

Media Release
Cayman Wildlife Rescue
For Immediate Release



Parrot Deterrent Device a Success
August 18, 2009

Cayman Wildlife Rescue, a Programme of the National Trust, has been testing a Cayman Parrot deterrent device with great success. A Florida based company, called Bird Busters, has created a custom device which is programmed specifically to ward off Cayman Parrots from crops. The device called a Bird Squawker plays back distress calls from Cayman Parrots, alarm calls from Cayman Parrots, cries of predatory hawks, gun shots noises and digital sound effects in a random pattern to confuse and scare offending birds. The custom device has now been tested in local farmland, worked by Franklyn Smith with great success. Mr. Smith's worker Eval Davis reports "When the device is running we have no new damage to the crop. If the device is off the parrots return to the area within a day."

Mr. Smith is looking forward to getting the Bird Squawker for next year's mango crop. In the past he admits to at least 50% crop destruction due to the Cayman Parrot.

Alison Corbett, Project Manager of Cayman Wildlife Rescue has teamed up with local farmers to help. "In visiting local farmers here I have seen the true devastation the parrot has on the crop. These farmers work hard, battling many issues and I hated that Cayman's National Bird was considered by most to be a pest. I knew there were solutions out there, we just needed to try some alternatives."

While there is no concrete evidence that Cayman Parrots are still being shot by local farmers as a mean of control Corbett added "One local farmer attested to shooting 80 Cayman Parrots in one day alone, before deciding to put down his rifle for good. I have had other reports that there are still hundreds shot each year. We can either deny this issue or choose to provide the farmers with effective and sustainable options."

Otto Watler, long time advocate for the Cayman Parrot, has also been working closely on the project commented "It will be a sad day when the beautiful Cayman Islands' Parrot cease to grace our skies. I think everyone that lives on these beautiful islands should do their part to stop this awful tragedy from becoming a reality and it will surely happen soon that later if some method of protecting the Parrot is not put in place by the powers that be."

The Cayman Parrot faces many threats: environmental threats such as loss of habitat and human threats such as illegal shooting, trapping and nest robbing. The Grand Cayman Parrot and Cayman Brac Parrot are two distinct endemic sub-species of the Cuban Parrot. Both of Cayman's Parrots are considered endangered and are CITES protected. The Cayman Brac species especially, due to its limited range, is at great risk for extinction.

The device retails for \$1,300 USD plus shipping for the Bird Squawker with 2 loud speakers. To order: contact Jack Wagner at Bird Busters (703) 299-8855 or by email jackwagner@birdbusters.com. Bird Busters will work with local farmers to devise a plan for the placement of the device and speakers. The device operates from a standard 12 volt battery and has a light sensor which turns the device off automatically at night.

About Cayman Wildlife Rescue - Cayman Wildlife Rescue is a programme of the National Trust for the Cayman Islands tasked with the rescue of sick, injured and orphaned wildlife for release back into the wild. It is financed by donations from the public and staffed entirely by volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering please contact Alison Corbett at caymanwildliferescue@gmail.com. For more information you can also visit www.caymanwildliferescue.org.

What to do if you find injured wildlife – Call the LIME Sponsored Emergency Hotline 917-BIRD(2473) for all wildlife emergencies. Cayman Wildlife Rescue has a team of experienced and trained volunteers ready to assist in wildlife emergencies. The public are reminded to NEVER attempt to care for a wildlife animal themselves as they required special diets and veterinary care.

Contact: Alison Corbett, Project Manager caymanwildliferescue@gmail.com
Photo Attachments: Bird Squawker, Otto Watler & Alison Corbett with Cayman Parrot