



HYACINTH MACAW

PSITTACIFORMES
Family: Psittacidae
Genus: *Anodorhynchus*
Species: *hyacinthinus*



Range: found in parts of Brazil, eastern Bolivia, and northeastern Paraguay.

Habitat: prefer lightly forested areas such as palm swamps and flooded grasslands.

Niche: Arboreal, herbivorous, diurnal

Diet: palm nuts; kernels of hard nuts and seeds.

Life Span: Wild:

Zoo:

Sexual Dimorphism:

Location in SF Zoo: South American Tropical Rainforest and Aviary

APPEARANCE & PHYSICAL ADAPTATIONS:

The Hyacinth Macaw is the largest macaw in the world and the largest flying parrot species. The plumage is predominately a deep cobalt blue along with yellow skin around the beak and eye. Flight and tail feathers are dark gray on their undersurface. Like all Macaws the tail is very long; the tail section of the body alone can be about half his length.

The large, grey/black bill is curved downward and sharply pointed. These strong beaks are for eating the kernels of hard nuts and seeds and are even able to crack coconuts, the large brazil nut pods, and macadamia nuts. The birds also have dry, smooth tongues with a bone inside them that makes them an effective tool for tapping into fruits. The acuri nut is so hard, the parrots cannot feed on it until it has passed through the digestive system of cattle.

They have zygodactylous feet for climbing; they use their gripping toes to latch onto branches and to grab, hold, and examine items.

Weight: 2 – 4 lbs
Length: 37 - 40 in (1/2 is tail)
Wingspan: up to 5 feet
Tail Length:

STATUS & CONSERVATION:

Habitat loss and the illegal pet trade has taken a heavy toll on their population in the wild, so the species is classified as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red list and listed on Appendix I of CITES. In the U.S., these birds are worth \$7,000-\$10,000.

COMMUNICATION & OTHER BEHAVIOR:

Macaws are intelligent, social birds that often gather in flocks of 10 to 30 individuals. Their loud calls, squawks, and screams echo through the forest canopy. Macaws vocalize to communicate within the flock, mark territory, and identify one another. They form very strong bonds as a family unit.

Flocks sleep in the trees at night, and in the morning they may fly long distances to feed on fruit, nuts, insects, and snails. Some species also eat damp soil, which may help to neutralize chemicals in their fruity diet and ease their stomachs.

Macaws typically mate for life. They not only breed with, but also share food with their mates and enjoy mutual grooming. In breeding season, mothers incubate eggs while fathers hunt and bring food back to the nest.

Unlike most parrots that prefer tropical rain forest habitats, hyacinth macaws prefer lightly forested areas such as palm swamps and flooded grasslands.

COURTSHIP & YOUNG:

The males offer lots of calls and displaying of their feathers to gain the attention females. Once mating has occurred a nest is created in tree cavities or cliff faces depending on the habitat. The clutch size is one or two eggs, although usually only one fledgling survives as the second egg hatches several days after the first, and the smaller fledgling cannot compete with the firstborn for food.

The incubation period lasts about a month, and the male tends to his mate whilst she incubates the eggs. The altricial chicks leave the nest, or fledge, around 110 days of age, and remain dependent on their parents until six months of age. They are mature and begin breeding at seven years of age.

Incubation: 27 – 30 days	Sexual Maturity: 7 years
# of Eggs: 2 (sometimes 3)	Fledging: 110 days (usually only one fledges)

MISCELLANEOUS:

The bill's lack of the tooth-like ridges characteristic of other genera of macaws gave rise to the scientific name for the *Anodorhynchus* macaws (an=no, odo=tooth, rhynchus=nose).

The largest population of Hyacinth Macaw are in the seasonally flooded grassland of Brazil's and Bolivia's Pantanal.

SOURCES:

The Handbook of the Birds of the World Vol IV © 1996, Lynx Edicions

Parrots: A Guide to Parrots of the World, by Mike Parr, Tony Juniper © 1998, Christopher Helm, London

<http://www.aqua.org/explore/animals/hyacinth-macaw>

<http://hyacinthmacaw.org/hyacinthmacaw.htm>

<http://www.bioexpedition.com/hyacinth-macaw/>