



Identification guide

# of MEXICAN PARROTS



**Authors**

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2018

Illustration and design

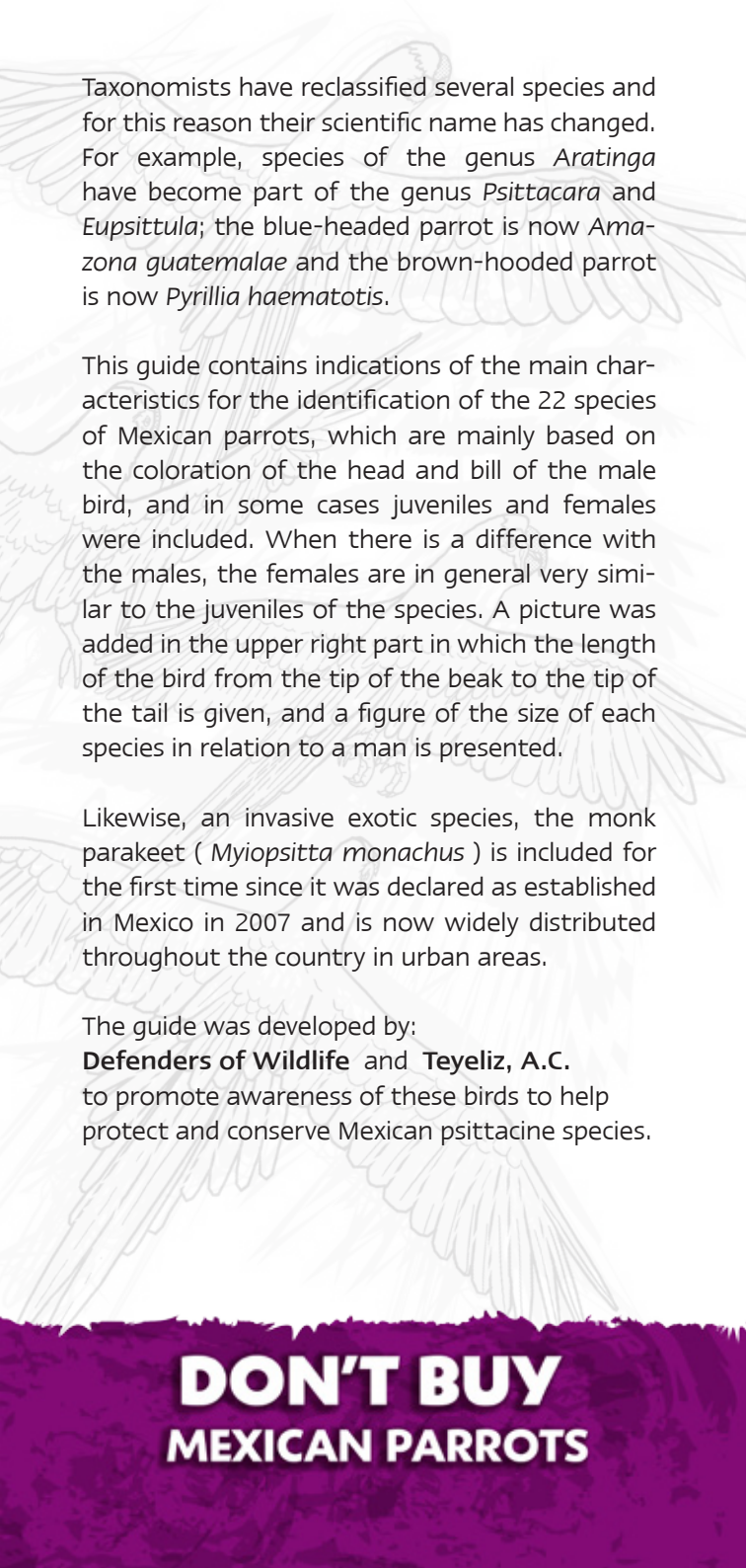
Raziel Levi Méndez  
Elías García López



Mexico has 22 species of parrots and macaws belonging to the Psittacidae family. In 2019 the Mexican norm **NOM-059-SEMAR-NAT-2019** on species at risk will be published that will include *Amazona autumnalis* (yellow-cheeked parrot), classifying it as threatened, being the only species that was missing from the norm. Now, 100% of Mexican species are at risk: 11 species are in danger of extinction; 7 are threatened and 4 under special protection.

“ This means that 50% of all Mexican species would be at risk of disappearing in the short term. ”

Parrots and macaws inhabit very diverse ecosystems, ranging from the tropical rainforests of the southeast to the pine and oak forests of the northern sierras. Seven species are endemic to Mexico: the thick-billed parrot ( *Rhynchopsitta pachyrhyncha* ), the maroon-fronted parrot ( *Rhynchopsitta terrisi* ), the lilac-crowned parrot ( *Amazona finschi* ), the red-crowned parrot ( *Amazona viridigenalis* ), the blue-rumped parrotlet ( *Forpus cyanopygius* ), the green parakeet ( *Psittacara holochlorus* ), and the Socorro parakeet ( *Psittacara brevipes* ).



Taxonomists have reclassified several species and for this reason their scientific name has changed. For example, species of the genus *Aratinga* have become part of the genus *Psittacara* and *Eupsittula*; the blue-headed parrot is now *Amazona guatemalae* and the brown-hooded parrot is now *Pyrillia haematotis*.

This guide contains indications of the main characteristics for the identification of the 22 species of Mexican parrots, which are mainly based on the coloration of the head and bill of the male bird, and in some cases juveniles and females were included. When there is a difference with the males, the females are in general very similar to the juveniles of the species. A picture was added in the upper right part in which the length of the bird from the tip of the beak to the tip of the tail is given, and a figure of the size of each species in relation to a man is presented.

Likewise, an invasive exotic species, the monk parakeet ( *Myiopsitta monachus* ) is included for the first time since it was declared as established in Mexico in 2007 and is now widely distributed throughout the country in urban areas.

The guide was developed by:

**Defenders of Wildlife** and **Teyeliz, A.C.**

to promote awareness of these birds to help protect and conserve Mexican psittacine species.

**DON'T BUY  
MEXICAN PARROTS**

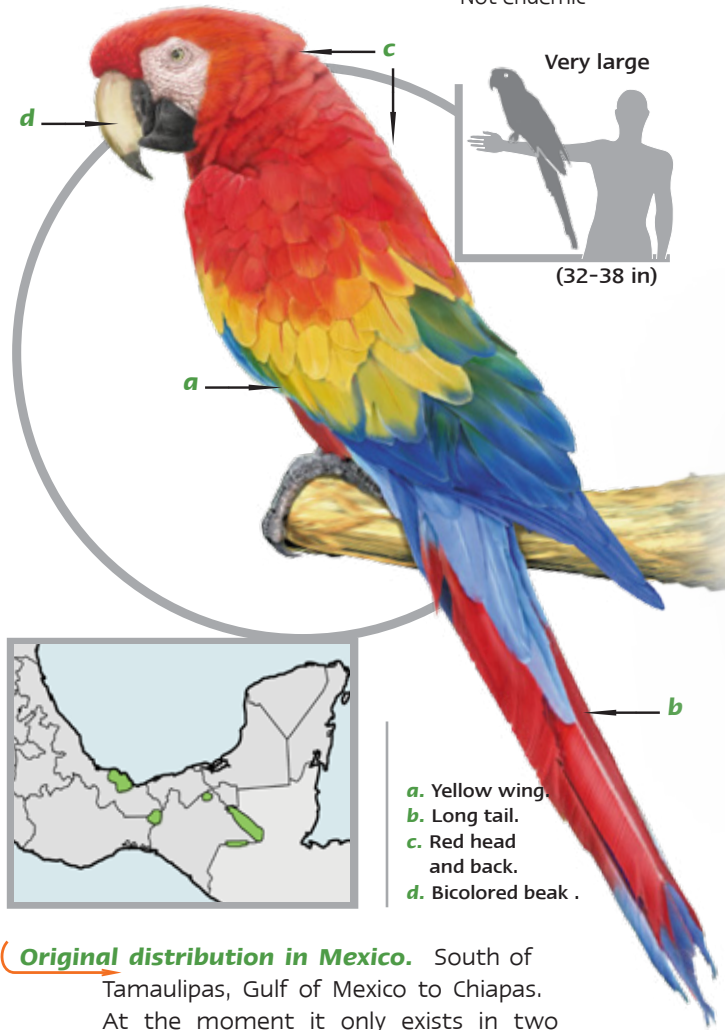
## ***Ara macao***

Scarlet macaw

NOM 059: **Endangered**

CITES: Appendix I

Not endemic



- a.** Yellow wing.
- b.** Long tail.
- c.** Red head and back.
- d.** Bicolored beak .

