

**The National
Symbols
Flora and Fauna
of
The Cayman Islands**

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Cayman Islands National Symbols: Flora and Fauna



The National Trust for the Cayman Islands

and

The Cayman Islands Department of
Education

are very grateful to



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National Symbols: Flora and Fauna Study Guide 2006 to
all teachers in the Cayman Islands.

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Table of Contents

National Symbols: Flora and Fauna of the Cayman Islands

Introduction to the Materials

Introduction	
How to Use This Book – includes detailed curriculum links	
Earth Day Prayer	3
What is the National Trust?	4
How Were These Symbols Chosen?	5
Conserving Our National Symbols (For teachers and more able students)	6
Vocabulary List	8
Vocabulary Work Sheet	9
Saving Our National Symbols (Easy Reading)	10
Colour our National Symbols	14
National Symbols Work Sheet (Easy Reading)	15
Answer Key	16

Wild Banana Orchid

General Information:

Natural History and Cultural History (For teachers and older or more able students)	18
Vocabulary List	27
Vocabulary Work Sheet	28
Key Facts: Natural History and Cultural History	29
Wild Banana Orchid (Easy Reading)	30
Key Facts: (Easy Reading)	36
An Island in Time - Birthday Orchids (a children's story) (Easy Reading)	37

Suggested Activities

Class Activity Suggestions	42
Picture of Wild Banana Orchid to colour or use for teaching parts of the orchid	43
Picture of Wild Banana Orchid to colour (simple lines for younger students)	44
Resources	45

Bulletin Board Materials

How to Care for your Wild Banana Orchid	46
What You Can Do	47
What Kids Can Do (Easy Reading)	48

Quizzes

Multiple Choice Quiz	49
True-False Quiz	50
Word Box Quiz A (Easy Reading)	51
Word Box Quiz B (Easy Reading)	52
Answer Key	53

Cayman Islands Parrot

General Information

Natural History (For teachers and older or more able students)	54
Vocabulary List	61
Vocabulary Work Sheet	62
Key Facts: Natural History	64
Pet Care (For teachers and older or more able students)	65
Key Facts: Pet Care	73
Natural History (Easy Reading)	74
Key Facts: Natural History (Easy Reading)	77
Pet Care (Easy Reading)	78
Key Facts: Pet Care (Easy Reading)	82
Is Today the Day? (Children’s story, Easy Reading)	83
<i>Suggested Activities</i>	
Class Activity Suggestions	86
Song: “We are the Children”	87
Make Your Own Parrot Ball Puppets	88
Parrot Sand Sculptures	91
Picture of a Cayman Islands Parrot to colour	93
Picture of a Cayman Islands Parrot to colour (with colour key)	94
Parrot colouring book (7 pages)	95
Resources	102
<i>Bulletin Board Materials</i>	
Pet Parrots - How Healthy is Your Parrot?	103
Pet Parrots - What to Feed Pet Parrots	104
Pet Parrots - Parrots Need More than Food	105
Did You Know?	106
What You Can Do	107
What Kids Can Do (Easy Reading)	108
A Tribute to Mr. Otto Watler	109
Poems and songs (Easy Reading)	110
<i>Quizzes</i>	
Natural History Multiple-choice Quiz	121
Natural History True-False Quiz	122
Pet Care Multiple-choice Quiz	123
Pet Care True-False Quiz	124
Natural History Word Box Quiz (Easy Reading)	125
Pet Care Word Box Quiz (Easy Reading)	126
Answer Key	127

Silver Thatch Palm

General Information

Cayman Islands National Symbols: Flora and Fauna

Natural and Cultural History (For teachers and older or more able students)	129
Vocabulary List	143
Vocabulary Work Sheet	144
Key Facts	145
Natural History (Easy Reading)	146
Rope making with the Silver Thatch Palm (Easy Reading)	148
Thatch Roofing (Easy Reading)	152
Other Uses of Thatch (Easy Reading)	154
Key Facts: (Easy Reading)	156
Little Neatha And The New Blue Shoes (A children’s story) (Easy Reading)	157
<i>Suggested Activities</i>	
Class Activity Suggestions	162
Planting a Silver Thatch Palm	163
Picture of a Silver Thatch Palm showing the parts of the tree	164
Picture of a Silver Thatch Palm to colour (simple drawing for younger students)	165
Resources	166
Resources: Thatch Weavers	167
<i>Bulletin Board Materials</i>	
What You Can Do	168
What Kids Can Do (Easy Reading)	169
Poems	170
<i>Quizzes</i>	
Multiple Choice Quiz	174
True-False Quiz	175
Natural History Word Box Quiz (Easy Reading)	176
Rope-making Word Box Quiz (Easy Reading)	177
Thatch Roofing and Other Uses of Thatch Word Box Quiz (Easy Reading)	178
Answer Key	179
 <i>Endpiece</i>	
National Trust Information & Membership form	
List of National Trust educational publications	
Books Available for Purchase from the National Trust	

Introduction

We have all heard the saying, "*It takes a village to raise a child.*" In modern times more than ever this is true. Busy parents who are juggling jobs, community responsibilities and duties in the home are relying more and more on the schools to provide students with values, work ethics, appreciation of the arts, an understanding of nature and a positive attitude about their role in society.

To assist in this monumental task, the National Trust for the Cayman Islands is providing a series of materials for use in the schools. These will contain information and ideas for teaching subjects of environmental and historical importance.

The Trust would like these materials to be as user-friendly as possible. If you have any comments or suggestions, or would like to help with future publications, please contact the National Trust for the Cayman Islands by calling 949-0121.

Detailed curriculum links to the Science and the Social Studies Programmes of Study as well as to the Syllabus Guide for Cayman Islands government primary schools are included in the front of the Study Guide for the convenience of the teachers.

While the National Trust holds the commercial copyright for these materials, permission is granted to photocopy for educational purposes.

How to Use This Book

All the materials in this book are designed to be photocopied.

For each National Symbol you will find *General Information* for teachers and older students, *Key Facts* pages which highlight the most important points and a *Vocabulary List* and *Vocabulary Work Sheet*.

The *General Information* pages can be photocopied and handed out to the class, read aloud, or the teacher may wish to summarize the material orally. **Bold** letters followed by an * in the text indicate that a word can be found in the *Vocabulary List*. The *Vocabulary Lists* are extensive and a bit difficult. Many words could be the subject of further investigation. It is suggested that they be taught through discussion and work sheets rather than memorized. Perhaps students could be asked to write short essays using five selected words at a time correctly. Several students could work together on an essay, discussing word use, so they learn from each other.

An *Easy Reading* version for younger or less able students follows each section. These are identified in the *Table of Contents*.

There are *Suggested Activities* for various levels of ability and a selection of materials for the *Bulletin Board*. Several levels of *Quizzes* are provided and *Answer Keys* are at the end of each section.

A National Trust membership form and a brochure designed by the Cayman Brac District Committee are included in the back of this book. They may be photocopied, folded, and distributed to students.

Teachers may select the materials that they feel best suit the interests and abilities of their particular classes. An *Optional Schedule* is included following the *Table of Contents*. Students can collect the materials distributed to them into folders and add their own creative writing and artwork. These booklets can be kept and shared with their families.

Complete curriculum links to Science and Social Studies programmes are included.

Day 1 PARROTS

Introduce Nat'l bird discuss parrots.
-what do students already know?
-description - look like
-habitat -where they live
-threats -predators
Year 1-3 colouring book
Year 4-6 - Begin making booklets and covers for National Symbols booklet of their own work.

Day 2 PARROTS

Yr. 1-2 Continue with colouring book pages
Talk about key facts
Year 3-4 - pass out Key facts
Discuss habitat (see Class Activity Suggestions.)
Year 5-6 Pass out information sheets
Discuss habitat.

Day 3 PARROTS

Art project
Make Puppet Balls
See Activity Sheets

Begin to learn the song

Write a "simile", "first letter", or a "telescope" poem about parrots.

Day 4 PARROTS

Years 1-3 Begin a mural or bulletin board about the care of pet parrots
Years 4-6 read and discuss pet parrot issues
Homework: Care of parrot activity so that parents can see!

Day 5 PARROTS

Years 1-3 Work on bulletin board or mural. Cut and paste coloured pictures.

Put all activities in a booklet entitled "Our National Symbols"

Quiz

Day 6 PALM

Introduce
What do students already know?
Read aloud the information to the class. Save time for discussion.
Colour the picture

Add to booklet.

Day 7 PALM

Use written text for a fill in the blanks oral activity.
Discuss vocabulary, use voc.work sheet.
Years 1-2 can learn the parts of the Silver Thatch Palm and list ideas that the thatch can be used for.

Day 8 PALM

Plan for thatch weaver to come and visit the class.
Try some weaving!
Teachers ask students to look for Silver Thatch Palms and Banana Orchids through the week.

Quiz

Day 9 ORCHID

Open a discussion about plants and how they grow - in the earth, on the trees...
What are Orchids like? What are epiphytes?
Years 1-2 colour Banana Orchid picture
Year 3-6 Read and discuss Birthday Orchids

Day 10 ORCHID

Add to bulletin board on National Symbols all info on the orchid
Ask for a member of the Orchid Society to come to the school.

Discuss Banana Orchid Key facts, do an oral fill in the blanks activity

Quiz

See Class Activity Suggestions Page in each section for details about these and other projects.

PARROTS

Science

Ecology theme
Invite speakers
fm.Bird Club or
Nat'l Trust.
Do voc.work sheet,
using voc. list to check
meanings.
Caring for parrots
Activities and quiz
Field trip(see Class
Activity Suggestions)

Social Studies

National Symbols
theme
Discuss symbols
and symbolism
Use activities provided
Write essays about
conservation

Use National Symbols
for oral reports
Discuss vocabulary
and do work sheets.
Use dictionary to
research deeper
meanings of
vocabulary words.

Make habitat diorama
Murals
Sand sculptures
Mobiles
Pottery designs of
Cayman National
Symbols

Learn song "We Are
the Children of the
Cayman Islands".

Write or think of tunes
for other parrot songs.

THATCH PALMS

Science

Ecology
Develop discussion
concerning land use
ideas to save the
Silver Thatch Palm
Plant seeds of Silver
Thatch Palm and
monitor their growth

Social Studies

Discussion of the
history of the Cayman
Islands and the uses
of the Silver Thatch
Palm.

What were the
economics of the
situation.

Language Arts

Read Silver Thatch
Palm poems.
Write "Simile" or
"telescope Poems"
about the Silver
Thatch Palm.

Art

Recreate some thatch
work. Invite a thatch
weaver to school
Try to make some
whompers

ORCHIDS

Science

Botany
parts of a plant
Ecology Preservation
of places where
orchids grow. Inter-
dependence of plants

Social Studies

Continue with reports
concerning all three
National Symbols
Field trips and guest
speakers. Discuss
early scientific
expeditions here.

Language Arts

Language Arts

Continue vocabulary
discussion. Do Wild
Banana Orchid work
sheet.
Discuss historical
expeditions and
history of the Wild
Banana Orchid
Art

Art

Colour or draw Wild
Banana Orchid.
Make a collage from
magazine clippings
using native plants
and orchids. (See
Class Activity
Suggestions)

Music

See Class Activity Suggestion Page in each section for
details about these and other projects.

**SOCIAL STUDIES –CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS WITH NATIONAL SYMBOLS: FLORA AND
FAUNA OF THE CAYMAN ISLANDS STUDY GUIDE (NSSG)**
(Sometimes referred to in Curriculum as National Trust Teacher’s Guide)

Year One Learning Outcomes

Stage 1 – Year 1

Theme 4 – My Country
National Symbols

Recognize and identify the National Tree, Flower and Bird

Develop Respect for National Symbols and songs

Use National Symbols: Flora and Fauna of The Cayman Islands

Pages 10 through 16 – explains the symbols and the reasons for them

Pages 31 through 38 - Wild Banana Orchid – information and easy work sheet – Short story to read aloud “Birthday Orchids”.

Page 44 Wild Banana Orchid Picture to colour

Page 48 Bulletin Board poster “**What Kids Can Do**” (to help save our National Flower)

Pages 52 and 53 Easy Word Box Quizzes

Pages 73 through 81 – Cayman Islands Parrots

Pages 82 through 98 – Pictures to colour, song to sing, ideas for classroom fun

Page 104 Bulletin Board poster “What Kids Can do” (to help save the National Bird)

Page 107 Poems and Songs – Easy Reading

Page 143 through 154 - Silver Thatch Palm, Natural History, Uses of Thatch - Rope making, Thatch Roofing, Other Uses of Thatch, and short story to read aloud “Little Neatha and the New Blue Shoes”

Page 162 – Picture of a Silver Thatch Palm to colour

Page 166 – What Kids Can Do (to enjoy and know our National Tree) *This one is NOT endangered!*

Pages 73 through 75 Easy reading Word Box activity

SOCIAL STUDIES –CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS WITH NATIONAL SYMBOLS: FLORA AND FAUNA OF THE CAYMAN ISLANDS STUDY GUIDE (NSSG)

(Sometimes referred to in Curriculum as National Trust Teacher’s Guide)

Year Two Learning Outcomes

Stage 1 – Year 2

Theme 2 Uses of Plants

Theme 4 – Symbols

National Symbols

Recognize and identify the National Tree, Flower and Bird

Develop Respect for National Symbols and songs

Use National Symbols: Flora and Fauna of The Cayman Islands

Pages 10 through 16 – explains the symbols and the reasons for them

Pages 31 through 38 - Wild Banana Orchid – information and easy work sheet – Short story to read aloud “**Birthday Orchids**”.

Page 44 Wild Banana Orchid Picture to colour

Page 48 Bulletin Board poster “**What Kids Can Do**” (to help save our National Flower)

Pages 52 and 53 Easy Word Box Quizzes

Pages 73 through 81 – Cayman Islands Parrots

Pages 82 through 98 – Pictures to colour, song to sing, ideas for classroom fun

Page 104 Bulletin Board poster “**What Kids Can Do**” (to help save the National Bird)

Page 107 Poems and Songs – Easy Reading

Page 143 through 154 - Silver Thatch Palm, Natural History, Uses of Thatch - Rope making, Thatch Roofing, Other Uses of Thatch, and short story to read aloud “**Little Neatha and the New Blue Shoes**”

Page 162 – Picture of a Silver Thatch Palm to colour

Page 166 – **What Kids Can Do** (to enjoy and know our National Tree) *This one is NOT endangered!*

Pages 73 through 75 Easy reading Word Box activity

**SOCIAL STUDIES –CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS WITH NATIONAL SYMBOLS: FLORA AND
FAUNA OF THE CAYMAN ISLANDS STUDY GUIDE (NSSG)**
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Year Three Learning Outcomes

Year 3: Theme 3

District of North Side

Look for Cayman Parrots in the Botanic Park and at Mr. Willie’s Farm. Teachers should read **NSSG pages 56, 57, 58, 59 and 60**. Parrots are viewed as crop pests by some North Side farmers. The children can understand that there are problems to be worked out if the Cayman Parrot is to survive in these islands, but should not be burdened with the difficult realities at this young age.

There are many more parrots in North Side than there are in George Town. Why? What can be done to help the parrots move back to the west side of the island and away from the farms? (Planting trees will help, and leaving older hollow trees in place.)

NSSG pages 61 and 62 are vocabulary words to stimulate discussion. Do the Work Sheet as a group to increase both vocabulary and awareness of the issues in which these words are used.

Year 3: Theme 7

Symbols

Use **NSSG pages 4 through 16** -

NSSG page 5 - How Were Our National Symbols Chosen?

Note Activity Box. Perhaps the students would like to vote for a National Mammal! (author’s note: the bat is the ONLY native mammal in the Cayman Islands.

NSSG pages 6 and 7 Teacher background to be summarized verbally for the students.

NSSG pages 8 and 9 are vocabulary words to stimulate discussion. Do the Work Sheet as a group to increase both vocabulary and awareness of issues in which these words are used, so the students can better understand the purpose and meaning of National Symbols.

NSSG pages 10, 11, 12 and 13 – Photocopy these pages and hand them out for the students to read aloud together or in turns.

NSSG page 14 Photocopy this page with all three National Symbols for students to colour.

NSSG page 15 – Photocopy this page and give as a quick quiz. This quiz is not difficult, but is designed to reinforce the students retention of the names of our National Symbols.

SOCIAL STUDIES –CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS WITH NATIONAL SYMBOLS: FLORA AND FAUNA OF THE CAYMAN ISLANDS STUDY GUIDE (NSSG)
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Year Four Learning Outcomes

Year 4 Theme 1

Shelter

“Display pictures featuring various building styles represented in the Cayman Islands”

Use National Symbols: Flora and Fauna of the Cayman Islands – Thatch Palm section Pages 132 through 134 - Easy reading page 151.

Year 4, Theme 2

People who live here: Caymanian People – **Use Wild Banana Orchid section**, Read of the first British scientists to come here to study our orchids, Read **“Birthday Orchids”** about life on Cayman Brac long ago. See modern Caymanians Kirkland Nixon and Miss Joyce Hilton growing Wild Banana Orchids today. Use **Silver Thatch Palm Section**, Read **“Little Neatha and the New Blue Shoes** about life long ago in East End. See Pictures of Miss Nell Conner making thatch baskets today.

Year 4: Theme 3, The Thatch Industry – Use entire **Silver Thatch Palm Section of National Symbols Study Guide. Information, Key Facts, Vocabulary and Vocabulary Work Sheets and Quizzes.**

Year 4 Theme 5, Our Heritage – **Use pages 5, 6 and pages 10 through 14**, Colour our National Symbols on **NSSG page 15** and do the **Work Sheet on Page 16** together as a class, discussing the answers together.

Year 4 Theme 5, Old Caymanian Houses – compare materials used long ago and today to build houses **NSSG page 132, 133 and 134 Thatch Roofing Section of National Symbols book**

Year 4, Theme 5, Old Traditions **Use entire Silver Thatch Section of National Symbols Study Guide. Also, NSSG top of page 64 and bottom of page 65 – parrots as pets in old times, and NSSG page 22, traditional uses of Orchids.**

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Year Five Learning Outcomes

Year 5, Theme 2, Our Central American Neighbours

Point 5 states “State what employment opportunities were like in Cayman in the past: **NSSG page 128, 129 and 130**
Rope-making section of Silver Thatch Palm part of National Symbols Study Guide

Year 5, Theme 5 Using our Natural Resources – Language Arts: Concept words include: construct, silver thatch, wompers – **Use picture of a pair of wompers on Page 136 of Silver Thatch Palm section, Use Vocabulary List, which includes the word “wompers” on page 140** – Use the words “silver thatch” correctly in a sentence...**Start on page 126 and read about the Silver Thatch Palm.**

Math section says, “Use a similar graph showing an earlier industry” - numbers **concerning rope making are in Silver Thatch section.** Also: “Make models of old Caymanian Houses” **Picture of thatch roof on pages 132, 133 and 134**

**SOCIAL STUDIES –CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS WITH NATIONAL SYMBOLS: FLORA AND
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Year Six Learning Outcomes

Year 6, Theme 2, Protecting Our Environment, Protecting our Plants and Animals – Define Natural Environment as flora and fauna, State why plants and animals must be protected, identify some endangered plants and animals in the Cayman Islands, define word “endangered” Research flora and fauna of the Cayman Islands – focus on one or two animals (Parrots! Bats!) Draw or sketch your favorite plant/animal and briefly describe it...Identify at least 8 different plants and animals found here in the Cayman Islands, List 3 or 4 plants and animals who are endangered, Write a composition on the importance of protecting endangered species.” **National Symbols Study Guide addresses these issues directly. Read, “Conserving our National Symbols” on page 6. Use Vocabulary List on page 8 and Vocabulary Work Sheet on page 9. Wild Banana Orchid section also speaks about the need to conserve and landscape carefully while building, saving as much native vegetation as possible.**

NSSG page 1 – Prayer for the Earth (Can be used on Earth Day, or any day in conjunction with studies about protecting the environment.)

Year 6, Theme 3 – “Name the four main industries of old Caymans; Compare and Contrast Cayman’s past industries with those of the present; State the stages of rope making from the Silver Thatch Palm, **All these are covered in the Silver Thatch Palm sections. Pages 126 to 143**

Year 6, Theme 7, Our Heritage Using our Natural Resources: “State what they were used for. e.g. ...thatch....**Key Facts page 142** “Invite a National Trust Officer to speak about...thatch... Visit an old Caymanian house and have pupils draw their own version; **picture of thatch roof on pages 132, 133 and 134.** Language Art, concept words, “thatch” ...**Vocabulary of Thatch and Vocabulary Work Sheet pages 140 and 141** Display brooms and other crafts made from thatch **picture of old-time broom on page 136, All Levels of Quizzes on pages 171 through 176**

SCIENCE: CI National Curriculum Guide - Science AnyTime Syllabus

Key Stage 1 – Year 1

The National Symbols: Flora and Fauna of the Cayman Islands Study Guide (NSSG) connections to Cayman Islands Education Department’s National Science Curriculum

Unit B, Weather and the Seasons, Lesson 7, page 7 – Animals and the Seasons (LP 5c) “Animals behaviors and activities change from season to season...Parrots’ nesting season.

National Symbols Study Guide (NSSG) page 74 and 76. Poem on page 116 ...“hatch my eggs in May; ...For one full year with Mom and Dad we stay.” page 108, Poem “A Flying Lesson” “65 days old”

Unit D, Animals of All Ages, Lesson 3, page 13 Birds Hatch (LP 1b)

NSSG pages 73 through 76. Song on page 83, pictures to colour pages 89 and 95 “Did You Know” on page 102, Poems about baby parrots on pages 108 and 113,

Unit D, Animals of All Ages, Lesson 9, page 16, Pets Need People (LP 5a)

NSSG pages 77 through 81, picture to colour page 94, Bulletin Board posters on pages 99, 100, 101, 102 and 104 Poems on pages 111, 112, 115. Easy Word Box Quiz on Pet Parrot Care page 122 (answer key page 123)

Unit E, Seeds and Plants, Lesson 1, page 17, “Plants are Living Things” (LP 3b)

NSSG pages 143 and 144, Silver Thatch Palm berries are blue, the seeds are inside and iguanas love to eat them. Page 162 picture to colour of Thatch Palm with berries

NSSG page 31, Wild Banana Orchid has millions of seeds that burst from pods and travel on the wind. Page 43, picture to colour page 43

Unit E, Seeds and Plants, Lesson 4, page 17, Sprouting (LP - 3c)

NSSG page 160 Planting a Silver Thatch Palm – Complete instructions for planting a palm

Unit #, Seeds and Plants, Lesson 8, page 18, People need Plants (LP 2E)

NSSG pages 149 and 150, thatch roofing in the past – pictures from National Archive

NSSG page 145 – rope-making, pictures from National Archive

Unit F, Caring for the Earth, Lesson 1, page 21 – Using the Earth’s Land, (LP 5d)

NSSG pages 33, 34 and 35 – effects of development on National Flower

NSSG page 47 – What Kids Can Do – Rescuing wild orchids when land is cleared

Unit F – Caring for the Earth, Lesson 5, page 22 Reusing and Recycling (LP 5c) – This is not in the NSSG, but Mr. Chris Mann of George Hicks, designed toy parrots, made with soda bottles for the bodies, and paper mache feathers.

SCIENCE: CI National Curriculum Guide - Science AnyTime Syllabus

Key Stage 1 – Year 2

The National Symbols: Flora and Fauna of the Cayman Islands Study Guide (NSSG) connections to Cayman Islands Education Department's National Science Curriculum

Unit A, Animal Hall of Fame, Section 2, Birds, Lesson 1, page 3, Birds of a Feather and Lesson 2 – Fine Feathers (LP 4 b and 5a)

NSSG pages 73, page 89, picture to colour of Cayman Parrot, - **Can be photocopied twice and coloured as a Grand Cayman Parrot or a Brac Parrot, or use pages 91 and 92, mirror image parrots, one a Cayman Brac Parrot and one a Grand Cayman Parrot – they are slightly different.** Page 90, picture to colour **that is a chart of all the different coloured feathers on a Cayman Islands Parrot**

NSSG page 102, Did You Know” **third paragraph – “red feathers on Cayman Islands’ Parrots are brighter in the breeding season – This helps parrots to signal each other that it is time to find a mate and build a nest.”**

Unit A, Animal Hall of Fame, Lesson 6, page 4, Birds (LP – 4b)

Page 73 – Natural History of the Cayman Islands Parrot

Unit D, How Does Your Garden Grow, Lesson 1, page 17 Plants in the Garden, (LP – 3b)

NSSG page 30, Wild Banana Orchid, Natural History

NSSG page 143, Silver Thatch Palm, Natural History

Unit D: How Does Your Garden Grow, Lesson 3, Looking at Roots (LP 3b)

NSSG page 40 and overleaf – **Wild Banana Orchid’s roots are visible as they wrap around the tree trunk hosts.**

Unit D: How Does Your Garden Grow, Lesson 5, page 17, Leaves At Work (LP 3a)

NSSG page 30, Wild Banana Orchid Natural History and page 143, Silver Thatch Palm Natural History – **Compare leaves, how are they different and why.**

Unit D: How Does Your Garden Grow, Lesson 7, page 18, Seeds Sprout

NSSG page 160 Planting A Silver Thatch Palm – Instructions

Unit D: How Does Your Garden Grow, Section 3 “Animals in the Garden”, Lesson 1, page 21

NSSG page 57 – Parrots as crop-pests – Very relevant to the Cayman Islands Parrot

Unit D: How Does Your Garden Grow, Section 3, Lesson 3, page 21 All Together Now.

NSSG page 10 – Cayman’s unique ecosystem – how our plants and animals interact

SCIENCE: CI National Curriculum Guide - Science AnyTime Syllabus

Key Stage 2 – Year 3

The National Symbols: Flora and Fauna of the Cayman Islands Study Guide (NSSG) connections to Cayman Islands Education Department’s National Science Curriculum

Unit E, Endangered Species, Lessons 1 through 4, page 1

NSSG pages 6 through 16 – Conservation essay and Vocabulary list with work sheet. Choose first section or easy reading simplification.

NSSG pages 54 through 81. Choose first section or easy reading simplification.

NSSG pages 104, 105 and 106 – How Kids can Help, What One Person Can Do – Tribute to Otto Watler.

NSSG Quizzes pages 117 to 123, choose levels of difficulty most appropriate to class

NSSG page 1, Prayer for the Earth

Unit G, The Great Outdoors, Habitat, Lesson 1 page 7 (LP 5a – 5b AND Lesson 6, Here or There

NSSG page 55 “Habits and Habitat of Cayman Islands’ Parrots

NSSG pages 8 and 9 Vocabulary list and work sheet

NSSG pages 61 and 62, Vocabulary list and worksheet

Unit G, The Great Outdoors, Cayman Woodland, page 10

NSSG page 33 – value of saving native trees while landscaping – photo shows example

NSSG page 127 – Habitat of Silver Thatch Palm – then and now.

Unit G, The Great Outdoors, Cayman Woodland, page 10, Lesson 1, Living Through Changes

NSSG page 55 – Cayman Islands Parrot nesting season

Unit G, The Great Outdoors, Cayman Woodland, page 10, Lessons 3 and 4 Trees and their uses

NSSG page 143 Silver Thatch Palm, Easy Reading–Natural History, rope, roofs and baskets.

Unit G, The Great Outdoors, Lesson 2, Plants and Animals in the Wetlands – Parrots

NSSG pages 73 through 76, Cayman Islands Parrots Natural History, - our parrots build nests in black mangroves on the edges of our wetlands.

**SCIENCE: CI National Curriculum Guide - Science AnyTime Syllabus
Key Stage 2 – Year 4**

The National Symbols: Flora and Fauna of the Cayman Islands Study Guide (NSSG) connections to Cayman Islands Education Department’s National Science Curriculum

Unit A, Animals Animals, Section A “Why Do Animals Differ?” Lesson 1, page 1 “What do Animals Need?” LP 1a, 2b, 5b)

NSSG pages 54 through 64 – All about Cayman Islands Parrots,

NSSG page 82, Class Activity Suggestions

NSSG page 98, Additional available resources for parrot studies

NSSG page 103 – Bulletin Board poster “What YOU Can Do To Help our Parrots

NSSG page 105 – What One Person Can Do – How Mr. Otto Watler is helping parrots, includes colour picture

NSSG pages 117 & 118, Quizzes (Answers on page 123 (easier quizzes on pages 121 & 122

NSSG pages 64 through 72 – Caring for Pet Parrots

NSSG pages 99 through 103 – Bulletin Board materials, How Healthy Is Your Pet Parrot; What to Feed Pet Parrots, Parrots need More Than Food; Did You Know?, What YOU Can Do

NSSG page 119 & 120, Pet Parrot Care Quizzes, Answers on page 123, easier quiz on pages 122

Emphasize that Parrots are NOT ideal pets, they are very demanding, it is expensive to provide proper cages, toys and perches; they need constant company to be happy, often bite and belong in the wild. Our responsibility is to help improve conditions for parrots already in captivity that do not know how to survive in the wild and therefore must remain in captivity.

Unit A, Animals Animals, “Why Do Animals Differ?” Lesson 2, Body Coverings LP 1a, 2b, 5b)

NSSG page 90 – picture to colour identifying each separate feather on a parrot

Unit A, Animals Animals, “Why Do Animals Differ?” Lesson 3 – How Animals Hide

NSSG page 55 bottom two paragraphs “The Cayman Brac Stealth Parrot!”

Unit A, Animals Animals, “Why Do Animals Differ?” Lesson 4 “Suited to their Food”

NSSG page 67 – What to Feed a Pet Parrot

Unit A, Animals Animals, Section B “Which Group” Lesson 1

NSSG page 54 – Scientific names for Cayman Parrots

**SCIENCE: CI National Curriculum Guide - Science AnyTime Syllabus
Key Stage 2 – Year 5**

The National Symbols: Flora and Fauna of the Cayman Islands Study Guide (NSSG) connections to Cayman Islands Education Department's National Science Curriculum

Unit D, Mountains and Molehills, Section D, National Treasures, Lesson 1, Using Resources Wisely.

NSSG pages 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9. What is the National Trust? How were our National Symbols chosen (Why do we want/need them?) Conserving our National Symbols, Flora and Fauna, Vocabulary and Vocabulary Work Sheet.

