

MEET INTI- THE HYACINTH MACAW

Hello kids, my name is Inti. I am Hyacinth macaw. I want to teach you about me and my family.

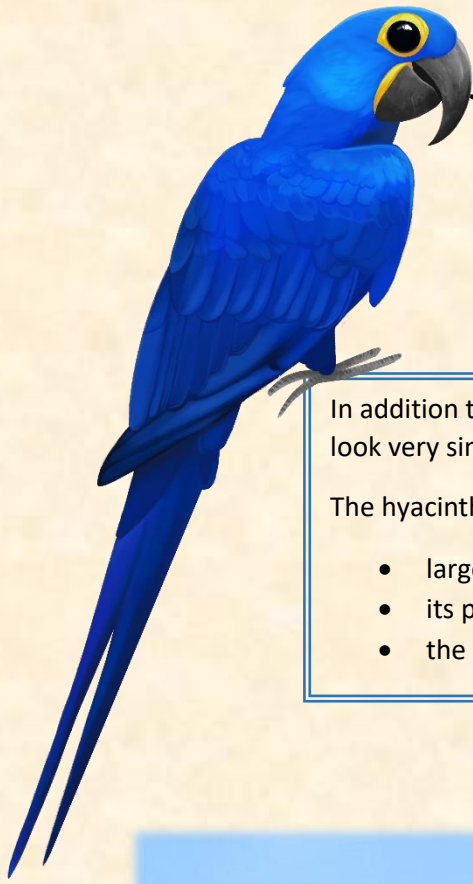


Name	Hyacinth macaw (<i>Anodorhynchus hyacinthinus</i>)
Habitat	At the edge of the rainforests and the Pantanal
Diet	Palm fruits, wild figs, berries, and seeds
Age	In human care over 50 years
Breeding behaviour	Breeding in tree hollows or, rarely, in rock crevices. They usually lay 1-2 eggs, which are incubated for about 30 days. The young birds leave the nest after about 100 days.
Threats	Habitat loss



Hyacinth macaws live in South America. There are three isolated populations in Brazil, Bolivia, and Paraguay. Most birds are found in the wetlands of the Pantanal.





Hyacinth macaws belong to the genus of blue macaws. Our genus is called "Anodorhynchus".

In addition to the Hyacinth macaw, there is a second species, the Lear's macaw. Both look very similar and differ only in a few characteristics.

The hyacinth macaw is:

- larger (up to 1 m)
- its plumage is a more intense blue
- the yellow, featherless beak area is elongated


Task: Identify which parrot is the hyacinth macaw and which is the Lear's macaw. Write the species name under the picture.




Name of the species

Name of the species






Most of my conspecifics live in the Pantanal. This is a large wetland in South America and home to a huge biodiversity.



To be precise, the Pantanal is a huge marshland with saltwater lakes, freshwater lakes and river plains. During the flood season, it covers an area of 210,000 square kilometres. That is almost as large as the United Kingdom and the largest wetland in the world.

Around 1,700 plant species, 240 fish species, 120 mammal species, around 60 amphibian species, and 100 reptile species live here. It is also home to around 650 bird species, including numerous



A few impressions of the Pantanal.



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The Pantanal has many swamps and a high level of biodiversity.

Task: Colour in the picture and try to name some species.

Species





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The Pantanal is a unique habitat that is unfortunately being destroyed.

In addition, the Pantanal is a large CO₂ reservoir. If it is destroyed, the CO₂ will be released into the atmosphere and climate change will be exacerbated.

BREAKING NEWS

The Pantanal is getting smaller and smaller. Over the last 40 years, the Pantanal has shrunk by 75%. Large areas are being drained for cattle farms. Demand has risen sharply due to increasing population growth and exports. At the same time, many parts of the Pantanal are falling victim to fires.

The lack of water means that natural fires can now spread more easily. Humans also cause many fires, for example by burning rubbish or using fire to drive away insects.



You're right, Inti. Climate change is a particular problem. It affects many other habitats, such as the polar ice caps. Climate change also has an impact on us humans. There are more and more hurricanes and floods. In addition, changes in water temperature are altering ocean currents, which is affecting fish stocks. Cultivating crops and cattle farming also becoming increasingly difficult without sufficient water.



Since 1990, the staff at Arara Azul have been committed to the conservation of hyacinth macaws.

