

MEET KEIKO – THE RED-FRONTED MACAW

Hello kids, my name is Keiko. I am a Red-fronted macaw. I want to teach you about me and my family.



Name	Red-fronted Macaw (<i>Ara rubrogenys</i>)
Habitat	Thorn and cactus bush with few trees.
Diet	Mainly wild fruits, seeds and nuts
Age	In human care up to 36 years
Breeding behaviour	Breeding in the crevices of cliffs, lay 2-4 eggs, chicks hatch after 27 days, chicks fledge after 70 days
Threats	Habitat loss, poaching



The Red-fronted macaw is endemic to Bolivia, a country in South America. The parrots inhabit a small, limited area in the south of Bolivia.

Its habitat is dominated by cliffs.





My family and I belong to relatives of the genus "Ara". There are 8 different species of us who live in South America.

Of these 8 cousins, 6 species live with me in Bolivia. Among them are the Blue-throated macaw, the Red-and-green macaw and the Scarlet macaw.

One characteristic that immediately identifies a macaw is their facial mask. On the left and right, between the beak and the eye, they have a featherless, white area of skin. The only exceptions are the Hyacinth macaw and the Lear's macaw. On them, the area of skin is yellow. They also have a very large, strong bill.

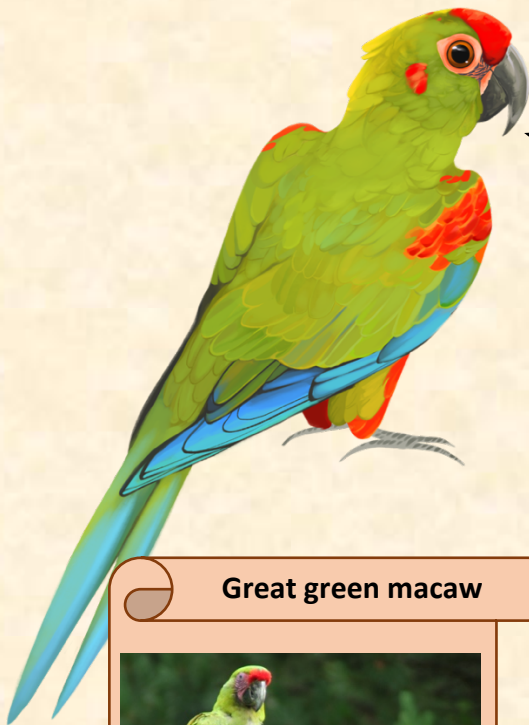


The plumage of the Red-fronted macaws is very colourful. They have green, blue, red and orange feathers.

Try to paint the white macaw as true to the species as possible.

If you don't know what a red-fronted macaw looks like, you can use the photo as a help.





Among my relatives there are some species that look confusingly like me. These are the Great green macaw, the Military macaw and the Chestnut-fronted macaw. However, only the Chestnut-fronted macaw and one subspecies of the Military macaw lives with me in Bolivia. The Great green macaw and the other two subspecies of the Military macaw lives in Columbia and Ecuador.

Great green macaw



Military macaw



Chestnut-fronted macaw



In Bolivia, the Red-fronted macaw can be confused with the Chestnut-fronted macaw. However, if you look closely, the two species differ in several characteristics.

Circle the differences in the pictures below and name them in the list.

Red-fronted macaw



Chestnut-fronted macaw



Differences

Differences



The Red-fronted macaw lives in Bolivia. They are endemic there. This means that this macaw does not exist anywhere else in the world. They love fruits and cacti. However, if they don't find enough to eat, they also eat peanuts or maize, which are grown by humans on large plantations.

The Red-fronted macaw lives in pairs or small groups. At night they often gather into several groups at roosting sites. These are usually rock walls. On occasion, they also sleep in palm groves.

The birds also breed in the rock faces. A clutch consists of 3 eggs. When the chicks hatch, they are real altricial birds. This means they have to be fed and cared for by the parent birds until they are old enough to fly out and fend for themselves. When the young birds have had some training and their flight muscles are as well trained as those of their parents, they can fly at speeds of up to 60km/h.



Sarah read a lot about the Red-fronted macaw and wrote down important words. Now she can't find the words among the many letters.

Can you help her? There is a description for each word. Try to find the right word in the text above and then look for it in the crossword puzzle.