NSSG page 26 – saving forest trees while developing – Native landscaping

NSSG page 55 – CI Parrots, Habitat preservation

NSSG page 61 and 62 Vocabulary and Vocabulary Work Sheet

NSSG page 127 – Habitat of Silver Thatch Palm – then and now.

SCIENCE: CI National Curriculum Guide - Science AnyTime Syllabus

Key Stage 2 – Year 6

The National Symbols: Flora and Fauna of the Cayman Islands Study Guide (NSSG) connections to Cayman Islands Education Department's National Science Curriculum

Unit E, Prairie Dog Tales, Section D – People of the Prairie, Lessons 1 “Land Ho” and Lesson 2 – What A Waste

NSSG pages 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9. What is the National Trust? How were our National Symbols chosen (Why do we want/need them?) Conserving our National Symbols, Flora and Fauna, Vocabulary and Vocabulary Work Sheet.

NSSG page 26 – saving forest trees while developing – Native landscaping

NSSG page 55 – CI Parrots, Habitat preservation

NSSG page 127 – Habitat of Silver Thatch Palm – then and now.

NSSG page 61 and 62 Vocabulary and Vocabulary Work Sheet

SCIENCE PROGRAMMES OF STUDY – COMMON REQUIREMENTS - KEY STAGE 1

How National Symbols: Flora and Fauna of the Cayman Islands (NSSG) can be used to fulfil requirements of Key Stage 1 Programme of Study – Science National Curriculum (Draft 14 – June, 2000

Page 1, Uses of Language

NSSG pages 91 through 96 Colouring Book with easy reading text

NSSG pages 107 through 116, Easy parrot poems to read and enjoy

NSSG pages 121 and 122 Word Box Quizzes

Page 1, Information Technology

Visit National Trust website – www.caymannationaltrust.org

Page 2, Systematic inquiry

NSSG pages 73 through 81 – Situation of Cayman Parrot has many aspects, what is the situation, what can be done, what should be done, who should do it.

Page 4, Life Processes

NSSG pages 73 through 81 – Parrots move, feed, grow, use their senses and reproduce

Page 4, Green Plants as organisms –

NSSG pages 143, 162 Silver Thatch Palm,

NSSG pages 31, 37, and 44 Wild Banana Orchid

Page 4 Variation and classification - ...living things can be grouped ...

NSSG pages 10 through 15, National Symbols, Bird, Flower, Tree, picture to colour

NSSG pages 31, 37, and 44 Wild Banana Orchid

NSSG pages 73 through 81 Cayman Islands Parrots

NSSG pages 143, 162 Silver Thatch Palm,

Page 5 Living things in their environment

NSSG pages 10 through 15, National Symbols, Bird, Flower, Tree, picture to colour

NSSG pages 31, 37, and 44 Wild Banana Orchid

NSSG pages 73 through 81 Cayman Islands Parrots

NSSG pages 143, 162 Silver Thatch Palm,

Page 5 Seasonal Changes... Parrots breeding and nesting season, Banana Orchid's blooming season

NSSG pages 31, 37, and 44 Wild Banana Orchid

NSSG pages 73 through 81 Cayman Islands Parrots

SCIENCE PROGRAMMES OF STUDY – COMMON REQUIREMENTS - KEY STAGE 2

How National Symbols: Flora and Fauna of the Cayman Islands (NSSG) can be used to fulfil requirements of Key Stage 2 Programme of Study – Science National Curriculum (Draft 14 – June, 2000

Page 8 Science in Everyday Life “ d. “consider ways in which living things and the environment need protection.
This is what the National Symbols Study Guide is ABOUT!!!

Easy Reading sections that can be given to the students to read

NSSG pages 10 through 15, National Symbols, Bird, Flower, Tree, picture to colour

NSSG pages 31, 37, and 44 Wild Banana Orchid

NSSG pages 73 through 81 Cayman Islands Parrots

NSSG pages 143, 162 Silver Thatch Palm,

Teacher background information that can be simplified for the students verbally

NSSG pages 4 through 9, National Symbols, Bird, Flower, Tree

NSSG pages 18 through 30, 43 (picture to colour and identify parts, Wild Banana Orchid

NSSG pages 54 through 63 Cayman Islands Parrots

NSSG pages 126 through 142 Silver Thatch Palm

Page 8, Communication

NSSG pages 8 and 9 Vocabulary List and Vocabulary Work Sheet – Conservation

NSSG pages 28 and 29, Vocabulary List and Vocabulary Work Sheet – Flowers

NSSG pages 61 and 62, Vocabulary List and Vocabulary Work Sheet – Birds

NSSG pages 140 and 141, Vocabulary List and Vocabulary Work Sheet – Trees

Page 11, Life Processes and Living Things – That there are life processes, including nutrition, movement, growth and reproduction, common to animals... That there are grown processes including growth, nutrition and reproduction common to plants.

Easy Reading sections that can be given to the students to read

NSSG pages 10 through 15, National Symbols, Bird, Flower, Tree, picture to colour

NSSG pages 31, 37, and 44 Wild Banana Orchid

NSSG pages 73 through 81 Cayman Islands Parrots

NSSG pages 143, 162 Silver Thatch Palm,

Teacher background information that can be simplified for the students verbally

NSSG pages 4 through 9, National Symbols, Bird, Flower, Tree

NSSG pages 18 through 30, 43 (picture to colour and identify parts, Wild Banana Orchid

NSSG pages 54 through 63 Cayman Islands Parrots

NSSG pages 126 through 142 Silver Thatch Palm

Page 11 – Green Plants as organisms; growth and nutrition

NSSG pages 31, 37 and 44 or 18 through 30 and 43 – Orchids

NSSG pages 143, 162 or 126 through 142 – Silver Thatch Palm

Page 12 - Life Processes and Living Things – locally occurring animals, (**parrots**) different plants and animals in different habitats (**parrot habitat, NSSG page 55**), changes in the environment, change of land use, **NSSG page 127 Thatch Palm Habitat, then and now; NSSG page 26 native landscaping;**

Prayer for the Earth

Almighty God,

Creator of all things,

You made this earth with its many living beings in amazing variety.

You gave us the birds, the trees, the flowers and all the plants and animals that add beauty and interest to our world.

We see Your hand in the tallest trees and in the tiniest insects.

You entrusted this treasure to human kind to be used in making a life that would bring us close to You and eventually lead us to your heavenly kingdom.

We thank You for this bounty of beauty and life that surrounds us.

Help us to use these precious gifts with wisdom and restraint.

Help us to avoid greed, waste, pollution and destruction.

Help us to remember that this earth is not ours alone and must be shared with generations of Your children who are not yet born.

Help us to act responsibly so that those who follow us will also be able to use the earth in Your service.

Amen

What is the National Trust?

The National Trust for the Cayman Islands was formed to help preserve the natural environment and places of historical significance for future generations.

When the National Trust is able to buy a piece of woodland or wetland, or when someone donates a piece of land, that land can be protected from development forever. This is called the Land Reserves Programme. It includes the Mastic Trail, the Salina Reserve, Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park and the Governor Michael Gore Bird Sanctuary on Grand Cayman; the Brac Parrot Reserve on Cayman Brac; and the Booby Pond Nature Reserve on Little Cayman.

The National Trust also works to make sure that the Cayman Islands' many endemic animals will always be with us. The Blue Iguana, the Whistling Duck, the Cayman Islands Parrots and local species of birds, bats, lizards and insects are being constantly studied and monitored. There is also a programme, in partnership with the Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park, to identify, grow and distribute native and endemic plants.

When the National Trust owns properties of historical significance, such as school houses, the East End Light House, Watler's Cemetery, the Bodden Town Mission House, or other interesting older buildings, those buildings are repaired and maintained to be as close to their original condition as possible. This is very expensive and can only be done as funds become available.

Membership forms are in the back of this book and may be photocopied. Call 949-0121 for more information.

Activity Box

Photocopy the membership form at the back of this book and make it available to students who want to join the National Trust. Allow students to take forms home to family and friends. The Trust is a non-profit organization and needs the support of its members to carry out its programmes and its mission. Older students can volunteer to assist with Trust projects in the field or in the office.

How Were These Symbols Chosen?

In the spring of 1995, at the request of the Ministry for Community Development, Sports, Women & Youth Affairs & Culture, the National Trust for the Cayman Islands called a meeting of an Advisory Committee to set

guidelines and poll public opinion on the best candidates for National Bird, Tree and Flower.

It was determined that these National Symbols must have biological uniqueness (only indigenous species would be considered); be representative of all three islands, having cultural and social importance; and have visibility and inherent beauty.

The Trust then spearheaded a public education campaign in partnership with the Government Information Service. An information leaflet and fifty large posters, with colour pictures and information on the various nominees, were produced. These were distributed across all three islands to schools and public buildings. With the help of the local media an intensive education drive, targeting all levels of the community and urging people to vote, took place.

Ballot boxes were distributed to public and private schools as well as to civic buildings such as Post Offices, the Library and the Government Administration Building. The vote closed on June 30, 1995 and the votes were tallied by volunteers at the National Trust. Clear favourites rapidly emerged for each of the three categories. By very large percentage margins, the public was found to support the Cayman Islands Parrot, the Silver Thatch Palm and the Wild Banana Orchid for the National Symbols

Activity Box

Stage a mock election to choose other National Symbols such as National Sport, National Insect, National Colour, National Reptile, or any other idea that interests the students. Divide the class into groups to “campaign” their choices before the voting.

Conserving Our National Symbols: Flora and Fauna

When a **species*** of plant or animal is unique to a certain area and especially when this species has cultural significance and beauty, it becomes important to acknowledge the special place it has in our world and to work to ensure its continued existence.

In the past, our supply of natural resources seemed endless. Now, people are realizing, that just as we conserve our personal resources and plan for our futures, so must we plan to conserve community resources.

To **conserve*** is to save. We conserve anything that may be in short supply. We conserve our energy, our money, our water, our health and many other things. To be conservative can mean to be cautious, careful and to make changes slowly.

To some, it might seem that development and economic interests are at odds with conserving species, but if the overall goal of development is a better life for most people, part of the plan must be to preserve some natural areas for all to enjoy and to save **habitat*** for **endemic*** and **indigenous*** species.

Often, areas of private and public concern overlap. Who owns the birds of the air and the fish in the sea? If land that is crucial to the survival of a species is in private hands, who decides what becomes of that land and that species?

We cannot simply divide the world into areas for humans and other areas for plants and animals. We must find ways to manage environments so that human needs are met, while plants and animals are allowed to continue to exist in their natural state. We must also find ways to conserve natural resources upon which humans depend, such as fishing grounds and fresh water supplies.



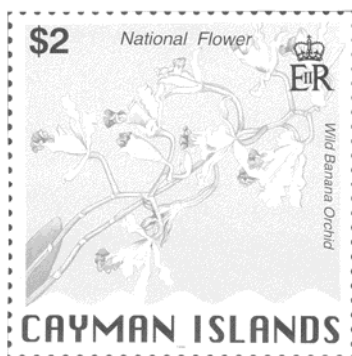
Humans have always had to make decisions involving the freedom of individuals and the overall good of the community. What may benefit one is not allowed if it will harm others. This simple concept is the basis for libraries of complicated laws and office buildings full of people trying to write, clarify and implement them. This system of laws and lawmakers, though sometimes cumbersome, is already in place and can assist in forming a conservation policy.



Finding ways to conserve species and their **environments*** is not an impossible task. We have taken the first step by declaring our endemic parrot, palm and orchid to be National Symbols. The second step is to teach people about the importance of these symbols and the third will be to take positive steps to ensure their survival.

Conservation is not putting plants or animals above people. It is putting the welfare of all people above the short-term profits of a few. It is looking at the big picture and planning for the future. Conservation asks that we do not jeopardize our own futures for immediate and temporary financial gain.

Because of their isolation from other landmasses, the Cayman Islands possess many endemic species of plants and animals. Our islands are small and development is moving ahead rapidly. What is the long-term plan? What level of development is **sustainable***? What is being left for future generations? Young people in the Cayman Islands should be encouraged to consider these issues and decide upon goals.



In a small country like ours, we each have a role to play. Our Islands contain many endemic species and Caymanians are the only ones who can save them. We are an affluent, first world country. If we are to hold our heads up proudly in the world community, our beautiful National Symbols and other plants and animals must not be allowed to slip into **extinction***.

National Symbols: Flora & Fauna: Vocabulary List

Conservation --- to save something now, so that we will have it later

Deforestation --- loss of forests or cutting trees on a large scale

Ecology --- the science of living things and their environment

Ecologist --- a biologist who studies ecology as a specialty

Endangered --- in danger of becoming extinct

Endemic --- (en-DEM-ik) found only in a certain area or country

Environment --- everything surrounding a person, plant, or animal

Environmentalist --- a person working to solve problems in the surroundings of people plants and animals

Exotic --- foreign, brought into one country from another

Extinct --- no longer in existence; gone forever

Feral --- once under human care, but now wild

Fauna --- all of the animals living in a particular place

Flora --- all of the plants living in a particular place

Habitat --- the natural area where a species lives and can find necessities

Heritage --- things passed on from parents to children

Hybrid --- (HI-brid) a new plant or animal created when two species mix.

Indigenous --- (in-DIJ-en-us) native, but found in other places too

Species --- a single, distinct kind of plant or animal

Sustainable --- able to be continued over time, maintainable

National Symbols: Flora and Fauna: Vocabulary Work Sheet

Fill in the blanks. Use the Vocabulary List to find the meaning of the words.

1. A single, distinct kind of plant or animal is referred to as a _____.
2. An _____ is a person working to solve problems in the surroundings of people, plants and animals. This is called the _____.
3. An _____ studies _____, the science of living things and their environment.
4. The natural area where a species lives and can find necessities is called a _____.
5. A plant or animal found only in a certain area or country is _____. When a foreign plant is brought into a country, scientists say it is _____.
6. Loss of forests or cutting trees on a large scale is called _____.
7. _____ is a word meaning all of the animals living in a particular place. All the plants living in a particular place are called _____.
8. _____ means saving something now, so that we will have it later.
9. If a plant or animal is in danger of becoming extinct it is _____.
10. A _____ population of parrots is one that will not die out.
11. The crocodile is _____ in the Cayman Islands.
12. Caymanians have a rich _____ in their natural environment.
13. When two species mix, the result is called a _____.
14. Pets or farm animals that have gone wild are called _____ animals.
15. In the Cayman Islands we share many _____ plants with our neighbours in Cuba and Jamaica.

ecology	Conservation	extinct	feral	species	ecologist	deforestation
Fauna	environmentalist	sustainable	indigenous	hybrid	exotic	
		habitat				
environment	endangered	heritage	endemic	flora		

Saving Our National Symbols

The Cayman Islands Parrot, the Silver Thatch Palm and the Wild Banana Orchid are our National Symbols. They are very special to the Cayman Islands.



Someday, there could be more National Symbols. Some places even have a National Insect!

We want to be sure that our National Symbols are always here for everyone to enjoy. Saving natural places is important for other plants and animals, too.

The Cayman Islands are very far away from other lands. Because of this, many types of plants and animals that live here, are not found in other parts of the world.

In fact, the Cayman Islands have hundreds of plants and animals that live only here. Some of them are: the Ironwood Tree, the Ghost orchid and the Tea Bankie.

We also have the Cordia, with its beautiful red flowers and the Hohenbergia, (Ho-hen-BERJ-ee-ah) which is a very big air plant.

An air plant is a plant that grows on a tree and does not put roots into the earth. These plants and many others can be seen at the Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park.

There are also animals that live here and nowhere else in the world. Besides our beautiful Cayman Islands Parrot, we have the Blue Iguana, the Lazy Snake, the Blue Anole Lizard, the Brown Bat and many birds and insects.

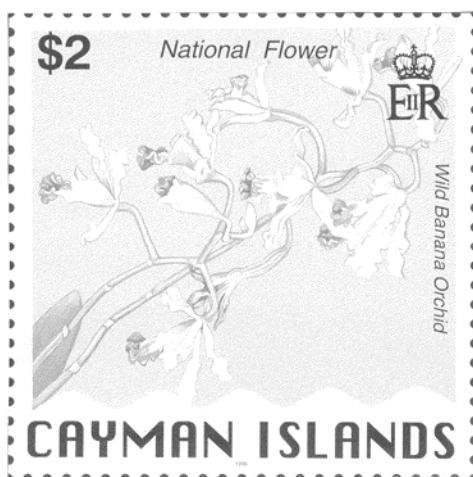


Scientists are still finding new plants and animals that live only in the Cayman Islands.

In March of 1993, the Reverend Alson Ebanks found a plant that grows only in one small area of Spotts. In April 1997, scientists found a tiny new animal that looks like a shrimp in the Central Mangrove Wetland.

No one knows how many more unknown plants and animals live in the Cayman Islands. Maybe you will find the next one!

Sometimes people have to cut down trees and clear land for buildings. We must try to remember to save some places for wild plants and animals to live.



Saving our woodlands is important for people, too. People like to spend time with nature. Tourists will not pay to visit an island covered with buildings and parking lots. Caymanians like living on beautiful, tree-covered islands. We would not be happy here without our birds, trees and flowers.

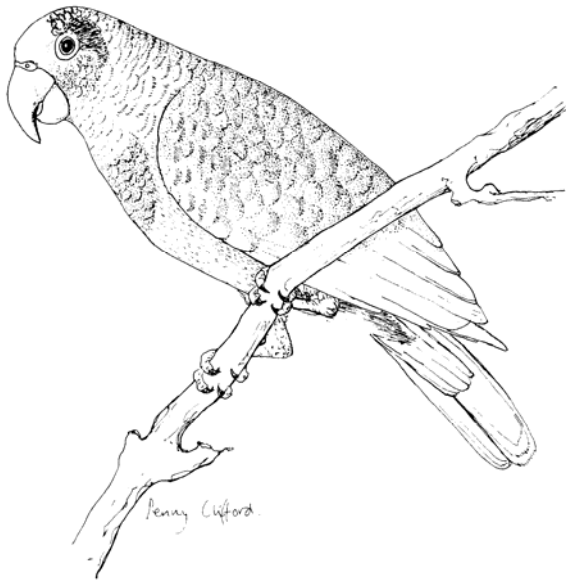
It is not too late to save some of our woodlands and wetlands. People are working hard to be sure that our beautiful National Symbols and other plants and animals always have a place to live.



Drawing courtesy of Mrs. Penny Clifford

In a small country like the Cayman Islands, you can make a big difference. Tell your friends and family what you have learned. Other countries are willing to help. It is Caymanians who must decide what to do. What we do now will affect our future world.

COLOUR OUR NATIONAL SYMBOLS



National Symbols Work Sheet

Fill in the blanks with the word from the word box below.

1. Three of our National Symbols are the National _ _ _ _ ,
the National _ _ _ _ and the National _ _ _ _ _ .
2. Our National Bird is the Cayman Islands' _ _ _ _ _ .
3. Our National Tree is the Silver Thatch _ _ _ _ .
4. Our National Flower is the Wild Banana _ _ _ _ _ .
5. In some places they even have a National _ _ _ _ _ !
6. Saving our National Symbols is important, but it is also
important to save our other _ _ _ _ _ and _ _ _ _ _ .
7. Because the Cayman Islands are so far from other lands,
we
have hundreds of plants and animals that live _ _ _ _ here.
8. It is not too _ _ _ _ to save our woodlands and wetlands.

flower Parrot animals late tree

Orchid bird plants Palm

insect only

Answer Key

National Symbols: Flora and Fauna - Vocabulary Work Sheet

1. A single, distinct kind of plant or animal is referred to as a **species**.
2. An **environmentalist** is a person working to solve problems in the surroundings of people, plants and animals. This is called the **environment**.
3. An **ecologist** studies **ecology**, the science of living things and their environment.
4. The natural area where a species lives and can find necessities is called a **habitat**.
5. A plant or animal found only in a certain area or country is **endemic**. When a foreign plant is brought into a country, scientists say it is **exotic**.
6. Loss of forests or cutting trees on a large scale is called **deforestation**.
7. **Fauna** is a word meaning all of the animals living in a particular place. All the plants living in a particular place are called **flora**.
8. **Conservation** means saving something now, so that we will have it later.
9. If a plant or animal is in danger of becoming extinct it is **endangered**.
10. A **sustainable** population of parrots is one that will not die out.
11. The crocodile is **extinct** in the Cayman Islands.
12. Caymanians have a rich **heritage** in their natural environment.
13. When two species mix, the result is called a **hybrid**.
14. Pets or farm animals which have gone wild are called **feral** animals.
15. In the Cayman Islands we share many **indigenous** plants with our neighbours in Cuba, Jamaica and other Caribbean islands.

National Symbols Work Sheet (Easy Reading)

1. Three of our National Symbols are the National **bird**, the National **tree** and the National **flower**.
2. Our National Bird is the Cayman Islands **Parrot**.
3. Our National Tree is the Silver Thatch **Palm**.
4. Our National Flower is the Wild Banana **Orchid**.
5. In some places they even have a National **Insect**!
6. Saving our National Symbols is important, but it is also important to save our other **plants** and **animals**.
7. Because the Cayman Islands are so far from other lands, we have hundreds of plants and animals that live **only** here.
8. It is not too **late** to save our woodlands and wetlands.

Wild Banana Orchid

National Flower
of
The Cayman Islands

OH GOD OF ALL,
AT THIS TIME OF OUR GRADUAL
AWAKENING
TO THE DANGERS WE ARE IMPOSING
ON OUR BEAUTIFUL EARTH,
OPEN THE HEARTS AND MINDS
OF ALL YOUR CHILDREN,
THAT WE MAY LEARN
TO NURTURE
RATHER THAN TO DESTROY
YOUR GIFT TO US,
OUR PLANET.

AMEN

LORRAINE R. SCHMI



Cayman Islands National Symbols: Flora and Fauna - National Flower

Courtney Platt - Island Images

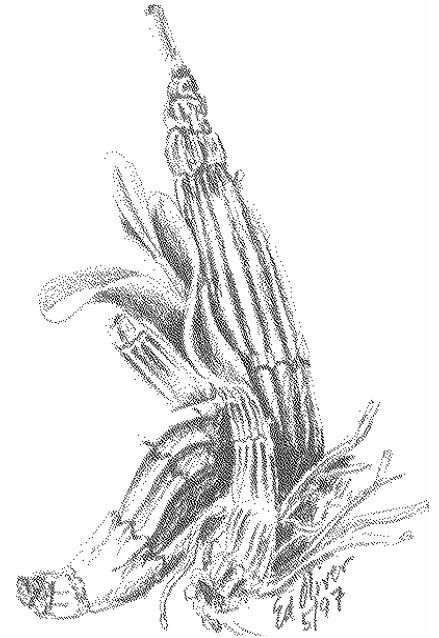
Wild Banana Orchid

On Earth Day 1996, the Wild Banana Orchid was chosen by the Government and the people of the Cayman Islands to be our National Flower. This plant is **endemic*** to the Cayman Islands. Endemic means that it grows only in a certain region and nowhere else in the world.

The scientific name of the Wild Banana Orchid is *Myrmecophila thomsoniana* (Shom-BURJ-kia tom-son-i-AN-a). The common name, Wild Banana Orchid, comes from the large green or yellow banana shaped bulbs at the base of the plant. In earlier times, Wild Banana Orchids were simply called “wild banana,” though they were never used as food.

Although many kinds of orchids grow in the Cayman Islands, the Wild Banana Orchid is the most well known. It is fairly common in the woodlands of all three islands. It is not endangered, but its numbers have declined drastically due to **deforestation***. When large tracts of land are carelessly cleared for development, many orchids and other beautiful and unique plants are lost.

Wild Banana Orchids have thick flat green leaves and bunches of ribbed green and yellow banana-shaped **pseudobulbs***. These pseudobulbs store water and energy for the orchid. The plants attach to trees with strong white roots. Small flowers appear on the ends of long graceful stalks. Most of these blossoms have no scent, though occasionally, at certain times of day, a mild aroma can be detected.



Drawing courtesy of Mr. Ed'z Archive Collection

There are two varieties of Wild Banana Orchid in the Cayman Islands. On Grand Cayman, the flowers are white with purple edges and there

are many colour variations, including a rare **albino*** variety. The slightly smaller flowers of the Cayman Brac and Little Cayman variety are yellowish and also have purple edges.

Biology and Habitat

Most Wild Banana Orchids bloom with the spring rains of April and May. The Wild Banana Orchid typically needs a long rest period between flowering seasons. During this time, the pseudobulbs dry out and become very compressed. In the rainy season, they plump back up and the plant begins to flower again.

After the petals fall off the flowers, the seedpod starts to grow. Every Wild Banana Orchid releases about a million seeds to the winds each season. The seeds need to land on a suitable **habitat*** in order to survive.



Drawing courtesy of Mr.Ed'z Archive Collection

The orchid is an **epiphyte***. This means it will live on another plant, but will not harm it as a **parasitic*** plant would. A rough barked tree trunk with a thin layer of moss is the best environment for the Wild Banana Orchid seeds.

The Wild Banana Orchid grows on a wide variety of **endemic***, **indigenous*** and **exotic*** trees. On Cayman Brac, Wild Banana Orchids are even found on the smooth barked Red Birch and on Cacti.

Plenty of rain is important for seeds to **germinate***. As the orchid grows, the roots absorb water and nourishment from rain as it runs down the trunk and branches of the tree. Wild Banana Orchids thrive in damp conditions and often grow downwind of ponds or wetlands.

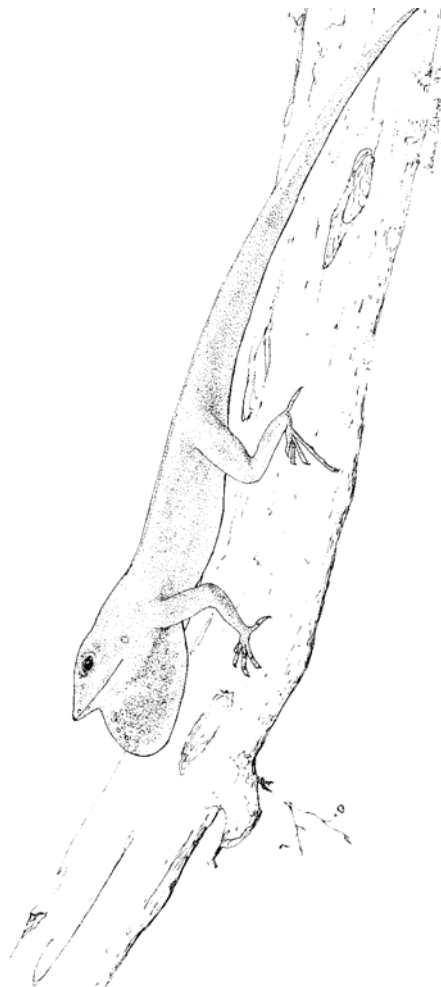
Hybrids* occur when two different types of plants or animals breed. Hybrids of the two native Wild Banana Orchids exist on Grand Cayman only. They may be caused by people bringing plants to Grand

Cayman from Little Cayman and Cayman Brac, or because northeast winds could bring pollen or bees carrying pollen toward Grand Cayman from the Sister Islands

Orchids will crossbreed very easily. There is a pink species of orchid from Honduras that could cross-**pollinate*** with our Wild Banana Orchid to create another hybrid. Though we are seeing some beautiful new colours from hybridization, if it happens too much, we will lose the uniqueness of our National Flower.

Mystery

A mysterious feature of our Wild Banana Orchid is that ants do not live inside it. Similar orchids in other parts of the world have colonies of stinging ants in the bases of the pseudobulbs. There is a small opening in the base of each pseudobulb that serves as a “doorway” for these ants. The orchids provide sweet nectar from a gland on the flower spike. In return for this food and shelter the ants will attack anything that disturbs the orchid. This is called a **symbiotic*** relationship. The word symbiotic means that two different species interact in a way that benefits both. In the Cayman Islands, lizards are sometimes seen enjoying the nectar from our Wild Banana Orchid, but this does not benefit the orchid in any way and is not a symbiotic relationship.



Cayman Islands Anole Drawing courtesy of Mrs. Penny Clifford

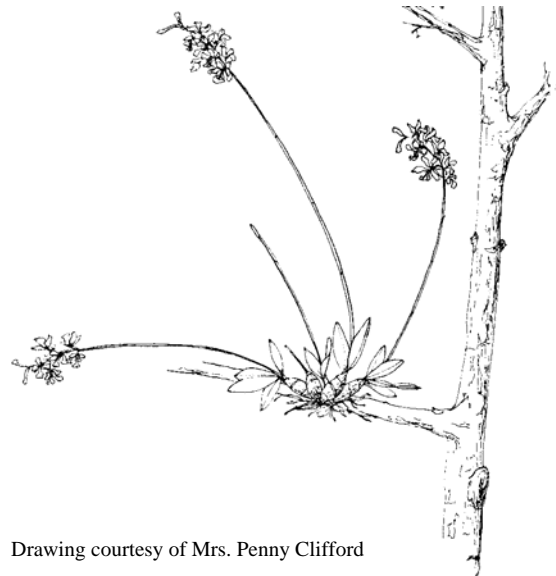
Early Scientific Expeditions

Our National Flower was first described in 1888 during a botanical expedition from Jamaica. Members of the team recognized our orchid

as a new species that had never been seen before. They wrote that it was "a most beautiful plant in its native woods," and stated that it was abundant on all three islands.

In 1913, another expedition arrived to study Caymanian plants. In his *Notes from a West Indian Coral Island*, Mr. T.M. Savage of Kew Gardens, in England, wrote that the Wild Banana Orchid was frequently found on white mangrove trees.

