

Parakeet Trade in Shwesettaw Wildlife Area, Minbu Township, Magway Region, During Pagoda Festival

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Abstract:- This study was conducted in Shwesettaw wildlife area in Minbu, Magway Region. The study period lasted from December 2018 to April 2019. During the Shwesettaw pagoda festival period of, a total of 10042 individuals from five species were recorded for trade. The most frequently sold species were *P.alexandri* with 3536 individuals, *P.krameri* with 2484, *P.roseata* with 1744, *P.eupatria* 1171 and *P.finschii* with 1107 from the total number of traded birds, 3128 (31.24%) were adult, 2380 (23.70%) were young and 4534(45.14%) were nestlings. The estimate average price of one *P.eupatria* 20\$,,*P.krameri* was 10\$, *P.alexandri* was 12000ks, *P.finschii* and *P.roseata* was (8\$) respectively.

Keywords:- Parakeet, Trade, *Psittacula*, Wild bird.

I. INTRODUCTION

Myanmar supports the greatest richness of bird species in mainland South-East Asia (over 1000: Smythies 1986) and among the largest remaining forest and wetland habitats, across a topography ranging from sea-level to nearly 6,000 m[1].

Shwesettaw Wildlife Sanctuary, a 546 km² wildlife and forestry reserve (20°04'N; 94°36'E) lies in the southwestern part of the Myanmar central dry zone and to the east of the Rakhine Yoma range and consists of low rolling hills, often gouged by steep banked streams. A dry tropical deciduous forest covers much of the Sanctuary, an open canopy and a grass ground cover is widespread. forms The northern border of the Sanctuary has the Mone River and the southern border has the Man River, both streams flow eastward and empty into the Ayeyarwady River. The Sanctuary is cut by numerous jungle tracks and roads, including a major north-south highway (gravel). These roads, a major Buddhist pagoda complex, and numerous villages adjacent to the Sanctuary boundaries make poaching of plant and animal materials difficult to control, thus all components of the biota experience human predation[2]. *Psittacids* are found throughout along habitat types of the wildlife area.

People traded parrot since thousands of years in order to own something beautiful, consequently a piece of nature have becoming lost and out of control [3]. Parrots was traded at international, national and the extended local market, prize for many million dollars. Among 300 species of parrot, nearly a third is highly endangered in the world [4]. Parrots attract people as pets since they serve as

companions, entertainers, beauty, intelligence and vocal ability[5]. Presently, wild parrots are kept as pets in most countries even their ownership is illegal[4]. Consequently, many wild parrots were threatened with extinction [6]. Indeed, parrots are the largest population of endangered species among all birds of the world [7]. There are 330 parrot species in the world, about 36% are threatened to some degree of extinction [8].

Illegal wildlife trade in Myanmar is considered to be widespread, causing, with illegal hunting, a general decrease of wildlife population [3].

Thus, present research is carried out to record the parakeet trade in Shwesettaw area.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study was conducted in Shwesettaw Wildlife Area. The study area lies on the northern edge of the central plains of Myanmar (Latitude 20° 3' - 20° 19' N, Longitude 94° 22' - 94° 42' E) and covering an area of 552.70 square kilometer.

Data were collected during the festival period of Shwesettaw pagoda from March to April for parakeet trade. Market and interview surveys were carried out. Market surveys for direct observation on the birds being sold were made during Shwesettaw pagoda festival and counted the number of adult, young and nestling.

Interview surveys were made by providing sets of questionnaires to trade men at the pagoda markets and to local people from some villages for value of parakeets.

III. RESULTS

During the festival period of Shwesettaw , from December 2018 to April 2019, a total of five parakeet species belonging to family *Psittacidae* of order *Psittaciformes* was observed. They were *Psittacula alexandri*, *Psittacula eupatria*, *Psittacula finschii*, *Psittacula krameri*, *Psittacula roseate*, a total of 10042 individuals from five species were recorded for trade.

The most frequently sold species were *P.alexandri* with 3536 individuals, *P.krameri* with 2484, *P.roseata* with 1744, *P.eupatria* with 1171 and *P. finschii* with 1107. From the total number of birds, Adult, young and nestling of all species were observed in the shops, 3128 (31.14%) were

adult, 2380 (23.70%) in young and 4534(45.15%) in nestlings (Table 1).

During Shwesettaw pagoda festival, prices for each species was recorded . Prices was highest in the sold for *P.eupatria* correlated positively with attractiveness and body size (estimate average price of 20\$), it was on average two to three times higher than prices of other parrots. Therefore *P.eupatria* species was more attractive and valuable than the other parrots and most scarce. Prices for *P.krameri* was second largest (estimate average price of 10\$) due to beauty and *P.alexandri* were (8\$) which correlated with the ability to talk as well as *P.finschii*, *P.roseata*.

