

HYACINTH MACAW

Anodorhynchus hyacinthinus

- **Range:** Central and southwestern Brazil, northeastern Paraguay, and eastern Bolivia, mainly concentrated south of the Amazon River.
- **Habitat:** It prefers semi-open habitats, typically forests with a dry season that prevents the growth of dense, tall, closed-canopy tropical forest. Hyacinth macaws inhabit a variety of environments, including deciduous woodlands, cerrado, palm groves, and the palm-savannas of the Pantanal. Their distribution is closely linked to the presence of a limited number of plant species on which they feed.
- **Nutrition:** They are herbivores (specifically granivores and frugivores), feeding mainly on the fruits of eight species of palm trees found in their range. Occasionally, they also consume fruits from other plants, seeds, palm sprouts, and even snails.
- **Reproduction:** 1 – 3 eggs. Incubation 27 – 30 days.
- **Social structure:** Highly social birds, hyacinth macaws live in pairs or small flocks.
- **Weight:** 1.2 – 1.7 kg.
- **Dimensions:** Length 95 – 100 cm. Wingspan 117 – 127 cm.
- **Estimated population in the wild:** 4,300 – 6,500 individuals.
- **Lifespan:** Around 50 years.
- **Threats:** Listed in Appendix I of CITES. Hyacinth macaws face ongoing population decline due to illegal capture and habitat destruction. Long-term conservation efforts have been underway since the 1990s. Today, some landowners in the Pantanal actively protect the species by refusing access to trappers.

- **IUCN Status:** VU (vulnerable).

Why did the EAZA Parrot Taxon Advisory Group nominate this species?

- Recent publication confirms the importance of the Pantanal (one of the world's largest wetlands) for the survival of the hyacinth macaw. During the rainy season 80% of their distribution area in the Pantanal is flooded and a paradise for wetland species.

Did you know?

- The hyacinth macaw is the largest parrot species in the world, measuring up to 100 cm in length – though about half of that length is due to its long tail.
- These birds are often affectionately referred to as "gentle giants" due to their large size and calm, affectionate nature.
- Hyacinth macaws have powerful beaks, which they use to crack open extremely hard nuts. To do this, they first file down part of the shell with their beak, then snap the nut cleanly in half.
- Interestingly, they have also been observed eating palm nuts that have passed through the digestive systems of cattle, likely because the process softens the hard outer shell.