An important part of their work is research, which includes monitoring breeding pairs. This involves recording of the date, time, farm name, weather conditions, location of observation, species, number of individuals, and what they are doing (flying, roosting, eating, etc.). In addition to the number of macaws, this monitoring allows us to understand the macaws' activity patterns, what they are doing, what type of environment they are using and where. They do not limit this to the birds alone: the eggs and hatched chicks are also counted and, where possible, weighed.

To help boost the population of the hyacinth macaw, they are installing artificial nesting aids. They are also out and about raising public awareness of the threats facing the hyacinth macaw.



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Currently, the staff at Arara Azul are aware of around 1,000 nesting sites, about half of which are artificial nesting boxes that they have installed for the Hyacinth Macaws.



It's not just the hyacinth macaws that use the nesting boxes. Many other species living in the Pantanal and the surrounding rainforests also find shelter here.

Task: Take a close look at the pictures of the following animals. Can you spot all three species that also live in the nesting boxes? Circle the correct species.



Honeybee



Lesser Rhea



Red and green macaw



Capybara



Spectacled Owl



Blue poison frog



Hey Inti, did you know that the zoos are also trying to help you? They breed endangered species, like Hyacinth macaws. They make sure that zoos don't have to take animals from the wild. They also breed a reserve population that can be released back into the wild when conditions are right in their natural habitat.

For this, it is important that the reserve population is genetically very diverse and that there is no inbreeding. Therefore, all these species kept in EAZA zoos are managed in a studbook, the so called EEPs (EAZA ex-situ program). The studbook for the Hyacinth macaw is maintained by the Zurich Zoo in Switzerland.



Studbook Hyacinth macaw

- The current population is 322 individuals in 73 EAZA institutions.
- There are 174 male and 144 female birds.
- The studbook keeper knows the relationships between all the birds in the studbook. That is why he decides which macaws are allowed to breed with each other. This prevents inbreeding, which causes the population to become diseased. Malformations could develop or hereditary diseases could arise.
- If there are more male than female birds, they can be kept in so called bachelor groups. Bachelor groups serves as a genetic reserve and can be used for zoo education.



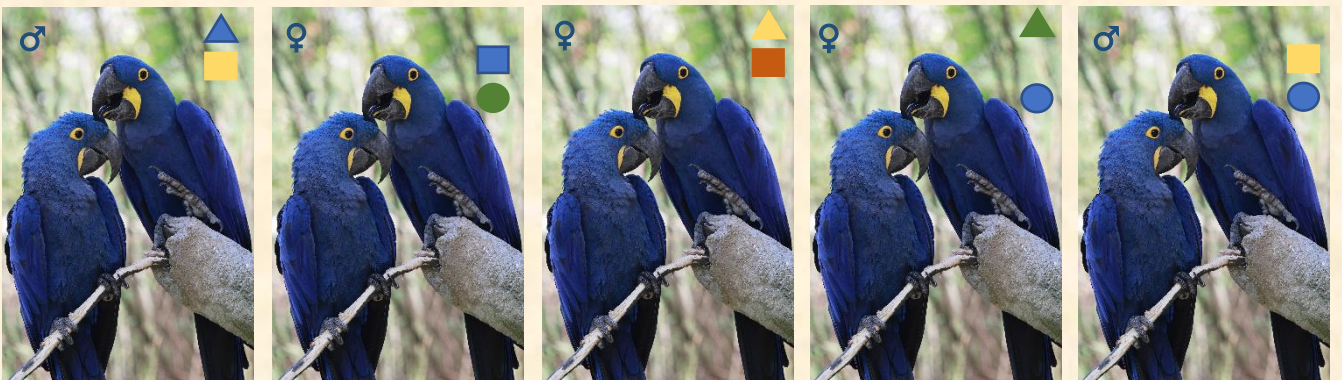
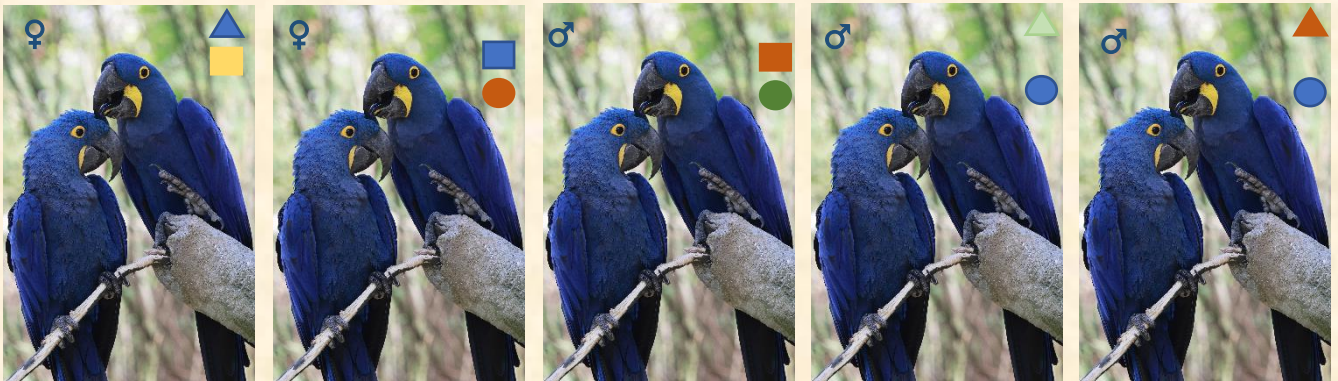
ZOOH!
Z Ü R I C H