In 1938, there was a third scientific expedition, this time from Oxford University. The researchers reported that the Wild Banana Orchid was common on all three islands. Sometimes there were very large numbers of orchids in clusters on a single tree. They noticed that the Wild Banana Orchid flourished on standing dead trees or old fallen



Drawing courtesy of Mrs. Penny Clifford

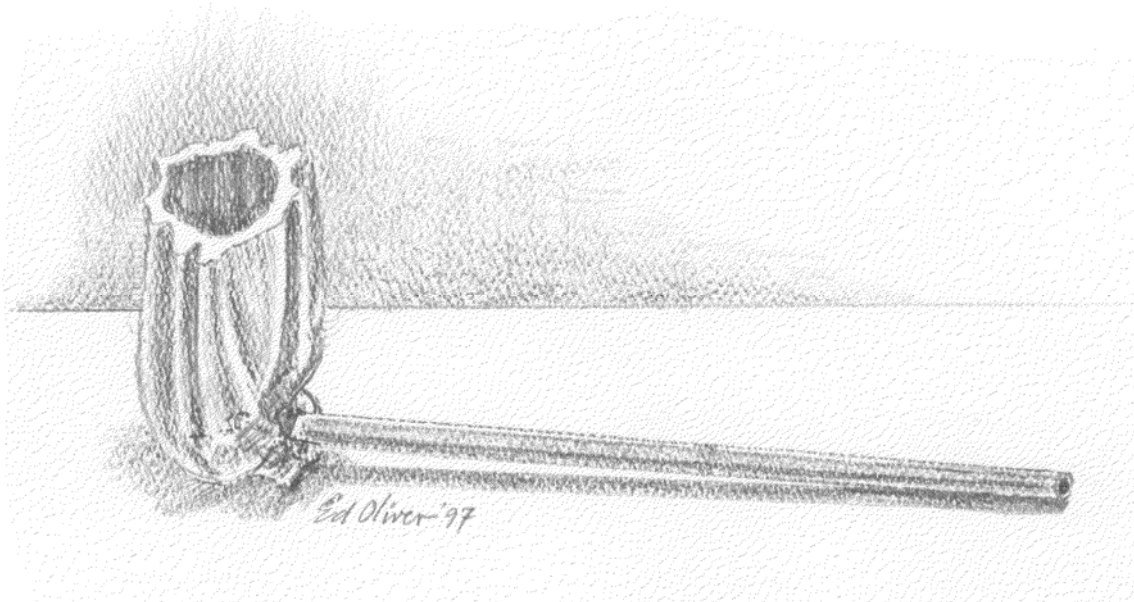
trees, but if it was growing on a live tree that was chopped down, the orchid would usually die. This may have been caused by a decrease in the amount of light, or other differences caused by a sudden change of position.

The Oxford scientific team wrote of considerable colour and size variation. It was not known if this meant that there were several species of Wild Banana Orchid, or if the differences were caused by environmental conditions. Unfortunately, the Oxford team did not note the exact habitats of the plants during collection. The variations may have been caused by position in the forest, amount of light received and other factors. This is still being researched. There *may* be two types of Wild Banana Orchid on Grand Cayman, in addition to the variety growing on Cayman Brac and Little Cayman.

Traditional Uses

In 1996, Mrs. Rena Reid of the Bight, Cayman Brac, was interviewed for the National Archive Memory Bank. Mrs. Reid is a charter member of the Cayman Islands Orchid Society. She recalled that when she was a child, people would pick "wild banana" flowers on the Bluff. The blossoms were often put on graves or used for birthday celebrations. It was not until she heard visitors talking about wild orchids that she realized that the "wild banana" was an orchid. Later, the people of Cayman Brac would gather the orchids to sell to tourists. Today, international trade regulations prohibit taking wild orchids away from the Cayman Islands.

Another traditional use for Wild Banana Orchids was making tobacco pipe bowls out of the larger pseudobulbs. Pipe stems were made from the hollow dried twigs of the Indian Almond Tree or from the stem of a wild grass locally called "draw water" which looks like a small bamboo and grows only in bushy wooded areas. The pipe stem was pushed into a small natural opening that is found in the base of every pseudobulb. Making these pipes was not a widespread practice, but there are reports of it being done in North Side and on Cayman Brac. These were very temporary pipes! When the bulb and stem became dry and brown, the pipes themselves would begin to burn.



Drawing courtesy of Mr. Ed'z Archive Collection

Rare Orchids

Among the 26 varieties of indigenous and endemic orchids in the Cayman Islands, there are several very rare or endangered species. These include the Dollar Orchid and the Ghost Orchid (also called the Frog Orchid). There is also a tiny orchid that does not even have a common name. This orchid can no longer be found in the wild. Mrs. Joyce Hylton still has a few samples in her greenhouse. Like the Dollar Orchid, this plant needs a specific **ecosystem*** found only in nature to grow well. Mrs. Hylton's samples are not thriving and she has not been able to **propagate*** any new plants from them.

When land is cleared for building, people often have no idea that they may be killing off the very last of a rare and beautiful species of orchid.



Mrs. Joyce Hylton with Wild Banana Orchid
Moses

Photo courtesy of Mrs. Kim Rough

The Cayman Islands Orchid Society

The Cayman Islands Orchid Society was formed in 1986 by people who wanted to share their knowledge and enthusiasm for orchids. They also hoped to help to protect local orchids in the wild. Several members of this very active society have amazing collections of local and exotic orchids. Mrs. Joyce Hylton, Mr. Kirkland Nixon, Mr. Frank Roulstone, Mr. Larry Chomyn and the other members are all extremely knowledgeable on the subject of orchids. Orchid Society members have even been known to halt the clearing of woodlands by standing in the path of the bulldozers until the orchids are rescued.

Rescuing Wild Banana Orchids

The Orchid Society has gone into woodlands that are scheduled to be cleared to gather plants that would otherwise be destroyed. These rescued orchids and other plants, have found new homes in Caymanian gardens and in the Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park. The Orchid Society asks that people call them *before* work begins, so that orchids can be saved before they are crushed. The National Trust is happy to provide free information about rare and valuable plants so that land can be developed without destroying them.



Mrs. Joyce Hylton and Mr. Kirkland Nixon with Wild Banana Orchid
Photo courtesy of Mrs. Kim Rough Moses

Care of Wild Banana Orchids

The Wild Banana Orchid is traditionally used as an ornamental plant. It is not unusual to see Wild Banana Orchids attached to trees in private gardens. Orchids can also be tied to pieces of cut tree branches and hung from walls of patios or nurseries. When their own roots grow enough to cling to the new host the ties can be removed. Wild Banana Orchids are very hardy and do not need a lot of special care. They should be placed away from any salt breeze and seem to thrive on Pink Poui, Mahogany and other rough barked trees.



Drawing courtesy of Mrs. Penny Clifford

Wild Banana Orchids are still so abundant that no local orchid experts have grown them from seeds. This has been done at a nursery in Miami, but usually Wild Banana Orchids here are propagated by breaking apart large clumps.

Maidenplum root is an ideal host for mature orchids. Some brave souls watch for fields where the Maidenplum plants have been knocked over by a bulldozer and carry home the root. Though the Maidenplum leaves can cause an irritating rash, it is said that the root does not affect human skin. Orchids are tied to the pieces of root and can be hung on walls or placed in greenhouses.

For more detailed information about caring for Wild Banana Orchids and other orchids, contact the Cayman Islands Orchid Society and attend one of their meetings.

Responsible Development

Older Caymanians speak sadly of the days when the Wild Banana Orchid bloomed everywhere and was easily gathered. It was used for decorations and given to visitors as a symbol of national pride.

Often when a hotel or housing development is complete, thousands of dollars are spent on imported plants and flowers to landscape the grounds.

If developers learn to work around some of the existing trees, they will have ready-made landscaping with beautiful native plants like our Wild Banana Orchid, Silver Thatch Palm, Red Birch and Sea-grape Tree. Native plants need to be watered less often and have more resistance to diseases and pests than imported plants.



Example of responsible development at Arlington Estates on Grand Cayman Island
Guthrie

Photo courtesy of Mr. Andrew

Mr. Kirkland Nixon, our local “Orchid Man” says: “It is not development itself, that is damaging the orchids, but the way we develop. We can conserve the orchid and still build our homes and businesses by using a little care.”

Significance

Like our other National Symbols, the Wild Banana Orchid is very special to the people of the Cayman Islands. This small, flowering plant is easy to overlook in today’s busy times. We should all remember to take a few moments, especially in April and May, to stop and appreciate our lovely little National Flower.

Wild Banana Orchid Vocabulary List

Albino --- a plant or animal with an unusual lack of colour

Conserve --- to save something now, so that we will have it later

Deforestation --- loss of forests or cutting trees on a large scale

Ecosystem --- community of animals; plants and their surroundings

Endemic (en-DEM-ik) found only in a certain area or country

Environment --- all the conditions surrounding a plant, animal, or human

Epiphyte --- (EP-a-fite) a plant that lives on another plant without harming it

Exotic --- foreign; brought into one country from another

Germinate --- (JER-min-ate) to sprout, bud, or begin to grow

Hybrid --- (HI-brid) a new plant or animal that is produced when two different species mix

Indigenous --- (in-DIJ-en-ous) born in a country, native, but can exist as a native of other places as well, not endemic and not exotic

Parasite --- plants or animals that live on and harm other plants or animals

Pollinate --- to transfer pollen from one flower to another

Propagate --- to cause to breed, reproduce, or multiply

Pseudobulbs --- (SOO-do-bulbs) a part of the orchid in which water and energy are stored; the area that looks like a banana on the Wild Banana Orchid

Species --- a distinct kind of plant or animal

Symbiosis --- (sim-bye-OH-sis) living together; usually two different species that both benefit from the union

Wild Banana Orchid - Vocabulary Work Sheet

Fill in the blanks. Use the Vocabulary List to find the meaning of the words.

1. A plant or animal with an unusual lack of colour is called an _____.
2. It is often better to _____ things now, so we will have them later.
3. When _____ occurs and the _____ is damaged, many _____ species may lose their homes.
4. Wild Banana Orchids are _____. They can live on another plant without harming it as a _____ would.
5. Some _____ of Cayman Islands orchids need a special _____ in order to survive.
6. Plants or animals not found naturally in the Cayman Islands which are brought in from other countries are called _____, while _____ plants or animals may be natural to the Cayman Islands, as well as other countries.
7. A new plant or animal produced when two different species mix is a _____. When seeds _____, they begin to sprout and grow.
8. Insects, birds, bats and the wind can all _____ flowers.
9. No one in the Orchid Society has yet _____ Wild Banana Orchids from seeds.
10. Stinging ants live in the _____ of some wild orchids. The orchid provides a home and nectar for the ants and they sting any animal or human that touches or harms the plant. This relationship is called _____.

pseudobulbs	symbiosis	endemic	parasite	albino	hybrid
environment	indigenous	exotic	germinate	conserve	species
epiphytes	pollinate	deforestation	propagated	ecosystem	

Wild Banana Orchid: Key Facts

- The Wild Banana Orchid is the *National Flower* of the Cayman Islands.
- The Wild Banana Orchid *grows only* in the Cayman Islands.
- The Wild Banana Orchid on Cayman Brac and Little Cayman is the same species as the one on Grand Cayman, but a *different colour*.
- The Cayman Islands have *26 different kinds* of orchids.
- The Wild Banana Orchid is not endangered, but its numbers have been drastically *reduced by development*.
- Our other 25 kinds of orchids are *more rare* and could disappear here if some measures are not taken to save them.
- Wild Banana Orchids bloom in the *rains of April and May*.
- Wild Banana Orchids release up to a *million* seeds.
- Wild Banana Orchids were traditionally used as *ornamental plants*.
- The Cayman Islands has a very active *Orchid Society*, formed in part to protect orchids in the wild.
- The National Trust and the Orchid Society are willing to give *free advice* to developers about which plants and trees are valuable and should be saved during development.
- The National Trust and the Orchid Society will *retrieve orchids and other rare plants from areas that are about to be cleared*.

Wild Banana Orchid

On Earth Day 1996, the Wild Banana Orchid was chosen to be the National Flower of the Cayman Islands.

The Wild Banana Orchid does not grow anywhere else in the world. You can only see it on the islands of Little Cayman, Cayman Brac and Grand Cayman.

The Wild Banana Orchid is not a kind of banana! It is a flowering plant that lives on many different trees in our woodlands. The bulbs look like green bananas, but these green or yellow bulbs are really where the plant stores its water and energy.



Drawing courtesy of Mr. Ed'z Archive Collection

The flowers of the Wild Banana Orchid bloom with the rains of April and May. They grow on the ends of long green stems. On Grand Cayman the blossoms are white with purple edges. On Little Cayman and Cayman Brac they are yellow with the same purple edges.



The Wild Banana Orchid blossoms on the islands of Little Cayman and Cayman Brac are smaller than the blossoms on Grand Cayman.

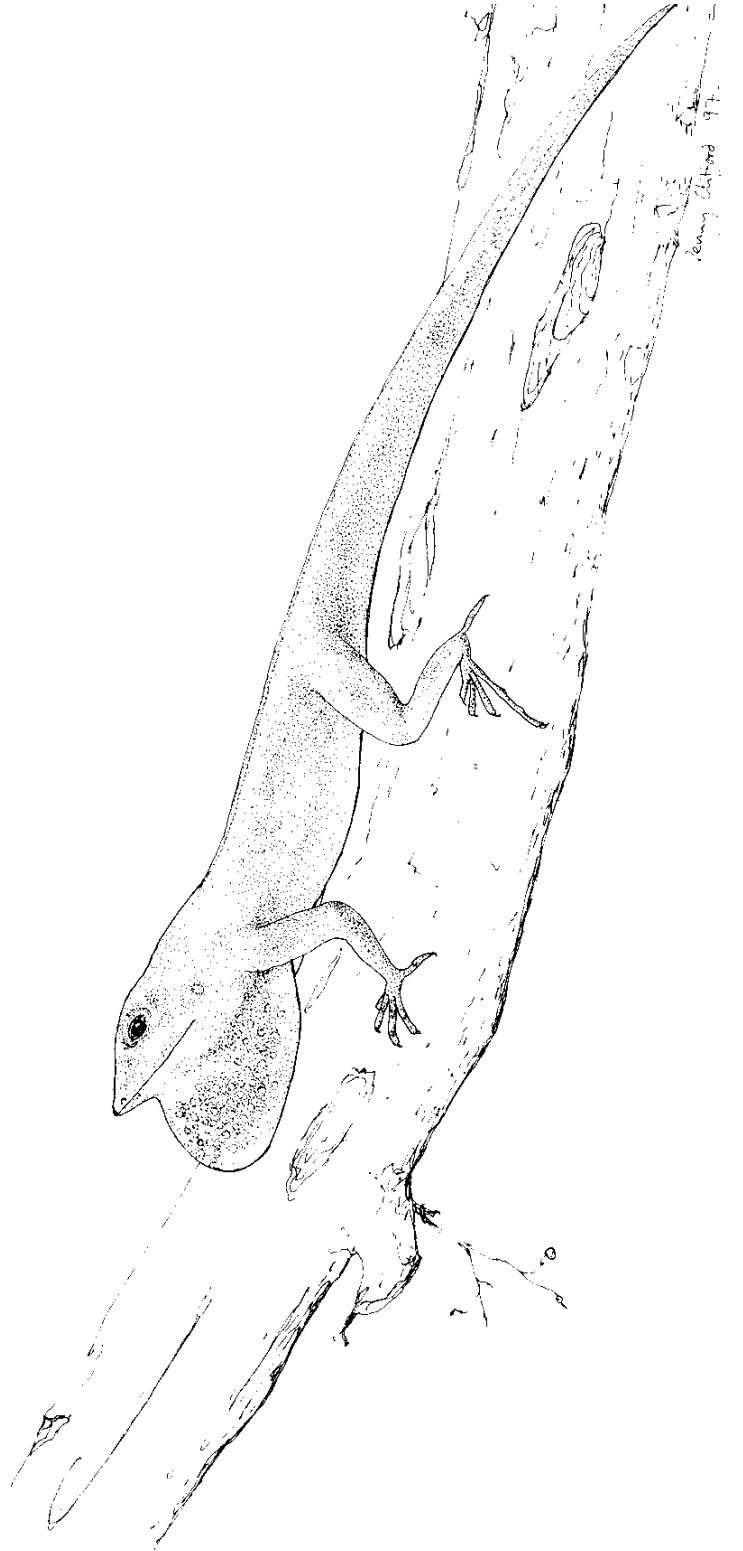
Drawing courtesy of Mr. Ed'z Archive Collection

After the petals fall from the blossom, a seedpod starts to grow. It hardens and cracks open, letting out millions and millions of very tiny seeds. The wind blows the seeds to their new homes in rough barked or mossy trees.

These rough or mossy trees are good places for seeds to nestle so that they can sprout. It does not hurt the trees to have many orchids growing on them. Plenty of rain will help the little plants to grow.

Wild Banana

Orchids have a sweet nectar that lizards sometimes like to drink. In some places stinging ants live inside the bulbs of the orchids. If you look closely you can see a tiny hole at the base of every bulb. This is the doorway provided by the plant for the ants to use. For some reason, in the Cayman Islands, no stinging ants are found living inside the Wild Banana Orchids.



Clifford

When people build homes or hotels, the construction crew sometimes bulldozes all the land and no trees or plants are left. The property owners then have to spend lots of money buying plants to decorate their gardens. If they could learn to know the valuable plants in the “bush” they are clearing, they could save money and have native trees, orchids and other beautiful plants without spending any extra money!



House built on Grand Cayman Island with native trees left in place
Guthrie

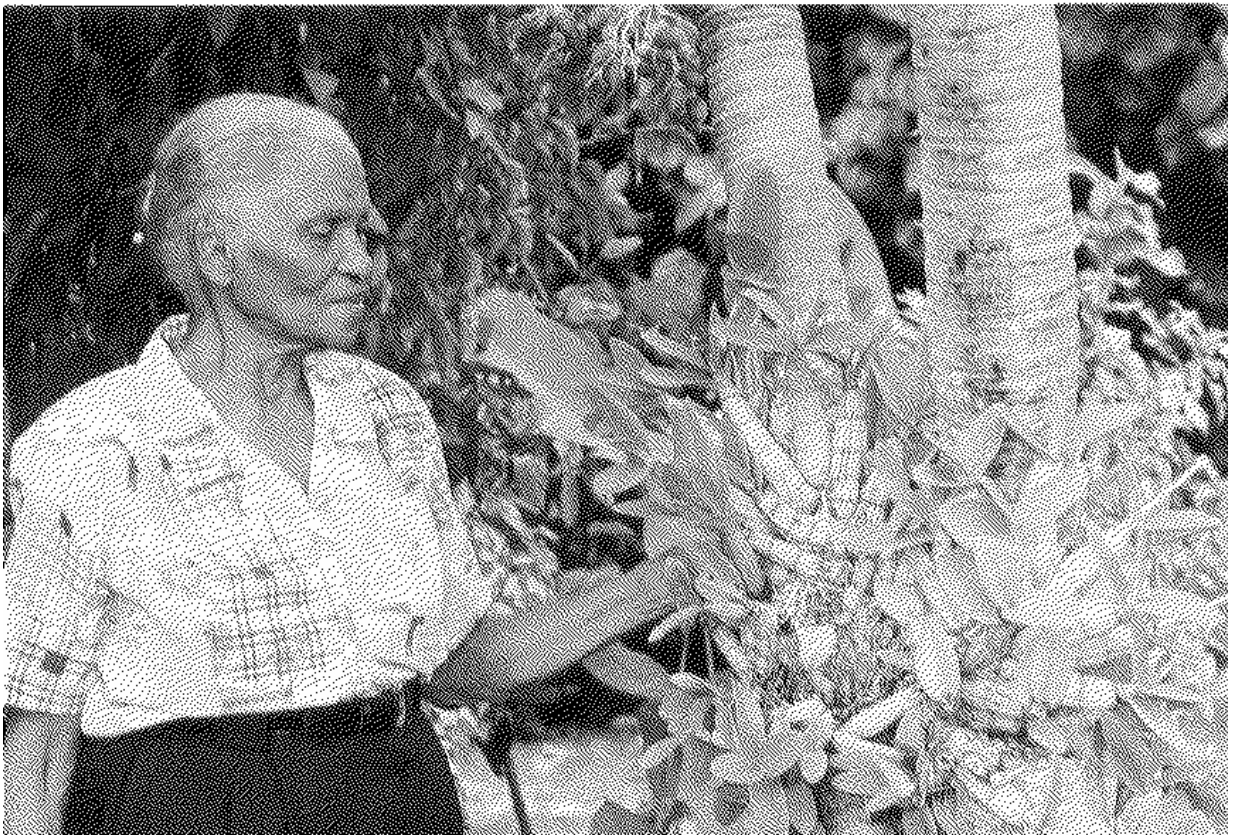
Photo by Mr. Andrew

In the Cayman Islands there is a group of people who are very interested in orchids. They have formed the Cayman Islands Orchid Society. They know a lot about our National Flower. These people care very much about saving orchids.

The Orchid Society will go into any woodland that they know is going to be cleared for development and rescue the orchids growing there.

Some of our orchids are very rare and grow very slowly. We must be careful not to damage them when we clear land.

Mrs. Joyce Hilton has saved many rare and endangered wild orchids by bringing them into her greenhouse.





Mr. Kirkland Nixon, our local “Orchid Man,” says that with a little care we can save our orchids and still build our homes and places of business.

o courtesy of Mrs. Kim Rough

Mrs. Joyce Hylton and Mr. Kirkland Nixon with Wild Banana Orchid
Photo courtesy of Mrs. Kim Rough Moses

Wild Banana Orchid: Key Facts

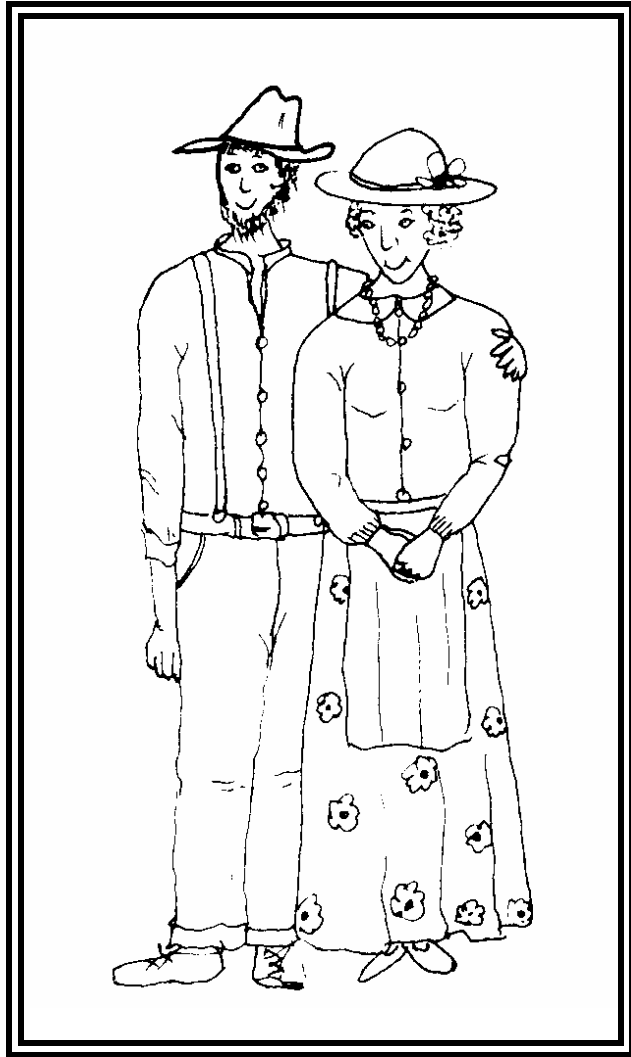
- The Wild Banana Orchid is the *National Flower* of the Cayman Islands.
- Wild Banana Orchids grow *only in the Cayman Islands* and nowhere else in the world.
- The Wild Banana Orchid is *not* a banana.
- On Cayman Brac and Little Cayman, Wild Banana Orchids are *yellow* with purple edges.
- On Grand Cayman Wild Banana Orchids are *white* with purple edges.
- Wild Banana Orchids bloom in April or May *after the rains*.
- The Cayman Islands Orchid Society will *rescue orchids* on land that is about to be cleared.
- People like to *decorate* with the beautiful flowers of the Wild Banana Orchid.
- *Tourists* love to see the Wild Banana Orchid, because it can be found only on these three islands in all the world.

An Island In Time - Birthday Orchids

Long ago, on an island in a warm sea, lived a people who had almost no possessions or money, but were rich in love, life and beauty.

The people were kind to each other and good. They had been through hard times and hurricanes together. They knew that the most valuable thing in the world is a good friend.

It was a peaceful, happy culture that can be seen now only in the eyes of the sweet older people who lived and were young in those times and can tell us about them.



There were sandy beaches and a high cliff, called “the Bluff” that rose high into the sky. There were caves in the Bluff where the people would shelter when the hurricanes came.



On top of the Bluff grew a beautiful flowering plant that the people called “wild banana” even though they knew it wasn’t really a banana.

Once a year this plant would grow a long spike of beautiful creamy yellow flowers with purple tips. The people loved these flowers and would gather them for celebrations and ceremonies.

The island was called Cayman Brac.



Imagine that you are a little child living in those times. It is the month of May and it is your birthday. Everything is very quiet. The sky is very blue. Later, Mama will fix your favourite food for dinner and there may be a heavy cake for dessert!

Then, you hear the sound of children talking and laughing. They are coming toward you. They are your brothers, sisters and friends returning from the Bluff, their arms loaded with beautiful “wild banana” flowers for you!

You feel happy and loved. You are surrounded by friends, family and flowers. It is your special day.

Now, we know that what the people in the past called “wild banana” was really a rare orchid that grows only in the Cayman Islands.

In these busier days, it is good to look back sometimes on the lives of our grandmothers and our grandfathers.

We have many things that they did not have, but they had peace, love and a special quality of life that should not be forgotten.



Based on a March 1996 interview with Ms. Rena Reid, for the National Archive Memory Bank. Written by Mrs. Lois Blumenthal; illustrated by Mrs. Penny Clifford.

Class Activity Suggestions

Discuss the reason for using scientific Latin names. Why not just use the common names that are easier to understand? Are common names the same for every plant in every country? (*No, of course not. Latin names are the only clear way to positively identify a species.*) Discuss Latin roots of words like *pseudobulb* and *albino*. Discuss cross-pollination and what it means. Should we be careful about importing other orchids that may breed with our National Flower and change it? (*Yes, some Honduran species are very closely related to our native Wild Banana Orchid*) Is Hybridization always bad? (*No; arrange a visit to Mr. Kirkland Nixon's orchid house to view incredibly beautiful hybrid orchids.*)

Discuss clearing land for development. Is it a good idea to rescue orchids on land that will be bulldozed? What can we do with these plants? Is it illegal to take Wild Banana Orchids from the wild? (*No*) Is there any need to make it illegal? (*Probably not; the problem is the loss of plants through careless development, not collecting. It is illegal to take them out of the Cayman Islands.*)

Have the students prepare a list of questions about changes here and how they have affected Wild Banana Orchids. Invite an older person to be put in the "hot seat" and answer the questions.

Assign students to write an essay, song, or poem about Wild Banana Orchids. Poems can assume the form of "telescope" poems (i.e. "In my mind I see a memory; in that memory I see a . . . ; in that . . . I see a . . . ; etc." OR "'In the universe there is a planet, on that planet there is an island, on that island there is a tree...; etc.") or a "simile" poem (i.e. "The blossoms are like . . . ; the stems are like . . . ; the clumps on the trees remind me of . . . ; the colours are like . . . ; etc.") OR use the letters of the word to start each line of a poem (i.e. **O**utside my house, **R**are plants are growing, **C**ome see them bloom, **H**ave you ever seen...).

On Grand Cayman arrange a visit to the Botanic Park or the Mastic Trail, preferably in April or May, to see the Wild Banana Orchid in bloom in its native habitat.

On Cayman Brac visit the Nature Trail in the Brac Parrot Reserve. From one spot it is possible in April or May to stand by a twelve - foot cactus and see 15 orchids flowering and three different types of air-plants (epiphytes) nearby. A brochure is included in the back of this book; and may be photocopied and folded to be pocket-sized.

Find a Wild Banana Orchid in a flowerpot for the classroom. Watch it bloom in April or May.

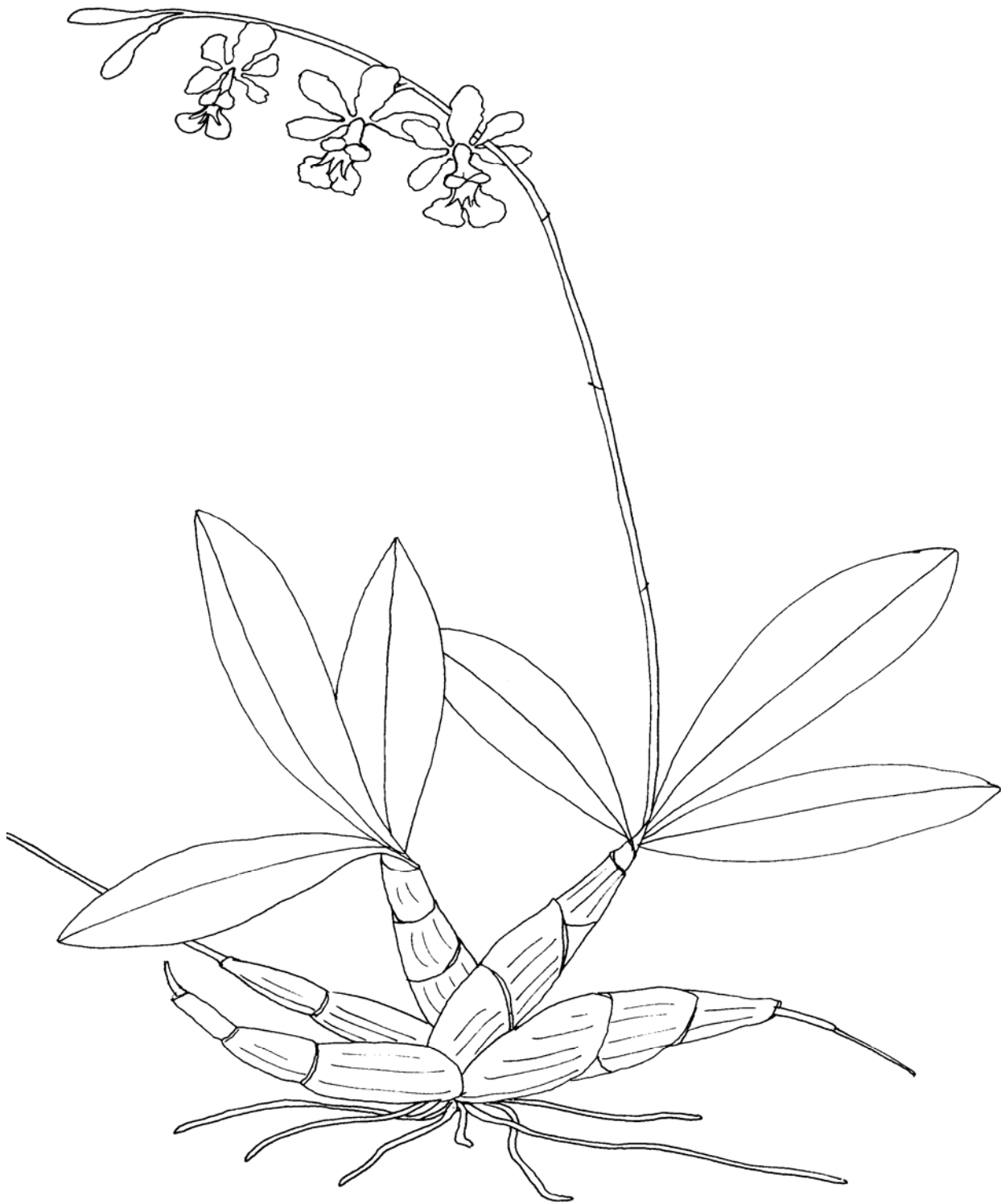
Draw the Wild Banana Orchid or colour the picture. Decide if the blooms will be coloured like the Grand Cayman or the Cayman Brac variety. Design pottery or make a tile with a Wild Banana Orchid motif.

