

## Scarlet Macaw

(*Ara macao*)



The Scarlet Macaw is arguably the most magnificent bird of the parrot family. With their wide strong wings, macaws can reach speeds of 35 miles per hour. They often fly in pairs or small groups and often call to each other in raucous hoarse voices.

Macaws appear to prefer higher elevations and riparian (riverine) forests. They are known to have very large territories. They prefer to nest in holes high up in trees and lay one or two eggs. They feed on specific fruits such as polewood, roaming large areas searching for clumps of their favorite foods.

As recent as 1989, the reported Belizean population of Scarlet Macaws was a total of 24 birds. But in 1996, a new population of over 100 birds was "discovered" south of the Cockscomb Basin Wildlife Sanctuary. Unfortunately, over most of its range, the Scarlet macaw is endangered, a victim of human greed - many have been taken as a commodity in the pet trade.

### Key Facts

#### Size

35 inches

#### Range:

E. Mexico to Brazil

#### Habitat:

Tall deciduous trees of forests and rivers.

#### Food:

Tropical forest fruits