



 VERSELE-LAGA

LORO PARQUE NEWS

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31 May 2002 was a memorable day for Versele-Laga. On that day, Mr W. Kiessling, General Administrator of the Loro Parque Fundación, and Mr L.M. Verbeke, Managing Director of Versele-Laga signed an agreement for a long-term collaboration. As one would expect of a modern company, Versele-Laga made this a new step towards its aim for ethical business undertakings: to seek a balance between economic, social and environmental aspects.



In recent years, Versele-Laga has clearly felt that customers were beginning to worry more and more about the situation of their beloved birds in nature. The pressure from the growing world population on their environment is constantly increasing. Hundreds of animal species, including a number of bird

species, are on the verge of extinction. Of the 353 species of parrots and parakeets, 93 are seriously threatened in their existence through the destruction of their habitat, through poaching or by the introduction of other (non-native) animal species. Only through the ide-

alism and efforts of scientists and nature lovers can some species still be preserved. Financial means are often the key as to whether or not a project succeeds.

This is why Versele-Laga has accepted a commitment to also make its contribution to nature protection. It was finally decided to provide this support via the Loro Parque Fundación. Their perception on preserving nature, whereby protection projects in nature are combined with controlled breeding to enable re-introduction and to discourage the trade in captured birds, lies very close to our heart. Their organisation, in which 100% of the money collected goes to the projects and does not flow away beforehand for high expenses, appealed to us very strongly indeed.

Through this agreement to work together, this mission of the Loro Parque Fundación, is also that of Versele-Laga: *To protect parrots and habitat through upbringing and education, by applied research, by responsible breeding programs and by protection activities in collaboration with the indigenous population*

What is the Loro Parque Fundación?

The Loro Parque Fundación is a Foundation that was set up in 1994 as a non-profit organisation and is closely connected with Loro Parque. Located in Puerto de la Cruz (Tenerife), Loro Parque is a beautiful parrot and animal park that is visited every year by thousands of tourists.

Since its creation in 1994 the Loro Parque Fundación has already taken part in 31 different protection projects spread across the globe and had financially supported them (up to today with more than 2,000,000\$). A threatened parrot or parakeet species is used as flagship for every project for protecting the world's most threatened Eco-systems. Naturally the efforts that are made to protect the habitat of the parrots also benefit all other animals that live there and all plants that grow there.

At the moment, the Loro Parque Fundación is involved in 11 projects. The project with the Spix's-Macaw, extinct in the wild and only 60 birds still in captivity, is the most obvious example. Yet other less remarkable, more unfamiliar species also are taken into consideration. Even

research projects on bird species that are generally found in aviaries, but which are very threatened in their natural biotopes, have ready been helped along (e.g. *Agapornis nigrigenis* in Zambia). Sometimes the choice falls on a very threatened Eco-system in which there are no parrots, as in the Phu Khieo Wildlife Sanctuary in Thailand.

In addition, the Loro Parque Fundación is owner of the world's largest and most diversified collection of parrots and parakeets. Over 3,400 birds of 330 different species are housed in the 1,000 aviaries of the 17.000m² large 'La Vera' breeding station. Here as a last means against extinction, a reserve population is maintained of different species, whose continued existence in the wild is extremely threatened. Besides that, the excess of young birds bred (1,150 in 2001) makes a two-part contribution to protection: it limits the demand for trapping birds in the wild and the money from their sale is used 100% for the field projects.



The collaboration between Versele-Laga and the Loro Parque Fundación

Through this agreement, Versele-Laga naturally becomes the exclusive supplier of bird feed in the well known Loro Parque. But the collaboration goes a lot further.

Backing of nature protection projects via the Loro Parque Fundación

In order to support the operations of the Loro Parque Fundación, Versele-Laga makes financial means available. The Advisory Board of the Loro Parque Fundación can freely dispose of these means and determine for which projects the money will be used. For the Loro Parque Fundación, the agreement is the guarantee for a part of their income for the coming years. For Versele-Laga, this collaboration is a guarantee that the means are used there where they are needed, without the sponsor being suspected of favouritism.

Heightening peoples' awareness

To announce our collaboration, a logo has been designed that will be placed on Prestige, Prestige Premium and Orlux packaging. In this way, millions of packagings in more than 60 countries will broadcast the message of the Loro Parque Fundación. Through this announcement, Versele-Laga wants to make bird lovers more aware of the problematic situation in which some bird species now find themselves.

By buying this product you are supporting
LORO PARQUE FUNDACIÓN
to help nature



Joint scientific research in the La Vera breeding centre

At regular intervals, there will be consultation between the scientific staff at Loro Parque and the veterinarians and nutritionists at Versele-Laga. The focus will be on improvement in the bird feed of birds in the breeding centre and research programs concerning feed. Research subjects, that are now on the agenda in Loro Parque, will be gone into in even more detail: preference and quantity of feed, nutritional needs, hand feeding and growth rate, feather problems, fertilisation problems, behavioural disorders,.. New or improved products will always be tried out on a large scale in the breeding centre, for insofar they do not cause any detrimental effects on the animals. For the follow-up of these tests, Versele-Laga will employ students and a veterinarian on a long-term basis in the breeding centre. Naturally Versele-Laga will have priority for receiving all knowledge gathered, so that the product range can be brought to the highest possible standard. We are consequently proud that in the coming years, we can exchange our scientific knowledge with that of the Loro Parque staff.

In this way, Loro Parque gets the guarantee that their collection can have the very best feed there is. The shared knowledge will enable Versele-Laga to reinforce



even further its position as European market leader. In the meantime, we can already report that the first student on work placement (a last year student of veterinary medicine) has left for a 2 month stay at Loro Parque. For her thesis on 'Feeding in zoos', she will carry out a number of tests and follow-up on lory feed, germed seeds and species-specific blends for parrots.

In future, we shall keep you informed via Hobby Info about the progress made via this collaboration agreement. There, you will also get first hand knowledge about the innovations in the area of bird feed as well about the results of the different nature protection programs.