



# Spix's Macaw: The Race to Save the World's Rarest Bird

*Tony Juniper*

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Tony Juniper's heart-stopping inside account of the race to save a rare blue parrot, the last of its species, is a priceless addition to nature literature -- and a timely portrait of Earth's endangered wildlife.

In 1897, the Reverend F. G. Dutton lamented that "there are so many calls on a parson's purse, that he cannot always treat himself to expensive parrots." He was hoping to purchase a Spix's Macaw, a rare parrot found in a remote area of Brazil. Today, Dutton's search would be in vain.

By the turn of the century only one survivor, a lone male, existed in the wild. Spix's Macaw tells the fascinating story of a unique band of brilliant blue birds -- who talk, fall in love, and grieve -- struggling against extinction. By the second half of the twentieth century the birds had become more valuable than heroin, worth thousands of dollars on the black market. In 1990, only one was found to be living in the wild and an emergency international rescue operation was launched, calling on private collectors to come forward with their birds to mate with the last wild Spix's.

In a breathtaking display of stoicism and endurance, the loneliest bird in the world had lived without a mate for fourteen years, outwitting predators and poachers. Would he take to a new companion? Like humans, Spix's Macaws can't be forced to love, but the stakes were as high as they could be: the survival of one of the world's most beautiful birds.

Combining a thrilling detective story and a rich natural history book, *Spix's Macaw* tells the dramatic story of the rescue operation, and of the humans whose selfishness and greed brought a beautiful species to the brink of extinction. Tony Juniper, a leading British environmentalist, has written both a love story and an environmental parable for our times.

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