**Original distribution in Mexico.** South of Tamaulipas, Gulf of Mexico to Chiapas.

At the moment it only exists in two areas in the tropical rainforest in Chiapas at the border with Guatemala and in Oaxaca at the border with Chiapas. Also, in Palenque, Chiapas, and Los Tuxtlas, Veracruz, after 2 successful reintroduction projects.

**Habitat.** Tropical lowland rainforest, also in remote portions of humid rainforest. Often close to rivers throughout its range.

**Threats.** Massive deforestation of the rainforest and illegal traffic.

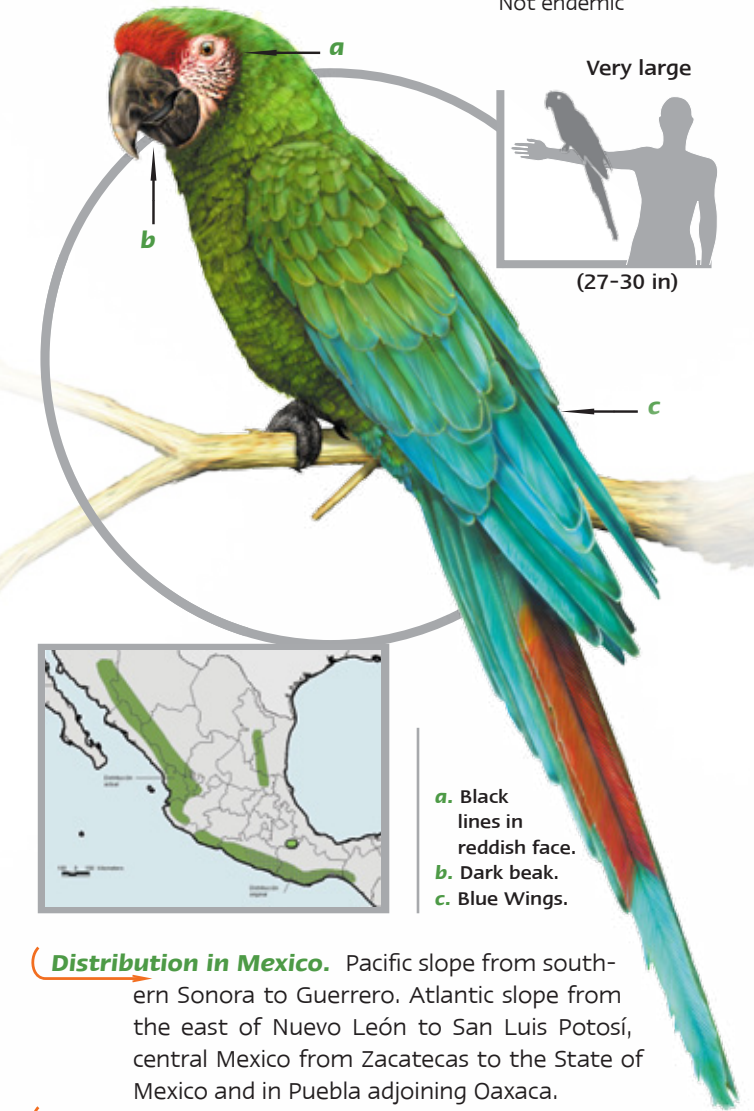
# *Ara militaris*

Military macaw

NOM 059: **Endangered**

CITES: Appendix I

Not endemic



- a.** Black lines in reddish face.
- b.** Dark beak.
- c.** Blue Wings.

**Distribution in Mexico.** Pacific slope from southern Sonora to Guerrero. Atlantic slope from the east of Nuevo León to San Luis Potosí, central Mexico from Zacatecas to the State of Mexico and in Puebla adjoining Oaxaca.

**Habitat.** Mainly in hills, in mountainous terrain, in wooded areas with canyons, between 1600 ft to 4900 ft, locally reaching 6550 ft, but also regularly at sea level in the Mexican Pacific. Mainly in isolated highlands in arid and semi-arid forests, and forests of oak and pine.

**Threats.** Illegal traffic, it is the fourth highest trafficked species by annual volume of confiscations.



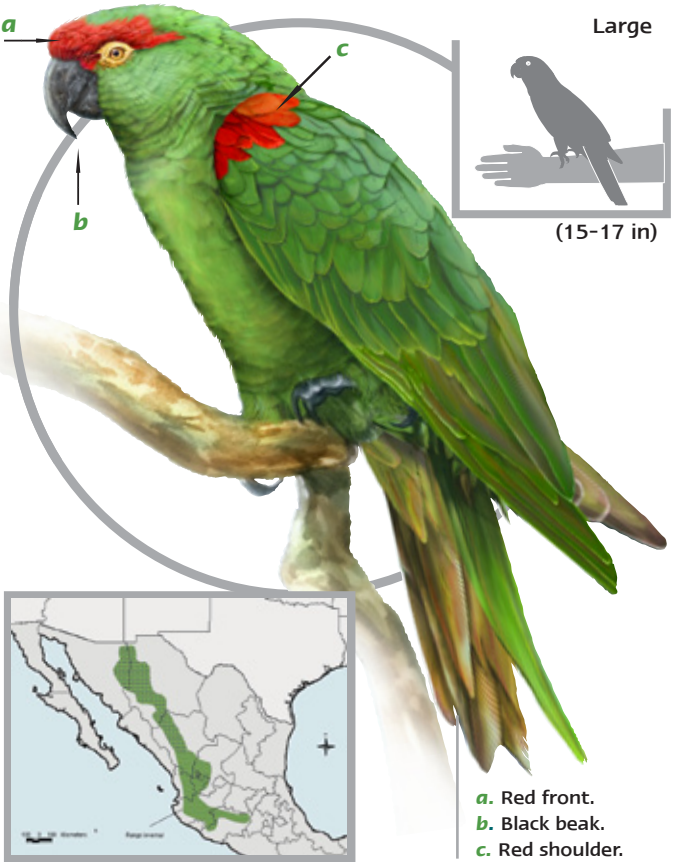
## *Rhynchopsitta pachyrhyncha*

Thick-billed parrot

NOM 059: **Endangered**

CITES: Appendix I

Endemic



**Distribution in Mexico.** ENDEMIC, Sierra Madre Occidental from Chihuahua to western Michoacán. It is a species that migrates.

**Habitat.** Mature coniferous forests, with pines and oaks in secluded and difficult to access forests, occasionally also in lower locations.

**Threats.** Deforestation, the loss of primary forests and consequently the decrease of nesting sites are the greatest threat factor for this species.

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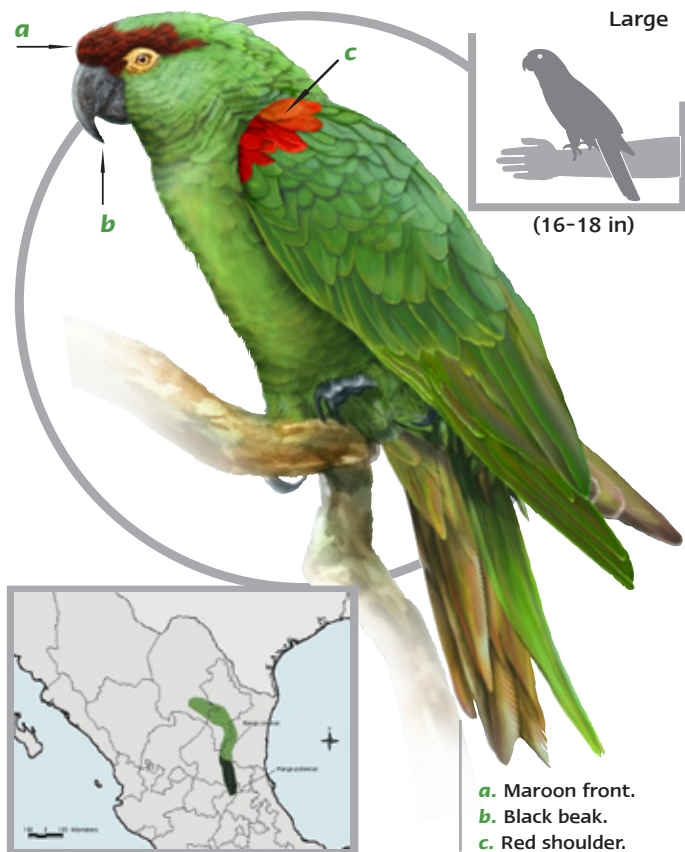
## *Rhynchopsitta terrisi*

Maroon-fronted parrot

NOM 059: **Endangered**

CITES: Appendix I

Endemic



**Distribution in Mexico.** ENDEMIC, Sierra Madre Oriental, in the southeast of Coahuila, south of Nuevo León and southwest of Tamaulipas. Recently registered in the Sierra Gorda, Querétaro. During the winter in the mountains of Nuevo León and Tamaulipas.