Do some role-playing using various scenarios. Land owner, developer, tourist and environmentalist interacting over the fate of a particular piece of land. Can they compromise?

For art classes, use orchids as introduction to Georgia O'Keefe paintings. Design a T-shirt featuring Wild Banana Orchids using Lino-cut techniques.

Draw cartoon-like pictures of early explorers finding Wild Banana Orchids. Put the words they used in "word balloons", such as "A most beautiful plant in its native land!" Point out Wild Banana Orchid stamp sold by the Post Office. Design a stamp.





Colour the flowers white with purple edges for the Grand Cayman Orchid. Colour the flowers yellow with purple edges for the Cayman Brac Orchid. Colour the leaves and stalks green, the bulbs yellow and green and the roots white.

Resources

The Orchid Society can be contacted by calling 949-2873 or 947-9462 (daytime only). Ask about meetings, books, speakers and other resources.

The Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park has many orchids on display. Note the painting of a Wild Banana Orchid just inside the Visitor's Centre.

The National Trust can answer questions and provide additional scientific and historical information about the Wild Banana Orchid.

The National Archive has information in the Memory Bank pertaining to orchids and other plants.

Wild Banana Orchids can also be seen along the Mastic Trail. A walk can be arranged by calling 949-1996.

Mr. Kirkland Nixon of the Cayman Islands Orchid Society is a knowledgeable source of information about Wild Banana Orchids and can be reached at 947-1476.

Mr. Steve Smith of George Hicks High School can provide an additional list of activity ideas and will help design materials for special needs students.

On Cayman Brac, Mr. Wallace Platts is available to accompany students on field trips and to explain more about the Brac Parrot Reserve and Nature Trail. He can be reached by calling 948-2390. A brochure produced on Cayman Brac about the Brac Parrot Reserve and Nature Trail is included at the end of this book, and can be photocopied and folded to be pocket-sized.

Visit the Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park on-line at www.botanic.park.ky

Visit the National Trust on-line at www.caymannationaltrust.org

Surf the web or try <http://www.mcquerryorchidbooks.com> for general information about orchids.

How to care for a Wild Banana Orchid

1. Tie your Wild Banana Orchid securely, but gently, to a tree with rough bark in your garden. In time the roots will grow around the tree and you can remove the ties.
2. Be sure that the spot you have chosen is shady and not too windy or too close to the sea.
3. If you do not have a suitable tree growing in your garden, you can tie the orchid to a piece of rough wood or a broken tree branch and hang it on your porch or deck.
4. Remember to water your orchids with a fine spray of water from the garden hose, or from a spray bottle.
5. If you see any small black dots on your Wild Banana Orchid, clean the leaves with a cotton ball dipped in rubbing alcohol mixed with soap.
6. Relax and wait for spring. Wild Banana Orchids are easy to grow and need very little care.

What YOU Can Do

- **Point out Wild Banana Orchids growing in your neighbourhood.** Explain to your friends and family that this special plant grows nowhere else in the world.
- **Speak out about the preservation of our woodlands.** When clearing land for development, it is often possible to leave native trees with their orchids and air plants in place to be part of the landscaping plan after construction is finished.
- **If you see someone clearing a large piece of land with orchids on it, call the Orchid Society.** They will come to “rescue” the orchids. Ideally, the Orchid Society would like to be notified *before* the trees are knocked down so the orchids will not be crushed.
- **If someone is clearing a smaller piece of bush near your home, check for orchids and bring them home.** Tie them to a tree in a shady place and water often until they become established.
- **Grow as many native plants as possible in your garden at home.** Local plants are just as beautiful as the ones from far away. They need less water and catch fewer diseases.
- **Remember what you have learned.** When you become an adult and build or buy your own home, use as many native Caymanian plants as possible in your garden.

What Kids Can Do

- Tell your friends and family about our Wild Banana Orchids. Explain that it grows only in the Cayman Islands and that we must take care of it.
- If you see someone clearing bush with orchids on it, call the National Trust or the Orchid Society. They will come to rescue the orchids. They would like to be told *before* the trees are knocked down so the orchids will not be crushed.
- If there are only a few orchids, rescue them yourself and bring them home. Tie them to a tree in a shady place and water them often.
- Grow as many native plants as you can in your garden at home. It is easy to take care of local plants. They are just as nice as the plants from far away.
- When you grow up and build or buy your own home, remember what you have learned about using native Caymanian plants in your garden.

Name _____ Class _____

Wild Banana Orchid Quiz

Multiple Choice: circle the correct answer.

1. The Wild Banana Orchid was chosen to be our National Flower because:
a) It is pretty b) It is special to our islands c) No reason
2. The Wild Banana Orchid is found:
a) all over the world b) all over the Caribbean c) only in the Cayman Islands
3. The Wild Banana Orchid got its popular name because the pseudobulbs:
a) taste like a banana b) look like a banana c) smells like a banana
4. Most Wild Banana Orchids bloom during:
a) April and May b) July and August c) October
5. Every Wild Banana Orchid releases about:
a) a dozen seeds b) a million seeds c) billions of seeds
6. The seeds survive best:
a) In dry sandy areas b) On coconut trees c) In damp places
7. An epiphyte is a plant that:
a) lives in harmony with its host b) kills its host c) grows in the earth
8. Ants live inside orchid pseudobulbs:
a) only in the Cayman Islands b) in other places, but not here
9. Wild Banana Orchids grow on:
a) endemic trees b) indigenous trees c) exotic trees d) all three
10. Wild Banana Orchids are:
a) tolerant of droughts b) resistant to pests c) both

Name _____ Class _____

Wild Banana Orchid Quiz

True or False: if the answer is true circle T. If the answer is false, circle F.

1. The Wild Banana Orchid is our National Flower. T F
2. "Endemic" means that the orchids have a disease. T F
3. Wild Banana Orchid pseudobulbs are green or yellow. T F
4. Wild Banana Orchids grow in damp woodlands. T F
5. We need to save woodlands for Wild Banana Orchids. T F
6. A parasitic plant will eventually kill its host plant. T F
7. An epiphyte plant lives in harmony with its host plant. T F
8. Orchids are epiphyte plants. T F
9. Stinging ants always live in Wild Banana Orchid pseudobulbs. T F
10. Wild Banana Orchid flowers are different colours on different islands. T F
11. Some people made pipe bowls from Wild Banana Orchids. T F
12. On the Brac, people used Wild Banana Orchids for food. T F
13. Hybrids are orchids from another country. T F
14. People from the Orchid Society have stepped in front of bulldozers to save our wild rare orchids. T F
15. The Wild Banana Orchid must be protected in the wild for the benefit of Caymanians and to encourage ecotourism. T F

Name _____ Class _____

Wild Banana Orchid Quiz A

Fill in the blanks: choose the correct answer from the word box below.

1. The Wild Banana Orchid is the National _____ of the Cayman Islands.
2. The flowers of the Wild Banana Orchid grow at the end of long green _____.
3. At the bottom of the flower stems are bulbs that look like a bunch of _____.
4. The Wild Banana Orchid is found in damp woodlands, growing on _____.
5. The Wild Banana Orchid does not _____ the tree on which it grows.

WORD BOX

bananas

trees

hurt

flower

stems

Name _____ Class _____

Wild Banana Orchid Quiz B

Fill in the blanks: choose the correct answer from the word box below.

1. Wild Banana Orchids let out _____ of seeds.
2. The flowers bloom in the spring rains of _____ and _____.
3. Wild Banana Orchid flowers on Grand Cayman are _____ with purple edges.
4. Wild Banana Orchid flowers on Cayman Brac and on Little Cayman are _____ with purple edges.
5. We should _____ orchids before we clear land.

WORD BOX

yellow white May
move April millions

Answer Key: Wild Banana Orchid Quizzes

Wild Banana Orchid - Vocabulary Work Sheet

1. A plant or animal with an unusual lack of colour is called an **albino**.
2. It is often better to **conserve** things now, so we will have them later.
3. When **deforestation** occurs and the **ecosystem** is damaged, many **endemic** species may lose their homes.
4. Wild Banana Orchids are **epiphytes**. They can live on another plant without harming it as a **parasite** would.
5. Some **species** of Cayman Islands orchids need a special **environment** in order to survive.
6. Plants or animals not found naturally in the Cayman Islands that are brought in from other countries are called **exotic**, while **indigenous** plants or animals may be natural to the Cayman Islands, as well as other countries.
7. A new plant or animal produced when two different species mix is a **hybrid**. When seeds **germinate**, they begin to sprout and grow.
8. Insects, birds, bats and the wind can all **pollinate** flowers.
9. No one in the Orchid Society has yet **propagated** Wild Banana Orchids from seeds.
10. Stinging ants live in the **pseudobulbs** of some wild orchids. The orchid provides a home and nectar for the ants and they sting any animal or human that touches or harms the plant. This relationship is called **symbiosis**.

Wild Banana Orchid Quiz - Multiple Choice

1. b) It is special and grows only on the Cayman Islands.
2. c) The Banana Orchid is endemic to the Cayman Islands.
3. b) The pseudobulbs look like green or yellow bananas.
4. a) April and May
5. b) A million seeds, because so many won't find a host tree.
6. c) Banana Orchids need damp humid conditions to grow in.
7. a) An epiphyte lives on a host tree without harming it.
8. b) It is a mystery why our ants do not take advantage of this natural habitat.
9. d) Banana Orchids can be seen growing on any tree with a rough mossy bark.
10. c) Because they are native plants, Wild Banana Orchids are easy to care for and tolerant of local conditions and pests.

Wild Banana Orchid Quiz - True - False

- 1.-T 2.-F 3.-T 4.-T 5.-T 6.-T 7.-T 8.-T 9.-F 10.-T 11.-T 12.-F 13.-F 14.-T, Miss Joyce Hylton, founder of the Orchid Society, tells of doing this. 15.-T

Wild Banana Orchid Quiz A - Word Box

1. The Wild Banana Orchid is the National FLOWER of the Cayman Islands.
2. The flowers of the Wild Banana Orchid grow in bunches at the top of long green STEMS.
3. At the bottom of the flower stem are swollen stems that look like a bunch of BANANAS.
4. The Wild Banana Orchid is found in damp woodlands, growing on TREES.
5. The Wild Banana Orchid does not HURT the tree on which it grows.

Wild Banana Orchid Quiz B - Word Box

1. The Wild Banana Orchid lets out MILLIONS of seeds.
2. The flowers bloom in the spring rains of APRIL and MAY.
3. Wild Banana Orchid flowers on Grand Cayman are WHITE with purple edges.
4. Wild Banana Orchid flowers on Cayman Brac and on Little Cayman are YELLOW with purple edges.
5. We should MOVE orchids before we clear land.

Cayman Islands Parrot

National Bird
of
The Cayman Islands

LOVE ANIMALS.
GOD HAS GIVEN THEM THE RUDIMENTS OF THOUGHT
AND JOY UNTRoubLED.
DO NOT TROUBLE THEIR JOY,
DON'T HARASS THEM.
DON'T DEPRIVE THEM OF THEIR HAPPINESS.
DON'T WORK AGAINST GOD'S INTENT.
MAN, DO NOT PRIDE YOURSELF
ON SUPERIORITY TO ANIMALS,
THEY ARE WITHOUT SIN,
AND YOU, WITH YOUR GREATNESS, DEFILE THE EARTH.

FYODOR DOESTOYEVSKY



Cayman Islands National Symbols: Flora and Fauna - National Bird

Courtney Platt – Island Images

Cayman Islands Parrot: Natural History

On Earth Day 1996, the Cayman Islands Parrot was chosen by the Government and the people of the Cayman Islands as our National Bird.

There are actually two **subspecies*** of this bird living in the Cayman Islands. Both are considered to be the National Bird. The Grand Cayman Parrot is **endemic*** to the island of Grand Cayman and the Cayman Brac Parrot is endemic to Cayman Brac.



Cayman Brac Parrot

From a painting by Ms. Tracy Pedersen for the RARE Center

The scientific name for the Grand Cayman Parrot is *Amazona leucocephala caymanensis*, (Am-a-ZO-na loo-ko-SEF-a-la cay-man-EN-sis) and the scientific name of Cayman Brac Parrot is *Amazona leucocephala hesterna* (Am-a-ZO-na loo-ko-SEF-a-la hes-TER-na). There are only three other subspecies of *Amazona leucocephala* in the world.

Two of these subspecies live in Cuba and the other one lives on two islands in the Bahamas. The common name for these five subspecies of the Amazon Parrot is the Cuban Parrot, although there is no evidence as to which subspecies appeared first.

Description

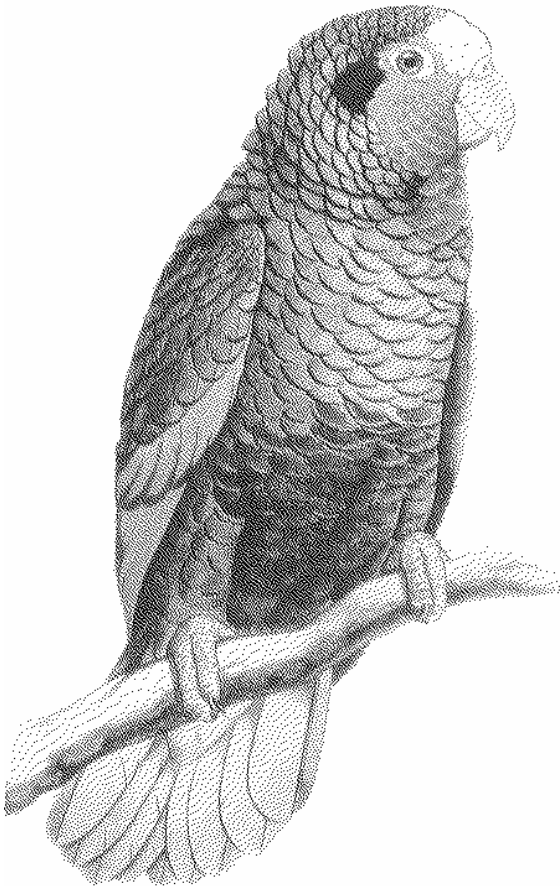
The Cayman Islands Parrot has brilliant green feathers with bright blue colouring under the wings and tail. Males are larger and more brightly coloured than females and have more rose-reddish colour around their faces. The Cayman Brac Parrot is smaller than the Grand Cayman Parrot. It has more black trim on its feathers and a maroon belly. Colours vary slightly during the **breeding season*** and in young parrots. For more detail see Patricia Bradley's [Birds of the Cayman Islands](#).

Habits and Habitat

Parrots mate for life and use the same nesting site over and over again. They nest in hollow trees in wetlands and inland woodlands. In Cayman Brac they breed in the woodland on the Bluff.

Cayman Islands Parrots lay eggs only once a year in the spring and average three eggs per **clutch***. Both parents help to raise the young chicks. The chicks stay in the nest for fourteen weeks and are able to fly by mid-summer. It takes four months for a chick to grow big enough to leave the nest and five years before it is ready to find its own mate and build a nest.

The natural foods for our parrots include Sea Grapes, Red Birch berries and other local fruits, berries and seeds. They only occasionally eat an insect or a small lizard. They are usually seen in pairs, or small family groups, though larger flocks will sometimes gather on fruit trees before the breeding season.



Grand Cayman Parrots are often heard before they are seen because they have a loud squawk. They have many different calls, such as alarm calls, flight calls and perching calls.

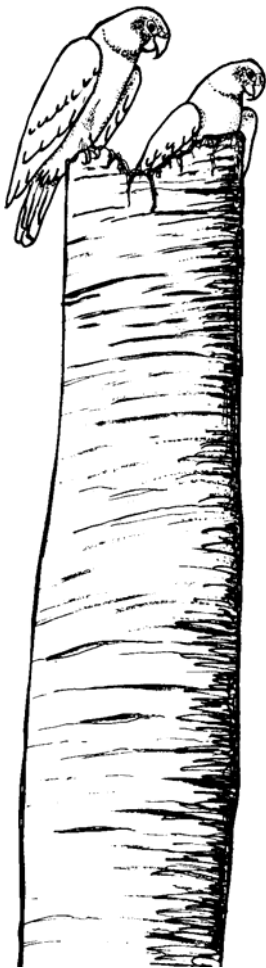
The Cayman Brac Parrot is nicknamed the "Stealth Parrot" because it is very quiet. This type of behaviour is usually seen in areas where **predators*** threaten a species, but Cayman Brac has no more predators than Grand Cayman. The reasons for the secretive behaviour of the Cayman Brac Parrot remain a mystery.

Grand Cayman Parrot

From a painting by Ms. Tracy Pedersen for the RARE Center

Threats

A census taken in 1996 counted about 400 Cayman Brac Parrots and 2000 Grand Cayman Parrots. The Cayman Brac Parrot is one of the rarest Amazon Parrots in the world with a range of only 14 square miles. At one time the Cayman Brac Parrot lived on Little Cayman as well, but was wiped out by the 1932 hurricane.



Natural

Parrots have many predators including hawks and owls. This is a **natural*** control. In addition, they can be injured in storms or lose their chicks from the flooding of nesting holes during heavy rains. Food can sometimes be scarce due to droughts, storms and hurricanes.

Unnatural

Parrots face new threats from animals brought to the Cayman Islands by humans, such as rats and cats. These **exotic*** and often **feral*** animals can climb trees and steal eggs and baby birds.

Birds imported from other countries can escape and bring diseases to our parrots. These foreign birds can also compete with our native parrots for food and nesting places.

Development is taking over many nesting areas. Parrots suffer as their traditional nesting sites are destroyed by **deforestation***.

Poachers* who wish to steal baby birds often chop down trees to reach nests. This illegal and thoughtless practice destroys a nesting hole that would have been used for many years and seriously impacts the parrot's ability to reproduce. Suitable nesting sites are not plentiful and the loss of even one affects our parrot population. Captive birds often die and those that do survive may lead lonely and unhappy lives in cages.

The Cayman Islands' parrot population could go into a severe decline during the next 10 or 15 years. If this happens, it would be very difficult to reverse. An attempt to restore the population would require enormous amounts of money

and effort. The Cayman Islands Parrot mates for life and only breeds once a year. A few dozen birds will not sustain our population.

Agricultural Concerns

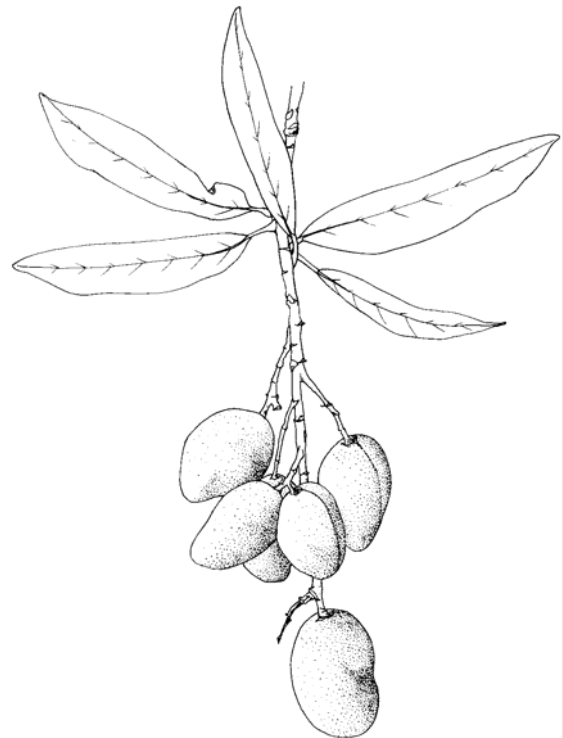
Many farmers consider parrots to be pests. Some feel that they should be allowed to shoot parrots that are eating their mangoes. This issue is very sensitive and has been debated at Agricultural Society meetings.

Some farmers in the eastern part of Grand Cayman feel that we have more parrots than ever before, but this could be an illusion. There are almost no parrots left in the George Town area. The parrot population is concentrated in the **habitats*** that remain.

Many farmers feel that with protection, the parrot will multiply beyond all reason and devastate their fruit crops. We must remember, however, that there is a natural balance of nature that will help to keep the population stable. Parrots also face many unnatural threats. There is no need for humans to add additional stresses to our parrot population.

Mr. Otto Watler says, "As a mango farmer I have produced up to twenty-five thousand pounds of mangoes per year. From that crop, about one hundred and thirty pounds were destroyed by parrots. This is less than one-half of a percent of my crop. I can give that little bit back to nature, so that my children and grandchildren will have the parrot in their skies. Yes, it is frustrating to see the parrot wasting and ruining fruit, but we need to look at the overall actual losses. In my opinion they are not large."

Small farmers face special problems. If a person only has 2 or 3 mango trees, the loss is greater. These people see the parrot as taking money out of their pockets. Perhaps society can find a way to help these small farmers. As times change, some people inevitably



Drawing by Mrs. Penny Clifford

experience hardship. Saving our National Bird is important enough that ways can and will be found to solve these problems.

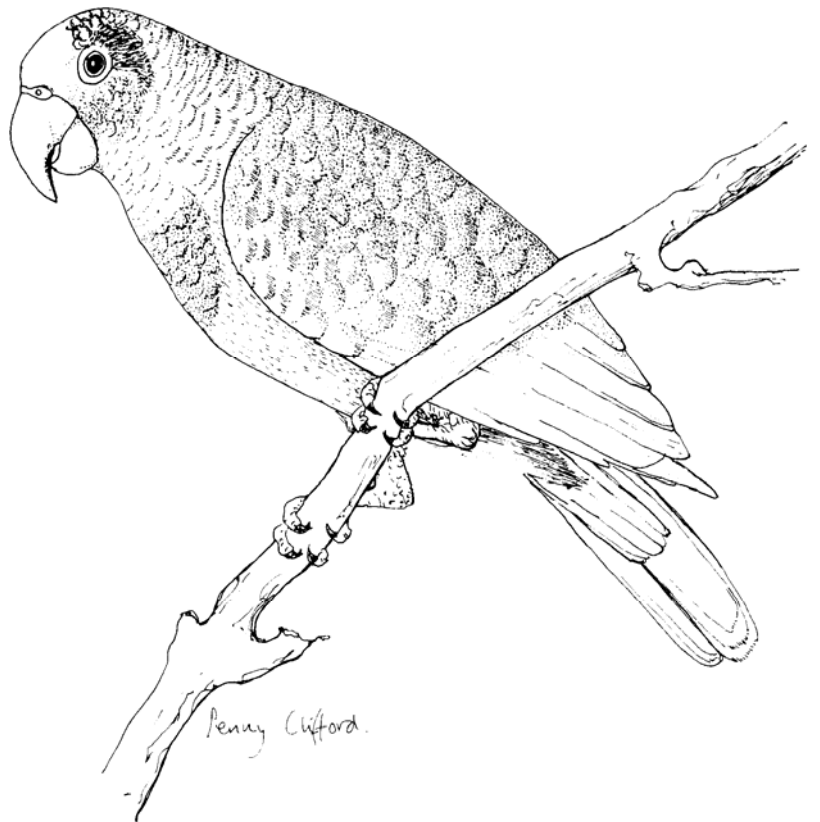
In the past, when less food was imported, people were more dependent on local produce. We believe that there were more parrots then, but there are no records of crop damage. Parrots in those days had plenty of wild natural foods. As humans take over more land, we must remember to leave stands of wild trees where parrots may find food.

Questions

There are many questions facing Caymanians. They must ask themselves, "Is there really a market for every mango that grows on our islands? Is the parrot the only animal that eats mangoes? What about other types of birds? Do I really want to live with skies empty of birds? Though it may seem like there are plenty of parrots, how many breeding pairs are there? How many good nesting sites? How many successful clutches are raised? How can we protect our parrot without harming our economy? How much development can our islands **sustain***? Is there a way that tropical islands can have parrots, mangoes and **sustainable*** development?"

Answers

While there are no easy answers to all of these questions, solutions are available with a little research, compromise and innovative thinking. There is expert advice available from Australia and other countries that raise economically important fruit crops and have native parrots. International



organizations such as the World Parrot Trust in the UK and RARE in the US are willing to help save Cayman's parrots. We need not invent the answers to our problems alone.

As an organization concerned with the protection of the natural environment, the National Trust for the Cayman Islands is against shooting parrots or "culling" the population in any way. Parrot access to cultivated crops can be controlled with protective netting or tenting of trees. This method also protects against other types of flying crop pests, such as bats and has been used successfully in other countries.



Photo courtesy of Mr. Michael Gore

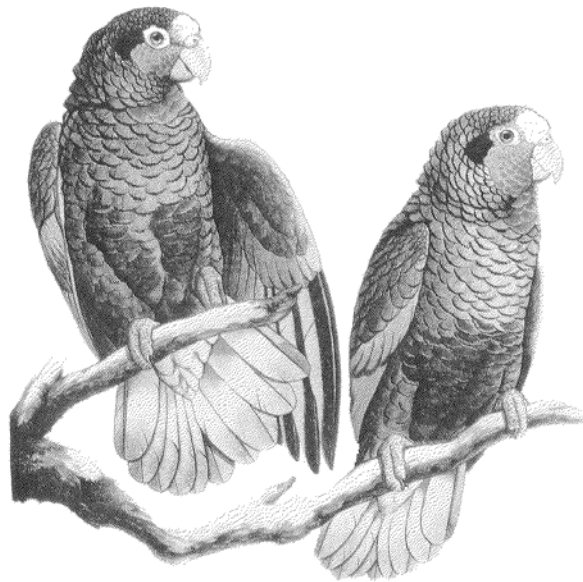
If our parrot population crashes due to loss of habitat, it may be necessary to install nesting boxes in the wild to ensure their survival. This can be a complicated and expensive project and is not always successful. It is a far better plan to preserve existing nesting areas, such as the Central Mangrove Wetlands. Preserving the parrot's habitat assures not only its survival, but that of other wild birds, animals and plants as well.

Puerto Rico has spent millions of dollars trying to conserve its parrot, with only limited success. Dominica has exported its few breeding pairs to England for specialists to work with and their parrot population is just starting to revive. Parrots survive on only two islands in the Bahamas. It is feared that it will be impossible to save them from **extinction*** there, due to **feral*** house cats that hunt in the birds' nesting sites.

We must look at what has happened elsewhere and take measures NOW to protect our National Bird from a sad and expensive population crash. Preservation of habitat is essential. Unless a long-term conservation plan is started soon, the survival of our National bird is *not assured*. Conservation efforts often begin too late.

Battles to save **endangered*** species must be won over and over again, but once they are lost there are no second chances. As a group, parrots are among the most **vulnerable*** species to human-caused extinction, mostly because of their many **interactions*** with the human world. It is doubtful that a species such as the parrot will survive unless humans help.

Future voters in the Cayman Islands should be encouraged to think about all these issues and decide what their long-term goals are. Since the Cayman Islands Parrot lives only here, Caymanians are the only ones who can save it.



Cayman Brac Parrot and Grand Cayman Parrot

From a painting by Ms. Tracy Pedersen for the RARE Center

Cayman Islands Parrot: Vocabulary List

Breeding season --- time of year when pairs are formed and chicks are born

Clutch --- a nest of eggs or a brood of chicks

Endemic --- (en-DEM-ik) found only in a certain area or country

Environment --- everything surrounding a person, plant, or animal

Exotic --- foreign, brought into one country from another

Extinct --- gone forever

Feral --- once under human care, but now wild

Habitat --- the natural area where a species lives and can find necessities

Indigenous --- (in-DIJ-en-us) native, but found in other places too

Interaction --- acting upon each other

Natural --- by birth, arising from and existing in nature

Poacher --- one who steals wild animals or kills wild animals illegally

Predator --- (PRED-a-ter) an animal that hunts other animals for food.

Range --- the area where a certain type of animal lives

Species --- a single, distinct kind of plant or animal

Subspecies --- a division of a species --- related, but not identical species

Sustain --- to maintain, to keep in existence

Sustainable --- able to be continued over time, maintainable

Vulnerable --- easily injured or harmed

Cayman Islands Parrot: Vocabulary Work Sheet

Fill in the blanks. Use the Vocabulary List to find the meaning of the words.

This is not a test. Students may work together to find the correct meaning of the words.