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You have gained a little insight into what to look for in conservation breeding. Now it's your turn. Try your hand at being a studbook keeper and help Zürich Zoo to keep the studbook. The different shapes and colours symbolise the genetic diversity. If two birds have the same genes, they are related to each other. Try to mate the right cockatoos with the greatest possible genetic diversity.

Task: Connect the birds with a line. Now think about the two genes of the young bird might look like. Remember, the offspring has 50% genes from the father and 50% from the mother (different gene combinations possible).



- Chick of first pair:

- Chick of second pair:

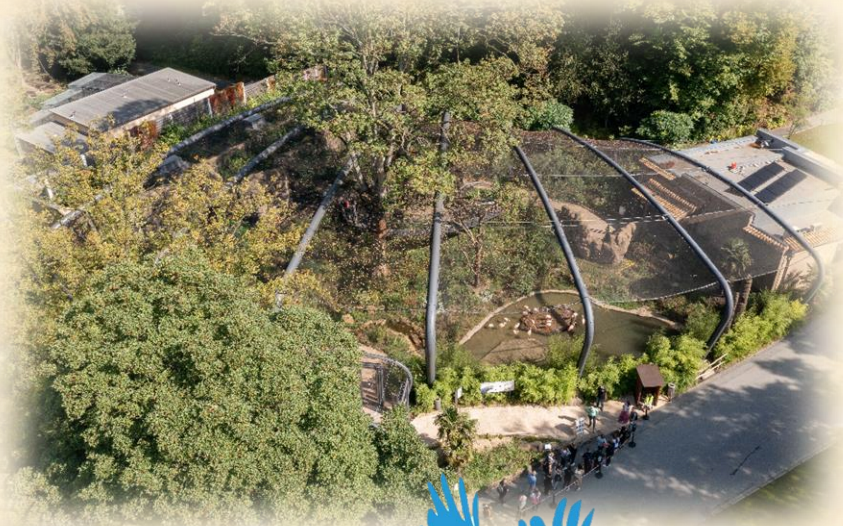
- Chick of third pair:





One of my cousins lives at Wuppertal Zoo in Germany. There is a very special breeding facility for us hyacinth macaws there. It is called "Aralandia". He has told me a lot about it. Let me show you.

1,100 square metre, 10 metre high open-air aviary, sponsored by the Zoo-Verein Wuppertal e.V.



Interior design similar to the Pantanal with wetlands and other species associated with it, e.g. the Chilean flamingo.

Clay walls are also included to ensure natural mineral absorption.



Find Out More



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Usually, macaws are assigned a partner by the studbook keeper. At Aralandia, macaws can find a partner independently within the flock, just as they would in the wild. This is a major development for animal welfare.



Now you are an EEP - Reproduction Expert.

Task: Try to find all the hidden words in the puzzle:

studbook, genetic, EAZA, parrot, conservation, breeding, Aralandia, Bachelor group

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World Parrot Day 2026

"Lets crack the hard nuts - be more Parrot"



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



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