

Fundación ProAves Opens Fuertes's Parrot Reserve

Conservation project aims to protect endangered bird

By Rachael Brugger

Courtesy Fundación ProAves

A parrot species found deep in the Andes mountain range of Colombia has newfound hope.

Fundación ProAves, a partner group of the American Bird Conservancy (ABC), opened up a conservation area in February 2008 for the Fuertes's parrot (*Hapalopsittaca Fuertes*), which was once thought to be extinct. Employees at the 1,500-acre reserve located in the Central Andes in Colombia set up a plan to study and monitor the parrots.

It is estimated that only 160 Fuertes's parrots remain in existence. The bird species had not been seen since 1911 until Alonso Quevedo, president of Fundación ProAves, found a flock of 14 birds in 2002.

"He played a central role protecting and studying the bird with Fundación Loro Parque support, and he negotiated and acquired the land on behalf of Fundación Proaves," said Paul Salaman, ABC spokesperson.

The Parrot Bus, a facet of Fundación ProAves' ecotourism company, offers monthly tours in English of the reserve. Visit the Fundación ProAves website for more information.