1. The time of year when pairs form and chicks are born is called the _____ season. A nest of eggs or a brood of chicks is called a _____.
2. When plants and animals develop in an isolated area and become different from those found in other parts of the world they are considered to be _____.
3. A plant or animal that is _____ to an area, but is also found in other areas is said to be _____. A plant or animal that is brought from another area and introduced to a new place is said to be _____ in that place.
4. Pets or farm animals that were once in human care, but have escaped and are living in the wild are said to be _____.
5. The _____ is made up of everything surrounding a person, plant, or animal.
6. _____ are a natural control for any animal. _____ are human hunters who illegally capture or kill wild animals.
7. If a plant or an animal loses its _____ it may become _____.
8. When two or more species affect each other, this is called _____.
9. The Cayman Brac Parrot has the smallest _____ in the world. Endemic _____ and _____ that live only in a small area are especially _____ to extinction.
10. _____ means to maintain, to keep in existence. We hope that our population of Wild Cayman Islands Parrots is _____.

endemic	vulnerable	Predator	breeding	exotic	interaction	
clutch	environment	indigenous	feral	Sustain	sustainable	
natural	poacher	extinct	range	habitat	species	subspecies

Cayman Islands Parrot - Natural History: Key Facts

- The Cayman Islands Parrot is the *National Bird* of the Cayman Islands.
- The *Grand Cayman Parrot subspecies* is endemic to Grand Cayman.
- The *Cayman Brac Parrot subspecies* is endemic to Cayman Brac.
- *Both* Cayman Parrot subspecies are considered to be our National Bird.
- Cayman Islands Parrots *mate for life*.
- The Cayman Brac Parrot has the *smallest range* of any Amazon Parrot.
- *Natural threats* to the parrot include hawks and owls, flooding of nesting cavities, loss of food supplies and injuries due to storms and hurricanes.
- *Human impact*, such as development, deforestation, poaching, deliberate killing by those who consider the parrot to be a crop pest and the loss of nesting sites are the *greatest threats* facing Cayman's parrots.
- *Other unnatural threats* include diseases from imported birds and introduced predators such as cats and rats.
- Other countries have spent *millions of dollars* trying to *re-establish* parrot populations that were allowed to decline.
- International organizations are *willing to help* save Cayman's parrots.
- We must *act now* to save our National Bird from extinction.
- It is *not too late* to save the Cayman Islands' Parrots from extinction.
- Everyone can help by telling others of the danger our parrots face and by speaking out for the preservation of our woodlands and wetlands. Don't tolerate poaching and NEVER catch or buy a wild parrot. Parrots are only really happy when they are flying free, and an unhappy pet is no pleasure to anyone and a very sad sight.

Cayman Islands Parrot: Pet Care

Parrots should NEVER be taken from the wild. It is illegal. This information is provided to improve conditions for birds already in captivity.

Caymanians have always kept parrots as pets. Early Cayman folklore describes pirates with Cayman Islands Parrots on their shoulders.

In 1990, a law was passed that protected all Cayman Islands Parrots. **It is now illegal to capture, export, sell, or keep a Cayman Islands Parrot as a pet.**



Photo courtesy of Cayman Islands National Archive Collection

At the time this law was passed, there were many Cayman Islands Parrots being kept as family pets. Although technically this is now illegal, Caymanians have been permitted to keep pet parrots already in their care.

A pet parrot could die if it was simply released into the wild. Pets can't easily survive on their own. They need to learn from their parents and other parrots what to eat, where to find food and how to avoid danger.

Pet parrots that have been kept with other birds could transmit diseases into our wild population. However, if a parrot was captured as an adult and has not been in captivity too long, it is possible to return it to the wild. If you have a pet parrot that you think should be released, seek help from the National Trust to ensure a successful outcome.

Parrots Need Friends

It is important that parrots in captivity receive proper care. Parrots are extremely intelligent and sociable animals with many special needs. A parrot is as smart as a three-year old child with the emotions of a two-year old child and, just like a young child, can't stand to be alone.

Cayman Islands Parrots can form strong attachments to their owners. They will talk not only by mimicking random words and phrases, but by fluffing, preening, making eye-contact, nodding and expressing happiness in the presence of their favourite person. If you are not available to give your pet parrot many hours of attention per day, consider finding another home for it or pairing it with another lonely pet. (Do this with expert advice to avoid fights and injuries to the birds.)



Mrs. Lori Adams with "Dayo"
Dailey

Photo courtesy of Mr. Tim

In olden times, when life was simpler, people stayed around the house all day. They enjoyed sitting on the front porch playing with their pet parrot. One Caymanian lady told of a pet bird that flew freely in the house and garden. This type of existence, though not natural, can be a happy one for a bird and a rewarding friendship between human and animal. Sadly, this is not the case today for most pet birds.

In these busier times, people are away at work and school for much of the day. They return home in the evening, only to go inside, turn on the air-conditioning and watch television, leaving a lonely parrot sitting in a cage on the porch.

Sometimes people inherit a pet parrot from a relative or friend who is no longer able to care for it. Often, the new owners are too busy to really enjoy having a parrot for a pet. These birds often become unhappy, or worse, actually lose their sanity from this solitary confinement and "turn mean." A patient person, with the right skills and knowledge, may be able to tame an unsociable parrot.



Drawing courtesy of Mrs. Judy Steele

A pet parrot is not just a decoration. It is a living animal with needs and feelings and should be kept by someone with the leisure time to care for it. Cayman Islands Parrots have been known to live for 30 years in captivity IF they are properly taken care of. They should not spend years of misery in a small cage that is like a jail and die young. Parrots should be provided with large cage and a variety of toys and perches made from fruit tree branches (almond tree branches are ideal). The perches should be of different sizes, and if the bird is tame enough, they can also be placed around the house, near where you work or watch TV to provide a change of scenery and so that your bird can see you and not feel all alone. A simple free-standing perch can be made with a Christmas tree stand and a large almond tree branch.

What To Feed Your Pet Parrot

Parrots need to eat lots of different seeds, vegetables, fruits and some protein. **When parrots are fed only sunflower seeds or rice they will sicken and die.** Special seed mixtures just for parrots are available in pet shops. Parrots like cheese if it's not too strong or salty and most fresh fruits like papayas, mangoes, watermelon, apples, grapes or oranges. They like cooked and raw vegetables like callaloo, broccoli, pumpkin, sweet potatoes, corn-on-the-cob, peas, potatoes, rice, and whole wheat pasta, bread, or cereal. Some people even serve their pet parrots *cooled* portions of the family meal using a clean plastic jar lid as a dinner plate.

Parrots also like the foods they would eat if they were still free in the wild. Sea Grapes, Red Birch berries, Chinaberries and ripe almond fruits are all good choices. Wild fruits should be washed if they are gathered near a busy road. Be sure you know exactly what a wild plant is before you give it to your parrot. Some plants are poison. Parrots also enjoy Ixora and Hibiscus flowers that have not been sprayed or heavily fertilized.

An occasional treat of fresh coconut adds interest to your bird's day, but coconut, like sunflower seeds, is high in fat and a caged bird should not eat much of it. Parrots need a small amount of fine gravel or crushed oyster shell. Buy these at pet shops.

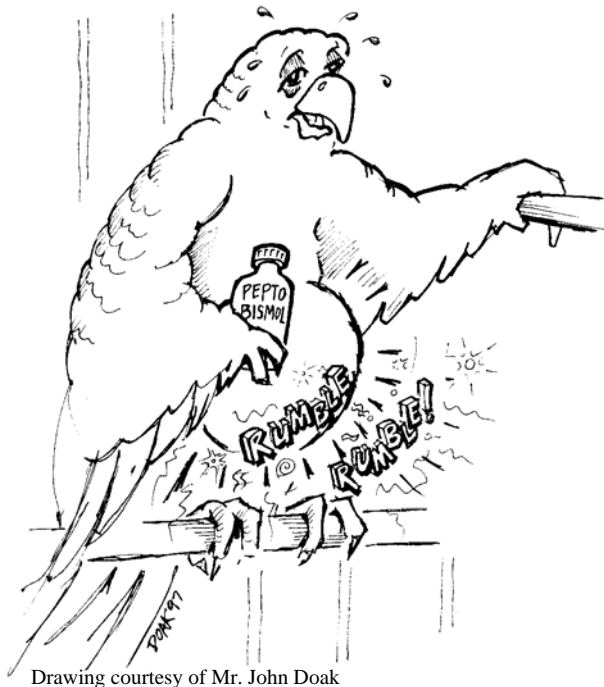


Drawing courtesy of Mr. John Doak

Water

Change your parrot's water every day. Slimy water will make your bird very sick. Water bottles, available from pet shops, work well and keep food and droppings out of the water supply. If a water bowl is used, place it away from the perch. Wash bowls daily and refill, especially if they are in the sun.

What NOT To Feed Your Pet Parrot



Drawing courtesy of Mr. John Doak

Apple, cherry and peach seeds are poisonous to birds. Do not feed pet parrots raw meat, red meat, coffee, tea, soda, chocolate, cinnamon, especially rolled cinnamon sticks, unidentified flowers, alcohol, salted peanuts, potato chips, or other very salty foods, junk foods or anything that is hot in temperature. Though some parrots like avocado, the part near the seed can be poisonous for them.

You should never place plants or sticks in the cage unless they are non-poisonous. Oleander is especially dangerous.

Pet stores and the public library carry books detailing the proper diet for parrots living in captivity. It is important to supply your pet bird with the proper nutrients. Improperly fed parrots have shorter life spans and are more subject to disease. Parrots naturally hide their illnesses. Those fed poor diets may appear healthy until they suddenly sicken and die.

Cage Size

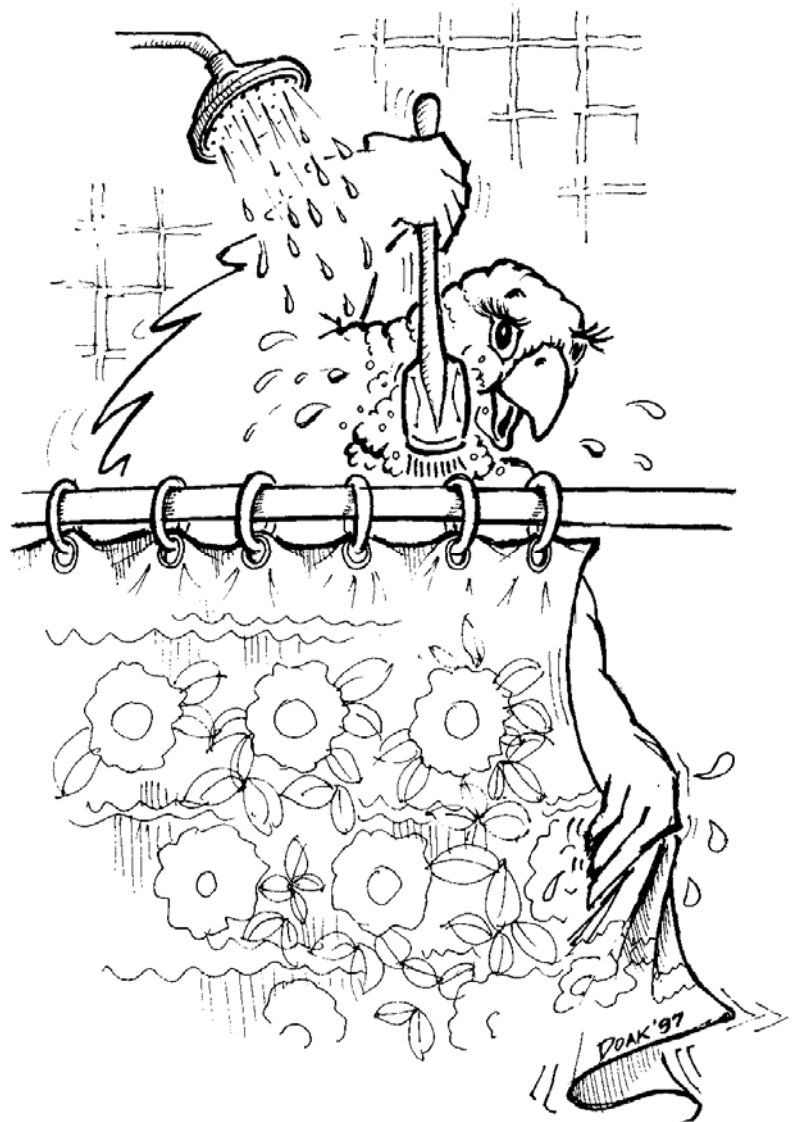
Provide as large a cage as possible for your pet parrot. Parrots are much happier and healthier if they have plenty of space. The cage should be rat proof and at least three feet on each side and four feet tall. Parrots should be able to stretch and flap their wings fully inside the cage and their tail feathers should not touch the bars. A ragged tail is a sign that the cage is too small. There should be plenty of room to climb and exercise. The bars should not be too widely spaced, or your parrot could become stuck. Cayman Islands Parrots are too large to live in cages designed for parakeets. A small cage will shorten the life of your pet. If your parrot is tame, allow it time outside the cage every day.

Cage Location

Always place the cage on a high shelf or hang it from a ceiling. Parrots hate to be down on the floor. Put the cage in an area where family members gather, so that your pet is included in the day-to-day life of the household. A very tame parrot can be provided with several perches around the house, (set over newspapers or sandboxes) and will enjoy being in the same room as the people.

Bathing

Parrots enjoy bathing and will clean themselves, splashing about happily, if provided with a bowl of pure water. Remove the water after the bird has bathed so that it does not collect debris and become polluted with droppings. Some parrots enjoy a light spray of pure water from a clean spray bottle that has never been used for anything else. They will turn round and round spreading their wings and shaking their feathers. Birds will not bathe after three or four in the afternoon, as they prefer to have plenty of time to dry off before night falls. Never try to wash your parrot with soap. Keep damp birds out of cold drafts and air-conditioning.



Perches

Standing on a flat surface is not natural for birds. Be sure your parrot has a perch. Natural branches from unsprayed fruit trees, such as almond trees, make ideal perches. The perch must be wide enough so that the bird's toes do not meet underneath and an uneven surface with a variety of diameters is better for their feet. Use several branches of different sizes so your parrot's feet can exercise and stay strong. If your parrot is tame, put perches around the house, near where your work or watch TV, so it can be near you.

Toys

Toys are not just a luxury for you pet parrot. They are a necessity for keeping your bird happy and healthy. Toys should be replaced often so the parrot does not become bored with them, although sometimes a bird becomes attached to toys with tassels and groom them as though they were a friend. These toys should stay in the cage. Soft or hard wood toys from a pet shop are nice, but will be shredded and destroyed fairly quickly. Coconut husks, branches from Sea Grape trees and Almond trees, leather strips that have not been dyed, mineral blocks, lava blocks and raw pumpkin with seeds all make good toys for pet birds. Be sure to wash toys carefully, and never use any branches that have been sprayed with insecticide.

Cage Cleaning

Be sure to clean your parrot's cage often. Clean and refill water and food dishes daily. Dismantle and wash the cage thoroughly every week. It is unhealthy to allow food and debris to build up in the bottom of the cage. Remember to scrub the perches and toys within the cage too.



Clipping

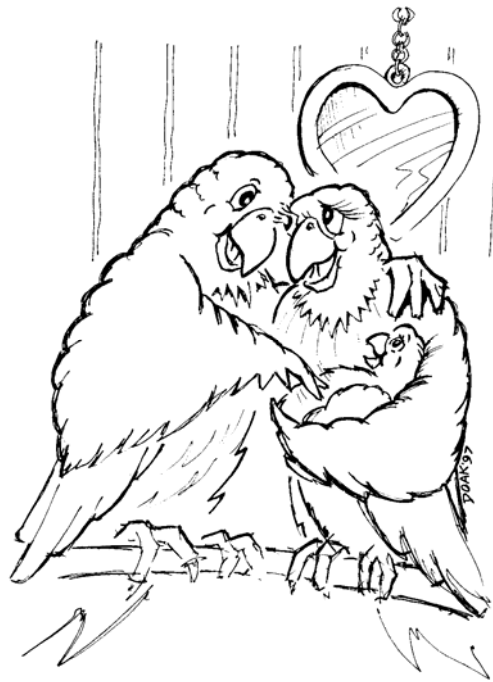
If a pet bird is to be free in the house and enjoys riding on its owner's shoulder, some of the wing feathers can be clipped. This keeps your pet from flying away and getting into trouble. If this is done to only one wing, the bird cannot fly at all. If both wings are trimmed evenly, the bird may be able to fly a few feet. It is good for your parrot to be able to fly enough to catch itself if it is dropped or falls.

Trimming a pet bird's wing feathers is a simple matter and can be done by pet shops, veterinarians, or experienced bird handlers. If done properly, the trimming should be almost invisible and not affect the appearance of the bird. Never allow anyone to "pinion" or cut the bone of the bird's wing. This practice is dangerous and unnecessary.

A trained person can also carefully trim a pet bird's claws. Only the very sharp tips should be removed. If too much is trimmed the claw will bleed profusely.

Breeding

In order to breed, Cayman Islands Parrots need enough space to fly, a nesting box, good food and to feel a sense of security and satisfaction with their circumstances. They will not breed if they are stressed or unhappy. The best place for parrots to breed is on their own in the wild. Captive breeding is difficult and expensive. Parrots mate for life. This may be why some parrots in cages seem to pine away. They miss their mates.



Drawing courtesy of Mr. John Doak

The National Trust for the Cayman Islands is happy to accept unwanted pet Cayman Islands Parrots for attempted rehabilitation.

Cayman Islands Parrot - Pet Care: Key Facts

- It is *illegal* to capture, export, sell, or keep a Cayman Islands Parrot as a pet.
- Caymanians are permitted to keep parrots that they already have as pets because pet parrots *cannot easily survive* in the wild if they are released.
- Parrots are extremely intelligent and sociable animals and *enjoy company*.
- Parrots “talk” in two ways; by mimicking words and phrases and by body language such as fluffing feathers, preening, nodding and making eye contact.
- A pet parrot’s diet should consist of a wide *variety* of seeds, vegetables, fruits and some source of protein.
- A pet parrot should have a *large, rat proof cage*. Place the cage on a high shelf or hang it from the ceiling. Pet parrots should be able to stretch and flap their wings fully inside their cages.
- Cayman Islands Parrots become *bored if left alone* too much. Keep them in an area where the family spends a lot of time.
- Pet parrots *prefer to be at eye level or higher*. A parrot kept in a cage on the floor will be very unhappy.
- *Keep pet parrot cages clean*. Wash food and water dishes daily. Water bottles, available from pet shops work well and prevent food and droppings from contaminating your pet's water supply.
- Many parrots enjoy an afternoon “bath” in a bowl of clean water. Never try to wash a parrot with soap. They will *clean themselves* if given the opportunity.
- Parrots need things to chew to *keep them busy* and interested. Safe “toys” include Sea Grape and Almond tree branches and coconut husks.
- Parrots will not breed if they are stressed or unhappy. *The best place for parrots to breed is on their own in the wild*.

Cayman Islands Parrot: Natural History

On Earth Day 1996, the Cayman Islands Parrot was chosen to be the National Bird of the Cayman Islands.

Cayman Islands Parrots live only in the Cayman Islands. The Grand Cayman Parrot lives only on Grand Cayman. The Cayman Brac Parrot lives only on Cayman Brac. Both are in the Amazon parrot family.



From a painting by Ms. Tracy Pedersen for the RARE Center

Cayman's parrots are bright green, with splashes of blue, yellow and red. They also have some white patches.

Parrots pick a special mate and the two stay together all their lives.



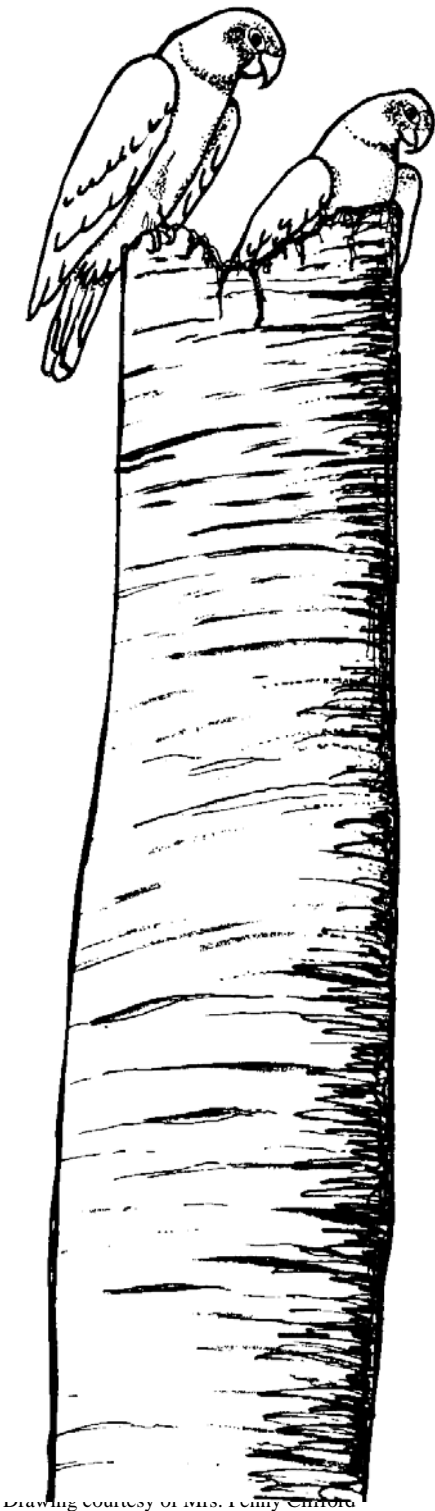
Fro

Parrots make their nests in holes in old trees. They use the same nest every year if both parents are still free and alive and if the tree is still there.

Both parents help to raise the young chicks. It takes four months for a chick to grow big enough to leave the nest and five years before it is ready to find its own mate and build a nest.

Both the Grand Cayman and the Cayman Brac parrot are doing well now. This is good, but it may not stay this way. Many trees are destroyed to make room for new buildings. This means that the parrots are losing their homes.

Another problem is that parrots are often hunted or trapped. Parrots cannot raise babies in small cages. If we don't leave the parrots in the bush to build their nests and care for their babies, one day there won't be any parrots left.



The National Trust for the Cayman Islands is trying to help the parrots.

It's against the law to hunt parrots or to catch them or trap them, or to disturb their nests or their eggs.

It is against the law to take the baby parrots out of their nests. Baby parrots are like any other babies. They need their mothers and their fathers.

We must all help to be sure that we always have the beautiful Cayman Islands Parrots living on our islands.

Remember, **NEVER** take parrots from their home in the wild.

Cayman Islands Parrot - Natural History: Key Facts

- The Cayman Islands Parrot is Cayman's *National Bird*.
- The Grand Cayman parrot lives *only* on Grand Cayman
- The Cayman Brac parrot lives *only* on Cayman Brac.
- Our parrots are very special because they live *nowhere else* in the world.
- Cayman Islands Parrots are very beautiful. They are *green with bits of blue, yellow, red and white*.
- Cayman's parrots *mate for life* and use the same nest every year to lay their eggs and raise their young.
- When people cut down trees to make room for buildings, parrots often *lose their homes*.
- It is *against the law* to take a Cayman Islands Parrot from the wild.
- The Cayman Islands Parrots are doing well on our islands *now*. Cayman Islands Parrots and their nesting and feeding places need protection so that we will *always* have parrots to "grace our skies."

Cayman Islands Parrot: Pet Care

It is against the law to take our Cayman Islands Parrots from the wild.

When this law was passed in 1990 some Caymanians already had pet Cayman Islands Parrots in their homes. These people were allowed to keep their parrots, because pet parrots do not always know how to live on their own in the wild. If pet parrots are set free, they might die.



Drawing courtesy of Mr. John Doak



Drawing courtesy of Mr. John Doak

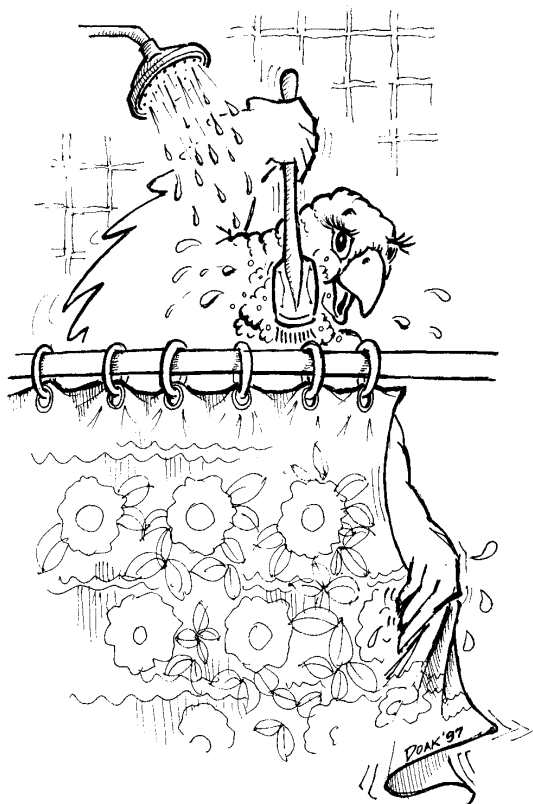
It is important to take good care of pet parrots.

Pet parrots need to eat vegetables, fruits and seeds, like they would find in the wild. They also need fresh cool water to drink. Certain parts of avocados are poisonous to them. Do not feed pet birds salted peanuts or salted popcorn, apple cores, sodas, coffee, alcohol or junk food.

Pet parrots need a big cage so that they can move around and stretch their wings. They need toys and things to chew. Parrots like their cages to be up high. They hate to be down on the ground. The cage should be rat proof and kept clean. Wash the food and water dishes every day and add fresh food and clean water. A water bottle from pet shop works well. A dirty cage with foul water and rotting food can make a parrot sick.



Drawing courtesy of Mrs. Judy Steele



Never try to wash a pet parrot. If you give it some clean water in a bowl it will splash around and clean itself. Parrots like to bathe in the morning. They don't want to go to sleep at night still damp from their bath.

Drawing courtesy of Mr. John Doak

Notice what your parrot likes. If you pay attention, your pet will let you know what it needs. Pet birds, when given proper care, will learn to love their owners and can have long, happy and healthy lives.

Parrots need lots of attention. In the wild they are always with other parrots. They hate being alone. Sometimes when a parrot is sad and lonely it will bite or pull out its own feathers.

A pet parrot needs to be with people or another parrot to keep it company.



In the old days, when Caymanians kept pet parrots, there was no air conditioning or television. The porch was the coolest part of the house and everyone spent a lot of time there playing with "Polly."

Now, we are all so busy that people don't have time to spend with their pet parrots. A parrot is not just a

decoration. It is a living animal with needs and feelings. If everyone is too busy to play with "Polly," you should think about finding another home for her.



Mrs. Lori Adams with "Dayo"
Dailey

Photo courtesy of Mr. Tim

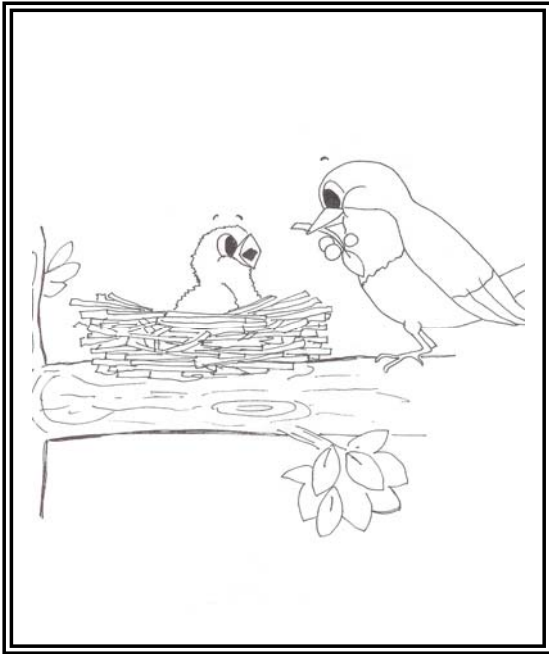
Call the National Trust for the Cayman Islands if you need help finding a good home for your parrot.

Cayman Islands Parrot: Pets Care - Key Facts

- It is *against the law* to take Cayman Islands Parrots from the wild.
- People have been allowed to keep pet parrots that were *captured before the law was passed*.
- A *pet parrot could die* if it were released and did not know how to find food or avoid danger.
- Pet parrots need to eat a *healthy, natural diet* of seeds, fruits and vegetables. Keep their dishes clean and give them fresh food and water daily.
- Pet parrots need a *big cage*, so that they can move around and exercise. They need sticks and branches to climb on and to chew.
- Pet parrots need lots of *attention*. They become lonely and unfriendly if they are left alone too much.
- Long ago, people *spent more time* with their pet parrots. Today, most people are too busy to enjoy having a pet bird.
- If a pet parrot is *no longer wanted* by its owners, the National Trust will help to find a new home for it, or release it to the wild, if possible.

Is Today the Day?

Frankie Fledgling stretched his brand new flight feathers and peered over the edge of his nest at the ground below. He looked at his mother and asked,
“Is today the day I get to try out my wings, Mommy?”



Before his mommy could answer, Frankie heard a little boy’s voice calling out, “Is today the day? Is today the day I learn to ride a bicycle, Dad?”

Frankie Leaned out a little farther so he could watch the boy below get on his bicycle. The boy’s father held the bike steady and told him, “Don’t worry Hunter, I’ll be right here. We will practice until you get the hang of it. Remember, practice makes perfect!”

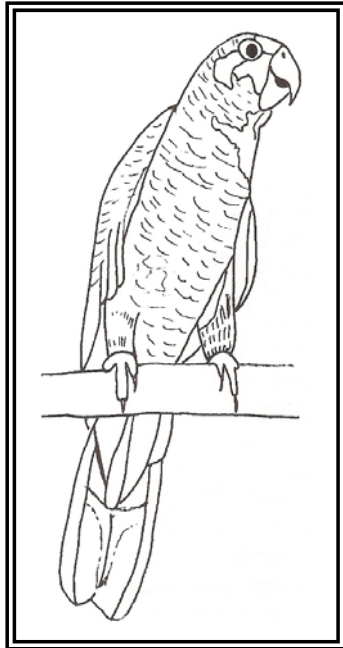
Frankie looked over at his mom and said excitedly, “Mom, that’s what you always say to me! Practice makes perfect. Look mom! Look at me! Watch me flap my wings!”

Frankie loved the way his flight wings felt as he moved them through the air. Suddenly, Frankie lost his balance and was tumbling through the air.

Frankie tried to flap his wings like he had practiced, but he was falling too fast. He felt leaves and branches twirl around him as he tumbled through the air. Finally, Frankie landed on the ground

and dazed, he looked up towards the tree where his mother was calling frantically to him,

“Frankie, don’t worry! We are going to stay close by and help you practice using your wings.”