**Habitat.** Highlands with forests of pines and oaks.

**Threats.** Deforestation, the loss of forests threatens feeding areas.

**DENOUNCE ITS ILLEGAL SALE  
TO PROFEPA**

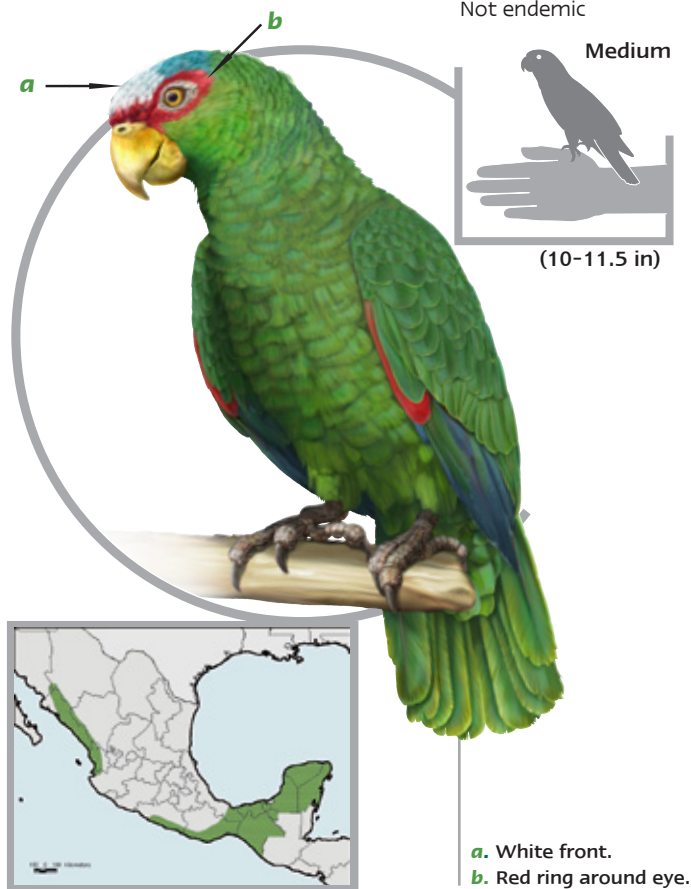
## *Amazona albifrons*

White-fronted parrot

NOM 059: Special protection

CITES: Appendix II

Not endemic



**Distribution in Mexico.** Pacific slope from southern Sonora to Chiapas (absent in Colima and Michoacán). Slope of the Atlantic from the southeast Veracruz to the Yucatan Peninsula.

**Habitat.** Forests and open areas with trees including humid forests, sub-deciduous, deciduous forests (especially the edges), pine forests, gallery forest, savannas and tropical semi-arid vegetation with cactus. Generally, it prefers drier forests, but when it shares habitat with *Amazona xantholora*, it tends to be in more humid and closed vegetation.

**Threats.** Illegal trafficking and deforestation. It is the second highest trafficked species by annual volume of confiscations.



## *Amazona xantholora*

Yellow-lored parrot

NOM 059: **Threatened**

CITES: Appendix II

Not endemic



Medium



(10-11 in)



- a.** White crown.
- b.** Yellow lores.
- c.** Dark spot on the cheek.

**Distribution in Mexico.** Yucatan Peninsula, in Yucatan, Quintana Roo and Campeche states.

**Habitat.** Mainly tropical deciduous forests, generally avoiding high or medium dense and humid forests.

**Threats.** Deforestation, illegal trafficking.

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MEXICAN  
PARROTS AND MACAWS !**

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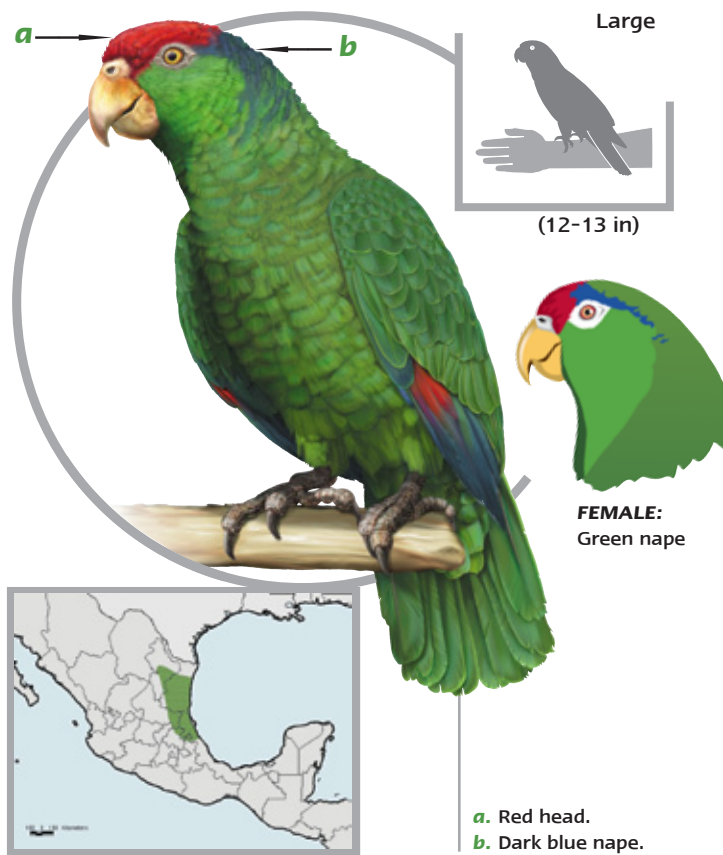
## *Amazona viridigenalis*

Red-crowned parrot

NOM 059: **Endangered**

CITES: Appendix I

**Endemic**



**Distribution in Mexico.** ENDEMIC, Atlantic slope from the east of Nuevo León and Tamaulipas, San Luis Potosí north of Veracruz.

**Habitat.** Deciduous forests, gallery and evergreen flooded areas in tropical areas, with non-breeding birds reaching the driest ridges of the mountains up to 3900 ft above sea level in temperate areas with pine and oak trees. It frequents cultivated areas where tall trees remain.

**Threats.** Illegal national and international trafficking as it is a highly prized species. Deforestation.

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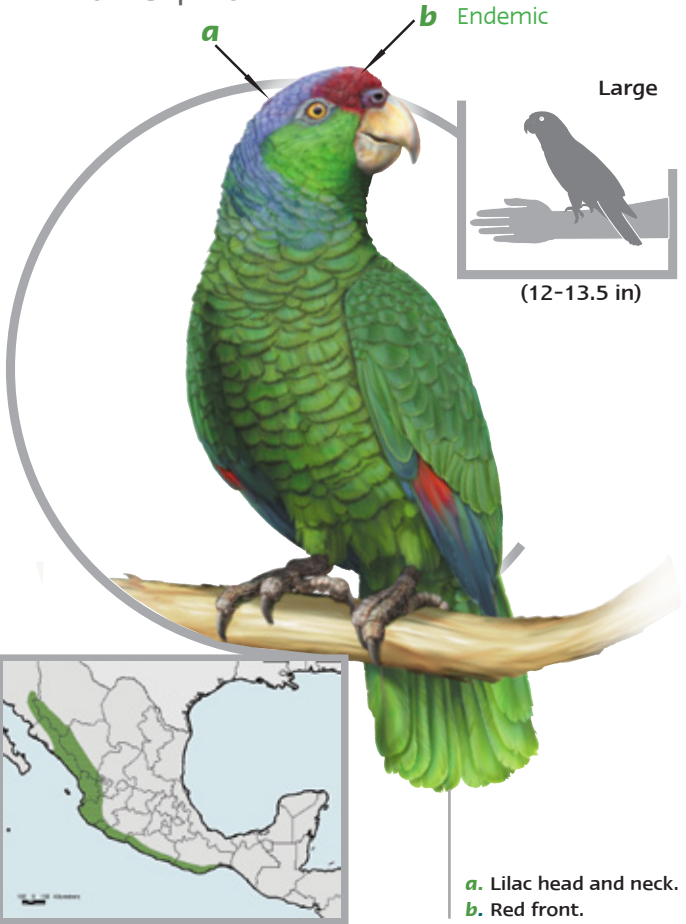
## *Amazona finschi*

Lilac-crowned parrot

NOM 059: **Endangered**

CITES: Appendix I

**Endemic**



**Distribution in Mexico.** ENDEMIC, Pacific slope from southern Sonora and southwest of Chihuahua to Oaxaca.

**Habitat.** Hills and wooded mountains, from the tropical zone with deciduous rainforests of low elevation to forests of pine and oak, with a preference for glens with leafy vegetation along the banks of streams; often also in arid and semi-arid shrub vegetation, frequents forest edges or cleared areas, and penetrates cultivated areas and orchards adjacent to forests.

