals will have an ideal body and feather condition at the end of the rehabilitation process

Output 5: All individuals are successfully transferred to the soft-release aviary and released back into the wild

Output 6: Creation of the Manual of Standard Operations Procedures for the rescue, rehabilitation and release of the African grey parrots in the LWC

Output 7: Reports are produced and social media content are published

FUTURE PLANS

1. Continue to **run the soft release program** in the Limbe Botanical Garden, as well as the rehabilitation of the last parrots in the Centre (this includes food and medication)
2. **Test the use of radio tracker technology**, for post release monitoring. This will provide valuable space use data which will allow us to better plan a surveillance and protection strategy
3. **Replicate** the above (1. & 2.) to develop a new conservation project to ensure adequate **post-release monitoring** and collect crucial data on survivorship, habitat use, and movement patterns. The field sites that seem fit for such projects are the Campo Ma'an National Park (South region), Lake Ossa Wildlife Reserve or the Douala-Edea National Park (Littoral region).
4. Engage local communities into new conservation actions to develop local conservation value and **alternative livelihoods** to help protect wildlife.

5. Perform genetic testing on blood/feather samples to sex each individual as part of the reintroduction programme and to build a genetic database for the Government of Cameroon to **support the fight against illegal wildlife trade** by identifying bird origin and trafficking routes (in partnership with CITES authorities)

KEY FACTS ABOUT AFRICAN GREY PARROTS

- Since 4 February **2017**, the African grey parrot was reclassified as **Endangered** on the IUCN Red List and placed in Appendix 1 of the CITES
- The African grey parrot is by law one of the most protected species in Cameroon (**Class A**), and both capture and export are no longer permitted
- The wild populations have been **declining** at a dramatic rate (-50% between 1998 and 2013)
- Cameroon contributed to almost **half of the 1.3 million legally wild-caught** individuals between 1982 and 2014

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS BY THE LWC

- **Rescued 395 individuals** from the illegal pet trade in 2019 and 2020
- **Performed 1120 health checks** under anaesthesia on 348 individuals
- In 2020, we completed the **building** of our **first ever soft-release aviary** in the Limbe Botanical gardens and inaugurated the first soft release with the Regional Delegate for the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife (MINFOF)
- **Upgraded** and **completed** the renovation of the medical complex (carrying capacity increased to 200 African grey parrots)
- **Released 171 individuals**
- In 2020, we launched the second **#ProtectWildlife** campaign by displaying a series of 10 large billboards showcases the work done in Limbe **to save** the African grey parrot **from extinction**
- Launched a campaign with 1 large original art creation of the **Art4Nature programme** in Limbe created by Toh Bright, which express the work we do to **rescue and rehabilitate African grey parrots** and primates, our conservation education programmes and the green project to provide alternative livelihoods to local communities.



MEDIA COVERAGE

Besides the many local media coverage, our African grey parrot's programme made many international news:

- [Reuters online report](#)
- [Reuters documentary](#)
- [France 24 documentary](#)
- [AfricaNews documentary](#)
- [Deutsche Welle documentary](#)
- [Deutsche Welle social media](#)
- [Le Monde Afrique newspaper](#)
- [BBC World Service Newday](#)



Saving the iconic African grey parrot from extinction, by Toh Bright. This endangered species was the 2020 Flag species of the LWC. Displayed in Limbe Mile 4 "Motor Way" entrance



The new **#ProtectWildlife** campaign highlights the threats to the survival of the endangered African grey parrots. It consist of 10 successive 4m x 2m billboards.

TO HELP OUR PROJECT

Get contact at info@limbewildlife.org

DONATE for the rehabilitation of the African grey parrots in Cameroon:

Option 1: Directly via wire transfer

Account Name	Pandrillus
Address of Account Holder	P.O. Box 878, Limbe, South West Region, Cameroon
Bank Name	Banque Internationale du Cameroun pour l'Epargne et Cr�dit (BICEC)
Bank Address	BP 1925, Douala, Cameroon
Account Number	33504740001-87
SWIFT code I	1-87 SWIFT code I
IBAN	CM2110001068403350474000187
Bank Code	10001
Bank Branch	Limbe, South West Region, Cameroon
Branch code	6840

Option 2: via PAYPAL (<http://limbewildlife.org/donate/>)

Option 3: via our European partner
(specify Limbe Wildlife Centre):



If you wish to support our future soft release programme, public sensitization campaign or post-release monitoring, or for any other information, contact us at info@limbewildlife.org

Limbe, 26 May 2021




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Direct observation was done in the Limbe Botanical Garden as part of the post release monitoring. In the future, we wish to equip individuals with GPS tags to better understand their travelling routes and space use.