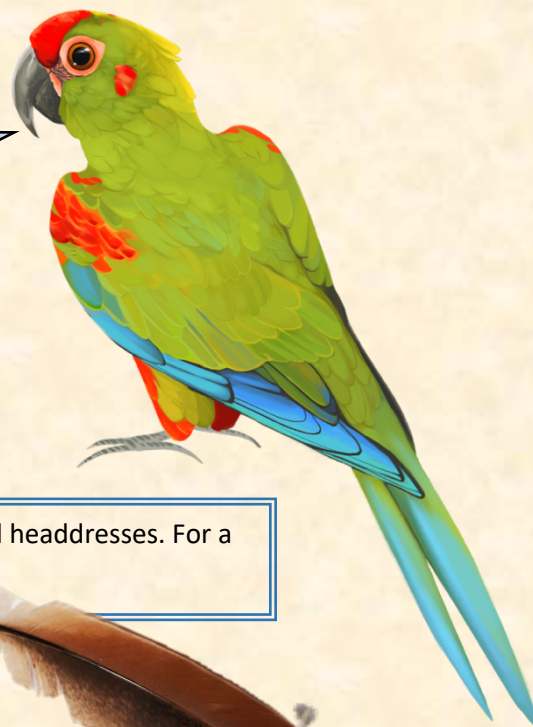
1. The country where the Red-fronted macaw lives.
2. An animal lives only in one certain part of the world.
3. The word is part of its name.
4. This is what popcorn is made from.
5. They live together in this number.
6. The place where animals meet to sleep.
7. A young bird hatches from it.
8. All eggs that are in a nest.
9. Word of a young animal that needs to be cared for by its parents.

A	E	G	A	A	H	F	V	O	E	P	C	H	R	B	C	R	O	X	R	B	A	N	S	J
R	B	O	L	I	V	I	A	F	I	G	T	P	L	X	G	M	B	R	C	G	L	W	C	H
E	U	A	N	A	T	U	S	A	B	B	H	Z	T	B	A	N	U	V	A	Z	T	I	U	H
F	L	M	K	N	B	F	V	S	K	L	Q	E	S	H	B	S	K	H	D	T	R	Q	D	B
P	C	C	W	I	T	K	M	I	P	F	S	N	G	V	F	A	N	L	W	X	I	H	C	J
Q	S	U	F	D	Q	C	U	D	A	H	C	D	U	D	C	Z	U	A	E	A	C	O	A	E
D	I	A	K	H	W	A	O	D	I	B	N	E	V	P	G	N	B	G	M	R	I	N	K	C
E	Y	I	A	B	V	Z	T	Y	R	C	D	M	A	C	A	W	V	A	K	D	A	P	M	J
R	C	Y	F	B	H	U	G	I	D	E	A	I	U	Z	I	K	R	H	L	G	L	R	C	V
Q	L	E	G	G	J	A	J	M	X	F	M	C	S	J	P	L	D	E	I	T	W	H	L	A
R	O	I	M	N	K	L	C	V	A	T	X	T	T	L	F	O	B	W	Y	D	B	Y	U	Z
P	C	L	N	P	V	V	B	C	Y	A	B	V	A	K	G	W	E	A	L	X	I	P	T	E
T	F	W	B	N	H	Z	O	I	A	S	T	W	A	H	L	K	R	D	F	Y	R	H	C	J
S	D	E	B	F	Z	E	M	S	H	H	M	E	U	T	M	A	I	Z	E	G	D	I	H	F
F	C	U	O	J	F	N	J	P	S	T	B	I	D	C	K	O	D	K	L	P	S	O	M	G
R	O	C	K	P	W	A	L	L	X	G	A	V	U	P	I	B	W	G	I	D	Z	A	A	B
E	L	I	N	C	Q	L	G	O	F	N	W	E	C	J	Y	V	B	E	F	T	J	K	R	F



Unfortunately, there are not many individuals of my species left in Bolivia. We are only about 1,000 birds.

My fellow species are poached to sell as pets. This is a lucrative source of income for the poor rural population.



Parrot feathers are very popular in Bolivia. They are used to make traditional headdresses. For a headdress the feathers of about ten macaws are needed.

A poacher was surprised by the police. During the escape he lost his feathers and they got mixed with the feathers of native birds. Now the police are trying to find out which feathers are from endangered species. Try to help them and mark all parrot feathers with an "x".

How many feathers was the poacher carrying?



Number of feathers: _____



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You don't need real bird feathers to use them for jewellery making or for decoration. There are great artificial feathers. With a little practice you can even make your own feathers.



Material:

- colored paper
- pencil
- scissors
- glue
- toothpicks

Instructions:

1. Think about the shape of your feather and draw it on coloured paper. Since your feather has two sides, do it twice.
2. Now cut out both halves of your feather. Coat the edge of your feathers with some glue.
3. Place a toothpick at the bottom of one of your feather halves. It will be your quill. The toothpick should rest about a third of the way down on the paper. Now place your second feather on top of it and press the two firmly together.
4. To make the feather look as real as possible, take the scissors and cut the feathers from each side. It is best to cut diagonally into the paper.
5. You can make as many cuts as you like. You can also make feathers without any cuts at all.





My favourite things to eat are fruits from palm trees and other trees. Unfortunately, humans cut the trees down to let cattle graze on the free areas or to plant crops.