**Threats.** Deforestation, currently deciduous rainforests have the highest rate of deforestation of all types of forests in Mexico. It is the sixth highest trafficked species by annual volume of confiscations.

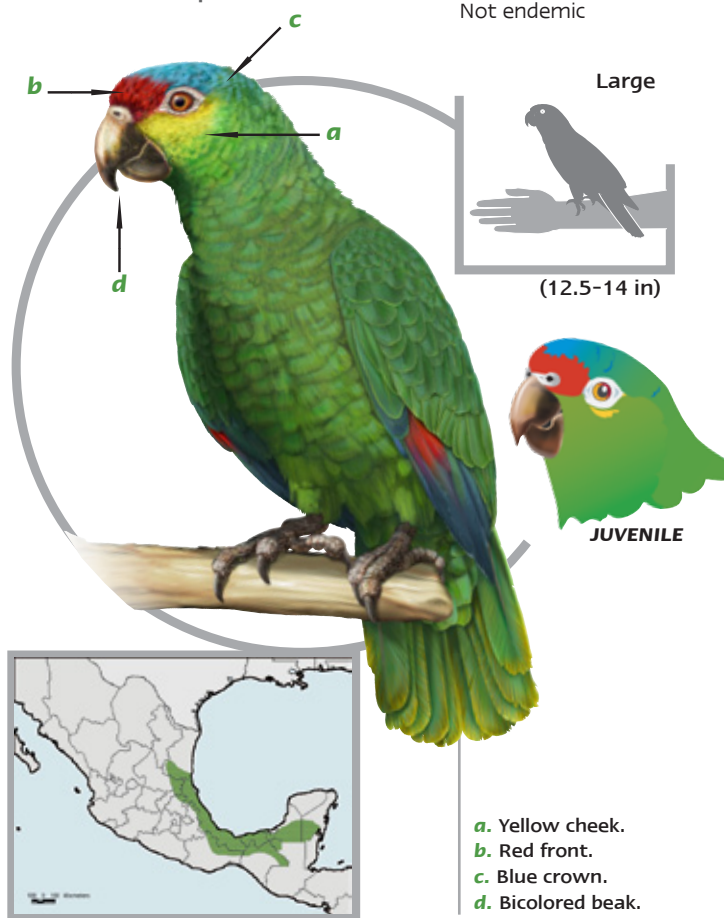
## *Amazona autumnalis*

Yellow-cheeked parrot

NOM 059: **Threatened**

CITES: Appendix II

Not endemic



**Distribution in Mexico.** Atlantic slope from the south of Tamaulipas and San Luis Potosí, south and east to Oaxaca, Chiapas, south of Campeche and southern end of Quintana Roo.

**Habitat.** Frequents a wide range of wooded and open habitats, including rainforest, tropical deciduous forest, pine trees, mangroves, wooded swamps, gallery forest, areas cultivated with tall trees, and plantations.

**Threats.** Illegal traffic. It is the sixth highest trafficked species by annual volume of confiscations. It has just been classified as threatened in **NOM-059** mainly because of illegal traffic. Deforestation.

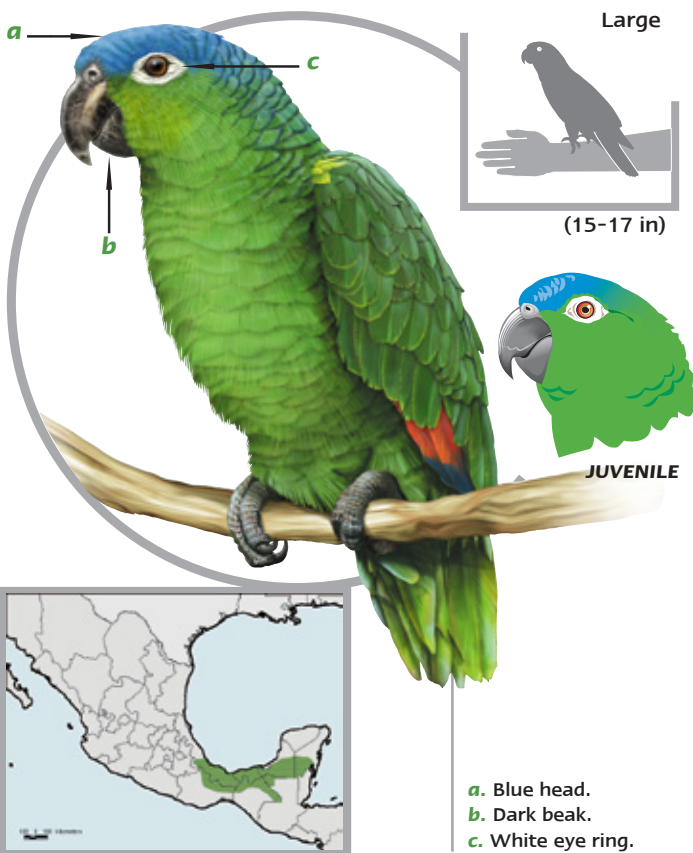
***Amazona guatemalae***  
(before *A. farinosa*)

Northern Mealy parrot

NOM 059: **Endangered**

CITES: Appendix II

Not endemic



**Distribution in Mexico.** Lowlands of Veracruz, Oaxaca, Chiapas and the south of the Yucatan Peninsula.

**Habitat.** Mainly in dense and humid tropical forest, especially near cleared areas and forest edges. It frequents plantations with tall trees and occurs locally in gallery forests and less frequently in deciduous forests. Generally, in the canopy, but descends to the middle level in clearings.

**Threats.** Deforestation, 90% of the humid rainforests of Mexico have disappeared, however, illegal traffic at the regional level is very large.

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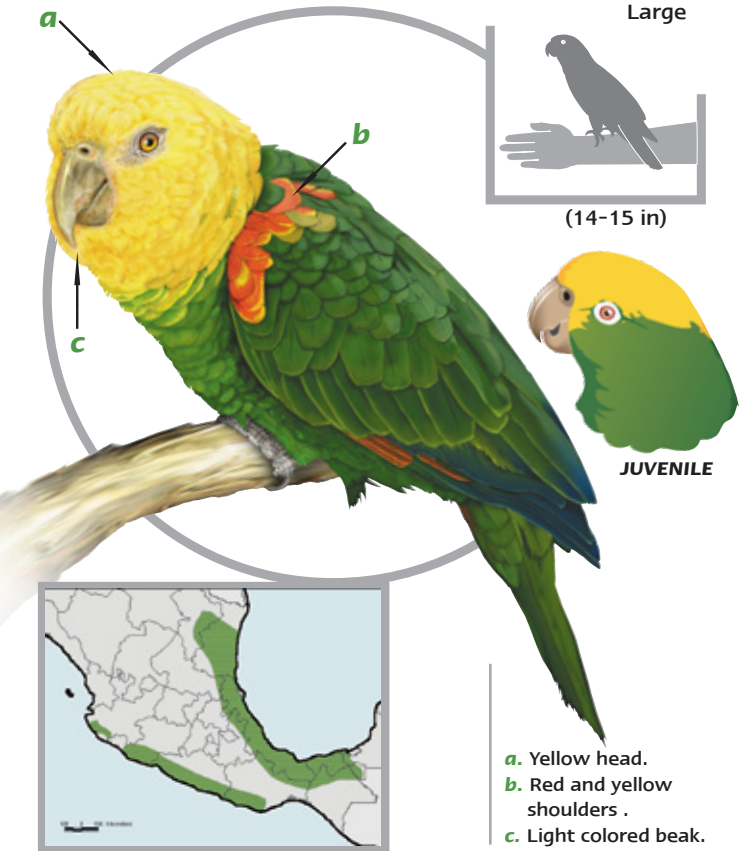
## **Amazona oratrix**

Yellow-headed parrot

NOM 059: **Endangered**

CITES: Appendix I

Not endemic



- a.** Yellow head.
- b.** Red and yellow shoulders .
- c.** Light colored beak.

