

BLUE-AND-GOLD MACAW

Ara ararauna · also called blue-and-yellow macaw

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Fast facts

ANIMAL GROUP	Bird (parrot)
NATIVE REGION	Tropical South America
HABITAT	Forest, palm swamp and savanna edge
DIET	Fruits, nuts, seeds and other plant material
LENGTH	About 33.5 inches
WEIGHT	About 2.3 to 2.8 lb
LIFESPAN	Can live for many decades
STATUS	Least Concern
OUR MACAWS	Danny and Maggie



Photo: Plumpton Park Zoo

Did you know?

- The lines of tiny feathers on a macaw's white face form a pattern that is different on every bird.
- A macaw's bare face skin can turn pinker when it is excited.
- Macaws have two toes pointing forward and two pointing backward.
- Macaws and other parrots gather at exposed riverbanks called clay licks. The clay may provide minerals.
- Macaws use their strong beaks to crack hard nuts and to help them climb.

Words to know

Zygodactyl: Having two toes forward and two toes back.

Canopy: The top layer of a forest, made of treetops.

Cavity: A hole in a tree where birds can nest.

Flock: A group of birds that live and travel together.

Think about it

1. Why are macaws so loud?
2. How do macaws use their feet when they eat?
3. Why are big, old trees so important to macaws?
4. What is a clay lick, and why might macaws visit one?
5. Why do macaw populations recover slowly when birds or nesting trees are lost?

Draw it

Draw a blue-and-gold macaw. Label its blue back, golden chest, green forehead, white face, hooked beak and its feet with two toes forward and two back.

Draw here