



DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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VALUABLE BIRD SHIPMENT FORFEITED TO THE
U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

More than 100 cockatoos and parrots valued at over a half-million dollars have been forfeited to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service after being illegally imported into the United States. The forfeiture is "one of the most valuable ever involving parrots," according to G. Ray Arnett, Interior Department Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks.

The birds, 104 palm cockatoos and 28 grand eclectus parrots from Indonesia, were valued at \$700,000 by the importer, Anna Marie's, Inc., a wholesale wildlife business in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. A U.S. District Court order issued February 7 in Miami forfeited the birds for having been imported in violation of the Lacey Act, a Federal law that prohibits importation of wildlife illegally exported from another country. The export of both palm cockatoos and eclectus parrots for commercial purposes is prohibited by the countries where they live in the wild -- Indonesia, Australia, and Papua New Guinea.

"This case is an example of the impact of the Lacey Act internationally in helping other countries enforce their wildlife conservation laws," Assistant Secretary Arnett said. "We hope this case will result in enhanced compliance with both U.S. and foreign laws, for the benefit of many species of wildlife."

Anna Marie's imported 100 of the palm cockatoos and the 28 parrots at Miami on September 28, 1983 -- the largest importation of palm cockatoos ever known to have been made into the United States. The firm had previously imported four other cockatoos at Los Angeles. After the birds concluded a 30-day quarantine period required by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Fish and Wildlife Service special agents took custody of them. No decision has yet been made concerning final disposition of the birds, which are being cared for in various zoos.

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Entirely black except for red cheek patches, palms are the largest cockatoos, measuring up to 29 inches in length. They are slow-breeding species that seldom reproduce in captivity. Because of export restrictions from their countries of origin, there are very few palm cockatoos in the United States.

Grand eclectus parrots are smaller and less rare than palm cockatoos and have bred successfully in captivity. Males are green and females are predominantly red.

All psittacine birds, such as cockatoos and parrots, are listed on Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), except for rare species, which are listed on Appendix I. CITES export documents are required for commercial trade in Appendix II species; commercial trade in Appendix I species is prohibited.

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Editors: A limited number of black and white and color prints of the palm cockatoos are available by calling the Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Audio-Visual, (202) 343-8770.