

PROPOSALS FOR CONSERVATION OF ARATINGA AURICAPILLUS (AVES: PSITTACIDAE) IN THE STATE OF SÃO PAULO

Theme: Modeling tools & biodiversity conservation

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The biodiversity crisis is a global reality and at the same time, demands from the scientific community in particular, urgent proposals to combat it. The order Psittaciformes is considered one of the most endangered of the world, with 29% of its species with some risk of extinction (IUCN, World Parrot Trust). The biggest threats to this order relate to: (a) fragmentation of habitats; (b) effects of the introduction of exotic species; (c) catches and persecutions and (d) pets for sale. The Golden-capped Parakeet is a parrot about 30 cm long, endemic from Brazil. It occurs in specific locations in the states of Bahia, Minas Gerais, Espírito Santo, Rio de Janeiro, Goiás, São Paulo and Paraná. In the countryside of the state of São Paulo, specifically in the northern and northwestern regions, groups of fewer than ten individuals of *Aratinga auricapillus* are sporadically observed frequenting disturbed areas, seasonal forests and even urban areas. The estimated population for the species is 10,000 individuals, showing a decreasing trend in this number due mainly to the loss of habitat (Birdlife International). Currently it is considered as near-threatened by IUCN (2010 IUCN Red List). Here, some conservation measures for *Aratinga auricapillus* are proposed besides those ones established by Birdlife International. Psittacidae in general, have certain characteristics such as specific sites for nesting, narrow food niche and reuse of nests (eg., cavities, termite nests). Thus, in order to propose here the following conservation measures both biology and group ecology were considered: (a) identification of sites and nesting sites preferred by the species; (b) conservation of the identified breeding sites, considering the behavior of reuse of these sites in subsequent reproductions; (c) detailed study of the species diet, aimed at the spread of the most commonly consumed plant species; (d) identifying sleeping areas, key species and habitats most used by the species; (e) keep these three conditions with the cooperation of local people and finally (f) implantation of artificial nests in priority sites, with monitoring of eggs and nestlings. These measures, though seemingly simple, are effective in maintaining, preserving and populational increasing in Psittacidae.

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