Parakeets were harvested by local poachers near rural source of Shwesettaw areas and sold in pagoda festival and then transported to urban centers such as Magway, Mandalay, Naypyidaw and Yangoon. They were traded to neighboring countries such as Thai and China. So, local, national and international trade was found in the study area. The most frequent of trade is found in pagoda festival since the breeding seasons of the species in the study area, from December to April. Nestling were taken from the nest as well as many adults were captured by hunters.

Species		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Total	
<i>P.alexandri</i>	Adult	150	400	623	100	1273	3536
	Young	30	87	263	434	814	
	Nestling	600	549	300	-	1449	
<i>P.eupatria</i>	Adult	100	110	95	5	310	1171
	Young	20	45	145	43	253	
	Nestling	95	205	278	30	608	
<i>P.finschii</i>	Adult	85	110	95	5	295	1107
	Young	12	45	145	43	245	
	Nestling	90	190	257	30	567	
<i>P.krameri</i>	Adult	100	240	250	200	790	2484
	Young	25	56	203	305	589	
	Nestling	95	300	305	405	1105	
<i>P.roseata</i>	Adult	40	140	150	130	460	1744
	Young	15	56	203	205	479	
	Nestling	95	200	305	205	805	
Total		2019	3286	4368	3060	12733	

Table 1:- Number of parakeets traded in Shwesettaw pagoda festival from January 2018 to April 2019.



(A) Adults

(B) Youngs



(C) Nestlings

Fig 1

IV. DISCUSSION

This study was conducted in Shwesettaw Wildlife Area. Loss of biodiversity is the most pressing environmental problem because species extinction is irreversible. Thus, present study was conducted in Shwesettaw wildlife area.

During the Shwesttaw pagoda festival, total of five parakeets were observed as trade. The most frequently sold species were *P.alexandri* with 3536 individuals, *P.krameri* with 2484, *P.roseata* 1744, *P.eupatria* with 1171 and *P.finschii* with 1107.

According to IUCN Red list (2018) *Psittacula krameri* is listed least concern [9]. *P.alexandri*, *P. eupatria* , *P. finschii* and *P. roseata* are listed as Near Threatened and under CITES Appendix II. In recent decades, capture for live bird trade cause declines and local extinctions, bird trappers eagerly sought Parakeets for the cage-bird trade and is likely to be impacted by the removal of large trees [6].

During festival period, Prices for each parakeet species were recorded, highest prices for *P.eupatria* (estimate average price of 20\$), followed by *P.krameri* (estimate average price of 10\$), *P.alexandri*, *P.finschii*, *P.roseata* (estimate average price of 8\$).

Juniper and Parr reported that the population of *P. alexandri* is moderately rapid decline, it is captured for the live bird trade (Juniper and Parr 1998). Remaining populations are eagerly sought by bird trappers in Laos (Fuchs et al. 2007; Duckworth and Timmins 2013, 2015; Timmins 2014; J. W. Duckworth in litt. 2016). It is targeted for the cage-bird trade in Bangladesh (P. Thompson in litt. 2012). In Nepal, as well as it is trapping for the cage bird trade and found in bird markets (Thapa and Thakuri 2009) [cited in 9].

The population of *P. eupatria* is moderately rapid decline overall, it is widely captured and traded as a cage-bird. Nest-robbing and capture of adults are the main threats as a cage-bird in Cambodia, (F. Goes in litt. 2013) and is used in 'merit releases' in Cambodia, (Gilbert et al. 2012). Thailand, nestlings still appear in illegal trade in Bangkok bird markets (P. Round in litt. 2013). Illegal trade and the destruction of nest-sites threaten the species in Pakistan (S. Khan in litt. 2013). Similarly, there is extensive poaching by local tribes in Gujarat (V. Vyas in litt. 2013) [cited in 10]

The population of *P. finschii* is moderately rapid decline, it is widely captured for the cage-bird trade and is locally kept as a pet, as in Laos and China. In China, poaching and illegal trade still present and it is reported that in one village, every family has one individual of this species as a pet, and price of up to US\$80 for one individuals (M. Zhang in litt. 2013). Trapping pressure may also be contributing to the observed decline in Cambodia (F. Goes in litt. 2013) [cited in 11].

P.roseata, although the population of this species is reported to be common to abundant throughout its natural range (del Hoyo et al. 1997), the overall abundance appears to be much reduced across its range in recent decades (Collar and Kirwan 2017). In Thailand and Myanmar, it suffers habitat loss, the cage-bird trade and pest (Juniper and Parr 1998). In the records of International trade, 836 birds were exported between 1981 and 1985, but this increased to 6,873 birds in 1986-1990 from Vietnam and Thailand (del Hoyo et al. 1997) [cited in 12].

In recent years, several authors have emphasized the feasibility of sustainable harvest of wild parrot populations. Investigation on the current high levels of trade and wildlife protection legislation would help to parrot conservation and management [13].

CONCLUSION

This research aims to inform the activities of illegal capture and trade of the wild parakeets in Shwese-taw wildlife areas, central Myanmar. Parakeets are captured by local peoples during their breeding seasons and nestlings were purchased and traded through informal channels and is therefore out of control.

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