

## New Breeding Center Opens for Spix's Macaw

**Loro Parque Fundacion opens a new breeding center for the endangered macaws**

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Photo Courtesy Loro Parque Fundacion

The Spix's macaws' new home in Spain The breeding center has strict rules employees must follow for the health and safety of the endangered macaws inside.

Photo Courtesy Loro Parque Fundacion

These Spix's macaws spend time in their new home.

The small population of captive Spix's macaws (*Cyanopsitta spixii*) that the Loro Parque Fundacion has, have been transferred to a new breeding center in La Vera, near Puerto de la Cruz, Tenerife, Spain. The Loro Parque Fundacion, based in Spain, is a non-profit organization committed to the conservation of parrots, including the Spix's macaw, and their habitats.

To protect the endangered macaws, the breeding center has plenty of security, which includes a 24-hour on-site crew and security guards with dogs patrolling nightly. The breeding center is surrounded by a wall and fence, with barbed-wire inside amongst a natural defense perimeter of spiny trees, plants and bushes. Closed-circuit cameras monitor the perimeter.

A team of avian veterinarians, veterinary technicians, laboratory technicians, curators and keepers has been assigned for the welfare and care of these endangered macaws. The Spix's macaws are checked everyday, with facilities set aside for allowing close observation and providing treatment to the birds if necessary. The aviaries undergo a strict daily cleaning, food bowls are washed twice daily and enclosures are cleaned weekly. For biosecurity reasons, new Spix's macaws are quarantined for 40 days before they are allowed in the facility and only authorized personnel are allowed on the grounds. Personnel go through a strict cleaning regiment, such as showering and then changing into special clean clothes and bathing their feet in an antiseptic.

Spix's macaws are extinct in the wild.

As for the endangered macaws, the outlook is good for the 2008 year for the foundation. "We are waiting to pair-up our breeding female with a male due to arrive soon from the Association for the Conservation of Threatened parrots in Germany," said Dr. David Waugh, the director of Loro Parque Fundacion. "This female normally breeds towards the end of the year, so we hope for success in 2008."

"We also have a much younger pair, which is beginning to approach sexual maturity. Both birds are showing all the correct behaviors inside the nest box, so this is another good sign," added Waugh.