“Look, Dad! Did you see that bird fall out of that tree? Do you think he is hurt? Why didn’t he fly, Dad? Don’t all birds know how to fly?” the questions bubbled out of Hunter.

The boy’s dad replied, “Don’t get too close, son. We don’t want to scare the little fellow. He’s just a fledgling which means he is learning to use his wings.”

Hunter exclaimed, “You mean birds have to learn to fly just like kids have to learn to ride a bicycle?”

“That’s right, Hunter.”

“And, sometimes birds fall down like I sometimes fall off my bike?” asked Hunter.

Before Hunter’s dad could answer, Frankie’s parents swooped down from their next to a branch closer to their fledgling. They called out to him, and fluttered nervously from branch to branch.

“Dad, we have to help this fledgling! Let’s take him home and look after him,” Hunter cried out to his father.

His father pointed up.

“Hunter, do you see the mother and father bird up there in the tree? They are very worried about their fledgling, because we are too close to him. They are afraid that we might hurt their

baby. They want to help him learn to fly, so the best thing we can do is leave him right where he is so they can do their job.”

“Are you sure, Dad?” asked Hunter.

“Yes, Hunter, I am sure. And then you can get back to learning to ride your bicycle!” said his dad.

“Yes, Dad, I know. Practice makes perfect!” laughed Hunter.

Hunter got on his bicycle and started to slowly push the pedals. He felt the bicycle pick up more and more speed. When his dad finally let go of his bike, Hunter felt like he was flying down the sidewalk. Something green flashed in the sky above Hunter. He grinned; Frankie Fledgling was flying along with him.

Frankie and Hunter shouted aloud,

“Today’s the day!”



Written by Ms. Trish Gray. If you find a bird or wild animal in trouble call our Wildlife Hotline at 917-BIRD

Suggestions for Class Activities

Use an unabridged dictionary to define conservation, development, nature and natural, heritage and inheritance. Encourage students to discuss the meaning of the words. They have surprisingly long and interesting definitions with many shades of meaning.

Play word game *Call My Bluff*. Choose a word from the vocabulary list that none of the students know the meaning of. Ask them to make up meanings and write them on slips of paper. Write the correct meaning on a similar slip of paper. Read the definitions to the class and vote on which one is the real definition. Then announce the true definition and discuss the word fully.

Discuss the meaning of Habitat. What is a habitat? Where are most parrots on Grand Cayman living? (*They live on the eastern side of the island. There are almost few parrots left in George Town or West Bay. One begins to see them around Savannah. There are more and more as we travel east.*) Ask students why they think the parrots have left the western side of the island. Where are most parrots on Cayman Brac living? (*In the Brac Parrot Reserve on the Bluff. This area is not near any human development - the parrots were there before the reserve.*) Will parrots always be able to live in these places? (*Yes, within the Reserve, but what about a protected nesting site for Grand Cayman?*) What can we do to make sure the Cayman Islands Parrots always have a safe place to live? (*We must protect their habitat from over-development and put a stop to poaching.*) Request further information on the central mangrove wetland and its importance to parrot's nesting from the National Trust and/or the Cayman Islands Department of Environment.

Rank issues in order of priority using a "diamond" ranking system. Whose needs are the most important -- the fruit farmer, the parrot, the poacher, the developer, the tourist, the average Caymanian...Why? How do these needs overlap? Discuss the reasons for the priorities and seek group agreement.

Assign students to write a poem (see simile, initial, and telescope poem descriptions in orchid section), or do an A B C poem as a class; A is for appetite, B is for bird, etc. Try a limerick, play, or a short story (perhaps modeled after one of Rudyard Kipling's Just So Stories, or an essay from a parrot's point of view or about why it is important to protect our local parrots. Students could design a pamphlet about parrot protection. Allow them to work on their projects in groups of three or four, to improve cooperation skills and allow them to teach each other what they know, or have the whole class co-operate on the project.

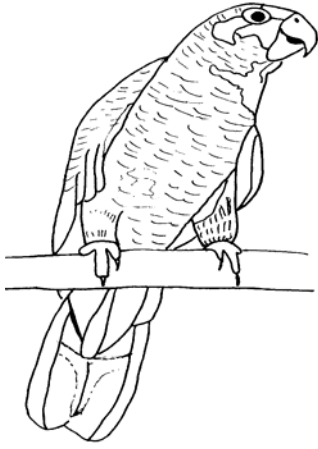
Plant native trees in the schoolyard that provide parrots with their natural food. These include Red Birch, Sea Grape, Buttonwood, Almond, Chinaberry and Coco-plum.

Role play using various scenarios. Include a fruit farmer, environmentalist, ecologist (note the difference!) pet shop owner, tourist, child who would like a pet, the parrot itself, etc. Write and perform a play about Cayman's parrots and perform it for other classes in the school.

Draw pictures or cartoons of parrots in various habitats and situations. Make drawings of foods parrots enjoy. Mould parrots from clay, or design pottery tiles featuring a parrot. Design a T-shirt featuring our parrots. Point out the Cayman Islands Parrot stamp sold at the Post Office. Design a parrot stamp.

Construct 3-D view boxes. Cut a three-inch square window in the lid of a shoe box and cover with coloured cellophane paper. Cut a small peephole at one end of the box. Inside the box, mount pictures of the parrot, the thatch palm and the orchid. Suspend flying parrots from a piece of cotton thread from the lid. Put the lid back on the box and look through the peephole at the scene you have made.

Make a flying-parrots mobile. Make a collag  of parts of trees parrots like. (i.e. Sea Grape leaves, fruit, stem, bark, twigs, seedlings, etc.)



Song: We Are the Children of the Cayman Islands

**Sung to the tune of “We are the Children
of the Caribbean”.**

Once upon a time, in the land of ole Cayman,
There were lots of pretty parrots flying free throughout our land.
They could feed on berries, sea grapes, nuts and seeds.
There was plenty of woodland for them and you and me.

CHORUS: We are the children of the Cayman Islands;
The Creator’s Glory in the land around us;
Help save our parrots, for our sons and daughters;
Let God be pleased by his children in the West Indies.

Then, people came to Cayman, her population grew
And clearing land became the common thing to do.
By making room for people, many parrot homes were lost.
Development has made us rich, but parrots paid the cost.

CHORUS

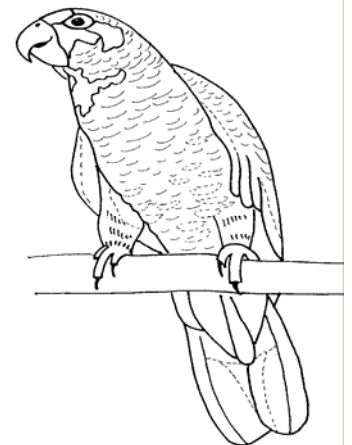
Today our pretty Polly some think to be a pest.
Her range declined, food hard to find and little place to nest.
Our parrots have been driven to raid the farmer’s crop,
But if we work together, we can make the damage stop.

CHORUS

Dear Mum and Dad, we’re asking your to lead the way,
Obey the laws of conservation, save our tomorrow today.
You’ll be our example by what you say and do.
When one day we are parents, we’ll be thanking you.

CHORUS

Special thanks to Mr. George Nowak, The Barefoot Man, for the generous donation of his music.



PARROT BALL PUPPETS

*A project developed during the National Trust for the Cayman Islands' Year of the Parrot
by Mr. Chris Mann and RARE Counterpart, Ms. Patricia Scharr*

This simple to make and inexpensive puppet can be used in a number of enjoyable and educational activities, limited only by your imagination.

Materials needed:

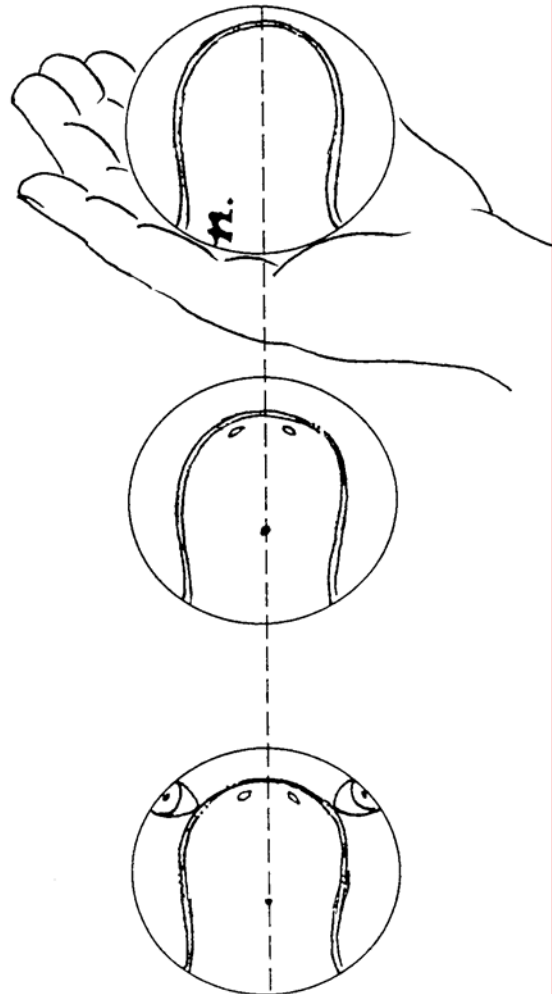
1. White or yellow-green tennis balls
2. Black indelible marking pen (laundry marker)
3. Exacto razor blade cutting instrument
4. Acrylic paints corresponding to the colours found on your parrot.
5. Paper cups for drying the painted balls

Instructions:

1. Hold tennis ball with name of manufacturer down in the palm of your hand. You will note that one of the seams in the ball forms a natural line which will be used as the upper beak definition line. Note the centre line drawn in the diagram. This is an imaginary line. Do not actually draw this line.

2. Draw the two nose holes with your indelible marker just below the upper beak definition line. Drop down the centre line from the nose holes about one and one quarter inches and make another dot on the centre line. This dot is for the tip of the beak.

3. Next, draw eyes just above the upper beak definition line. Make sure eyes are at least one quarter inch in diameter and symmetrically placed on either side of the centre line.



4. Now draw a curved line from the outer top side of one eye to the outer top side of the other eye. This outlines the white forehead found on our Cayman Amazona leucocephala subspecies.

5. Next, outline the cheek area on each side by drawing a circular line from where the eye joins the upper beak definition line, back and around until it joins the upper beak definition line again. This outlines the rosy red cheeks found in our Cayman Amazona leucocephala subspecies.

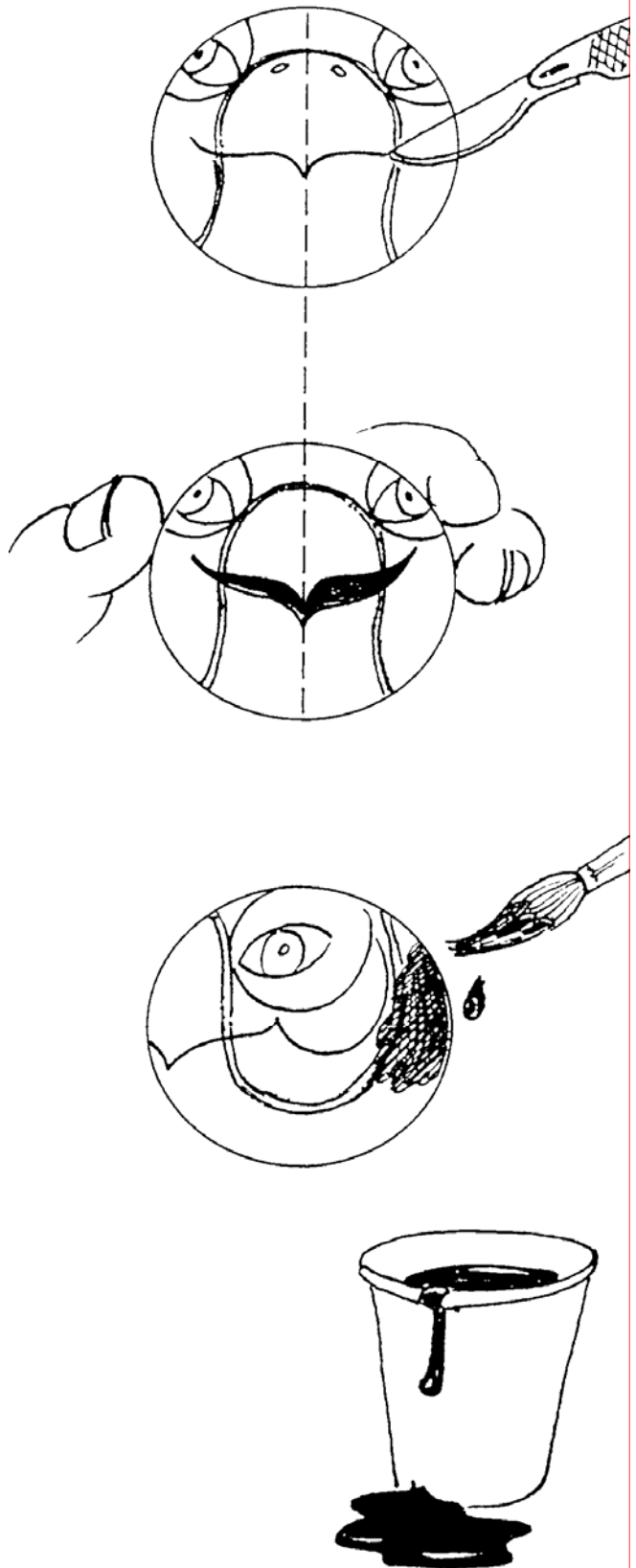
6. With the Exacto razor, cut a curved line as shown in diagram from the beak tip dot, back to the cheek area on each side.

7. When you squeeze the ball between thumb and fingers, the beak will open.

8. Assemble acrylic paints and brushes. Use one brush for each colour and rest the painted parrot balls on cups to dry. Paint the parrot's head to correspond with the colours of your own endemic parrot. The diagram shown here is keyed to the coloration of the Cayman Amazona leucocephala subspecies.

9. When parrot balls are completely painted and dry; have each child name their parrot and write the child's name and the parrot's name on the underside of the ball for identification.

10. Now you are ready to work with the children to create a host of activities limited only by your and their imagination and creativity.



PARROT BALL ACTIVITIES

*Created by Patricia Scharr, RARE Counterpart,
during the National Trust for the Cayman Islands' Year of the Parrot*

Once you have made your parrot balls, the possibilities are endless. Here are a few activities that have worked well for us. They are so inexpensive that we found them useful in classrooms as well as in summer camps.

These parrot balls, in the hands of children, can:

SQUAWK, TALK and WALK - In play activities or in more formalized puppet plays, children can spend endless hours play-acting stories. With a little direction, these can easily have conservation themes.

SING - After teaching children the parrot song, they can hold the parrot balls in their hands and sing while they make the parrot ball “sing the song.”

FLY - Although these balls don't bounce as well as they once did, they can be used for any variety of throwing and catching games from a simple game of catch to “PARROTS FLYING TO THEIR NEST.” For this game, decorate a bucket or basket ball hoop as a tree hole nest. Points are scored for balls that stay in the nest and additional points are given for increasing the distance from the pitcher to the target.

LANGUAGE ARTS - Parrot balls worked well in the Cayman Islands Middle School English classes as a stimulus for creative writing. Poems, plays, stories, songs and even rap music were produced.

SOCIAL STUDIES - These special creatures can be used to focus attention on conservation issues like land use, populations and traditions.

SCIENCE - Parrot balls can be used to draw attention to identifying characteristics such as the stereoscopic vision of birds and bird biology in general, as well as the nesting habits and habitat requirements of parrots.

ART - Cutting and painting the balls is obviously an art project. This can be expanded upon by creating a parrot's body from cardboard, cloth, or paper maché.

If each child has their own puppet to take home, it will stimulate interest among their friends and family members. The children can share what they have learned through play.

PARROT SAND SCULPTURES

A project developed by Mr. Chris Mann and Ms. Patricia Scharr during the Year of the Parrot

Although this project is designed for marine conservation activities, it was particularly effective when parrots were used as the theme. The materials and instructions are designed for a group of 50 children at the beach, but can be adapted to other situations.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

Sandy beach

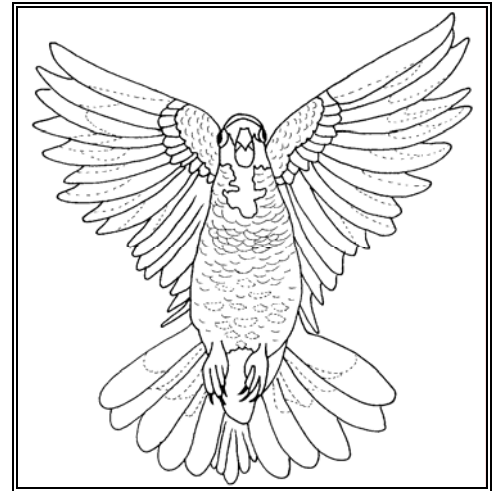
12 wooden frames (optional)

12 buckets

24 bottles of food colouring (red, blue
green and yellow)

Twigs, seeds, leaves, shells, seaweed,
and other things naturally found on
the beach.

Colour picture of a Cayman Islands Parrot



FRAMES: Frames (if used) can measure 3 feet by 4 feet. Be sure that they are well sanded so that children will not get splinters. The frames can be saved and used again.

PREPARATION: If children have drawn or coloured pictures of parrots before, they have a better idea of shapes and proportions. Have a colour picture of a Cayman Islands Parrot available as a reference. Have the children beach comb a little bit first, to gather natural materials to add texture to the sculptures.

LOCATION: Select an area where children can put their frames in the sand. The area should be close enough to the sea so that the children can get water, but not so close that the waves will wash away their creations. There should be at least 6 feet between frames or work spaces.

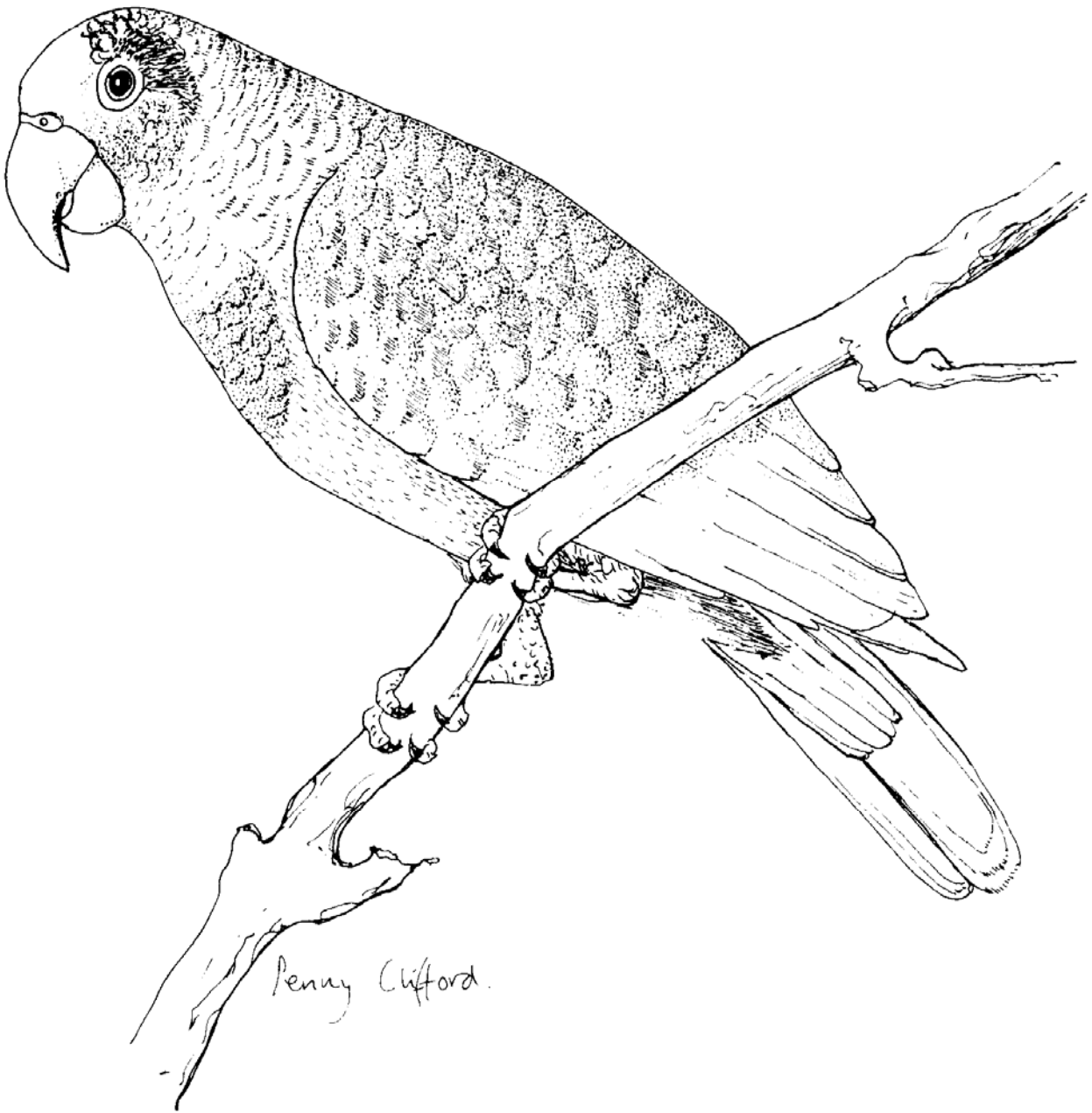
BUCKETS AND FOOD COLOURING: Plan to mix two small bottles of food colouring per gallon bucket of wet sand. We used sea water to wet the sand. When the children are satisfied with the shape of their sculpture, they may “colour” it with a thin layer of the dyed sand. This works particularly well with blue and yellow. For red and green, it may be more effective to drop a spot of food colouring directly on to the sculpture and let the children work it in to the area.

Sand Sculpture Contest Rules

*A project developed during the National Trust for the Cayman Islands Year of the Parrot
by Mr. Chris Mann and RARE Counterpart, Patricia Scharr*

1. Teams must consist of at least 2 but no more than 4 children.
2. Each team will be assigned one frame in an area with room to move around and easy access to the sea.
3. Each team is responsible for bringing their own “tools”(if necessary) and collecting items to decorate their parrots.
4. Sculpture must be completed out of natural coloured sand before any coloured sand can be used to decorate it.
5. A time limit will be set by the judges (approximately one hour) during which all work may be completed. 15, 10 and 5 minute warnings will be given as the deadline approaches. Judges may extend time limit if they so desire.
6. Sculptures will be divided into categories by the ages of children as follows:
 - Primary Level - ages 5 - 7 with close adult supervision
 - Upper Primary - ages 8 - 10 No adult assistance
 - Middle School - ages 11 - 13 No adult assistance
 - High School - ages 14 - 17 No adult assistance
7. Sculptures will be judged on originality, accuracy, colour and texture.
8. Polaroid colour snapshots should be taken to post with awards. It is also helpful to take black and white photos for the newspapers.
9. Prizes will be awarded for first, second and third place in each category.
10. Decision of the judges is final.

*These contests were held on the public beach to the delight of tourists and residents alike.
Prizes for the contest were donated by local businesses.*

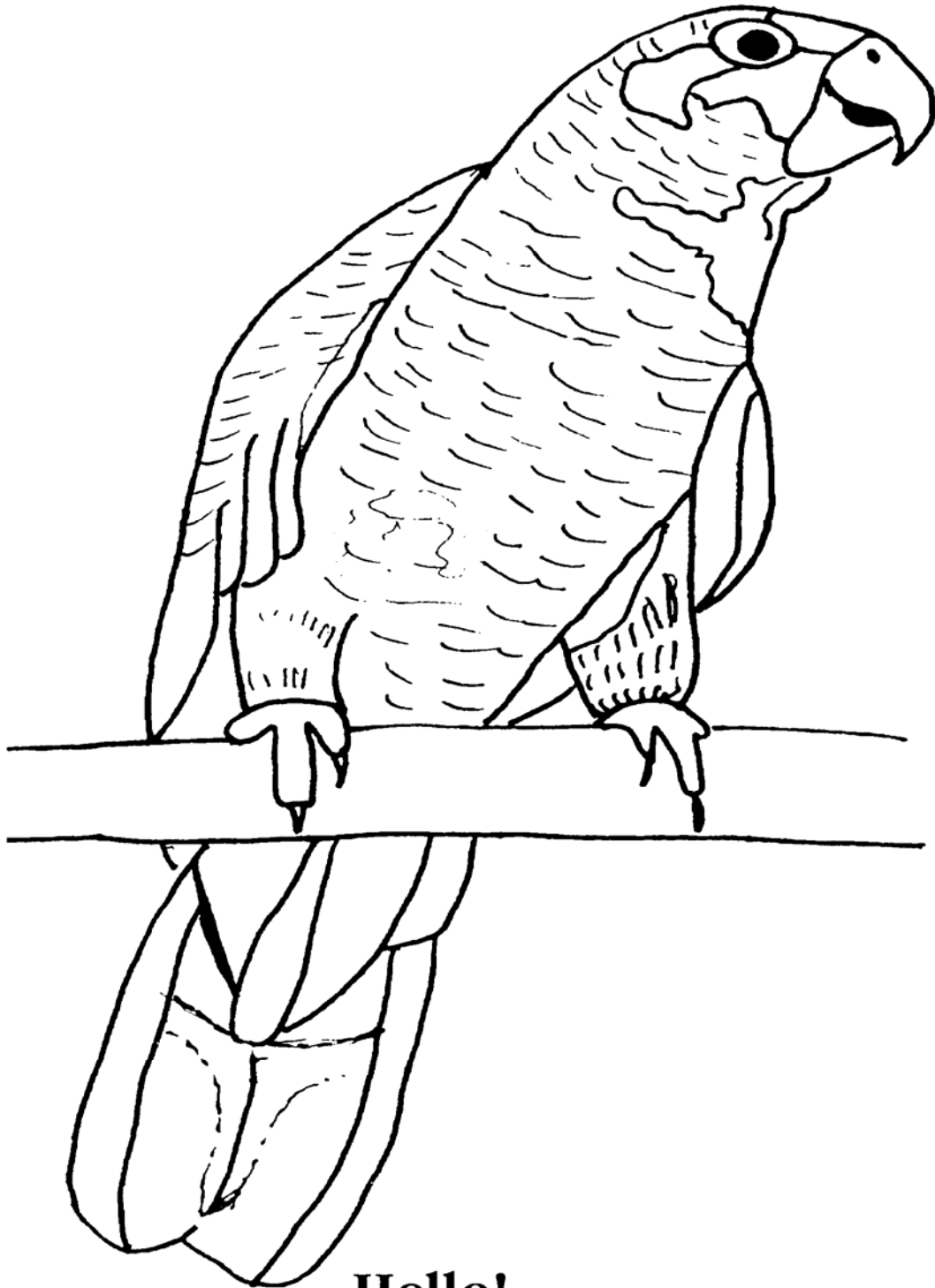


Colour Cayman Islands Parrots BRILLIANT GREEN with BRIGHT BLUE under the wings and tail. They have WHITE foreheads and RED cheeks. The Cayman Brac Parrot has a MAROON belly.



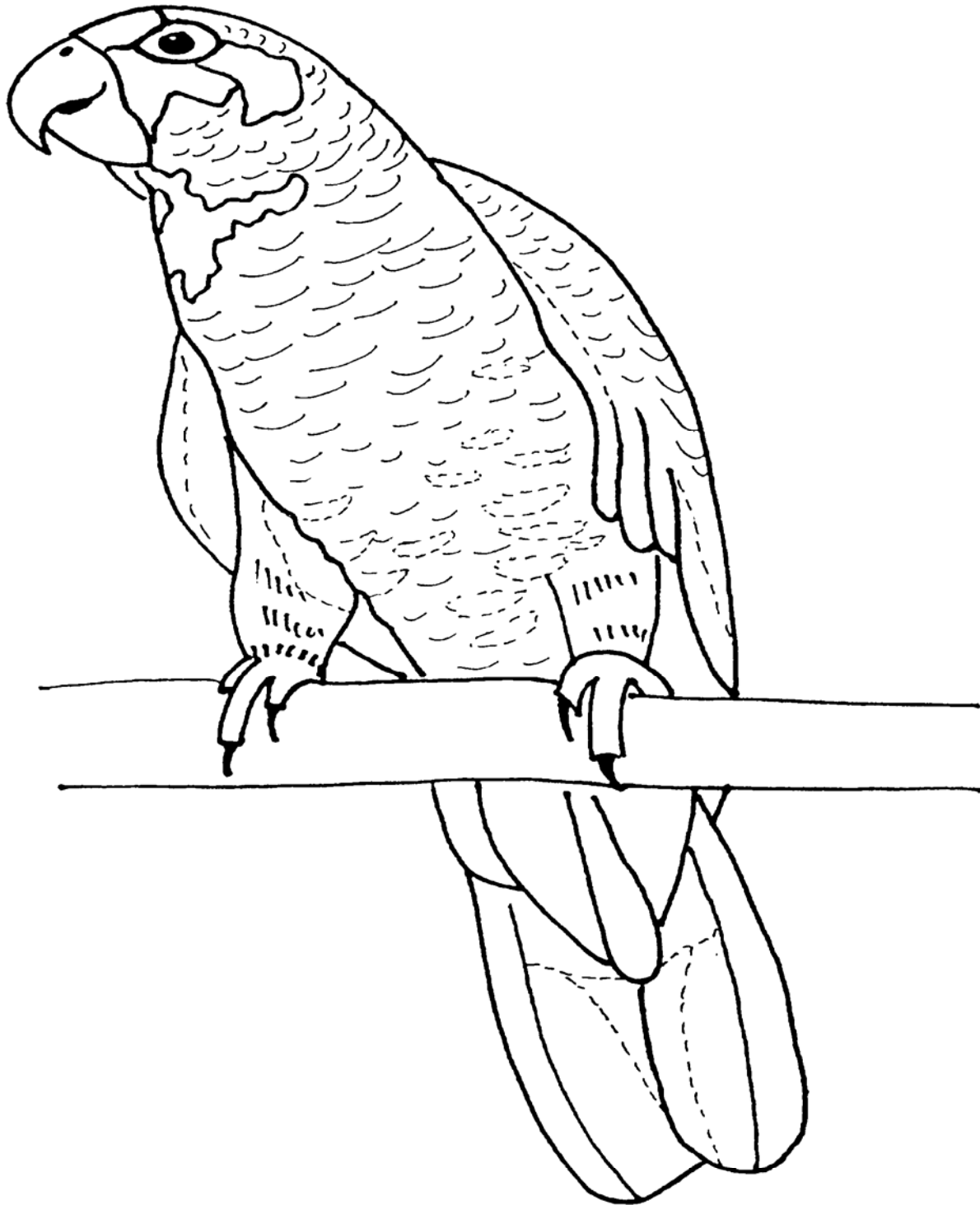
Our Cayman Parrots are among the most colourful in their family. Try to colour these pictures according to the key to see exactly why this is so. Using coloured pencils will be easier and give you better results.