**Distribution in Mexico.** Pacific slope from Jalisco to Oaxaca. Atlantic slope from the east of Nuevo León and Tamaulipas, towards Tabasco and north of Chiapas.

**Habitat.** They frequent savannas, deciduous tropical forest (including cleared areas), dense thorny forest, swamp forest in the Pacific, evergreen wooded highlands, dense gallery forest and areas planted with trees, in lowlands below 1640 ft above sea level.

**Threats.** Its biggest threat is illegal trafficking given it is the most sought-after species because of its ability to talk. It has been documented that there are areas where the habitat is well preserved, but the populations have disappeared due to intense poaching.

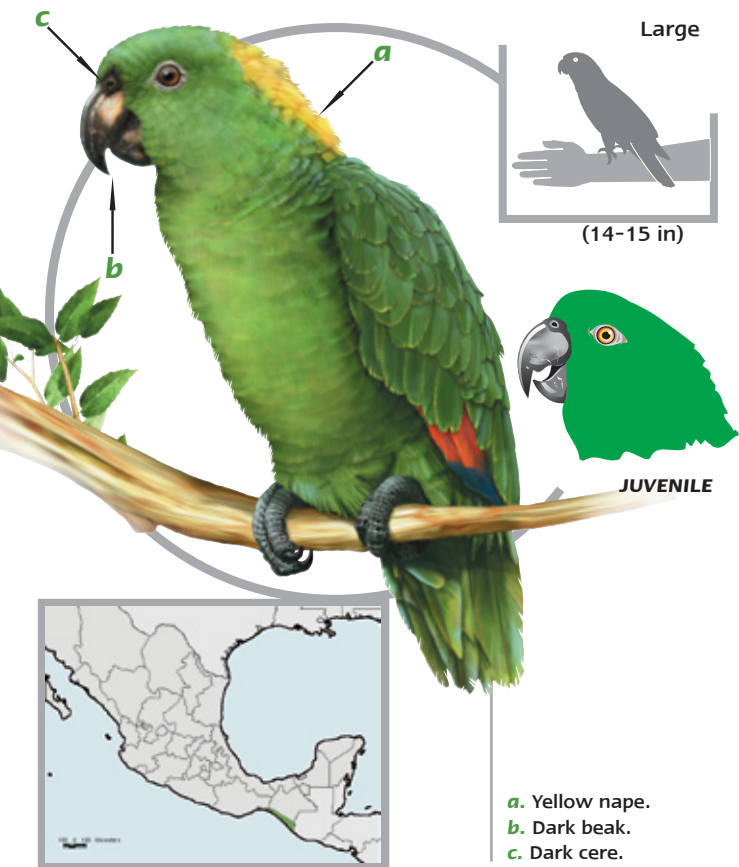
## *Amazona auropalliata*

Yellow-naped parrot

NOM 059: **Endangered**

CITES: Appendix I

Not endemic



**Distribution in Mexico.** Southern border of Oaxaca to the south along the coastal strip of the Pacific to Chiapas.

**Habitat.** Semi-arid forests, arid shrublands and savannas (including pine forests), deciduous tropical forests and Pacific marsh forests, gallery forest and sometimes secondary vegetation in agricultural areas.

**Threats.** Its biggest threat is the illegal national and international traffic because it is a very popular species for its ability to talk. Deforestation.

**DON'T BUY  
MEXICAN PARROTS**

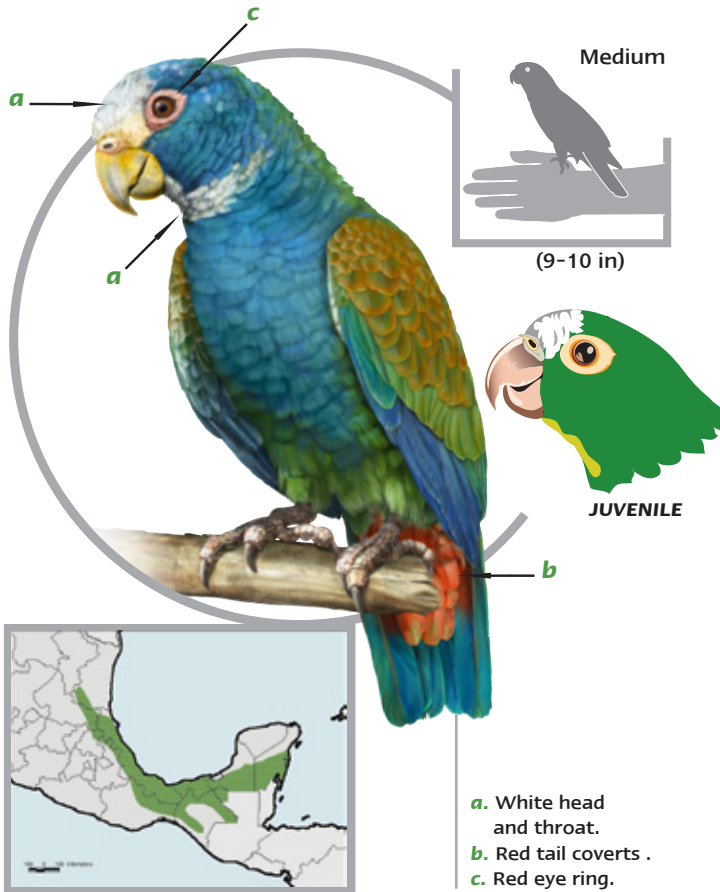
## **Pionus senilis**

White-crowned parrot

NOM 059: **Threatened**

CITES: Appendix I

Not endemic



**Distribution in Mexico.** Atlantic slope from southern Tamaulipas to Chiapas.

**Habitat.** Mainly humid forest (including tropical high forest), but also locally in pine and oak forest, savanna and low mountain forest. Reported from forests and forest edges, cultivated areas and livestock areas with scattered trees, plantations, and secondary forests with emergent trees.

**Threats.** Deforestation, illegal trafficking.

**DENOUNCE ITS ILLEGAL SALE  
TO PROFEPA**

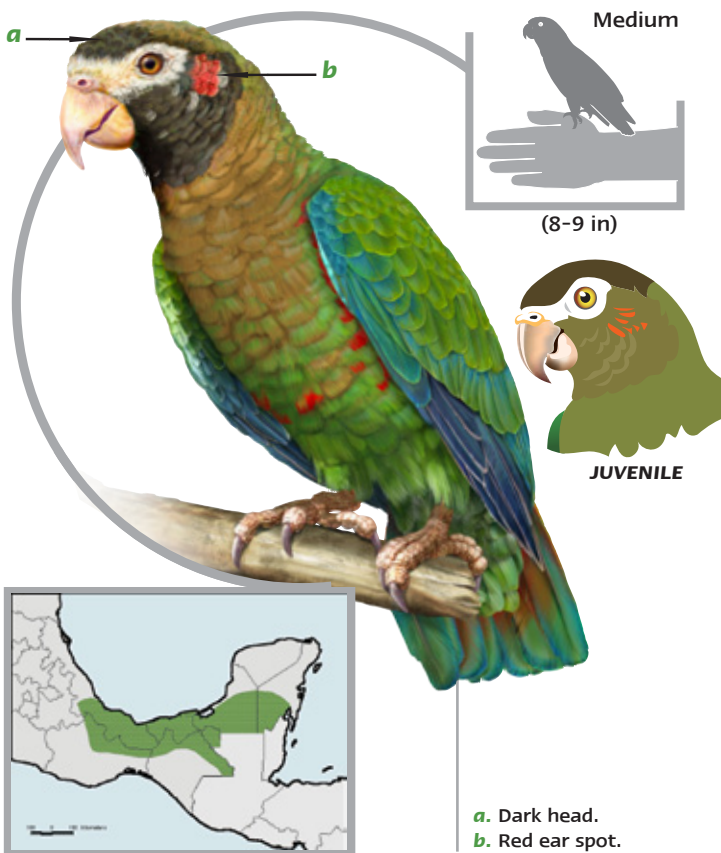
***Pyrillia haematotis***  
(before *Pionopsitta haematotis*)

Brown-hooded parrot

NOM 059: **Endangered**

CITES: Appendix I

Not endemic



**a.** Dark head.  
**b.** Red ear spot.

**Distribution in Mexico.** Atlantic slope from southern Veracruz, Tabasco, Campeche, Oaxaca and Chiapas.

**Habitat.** Reported in primary and dense rainforest (including mature secondary vegetation) about 5250 ft above sea level in Oaxaca and up to 9850 ft, as well as low elevation cloud forest, open fields with scattered grass and trees, and in plantations. It prefers the canopy of the forest and the edges.