That's why we find less food and try to find something edible in the fields. We found out that peanuts and maize are also very tasty. The farmers don't like that at all, which is why they hunt us.

BREAKING NEWS

Due to its high threat, the Armonia Conservation Organisation is committed to protecting the Red-fronted macaw. Through their efforts, a 50-acre reserve has been established. The largest breeding population of the Red-fronted macaw lives there. In total, the habitat of over 200 bird species is protected.

In addition, nesting boxes were installed to provide additional nesting opportunities for the macaw.



Reserva Frente Roja



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To prevent the poor people from poaching the birds for the pet market, they have tried to show the people a new source of income.

By visiting the Reserve, tourists help to save the macaw and contribute to the well-being of indigenous communities. Income from tourism is divided equally among the three communities involved with Reserve administration and is invested directly to community projects related to health and education. If the people earn money through tourism, they will no longer have to poach birds to feed their families.



Armonía
CONSERVACIÓN DE AVES EN BOLIVIA



Other conservation organisations, such as the Zoological Society for the Conservation of Species and Populations (ZGAP), also support Armonia's work. Each year, ZGAP selects the Zoo Animal of the Year. This year it is the macaw. In this context, ZGAP supports certain species conservation programmes. For the macaw, this includes the protection of the Red-fronted macaws, through Armonia.



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Armonia is not only supported by the "Zoo animal of the year" program. Many zoos are also committed to our protection. Edinburgh Zoo keeps the studbook that coordinates breeding within the EAZA Ex-situ Program (EEP).



Wow, that was a lot of information what Armonia is doing for the Red-fronted macaw. Unfortunately, I've already forgotten one part of it. Can you help me? Try to answer the questions below.



Question: Why are the macaws being poached?

Answer: _____

Question: Why do Red-fronted macaws eat maize and peanuts?

Answer: _____

Question: Why were wooden boxes hung in the rock wall?

Answer: _____

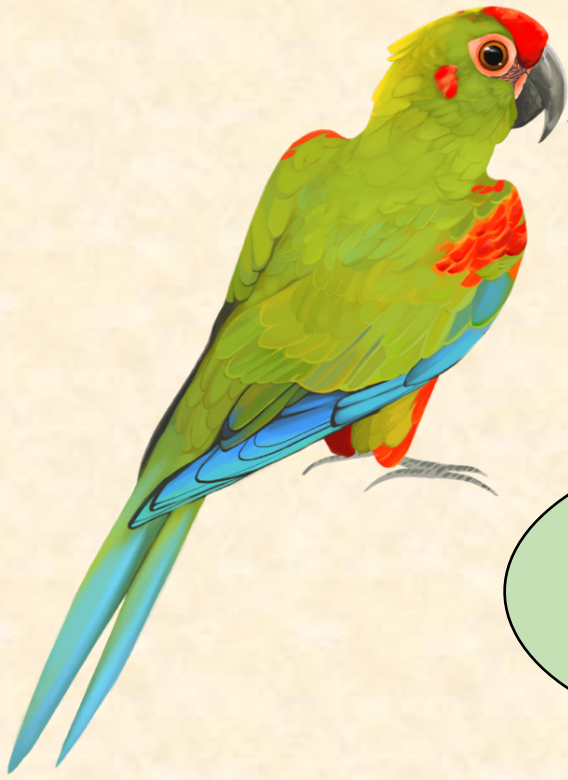
Question: How does the reserve also help people?

Answer: _____



You can take the questions as a basis and write a small report about the Red-fronted macaw. Read it to your family and friends. You can also try to put it in your school newspaper.





So far you've learned quite a lot about me and my family. I would be happy if I could stay with you a little longer. So, what do you think about making your own Red-fronted macaw out of playdough?

Hey Keiko, that's a good idea. Look I made some macaws too. I made my own sustainable playdough for them. It was very simple.



Wow, they look great. You should show them to your friends on social media.

[#WorldParrotDay](https://www.instagram.com/WorldParrotDay)



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Sustainable playdough

Material:

- bowls (one bowl for each color you want to make)
- spoon
- plastic bags or wax paper

Ingredients:

- 8 tbsp plain flour
- 2 tbsp table salt
- 60ml warm water
- food colouring (green, blue, red, black or brown)
- 1 tbsp vegetable oil

Instructions:

1. Mix the flour and salt in a large bowl. In a separate bowl mix together the water, a few drops of food colouring and the oil.
2. Pour the coloured water into the flour mix and with a spoon.
3. Dust a work surface with a little flour and turn out the dough. Knead together for a few minutes to form a smooth, pliable dough. If you want a more intense colour you can put in a few more drops of food colouring.
4. Store in a plastic sandwich bag (squeeze out the air) and place in the fridge to keep it fresh.

→ When you have made all the necessary colours, you can now model your own Red fronted macaw.



I was drawn by **Alyssa Rice**. You can follow my mom on [Instagram](#).



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