

## Gulliver Returns to America in July

**The Oasis Sanctuary's efforts to rescue the abandoned macaw pull through.**

*By Erin O'Brien*

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Courtesy The Oasis Sanctuary

Gulliver, the blue-and-gold macaw that was abandoned in the Republic of Kiribati, spreads his wings to head for home.

Courtesy The Oasis Sanctuary

The Oasis Sanctuary features a 4,000-sq.-ft. macaw aviary that hosts 2 dozen able-bodied macaws.

After months of tireless effort from the Oasis Sanctuary, Gulliver, the blue-and-gold macaw that has captured the hearts of bird lovers across the world, is finally making the journey back to America in July.

Sybil Erden, executive director of the Oasis Sanctuary and ringleader of "team Gulliver," is flying to the Republic of Kiribati to retrieve Gulliver on Sunday, June 29. Once Gulliver returns, he will enter a 30-day quarantine in Southern California. Upon his release from quarantine, Gulliver will join the other 2 dozen able-bodied macaws in the Oasis Sanctuary's 4,000-sq.-ft. macaw aviary.

Gulliver was abandoned by his American owners after they got shipwrecked in early December, 2007. Their boat crashed onto Fanning Island, a tiny island in the South Pacific. Following the advice of locals, who, according to Erden, promised them that Gulliver would be well taken care of, Jerry and Darla returned to the U.S. and left Gulliver behind.

The 4-year-old macaw was abandoned without papers at a locale that lacks electricity, running water and an airport, with a family that had only breadfruit and rice to feed him. This family eventually sent him to Christmas Island, where they thought he could easily be rescued. This rescue, as Erden knows, was not so simple.

Erden has worked on "team Gulliver" vigorously since April through contacts at Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS); she has also coordinated with officials in the Republic of Kiribati and Nautonga and Mamarau, the couple who rescued Gulliver from extermination on Christmas Island. With their help, Erden was able to overcome the multiple legal obstacles and find the necessary paperwork for Gulliver's return.

The Oasis also faced a number of financial obstacles. Erden addressed these problems with a fundraiser.

"The Oasis put word out through our 'OasisNews' and on our website regarding ... the difficulties bringing Gulliver home," Erden said. "Within a week, \$3,000 was raised for the rescue."

Now that Gulliver's situation has fared for the better, Erden reflects on the incredible story that inspired people from all over the world to join "team Gulliver."

"I've had a lot of people ask me, 'Why Gulliver? Why did you use all these resources just to save a single life?'" Erden said. "We did this for Gulliver because he is a spokes-parrot. Gulliver is a platform for the American public to learn about the tens of thousands of birds that need homes. When their owners pass away, birds are not likely to get passed to someone else who is willing to care for them. The result is massive euthanizations of these incredibly intelligent animals. At Oasis, we're doing everything we can to convince the bird lovers of America to take in just one more homeless bird. That's why Gulliver."

Erden plans to celebrate Gulliver's homecoming with a welcome-home picnic in Southern California upon his release from quarantine.

"I'm not exactly sure when Gulliver will get out of quarantine, so keep an eye on our website, [www.the-oasis.org](http://www.the-oasis.org), for updates" said Erden. "I think the picnic will be a ball."