



# Pandrillus Cameroon

Cameroon Charity no: 034/G.37/D14/VoIII/SAAJP | US EIN: 93-1289932  
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*P.O. Box 878, Limbe; Republic of Cameroon*

1 June 2020

## LIMBE WILDLIFE CENTRE ESTABLISHES THE SOFT-RELEASE PROGRAMME TO SAVE THE ENDANGERED AFRICAN GREY PARROT

### FIGHTING THE EXTINCTION OF AFRICAN GREY PARROTS IN CAMEROON

The 6<sup>th</sup> mass extinction is happening faster than anyone anticipated and is affecting and will irreversibly affect all our lives. All over the world, human unsustainable actions, including forest encroachment and poaching, dooms our planet's wildlife and threaten human wellbeing. The African grey parrot is unquestionably under the constant pressure of their shrinking habitat and as the pet trade's long-term victims. As a result of their wild population decline, the species was reclassified from vulnerable to endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in 2018.

The Limbe Wildlife Centre (LWC) was established in 1993 to ensure the survival of Cameroon's rich wildlife through rescue, rehabilitation and release programmes. The LWC has since become the first and only project in Cameroon dedicated to the survival of the endangered African grey parrots. With the 2019 rescue of 380 parrots, the LWC enhanced all facilities and procedures to pave the way for the national rehabilitation and release programme.

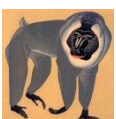
Through this programme, confiscated African grey parrots will receive rehabilitation care at the LWC until they are healthy enough to be relocated to national protected areas. Relocation to protected areas serves many purposes including reinforcement of local wild populations and aligns with national conservation strategies.

The inauguration of this programme commences before the end of 2020 with the soft-release of 100 African grey parrots. It consists of the following three components:

Firstly, the LWC will test a customized aviary in the Limbe Botanical Garden for effectiveness before replication on a national scale. Each released flock, consisting of 25 parrots, will continue to have access to food and shelter as long as necessary while adapting to their new surroundings and freedom.

Secondly, 10 individuals will be fitted with GPS harnesses, for the first time ever, to facilitate post-release monitoring. This will enable recording of their space use and measure survivorship, but also to the collection of extremely valuable data of wild populations to better understand their ecology and prioritize in-situ conservation actions.

The third component for the success of this programme is societal acceptance and support. Utilizing traditional and social media, the LWC will conduct a "STOP ILLEGAL PET



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TRADE: #ProtectWildlife!" public engagement campaign. Local events include the creation of a large art installation by artist Toh Bright, an award-winning 25-year-old Anglophone Cameroonian visual artist and writer. The artwork will be displayed in Limbe and promote Art-4-Nature, a concept developed by the LWC and Toh Bright to encourage rethinking the link between human wellbeing and preserving nature.

It is important to note that in carrying out this programme, LWC incorporates aspects of CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) strategic plan through cooperation and partnerships. In addition to effectively supporting the fight against parrot trafficking in Cameroon, they are helping to restore wild populations of African grey parrots and the ecosystems shared with rural communities.

Amid additional challenges of the pandemic, the organisation is seeking more supporters and funders to successfully implement all three components of the programme.

Wising to express the importance of LWC mission supporters, manager of the Limbe Wildlife Centre, Peggy Motsch stated: "We are so grateful to all the generous and committed persons who helped us achieve so much in such a short time! Thanks to them, the LWC has become the rescue and rehabilitation centre for the African grey parrot, one of the most endangered and emblematic species of the country. That's a major result!" Ms Motsch is hopeful and advocates for more participative and civic conservation: "Now we must release these birds where they belong. Through them, we will protect the others and their habitats, for the benefit of humans and nature. Everybody has a role to play, everybody can become a guardian of this endangered species. Now, ensuring the survival of the African grey parrots is within our reach."

2

Anyone who wishes to donate and contribute to the preservation and conservation of the African grey parrots of the Limbe Wildlife Centre can do so at [www.limbewildlife.org/donate](http://www.limbewildlife.org/donate)

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