**Threats.** Deforestation, it is a species with scarce populations that has been considered rare.

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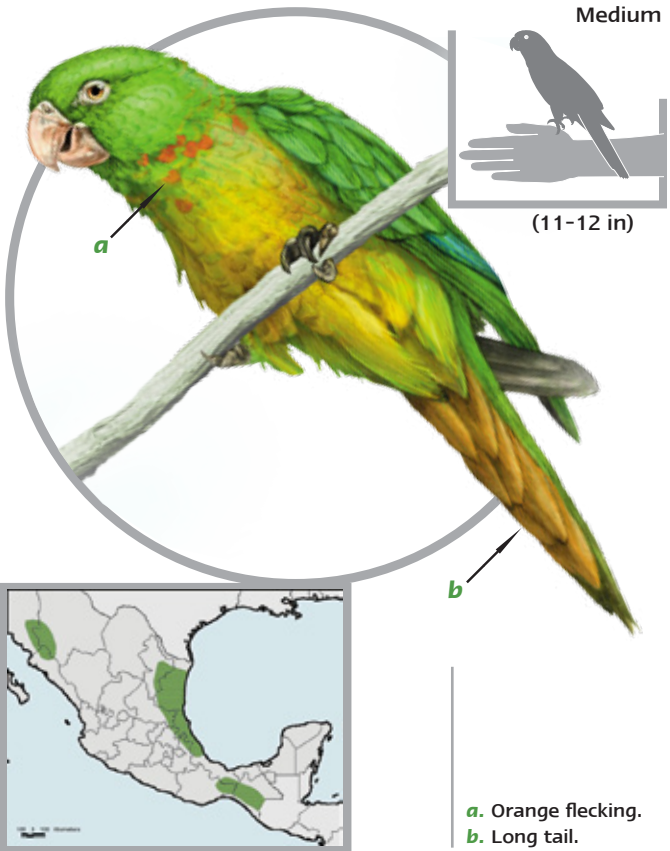
***Psittacara holochlorus***  
(before *Aratinga holochlora*)

Green parakeet

NOM 059: **Threatened**

CITES: Appendix II

**Endemic**



**Distribution in Mexico.** Disjunct populations in the Atlantic slope, from the east of Nuevo León and Tamaulipas to the center of Veracruz; southeast of Veracruz, east of Oaxaca and east of Chiapas; southwest of Chihuahua, north of Sinaloa and south of Sonora.

**Habitat.** All types of wooded habitat except tropical rainforest. In northeastern Mexico, mainly in the highlands, with some movement towards dry deciduous forests of low elevations during the non-breeding season.

**Threats.** Illegal trafficking and deforestation.

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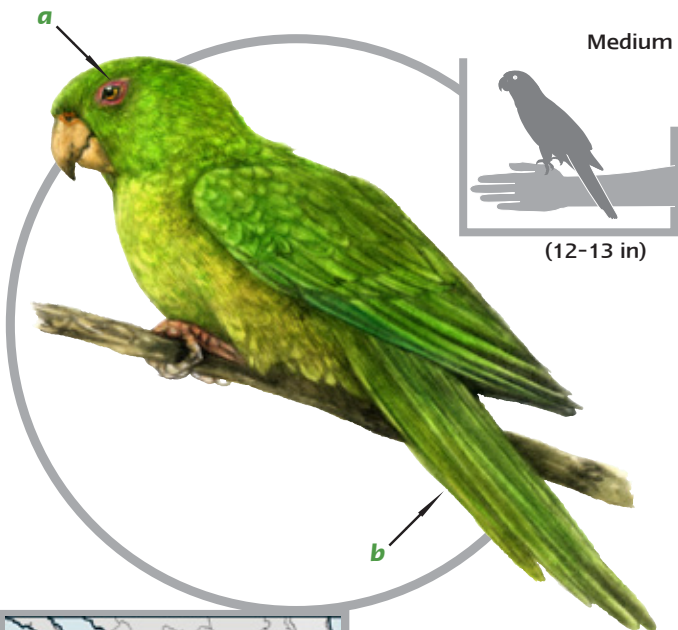
***Psittacara brevipes***  
(before *Aratinga brevipes*)

Socorro parakeet

NOM 059: **Endangered**

CITES: Appendix II

Endemic



**a.** Purplish eye ring.  
**b.** Long tail.

**Distribution in Mexico.** ENDEMIC, it is only found in Isla Socorro in the Archipelago of the Revillagigedo Islands.

**Habitat.** Commonly in forests of Bumelia, Ilex and Guettarda with trees at least 8 m high.

**Threats.** Introduction of exotic species to the island such as cats, sheep, rodents. Destruction of their habitat.

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WILD  
PARROTS AND MACAWS**

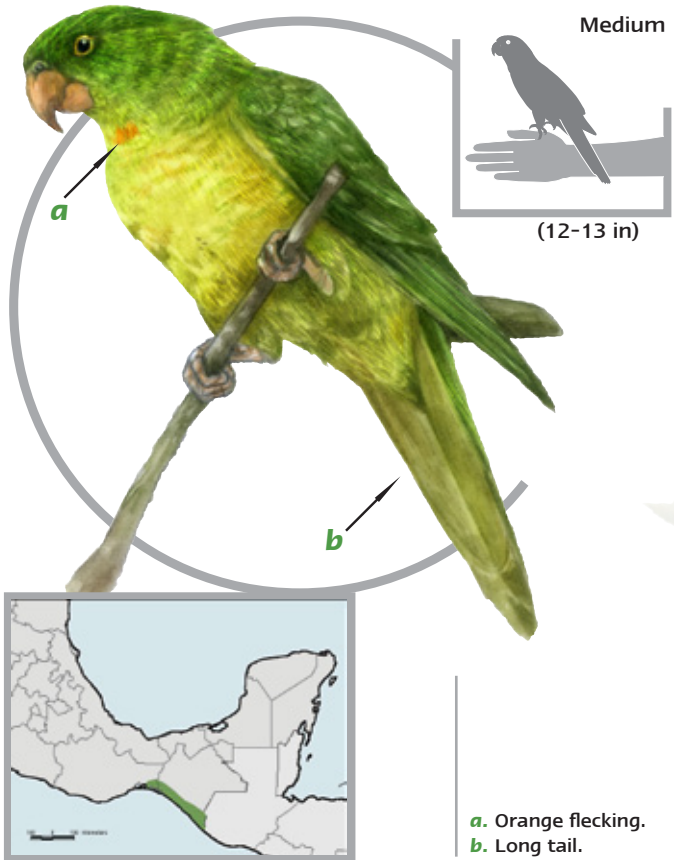
***Psittacara strenuus***  
(before *Aratinga strenua*)

Pacific parakeet

NOM 059: **Threatened**

CITES: Appendix II

Not endemic



**Distribution in Mexico.** Pacific slope from eastern Oaxaca to Chiapas.

**Habitat.** Semideciduous forests, riparian vegetation and in patches of medium deciduous and semideciduous rainforest.

**Threats.** Deforestation, illegal trafficking.

**BUYING AND SELLING  
MEXICAN PARROTS  
IS FORBIDDEN**

***Eupsittula nana***  
(before *Aratinga nana*)

Aztec parakeet

NOM 059: Special  
protection

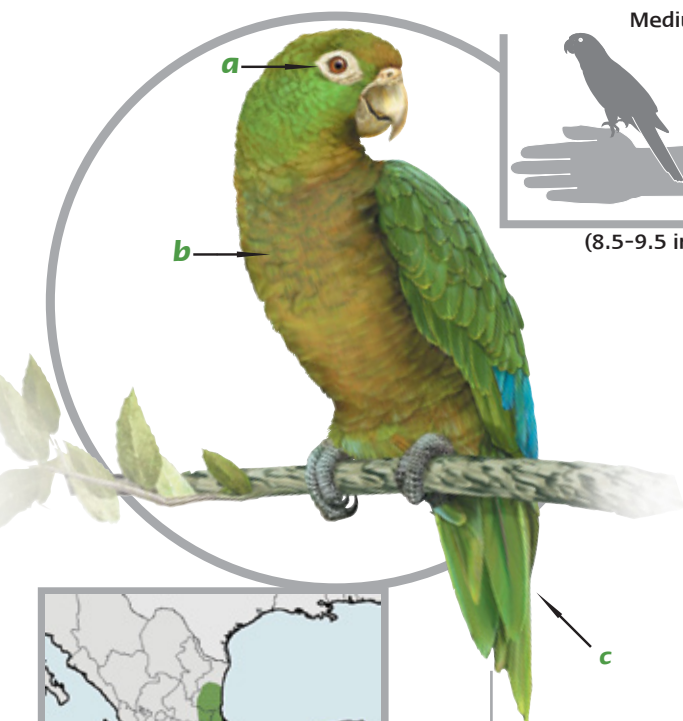
CITES: Appendix II

Not endemic

Medium



(8.5-9.5 in)



- a.** White eye ring.
- b.** Dark chest.
- c.** Long tail.