- | | | | |
|-----------|------------|-------------------|------------------|
| G - Green | W - White | TQ - Turquoise | LG - Light Green |
| P - Pink | R - Red | YG - Yellow Green | DG - Dark Green |
| T - Tan | Y - Yellow | BG - Blue Green | BB - BlueBlack |
| B - Blue | | | |

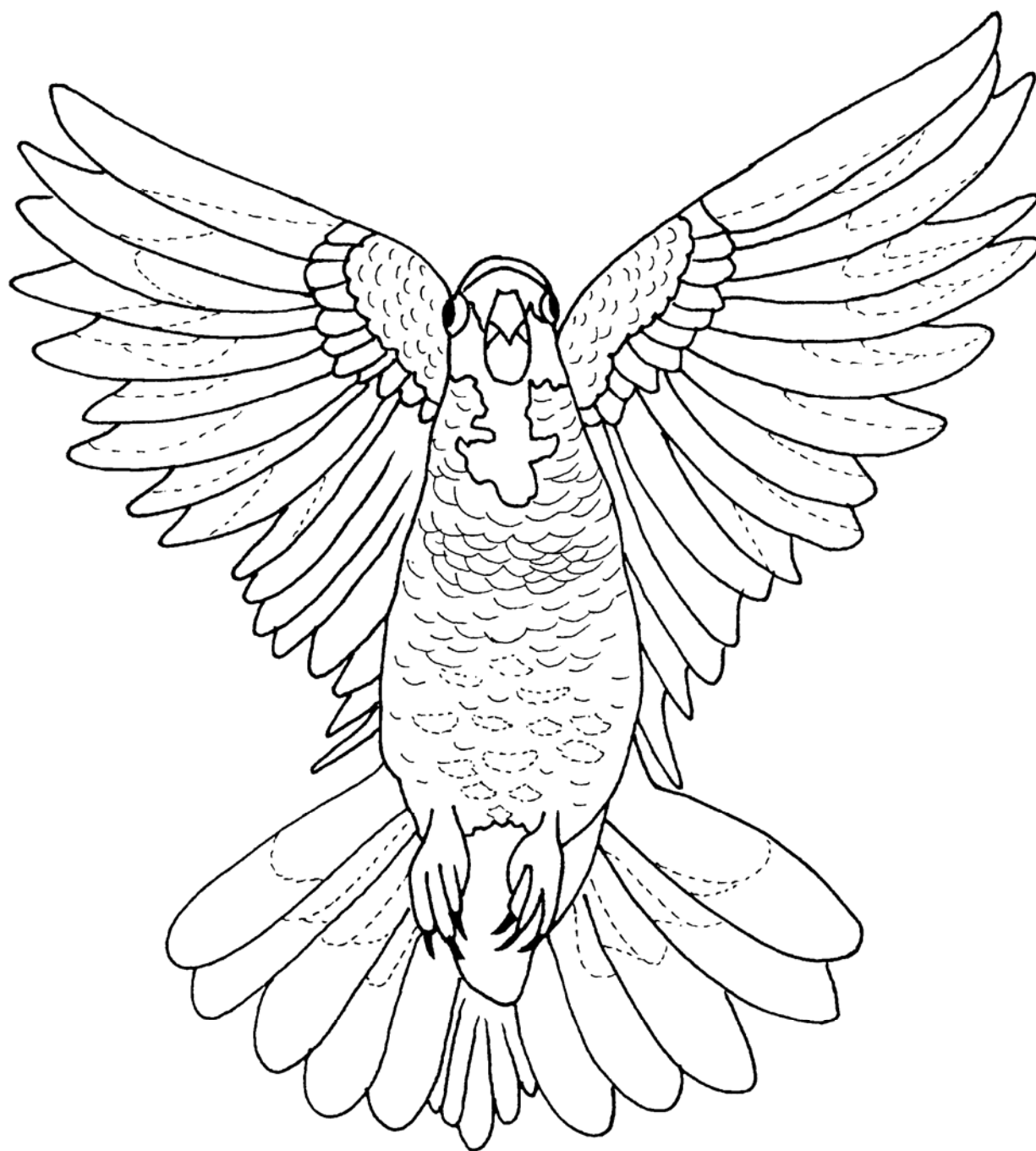


Hello!

My name is Cappy. I live in Grand Cayman in the wild. I was born here. I am Caymanian.



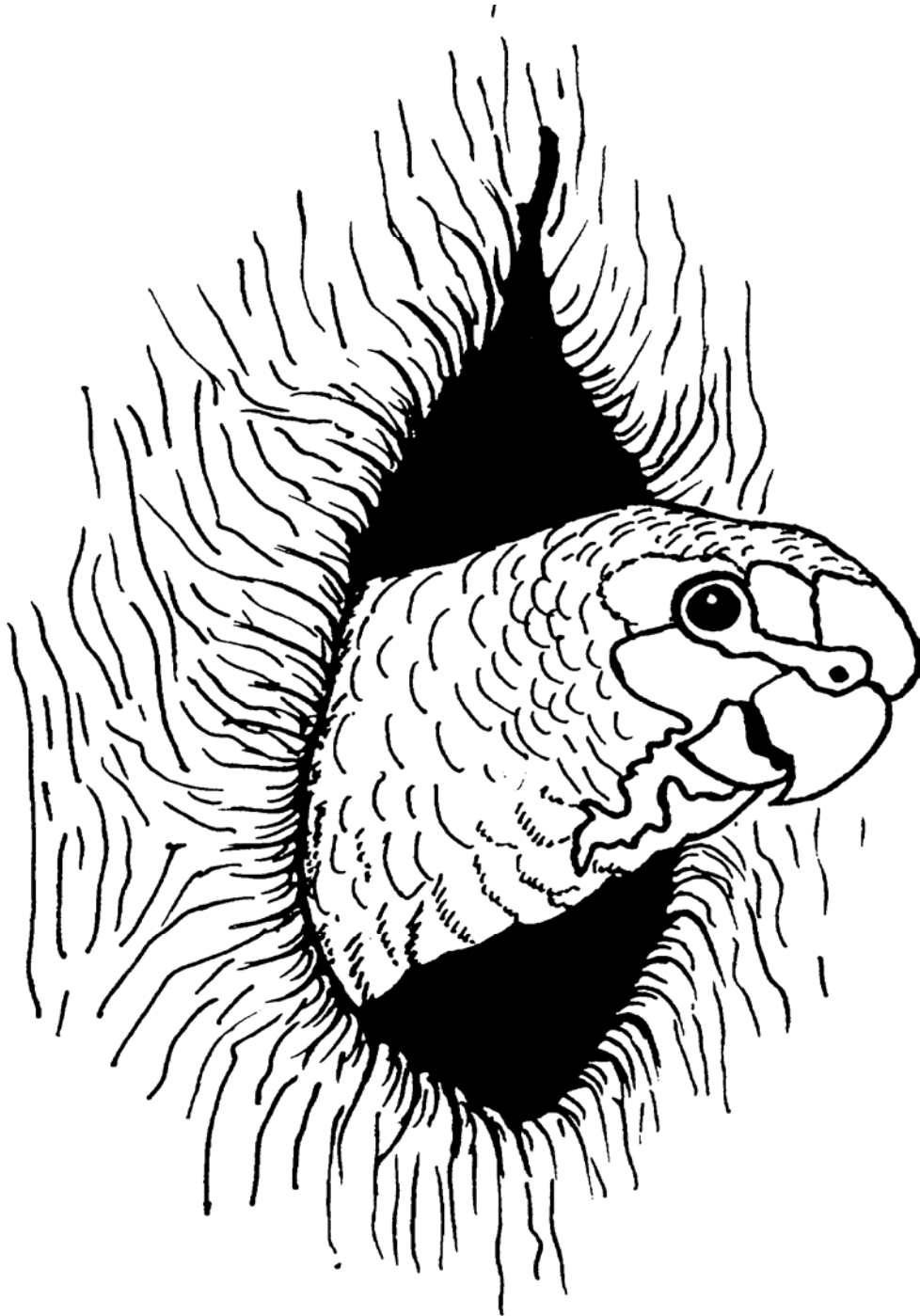
This is my cousin Polly. She lives in Cayman Brac on the Bluff. She was born in Cayman Brac. She is Caymanian too.



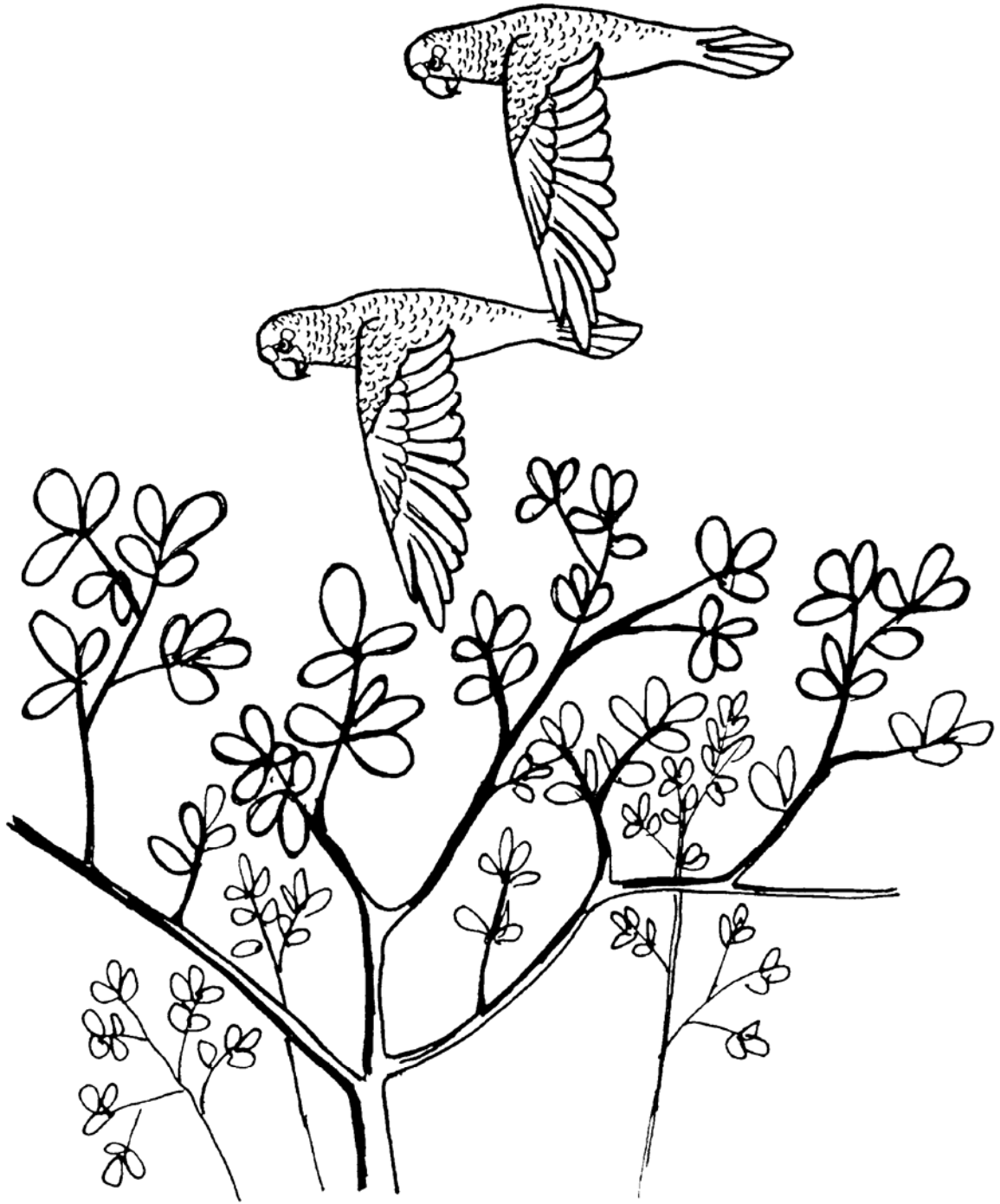
Our feathers are green, blue, yellow and red. My forehead is white and pink. Polly's forehead is snowy white but I am bigger.



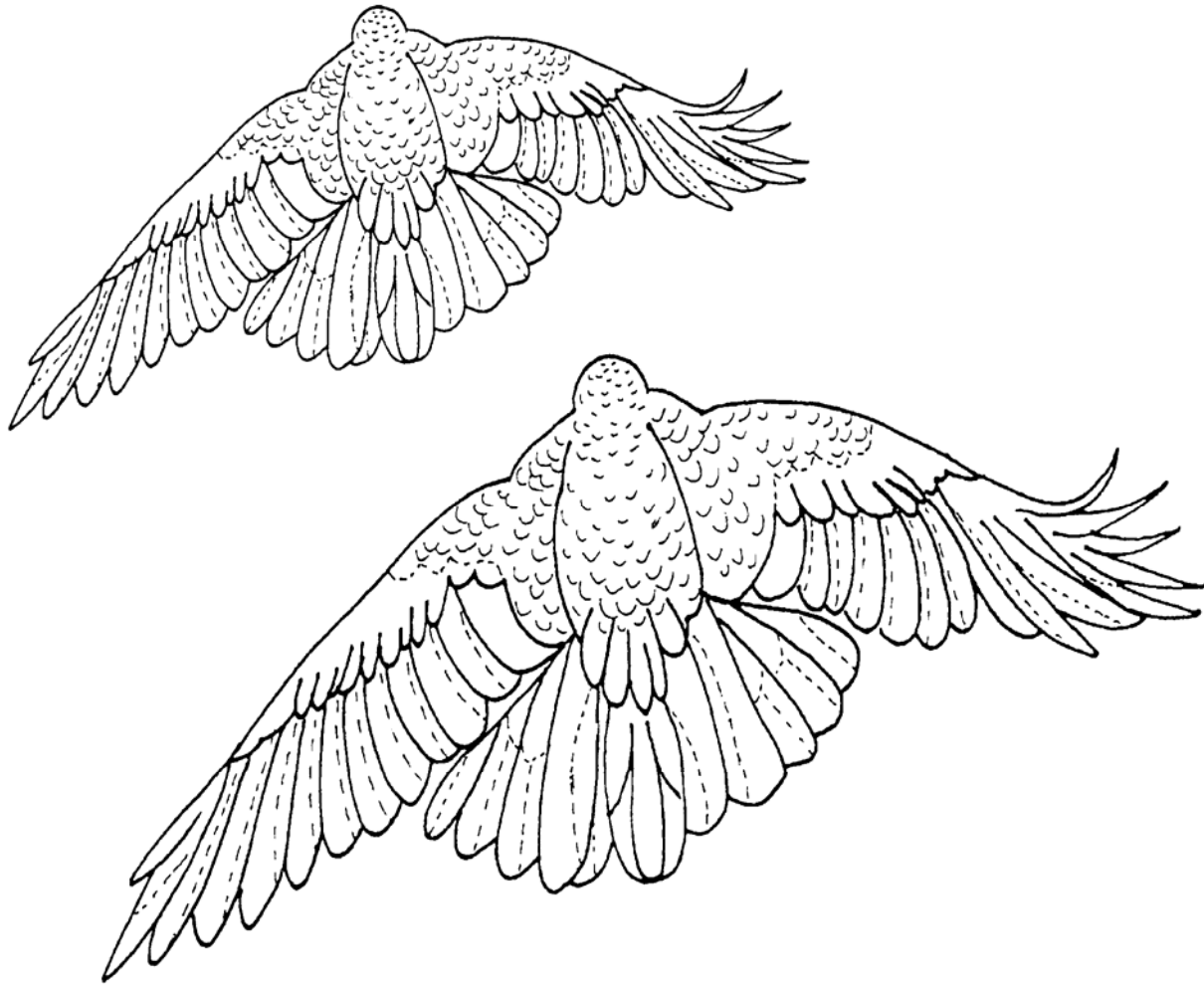
We like to eat fruit and vegetables, especially sea grapes and almonds.



We like to talk. We like to squawk. We like to fly up in the sky. We make our nests in big old trees. But today there are not too many of these.



We like to fly free, just over the trees. But sometimes people try to catch us. That is against the law. It hurts us and makes us sad. Can you help to keep us free?



***Remember -
Protect us in the wild.***



***Produced by: The National Trust
for the Cayman Islands***
Written by: Patricia Scharr
Illustrated by: Phillipe Bush

Resources

Birds of the Cayman Islands, by Mrs. Patricia Bradley, is available at book shops, the public library and the National Trust.

The National Trust can answer questions and provide additional information about the natural history and conservation of the Cayman Islands Parrot.

The Cayman Islands Parrot can be seen in the wild at the Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park. Parrots are most active in the early mornings or very late afternoons. School visits to the park can be arranged by calling 947-9462.

The Cayman Islands Parrot can also be seen along the Mastic Trail. Walks along the trail can be arranged by calling 949-0121.

Visit the Brac Parrot Reserve off Major Donald Drive. A brochure, produced on Cayman Brac about the Brac Parrot Reserve and Nature Trail, is included at the end of this book, and can be photocopied and folded to be pocket-sized. Mr. Wallace Platts is available to go with students on field trips and to explain more about the Brac Parrot Reserve and Nature Trail. He can be reached by calling 948-2390. The best months to view parrots are May through October and the best time is either dawn or dusk. On the Brac parrots are most visible in the central area, around Stake Bay, either on the Bluff plateau or the north coastal strip.

Field trips may be arranged to Mr. Otto Watler's Aviary in Savannah by calling 947-1255. This may be a better choice for school groups, because parrots are difficult to view in the wild during the heat of the day.

The Cayman Islands National Museum features some information about our National Symbols and has a stuffed Cayman Islands Parrot on display.

Dr. Brenda Bush of Island Veterinary Services will be happy to assist with care or rehabilitation of Cayman Islands Parrots. Dr. Bush is also available to speak to students about proper pet care.

Pet shops carry many excellent books about the care of pet parrots. Bird magazines for pet bird owners are available wherever magazines are sold.

The National Trust has published a free booklet called Caring For Your Pet Parrot. Stop by the Trust Office on Courts Rd. off Eastern Avenue across from Cox Lumber to pick up a copy. While you are there, look over our Parrot Colouring Book and other educational materials designed for use by local teachers.

Mr. Steve Smith and Mr. Chris Mann of George Hicks High School can provide an additional list of activity ideas and will help design materials for special needs students.

Visit the National Trust on-line at www.caymannationaltrust.org

How Healthy is Your Pet Parrot?

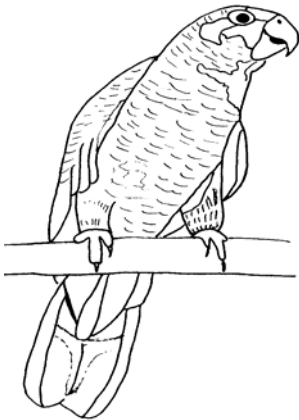
How does your parrot look?

Cayman's Parrots are very beautiful. They should have sparkling bright eyes. Their feathers should be shiny and clean. Look for these warning signs. A sick parrot will hide its illness until it is almost dead. If you see any of these symptoms rush your bird to a veterinarian immediately.

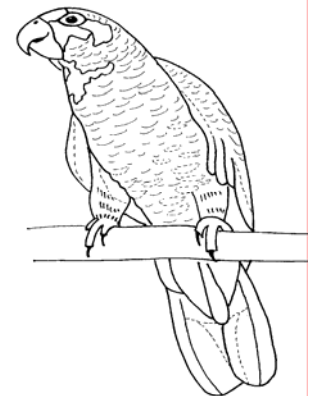
- Dull lifeless feathers
- Loss of appetite
- Sitting too quietly on the perch with feathers fluffed
- Sitting on the bottom of the cage
- Glazed, cloudy or half-closed eyes
- Bare skin showing through the feathers
- Prominent heart bone, thinning of chest muscles
- Change in droppings

How does your parrot act?

If you notice your pet parrot doing any of the things listed below, something is wrong. Call your veterinarian if you see your bird:



- Shifting from one foot to another
- Pecking its claws
- Pulling out feathers
- Bobbing up and down constantly
- Weaving and bowing
- Screaming for no good reason

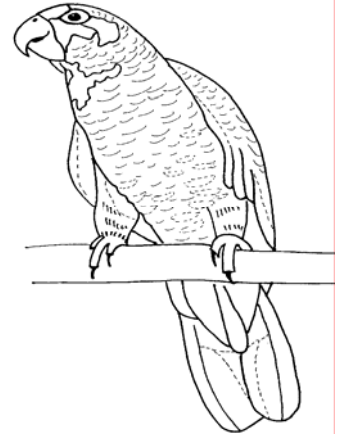


If your parrot is glad to see you, it will nod its head and flutter its wings while leaning towards you. If you look into its eye and make whistling and cooing noises, your parrot's eyes will dilate and contract quickly. This is all normal “parrot talk” and is not a sign of problems.

If you have questions about caring for your pet parrot, call your veterinarian, or the National Trust.

What to Feed Pet Parrots

Fruits: Parrots enjoy bananas, oranges, apples, grapes, papaya, watermelon and other fruits that you and your family like. Cayman parrots especially enjoy local fruits. Sea Grapes, Red Birch berries, and the soft pods around the seeds of Almond trees are good choices. If you pick wild fruits, be sure they are clean and wash them if they were gathered near a busy road. Be sure you know exactly what a wild plant is before you give it to your parrot. Some plants are poison.



Vegetables: Pet parrots can be fed many different raw and cooked vegetables. They enjoy carrots, peas, broccoli, lettuce, yams, corn-on-the-cob, parsley, cucumbers, green beans, pumpkin and squash. They also love callaloo tops.

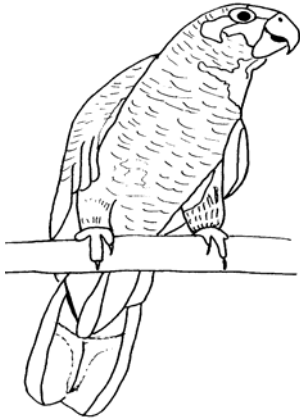
Grains: Whole grains are best for people and parrots. Your pet parrot will enjoy rice, bread, noodles and cereals like oatmeal, shredded wheat or corn flakes.

Protein: Special mixtures of seeds are sold in pet shops.

Unsalted peanuts or other unsalted nuts, cheddar cheese and cooked beans are all good protein sources for parrots.

NEVER feed parrots salted popcorn or salted peanuts, apple cores with seeds, peach pits or cherry seeds, avocado pears, coffee, tea, soda, chocolate, rolled cinnamon sticks, raw meat, red meat, alcohol, iceberg lettuce or junk food.

Parrots Need More Than Food



If you want your pet parrot to be cheerful and happy, try to give it the things that it would naturally have if it were still in the wild.

Space - Parrots need space to spread their wings and move around. They don't like being cooped up in a small cage. Parrots who can't move around suffer boredom and get fat and lazy.

Attention - When parrots are in the wild they are very social animals. When they are put in a cage, they miss the fun they used to have. If you keep a pet in a cage, you must spend time with it, talk to it and play with it, so it won't be so lonely. A parrot is not a decoration. It is a living animal and should be kept by someone with the leisure time to care for it. Parrots can live for thirty years or more in captivity – a lifetime of misery for those that are neglected.

Perches - Non-poisonous tree branches from Sea Hrape trees or Almond trees make good perches for pet parrots.

Water - Parrots need fresh clean water every day. Pet shops sell a special water bottle for birds. The water in the bottle must be changed every day, so that it doesn't turn green and slimy and make your parrot sick. Give your parrot a large bowl of clean water on a warm sunny day and allow it to splash around and wash itself. Some parrots like a gentle spray of water from a clean plant spritzer.

Toys - Parrots are very active. When penned up in cages they get nervous if they can't keep busy. Parrots need toys. Pet shops sell things to swing on and things to chew and shred like soft blocks of wood or cuttlebones. Parrots also like to chew coconut husks.

Did You Know?

The bones in a parrot's wing are like the bones in your arm.

Parrots have bones like our shoulder, elbow and wrist joints.

Parrots (like most birds) have two stomachs. When a parrot eats something, it first goes into its “crop.” This is a storage area so that parrots can eat now and digest later! Mother and father parrots can store food in their crops to feed their babies. The second stomach also has two parts to it. One stomach helps to digest the food and the other, called the gizzard, grinds it.

The red feathers on Cayman Islands Parrots are brighter in the breeding season. This helps the parrots to signal each other that it is time to find a mate and build a nest.

Parrots mate for life. This may be why some parrots, when put into cages, seem to pine away. They miss their mates.

Once the baby parrots (chicks) hatch, both parents take care of them. Young parrots stay with their parents for a year. When they are four months old and can fly, their parents herd them together into “day care centres” while the adults find food.

Parrots can become addicted to sunflower seeds. Just as you must not eat only cakes and candy to be healthy, parrots must eat their fruits and vegetables so they do not become fat!

Parrots need toys. Parrots like to chew on coconut husks and soft wood, like the branches of the Sea Grape tree. They can become bored if they have nothing to do and will even have nervous breakdowns and pull out their feathers. This is very serious. If this happens to your parrot, take it to your veterinarian.

What YOU Can Do

- **Help us spread the word about our wonderful birds.** The more people know about how special these birds are, the more likely they are to help save them. Remind them that the rest of the world is watching us. We want to be proud of what we do.
- **Don't catch or buy wild parrots.** It is against the law. Speak out against those who go into the land and trap parrots. Explain that captured parrots often die or are unhappy and that they cannot have babies when they are trapped in cages. Parrots stay together for life. If you catch one parrot, the other will not have a mate.
- **If you have a pet parrot, take good care of it.** Give your pet parrot a large, rat-proof cage. Change the food and water daily. Talk to your parrot and keep it where it can be part of the family. If everyone is too busy to play with "Polly," think about finding a better home for her.
- **Speak out for the preservation of our wetlands and woodlands.** If we sell all our land to developers, there will be nowhere for our parrots to live. The Botanic Park is not big enough by itself to be a home for all our wild parrots.
- **Don't be discouraged if no one listens to you.** It takes a long time for people to accept new ideas.
- **Call the Wildlife Rescue Hotline 917- BIRD if you find an injured bird or wild animal.**

Caymanians have long enjoyed the sight of wild parrots flying among the trees. You can help make sure these beautiful birds are here forever in our skies and not in cages!

What Kids Can Do

- Tell people about our parrots. Many people don't know how special they are and that they are in danger.
- Don't disturb parrots in the bush. Let them live in peace and have their babies in the wild.
- Explain why people shouldn't disturb parrots and that there is a law that protects these birds.
- If you see someone trapping or harming a parrot, tell the National Trust or the Police. It is against the law.
- If you have a pet parrot, make sure it has a big cage so that it can stretch and move around and that it gets the right diet and plenty of clean fresh water. If you can't do these things, ask the National Trust. They might be able to help you find a home for your parrot.
- The National Trust has a free booklet called Caring For Your Pet Parrot. Give copies of this booklet to your friends and relatives who have pet parrots, so that their birds will have the best care possible.
- Don't feel bad if people won't listen to you. It takes a long time for some things to change. Just do your best. In time, people will realize that you are right.

A Tribute to Mr. Otto Watler WHAT ONE PERSON CAN DO!

In the face of widespread development, poaching of parrots for pets, animosity of fruit farmers and general indifference, what can one person do?

A look at history will show us that most major steps forward were accomplished by ONE dedicated person. One Caymanian has proved this.

Mr. Otto Watler is a selfless, insightful person with true vision. He single-handedly, with no formal training and at his own expense, became the first person to successfully breed Cayman Parrots in the nation. He accomplished this while working full-time on his large farm in Savannah and remaining a very active member of the Agricultural Society. This is a man Caymanians can be proud to call their own.

While realizing that the best place for our parrot is in the wild and continuing to debate the crop-pest issue with his fellow farmers, Mr. Watler educated himself about conservation efforts on other Caribbean islands and built a spacious, clean and successful aviary. Mr. Otto's aviary is a model environment for birds that must be in the care of humans and an invaluable aid in educating young people about the proper maintenance of Cayman Islands Parrots in captivity.

Quotes from Mr. Otto Watler

"The parrot is just as Caymanian as the Caymanian himself and as long as time exists should be allowed to grace our skies"

"Parrots need a place on our island and a place in our hearts. They should be with us here in the Cayman Islands as long as man is here."

"Cayman has the affluence and the opportunity to be one of the few Caribbean islands to save a viable wild population"

"I do not want my great grandchildren to only know the Cayman parrot from a stuffed dead sample in the museum or a Cuban parrot in a zoo somewhere."

APPREHEND GOD IN ALL THINGS,
FOR GOD IS IN ALL THINGS
EVERY SINGLE CREATURE IS FULL OF GOD
AND IS A BOOK ABOUT GOD
EVERY CREATURE IS A WORD OF GOD
IF I SPENT ENOUGH TIME WITH THE TINIEST CREATURE
EVEN A CATERPILLAR
I WOULD NEVER HAVE TO PREPARE A SERMON
SO FULL OF GOD
IS EVERY CREATURE.

MEISTER ECKHART

BUT ASK NOW THE BEASTS,
AND THEY SHALL TEACH THEE
AND THE FOWLS OF THE AIR,
AND THEY SHALL TELL THEE,
OR SPEAK TO THE EARTH,
AND IT SHALL TEACH THEE:
AND THE FISHES OF THE SEA
SHALL DECLARE UNTO THEE.