**Distribution in Mexico.** Atlantic slope from southern Tamaulipas to Chiapas.

**Habitat.** Mainly in forests and riparian forest edges in humid lowlands, but less frequent in large portions of tropical rainforest and reported in arid areas (Veracruz) and open fields with isolated trees (including cultivated areas) and plantations.

**Threats.** Deforestation and illegal traffic. It is the sixth highest trafficked species by annual volume of confiscations.

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***Eupsittula canicularis***  
(before *Aratinga canicularis*)

Orange-fronted parakeet

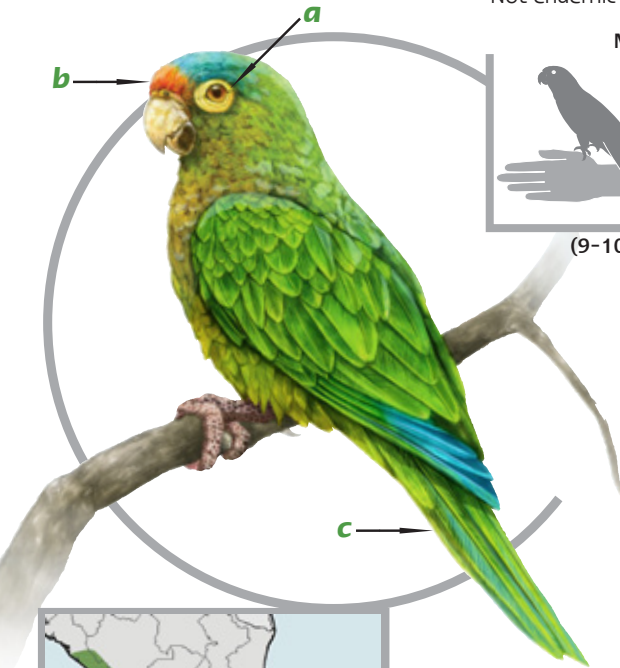
NOM 059: Special protection

CITES: Appendix II  
Not endemic

Medium



(9-10 in)



- a.** Yellow eye ring.
- b.** Orange front.
- c.** Long tail.

**Distribution in Mexico.** Pacific slope from Sinaloa and Durango to Chiapas. Locally within the basin of Balsas river.

**Habitat.** Slightly wooded fields or open areas with scattered trees in arid and semi-arid lowlands, including spiny forests and tropical deciduous forests.

**Threats.** Immense illegal traffic, is the most trafficked species in the country with the highest annual volume of confiscations. There are several areas where well-preserved habitat still exists and the species has disappeared due to poaching. Deforestation.

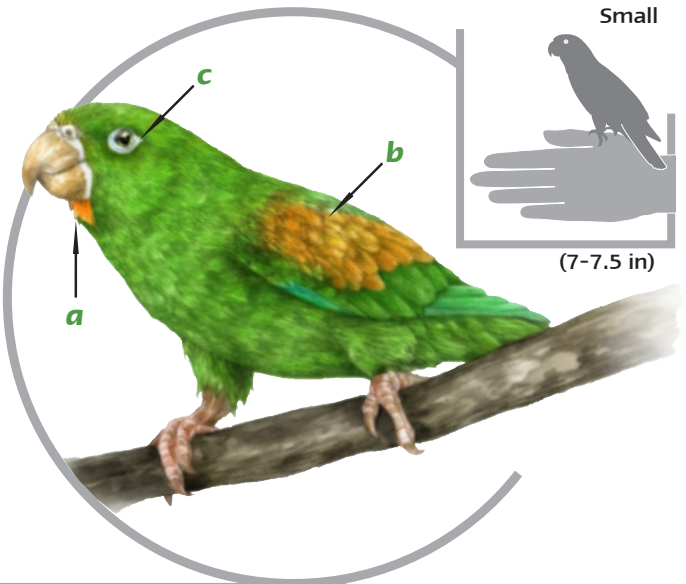
## ***Brotogeris jugularis***

Orange-chinned parakeet

NOM 059: **Threatened**

CITES: Appendix II

Not endemic



- a.** Orange chin.
- b.** Brownish wing.
- c.** Whitish eye ring.

**Distribution in Mexico.** Only on the Pacific coast of Oaxaca and Chiapas.

**Habitat.** Mainly in tropical vegetation at low elevation, but it ascends to subtropical vegetation, gallery forests and vegetation of medium semideciduous forest in areas near hills although they also frequent semi-open areas and closed tropical forests. The species is also observed in plantations, edge of clearings and cultivated areas or of pastures with large trees.

**Threats.** Deforestation. Illegal trafficking has decimated populations and has practically disappeared from Oaxaca.



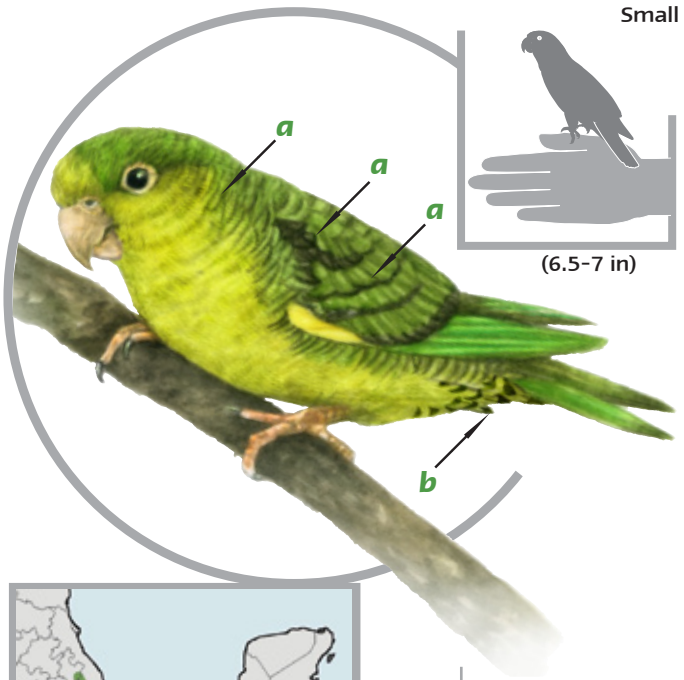
## ***Bolborhynchus lineola***

Barred parakeet

NOM 059: **Threatened**

CITES: Appendix II

Not endemic



**a.** Black bars in neck, back and wings.

**b.** Black spots on tail coverts.

**Distribution in Mexico.** Central and western Veracruz, northern Oaxaca and inland Chiapas.

**Habitat.** Tropical or subtropical mountain forest, especially between 4900-7500 ft above sea level, are often found at minimum elevations of 1950 ft. Cloud forests, rainy tropical forests and also pine forest.

**Threats.** Deforestation, the cloud forest is one of the ecosystems most threatened in Mexico by deforestation. Illegal traffic.

**DON'T BUY  
MEXICAN PARROTS**

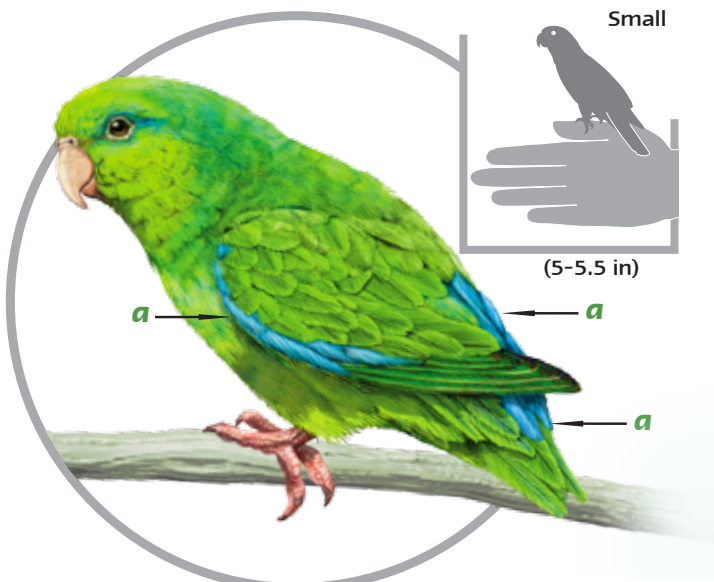
## ***Forpus cyanopygius***

Blue-rumped parrotlet

NOM 059: **Special protection**

CITES: Appendix II

Endemic



**a.** Blue wing and rump.

**Distribution in Mexico.** ENDEMIC, Pacific slope from southern Sonora, Durango and Zacatecas south to Colima, inland to Guadalajara, Jalisco.

**Habitat.** Found in gallery and deciduous forests, plantations, thickets, semi-arid open fields and areas planted with trees, mainly in lowlands and hills.

**Threats.** Deforestation and illegal trafficking.

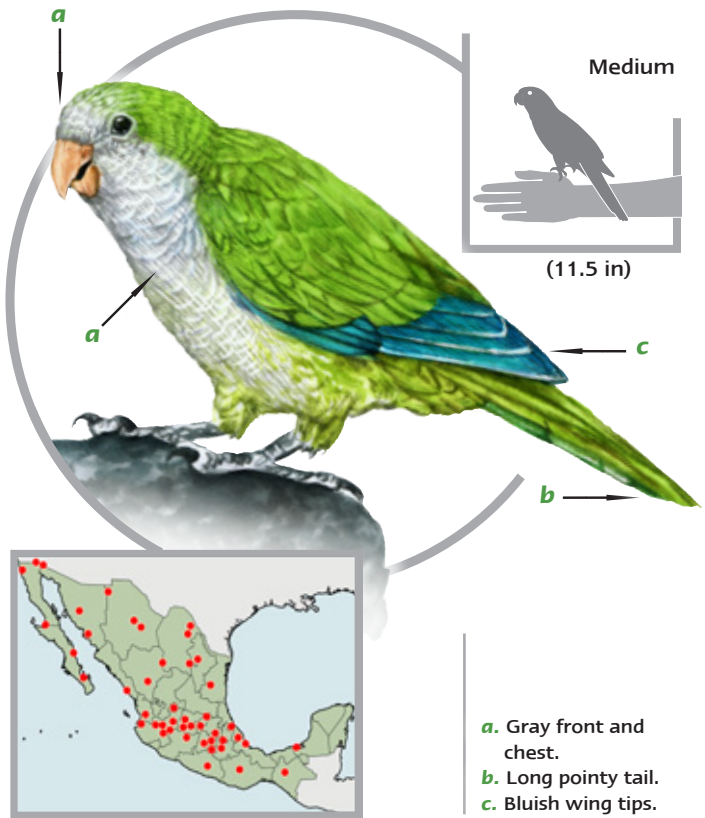
**DENOUNCE ITS ILLEGAL SALE  
TO PROFEPA**

## *Myiopsitta monachus*

Monk parakeet

## INVASIVE SPECIES

CITES: Appendix II



**Distribution in Mexico.** INVASIVE EXOTIC SPECIES. Its original distribution is South America, it has been massively imported and it has established populations throughout the country due to voluntary releases or escapes. Its importation was prohibited since 2010 but imports were not stopped until 2015.

**Habitat.** Predominantly urban areas but tends to expand to green areas bordering cities and towns where it has been liberated.

**Threats.** Currently it has no threats and its populations are increasing. The species is considered a pest for crops in South America since it tends to form large flocks. It is also a threat to native birds (parakeets and other species) as they can be displaced from feeding areas. In addition, it is considered a threat to energy and urban infrastructure due to the construction of massive nests.



## LEGISLATION THAT PROTECTS MEXICAN PARROTS

On October 14, 2008, the General Law of Wildlife was reformed and the use of psittacines was prohibited:

**Article 60 Bis 2.-** No bird specimen corresponding to the Psittacidae or psittacine family, whose natural distribution is within the national territory, may be subject to extractive exploitation for subsistence or commercial purposes.

The Secretariat may only grant authorizations for extractive exploitation for conservation or scientific research purposes. Only authorizations for scientific research will be granted to accredited academic institutions.

The importation, exportation and re-exportation of any bird specimen corresponding to the Psittacidae or psittacid family, whose natural distribution is within the national territory, is prohibited. Species of psittacines not included in this article are subject to the provisions set forth in other laws and International Treaties of which Mexico is a party.



The **Federal Criminal Code** establishes sanctions for those who carry out activities that violate the provisions of the Law:

**Article 420.-** A penalty of one to nine years of imprisonment and a fine for the equivalent of three hundred to three thousand days shall be imposed, to whom unlawfully:

- IV. Carry out any activity for the purpose of trafficking, or capture, possess, transport, collect, introduce into the country or extract from it, any specimen, its products or by-products and other genetic resources, of a species of wild, terrestrial or aquatic flora or fauna that is banned, considered endemic, threatened, in danger of extinction, subject to especial protection, or regulated by an international treaty to which Mexico is a party, or
- V. **Damage any specimen of the wild**, terrestrial or aquatic flora or fauna mentioned in the previous section.

An additional penalty of up to three more years of imprisonment and up to a thousand days additional fine will be applied when the conducts described in this article are carried out in or affect a protected natural area, or when they are carried out for commercial purposes.

In addition, the Federal Law against Organized Crime was reformed on April 7, 2017 to include the trafficking of species as organized crime:

**Article 2.-** When three or more people organize in fact to perform, permanently or repeatedly, conducts that by themselves or linked to others, have as purpose or result to commit any or some of the following crimes, will be sanctioned by that single fact, as members of organized crime:

- X. Against the Environment foreseen in section IV of article 420 of the Federal Criminal Code.



The modification of the Official Mexican Standard **NOM-059** will leave the 22 species of Mexican psittacids with the following classification:

**ENDANGERED**

11 species

*Ara Macao*  
*Ara militaris*  
*Rhynchopsitta pachyrhyncha*  
*Rhynchopsitta terrisi*  
*Amazona oratrix*  
*Amazona auropalliata*  
*Amazona viridigenalis*  
*Amazona finschi*  
*Amazona guatemalae*  
*Pyrillia haematotis*  
*Psittacara brevipes*

**THREATENED**

8 species

*Amazona xantholora*  
*Amazona autumnalis*  
*Pionus senilis*  
*Psittacara holochlorus*  
*Psittacara strenuus*  
*Brotogeris jugularis*  
*Forpus cyanopygius*  
*Bolborhynchus lineola*

**ESPECIAL PROTECTION**

3 species

*Amazona albifrons*  
*Eupsittula nana*  
*Eupsittula canicularis*

**BUYING AND SELLING  
MEXICAN PARROTS  
IS FORBIDDEN**

In the listings of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES), the Mexican psittacines are listed as follows:

### Appendix I

( international  
trade is  
banned )

8 especies

*Ara Macao*  
*Ara militaris*  
*Rhynchopsitta*  
*pachyrhyncha*  
*Rhynchopsitta terrisi*  
*Amazona oratrix*  
*Amazona auropalliata*  
*Amazona viridigenalis*  
*Amazona finschi*

### Appendix II

( international  
trade is allowed  
with some  
restrictions )

14 especies

*Amazona albifrons*  
*Amazona xantholora*  
*Amazona autumnalis*  
*Amazona guatemalae*  
*Pyrillia haematotis*  
*Pionus senilis*  
*Psittacara brevipes*  
*Psittacara holochlorus*  
*Psittacara strenuus*  
*Brotogeris jugularis*  
*Forpus cyanopygius*  
*Bolborhynchus lineola*  
*Eupsittula nana*  
*Eupsittula canicularis*



it is in your hands  
**TO SAVE**  
mexican parrots and macaws  
**FROM EXTINCTION**



**ALL YOU HAVE**  
to do is  
**DON'T BUY THEM**