JOB 12-7-8 KJV

THE PARROT

A Simile Poem

It is locked behind bars like
a prisoner serving life,
Pecks at its food like a
nail being hammered into a piece of
wood,
As squeaking as a floor board
in an old Victorian house,
Colours as vivid as a clown,
They have the closest families like
a tightly woven glove,
If you look at it and how it acts,
it's like a stand-up comic

Ledra Lawrence, Year 9, St. Ignatius High School

POEM: A FLYING LESSON

Mother taught her chick to fly
At 65 days old

Mother said "Now you must try
To do what you are told."

Raise your wings, Dip your wings.
Give a little flap.

Bend your knees. Push off please.
That's a clever chap.

Mrs. Albin Music and Mrs. Cecily Clark

POEM: FIVE LITTLE PARROTS

Five little parrots were perched in a tree
One was caught and was never set free

Parrots flew high. Parrots flew low.
Four little parrots flying to and fro.

Four little parrots went too near a farm.
A wild cat pounced and one he did harm.

Three little parrots in the woods did roam.
A hurricane blew one far from home.

Two little parrots, left alone to mate.
We can save these birds. It's not too late.

Mrs. Albin Music and Mrs. Cecily Clark

POEM: A PARROT

A parrot flies over my head
His throat and his belly are red

A parrot lives in our zoo
His wings are bright green and blue

A parrot roosts high in a tree
His cheeks are as pink as can be

A parrot likes the North Side trail
His beak and feet are very pale.

A parrot repeats what he hears
His grey feathers cover his ears

A parrot is a special fellow.
His under tail is greenish yellow.

Mrs. Albin Music and Mrs. Cecily Clark

POEM: HELP OUR PARROTS

Cayman Islands National Symbols: Flora and Fauna - National Bird

If you are a friend to parrots,
loyal, kind and true.
Remember these four special things
you must surely do.

Never trap a wild parrot
and do not touch its nest.
If you have a pet parrot,
a healthy diet's best.

Do not hurt Cayman parrots.
It is against the law.
A five hundred dollar fine
is what the crime will draw.

Mrs. Albin Music and Mrs. Cecily Clark

POEM: THE CAYMAN PARROT

The Cayman parrot has big green wings
When he's happy he whistles and sings.

The parrot flies up, the parrot flies down
The parrot flies free around North Side Town

The Cayman parrot has a bright green tail
When he's frightened his alarm call will wail.

The Cayman parrot has a beak that's stout.
When he's bored he pulls his feathers out.

The Cayman parrot has an eye-ring that's white
When he is angry, your finger he'll bite.

Mrs. Albin Music and Mrs. Cecily Clark

SONG: ONE LITTLE PARROT

There was one little parrot in one little tree.
"I'm so alone, I need a friend said she.
So she flew far away, over the sea,
And brought back a friend to live in the tree.

There were two little parrots in one little tree
Now we will stay and have a family.
So they built up a nest inside the tree
And both parents shared in raising the three.

There were five little parrots in one little tree
Deep in the woods and living happily
So they flew every day, glad to be free
Because we protect our parrots you see.

The tune to this song has been lost. Can you choose a new one?

Mrs. Albin Music and Mrs. Cecily Clark

SONG: PARROTS PARROTS

Parrots, parrots. We have parrots
On Grand Cayman Isle

If we take their land away
Break their nests so they won't lay
Cut down the trees where they play
Trap their babies everyday
In small cages make them stay

Parrots, parrots. No more parrots
On Grand Cayman Isle.

The tune to this song has been lost. Can you choose a new one?

Mrs. Albin Music and Mrs. Cecily Clark

SONG: I'VE A PARROT

I've a parrot with feathers,

green, red, yellow and blue.
She was born on Grand Cayman
and is now only two.

I've a Grand Cayman parrot
and she does love to talk
When I feed her some fresh fruit,
she thanks me with a squawk.

I've a Grand Cayman parrot.
She eats everything nice;
sea grapes, almonds, wild mangoes.
vegetables, peas and rice.

I've a Grand Cayman parrot.
What a sweet little dear.
If we don't save our parrots,
they will all disappear.

The tune to this song has been lost. Can you choose a new one?

Mrs. Albin Music and Mrs. Cecily Clark

SONG: TELL ME LITTLE PARROT

Tell me little Cayman parrot

What have you to say?

My head is bright green, red and white
With just a touch of grey.

I build my nest inside old trees
And hatch my eggs in May.

If I am stuck inside a cage
With toys I need to play.

The rats and cats and poachers
On baby birds will prey

We are rare as there are just
Two thousand left today.

For one full year, we live at home
With Mum and Dad we stay.

The tune to this song has been lost. Can you choose a new one?

Mrs. Albin Music and Mrs. Cecily Clark

Name _____ Class _____

Cayman Islands Parrots Quiz: Natural History

Multiple Choice: circle the correct answer.

1. What is the National Bird of the Cayman Islands?
a) Banana Quit **b) Cayman Islands Parrot** c) Snowy Egret
2. What does “endemic” mean?
a) Found only in a certain area or country b) A disease c) Foreign
3. How long do mated pairs of parrots stay together?
a) One year b) Fourteen weeks c) All their lives
4. How does the Grand Cayman Parrot compare in size to the Cayman Brac Parrot?
a) Bigger b) The same size c) Smaller
5. What is the average number of eggs laid in a clutch by parrots?
a) One b) Three c) Five
6. Why is the Cayman Brac Parrot called the stealth parrot?
a) It is very fierce b) It is fast c) It is quiet
7. Which Amazon Parrot has the smallest range in the world?
a) Puerto Rican Parrot b) Cayman Brac Parrot c) Cuban Parrot
8. How many parrots were counted on Cayman Brac in the 1996 Census?
a) 200 b) 400 c) 2,000
9. What threats do parrots face in the wild?
a) Development b) Poachers c) Predators d) all three
10. Preserving parrot habitats in the wild also helps to assure the survival of:
a) Sea turtles b) Cats and dogs c) All of our wild plants and animals

Name _____ Class _____

Cayman Islands Parrots Quiz: Natural History

True or False: If the answer is true, circle T. If the answer is false, circle F.

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. The Cayman Islands Parrot is our National Bird. | T | F |
| 2. The Grand Cayman Parrot lives only on Grand Cayman. | T | F |
| 3. The Cayman Brac Parrot lives only on Cayman Brac. | T | F |
| 4. There are no Parrots left on Little Cayman. | T | F |
| 5. There is a \$500 fine for disturbing a parrot's nest. | T | F |
| 6. There is a \$500 fine for hunting or trapping parrots. | T | F |
| 7. No other country in the world has parrots exactly like ours. | T | F |
| 8. Parrots can nest happily in small trees around houses. | T | F |
| 9. Parrots need wild, undisturbed land to find homes and food. | T | F |
| 10. Parrots love to be in cages and don't mind being alone. | T | F |
| 11. Parrots cannot be hurt by hurricanes | T | F |
| 12. We will always have parrots in the Cayman Islands, even if we don't protect their habitat. | T | F |
| 13. Everyone can help save our parrots by telling their families, neighbours and friends how important these birds are. | T | F |
| 14. The parrot is not important to the Cayman Islands. | T | F |
| 15. The rest of the world doesn't care if we save our parrots. | T | F |

Name _____ Class _____

Cayman Islands Parrots Quiz: Pet Care

Multiple Choice: circle the correct answer.

1. Why did Caymanians traditionally keep parrots?

- a) For the eggs b) As pets c) To control insects

2. In 1990 Cayman Islands Parrots were:

- a) Exterminated b) Pictured on our flag c) Protected by law

3. Pet parrots released into the wild without expert advice might:

- a) carry disease b) get hurt c) starve d) all three

4. Parrots are friendly and love to:

- a) Go to parties b) have company c) Sit in the cage alone

5. Parrots should be fed a variety of seeds, fruits and:

- a) Vegetables b) Coconuts c) Meats

6. Parrots should always have a supply of fresh cool:

- a) Coca Cola b) Water c) Fruit juice

7. Pet parrots need a cage that is:

- a) Clean b) Big enough to spread their wings inside c) Both

8. A Cayman Islands Parrot's cage should be:

- a) Down low b) Up high c) Outside

9. The wing feathers of a pet parrot can be carefully trimmed so that the parrot:

- a) Looks nicer b) Flies faster c) Does not escape

10. The best place for parrots to breed is:

- a) In a cage b) In an aviary c) In nesting holes in the wild

Name _____ Class _____

Cayman Islands Parrots Quiz : Pet Care

True or False: If the answer is true, circle T. If the answer is false, circle F.

1. Certain parts of the avocado can poison a parrot. T F
2. A Parrot can die if his cage is not big enough. T F
3. Parrots don't mind being alone. T F
4. A Parrot must get plenty of breeze and fresh air. T F
5. A parrot needs to play with toys and keep active. T F
6. Parrots like to be in a cage on the floor. T F
7. A stressed or unhappy bird will not breed. T F
8. Parrots will eat anything. No special food is necessary. T F
9. Parrots can show us their needs by the way they act. T F
10. A parrot's cage should be cleaned frequently. T F
11. An unhappy parrot might pull out its feathers. T F
12. The National Trust will find a good home for unwanted pet parrots. T F
13. It is illegal to take a parrot from the wild for a pet. T F
14. In the past, people had more time to play with pet parrots. T F
15. A pet parrot should not be freed without special training. T F

Name _____ Class _____

Parrot Quiz: Natural History

Fill in the blanks: choose the correct answer from the word box below.

1. The Cayman Islands Parrot is our National _ _ _ _.
2. There are _ _ _ kinds of parrots in the Cayman Islands.
3. Our parrots are part of the _ _ _ _ _ Parrot family.
4. Parrots stay with the same _ _ _ _ all their lives.
5. Parrots make their _ _ _ _ _ in holes in old trees.
6. Cayman Islands Parrots are bright _ _ _ _ _ .
7. It takes _ _ _ _ months for a chick to learn to fly.
8. If forests are cut down, parrots lose their _ _ _ _ _.
9. Parrots return to the _ _ _ _ nest every year.
10. It is against the _ _ _ to disturb parrot's nests.

Word Box

Amazon nest Bird homes two
mate law trees green four

Name _____ Class _____

Parrot Quiz - Pet Care

Fill in the blanks: choose the correct answer from the word box below.

1. It is against the _ _ _ to take parrots from the wild.
2. A Parrot's _ _ _ _ should be placed up high.
3. Parrots need to eat vegetables, fruits and _ _ _ _ _.
4. Parrots should always have clean _ _ _ _ _.
5. Parrots hate to be _ _ _ _ _.
6. Some pet parrots enjoy a gentle shower or _ _ _ _ _.
7. A parrot _ _ _ _ _ attention.
8. Parrots can get sick if their cages are not _ _ _ _ _.
9. If a parrot is unhappy it might _ _ _ _ _.
10. It is important for pet parrots to have proper _ _ _ _ _.

Word Box

alone bath seeds bite needs
 water cages clean care law

Answer Key: Cayman Islands Parrots Quizzes

Cayman Islands Parrots Quiz: Natural History - Multiple Choice

1. b) The Cayman Islands Parrot was chosen by the people and by government.
2. a) Endemic is an important word. Caymanians have the sole responsibility for the survival of our own special species.
3. c) Parrots mate for life. It is rare to see a single parrot in the wild.
4. a) The Grand Cayman Parrot is slightly bigger than the Cayman Brac Parrot.
5. b) Parrots lay an average of three eggs per nest.

6. c) The Cayman Brac Parrot is very difficult to find or count, because of its very quiet behavior.
7. b) The Cayman Brac Parrot is only found on the island of Cayman Brac.
8. b) Four hundred is a very small number to be the entire population of a species.
9. d) Developers and poachers are unnatural threats. Predators are natural.
10. c) All nature is inter-dependent. Helping one species always helps many others too.

Cayman Islands Parrots Quiz: Natural History - True-False

1.-T, 2.-T, 3.-T, 4.-T, 5.-T 6.-T 7.-T 8.-F 9.-T 10.-F 11.-F 12.-F 13.-T 14.-F 15.-F

Cayman Islands Parrots Quiz: Pet Care - Multiple Choice

1. b) Parrots were traditional pets in the days before people were away from the house all day.
2. c) As the population grows, it is no longer feasible for everyone to take a pet parrot from the bush.
3. d) It is very important that Cayman Islands Parrots be returned to the wild only under expert advice.
4. b) Parrots need and enjoy companionship.
5. a) Parrots' diet should be as close to their wild foods as possible.
6. b) Clean water is a must for a healthy pet.
7. c) A proper cage is part of responsible pet ownership.
8. b) Parrots are designed to live in trees. They enjoy being up high.
9. c) The greatest loss of pet parrots is due to their escaping and getting lost.
10. c) Captive breeding is an emergency measure, very expensive, as only appropriate if the population is in a severe decline due to loss of habitat.

Cayman Islands Parrots Quiz: Pet Care - True-False

1.-T, 2.-T 3.-F 4.-T 5.-T 6.-F 7.-T 8.-F 9.-T 10.-T 11.-T 12.-T 13.-T 14.-T 15.-T

Cayman Islands Parrots Quiz: Natural History - Word Box

1. The Cayman Islands Parrot is our National BIRD.
2. There are TWO kinds of parrots in the Cayman Islands.
3. Our parrots are part of the AMAZON Parrot family.
4. Parrots stay with the same MATE all their lives.
5. Parrots make their NESTS in holes in old trees.
6. Cayman Islands Parrots are bright GREEN.
7. It takes FOUR months for a chick to learn to fly.
8. If forests are cut down, parrots lose their HOMES.
9. Parrots return to the SAME nest every year.
10. It is against the LAW to disturb parrot's nests.

Cayman Islands Parrots Quiz: Pet Care - Word Box

1. It is against the LAW to take parrots from the wild.
2. A parrot's CAGE should be placed up high.
3. Parrots need to eat vegetables, fruits and SEEDS.
4. Parrots should always have clean WATER.
5. Parrots hate to be ALONE.
6. Some pet parrots enjoy a gentle shower or BATH.
7. A parrot NEEDS attention.
8. Parrots can get sick if their cages are not CLEAN.
9. If a parrot is unhappy it might BITE.
10. It is important for pet parrots to have proper CARE.

Silver Thatch Palm

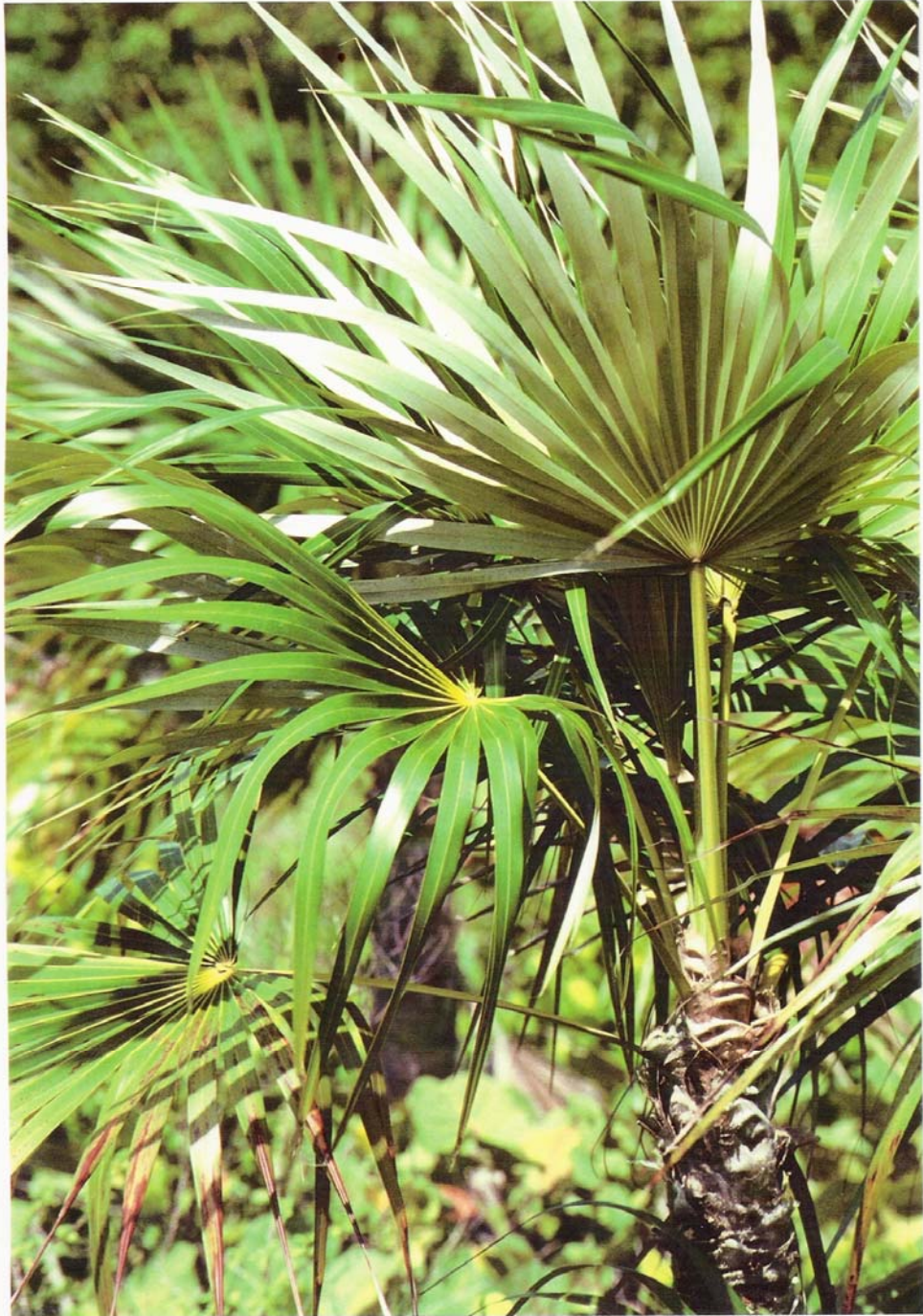
**National Tree
of
The Cayman Islands**

GRANT ME THE ABILITY TO BE ALONE,
MAY IT BE MY CUSTOM TO GO
OUTDOORS EACH DAY
AMONG ALL GROWING THINGS
AND THERE MAY I BE ALONE,
AND ENTER INTO PRAYER
TO TALK WITH THE ONE
THAT I BELONG TO.

RABBI NCHMAN OR BRATZLAV

I HAVE COME TO TERMS WITH THE FUTURE.
FROM THIS DAY ONWARD I WILL
WALK EASY ON THE EARTH.
PLANT TREES.
KILL NO LIVING THINGS.
LIVE IN HARMONY WITH ALL CREATURES.
I WILL RESTORE THE EARTH
WHERE I AM.
USE NO MORE THAN I NEED
AND LISTEN,
LISTEN TO WHAT IT IS TELLING ME.

M. J. S. HOOLEY



Cayman Islands National Symbols: Flora and Fauna - National Tree

Courtney Platt – Island Images

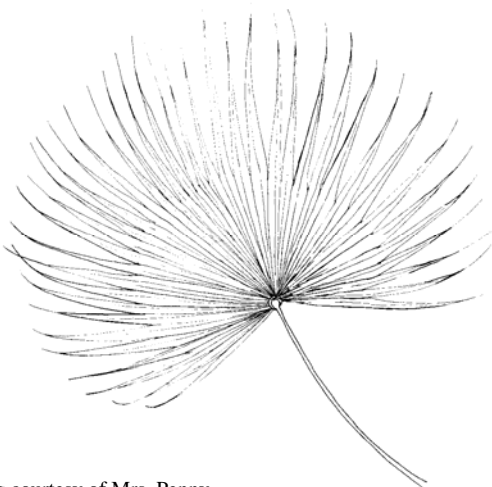
Silver Thatch Palm

On Earth Day 1996, the Silver Thatch Palm was chosen by the Government and the people of the Cayman Islands to be our National Tree. The Silver Thatch Palm is **endemic** * to the Cayman Islands. It is abundant on all three islands.

The Silver Thatch Palm is a part of our history, culture, landscape and national heritage. There is even a piece of thatch rope on our National **Coat of Arms*** on the Cayman Islands flag just under the turtle.

Description

The palm's scientific name, *Coccothrinax proctorii*, (Coh-co-THRY-nax prok-TOR- ee- eye), honours the botanist Dr. George Proctor, author of the book Flora of the Cayman Islands. The common name of the Silver Thatch Palm comes from the silver colour of the under sides of its leaves. The upper sides of the leaves are green.



Drawing courtesy of Mrs. Penny Clifford

The Silver Thatch Palm can reach a height of thirty feet. The flowers are white or cream in colour and are a favourite source of nectar for the honey bee. The berries change from orange-brown to blue black as they ripen and are eaten by iguanas and many species of birds, including doves and Bald Pates (White-Crowned Pigeon).

Habitat

The Silver Thatch Palm is perfectly adapted to grow everywhere in the Cayman Islands, except for the wetlands. It can tolerate drought, rain, salt breeze and hurricanes.

On Grand Cayman, there was a popular **thatch walk*** called “Head o’ Bay” where the cinema stands today. There was also a sixty-acre thatch walk in the Webster Estates area. People came by boat to Smith's Cove, walked inland to pick **tops***, then **backed*** them to the boat landing. They would trade a piece of finished rope to the owners of the land for the privilege of gathering thatch. North Side people gathered thatch in Round Key and Bowses (in the Cayman Kai area). Another favourite spot near North Side was Forest Glen, behind Caanan Land. On Cayman Brac, people would walk over the Bluff to the south side of the island. There are still thatch palms in most of these areas.



Drawing courtesy of Mrs. Penny Clifford

Tops and leaves of the Silver Thatch Palms along coastal roads tended to be harvested more often than remote inland sites. It was easy for travelers to gather leaves or tops as they passed by. These palms tended to become a bit stressed and their leaves would become shorter. By going inland, the people could find longer leaves that were easier to twist and weave. Harvesting leaves and tops does not kill the trees.

The Silver Thatch Palm is sometimes confused with the **Bull Thatch Palm***, but they are not the same plant. Bull Thatch Palm leaves are bigger and do not have a silver underside. They are used for decorating at celebrations, but the leaves of the Bull Thatch Palm have no strength and were never used for weaving or roofing.

Historical Significance

In addition to their graceful beauty and ecological importance, Silver Thatch Palms have an important place in the history and culture of the Cayman Islands. In earlier times, the people gathered leaves at every stage of development to make things for home use and for sale. Skills and styles of weaving were passed from one generation to the next and thatch weaving was even taught in schools.

Thatch Rope

Historically, **thatch rope*** making was one of the most important industries in the Cayman Islands. Women and children would go into the bush early in the morning on the day before the full moon to cut tops. When they returned, the tops were set out to dry. After several weeks the hard central ribs called **straws*** were removed with a sharp knife. The straws were used to make brooms called straw-brooms and the remaining strips of leaf called **strings*** were twisted into strands to make thatch rope.

Twisting these strands was an art. People knew exactly when to add new strings to the strand in order to keep it even and rounded. Each strand would be thirty **fathoms*** long, to make a finished rope of twenty-five fathoms (one hundred fifty feet). A fathom is six feet or about the length of an adult's outstretched arms.

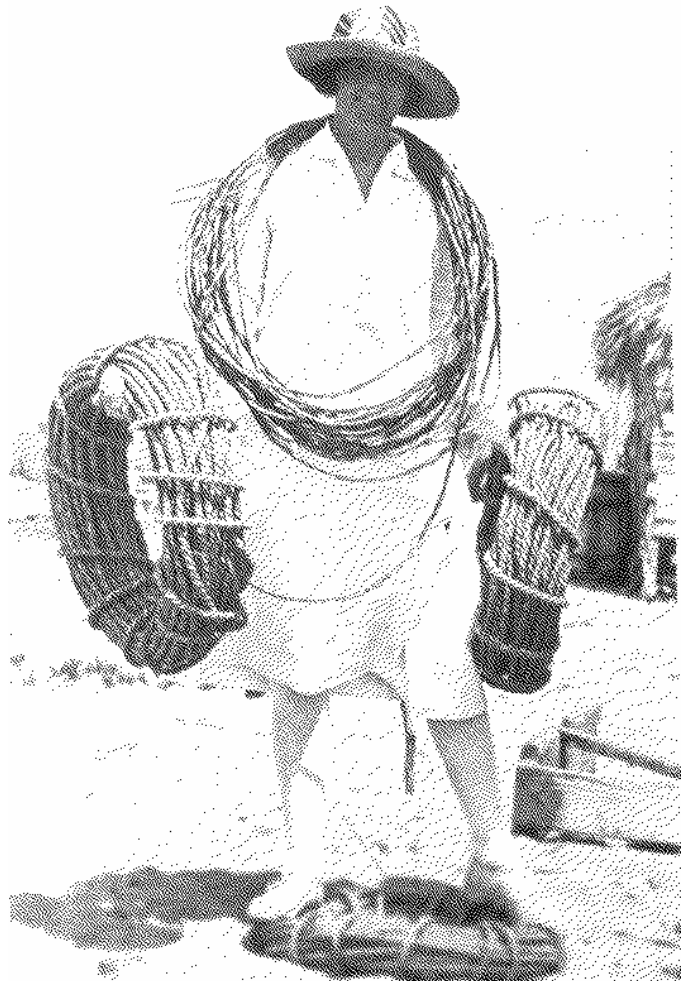
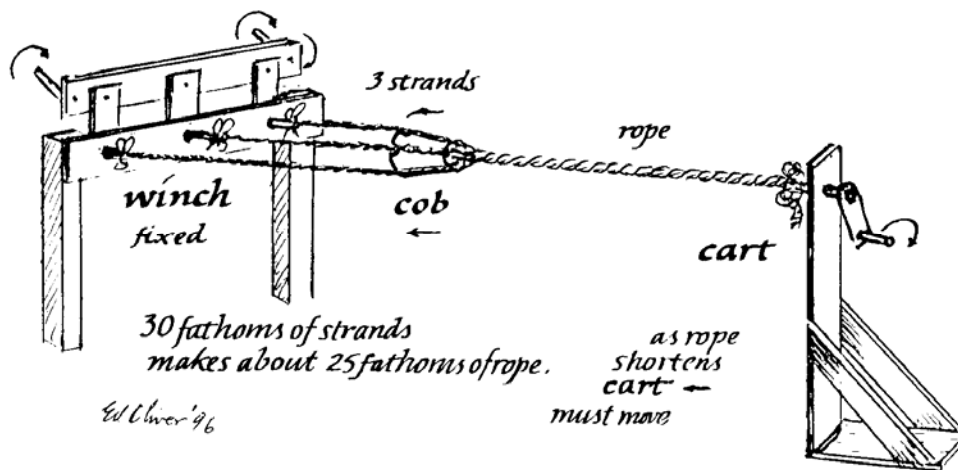


Photo courtesy of Cayman Islands National Archive Collections

The rope was laid (woven) on a special handmade machine. Three strands were attached to three spindles on one end of the machine. This end of the machine, called the **winch***, was rotated with a single handle. The three strands were also attached to a single spindle at the other end of the machine called the **cart***. Two people, one on each end, rotated the cart and winch in opposite directions.

The **cob*** was moved along just ahead of the point where the strands were being twisted together. This prevented knotting and insured a tightly laid rope. The cob contained three notches. When it was pushed back against the progressing rope, it would spread the strands and make the rope tighter. When the cob was moved away, the rope would be looser. Sometimes, a child moved the cob, but often it was weighted with a rock and squeezed along just ahead of where the strands twisted together into rope.

People sometimes referred to the whole rope-making machine as a **cart and winch*** though these terms actually meant just the two ends. No one knows who invented this very useful machine or exactly when it came into common use.



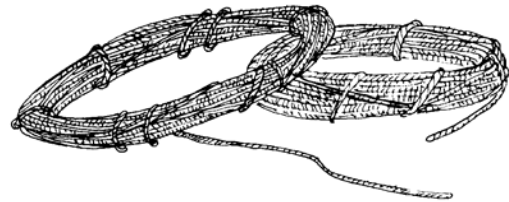
Drawing courtesy of Mr. Ed'z Archive Collection

Thatch rope was made in three sizes; the smallest was called head rope, the middle size was called big rope and the largest size rope was called hawser.

All the shops took rope in trade for goods and cash was rarely used until the 1960s. The shops would send rope by boat to Jamaica. The vessel taking the rope received twenty percent of the profits. The rope was sold to merchants, peddled around the coast and traded for goods like cloth, soap, matches, oil for lamps, sugar and syrup. At one time, twenty-five fathoms of rope could be traded for six pounds of sugar.

Thatch rope was used whenever a strong rope was needed. It was used for hanging hammocks, roping beds and fastening floats to nets.

Cayman Islands thatch rope was the best available rope for the boats in the fishing and shipping industry of Jamaica because it was resistant to salt water. Jamaicans could weave rope from fibres of the sisal plant, but this rope was not as durable in marine use.



Drawing courtesy of Mrs. Penny Clifford

Imagine the excitement of the people when they discovered that they could market thatch rope. The leaves of the Thatch Palm were free and no expensive equipment was needed. Women and children could work at home. Families were often large and everyone helped.

Rope making often supported people who had no other way to make a living. In 1930, when Mrs. Olga Whittaker was eleven years old, her father became ill and went to George Town with her mother for treatment. Olga and her four brothers and sisters, ages three through fifteen, were left home alone in East End. All their parents savings were used to pay for medical care. The children made and sold rope to survive. During this time one hundred fifty fathoms (nine hundred feet) of rope could be traded for three yards of cloth. When their mother returned six weeks later they continued to make thatch rope together because their father was still too ill to work.

From 1901 to 1906 over two million fathoms (over two thousand miles) of rope was exported. Most of it was made by women and children working in their homes.

The market for thatch rope continued to grow. From 1941 to 1945 over seven million fathoms (nearly eight thousand miles) of rope was exported.

The hurricane of August 1944 devastated the Jamaican fishing fleet. An urgent call was sent to the Cayman Islands requesting that all the thatch rope possible be shipped to Jamaica.

Caymanians rushed to fill the order. Jamaican agents offered a slightly higher price as an incentive. At this time an agent from West Bay traveled to Bodden Town to buy rope. There was a Caymanian expression, "time longer than rope," but after looking at the quantity of thatch rope for sale, the agent pronounced that "rope longer than time!"

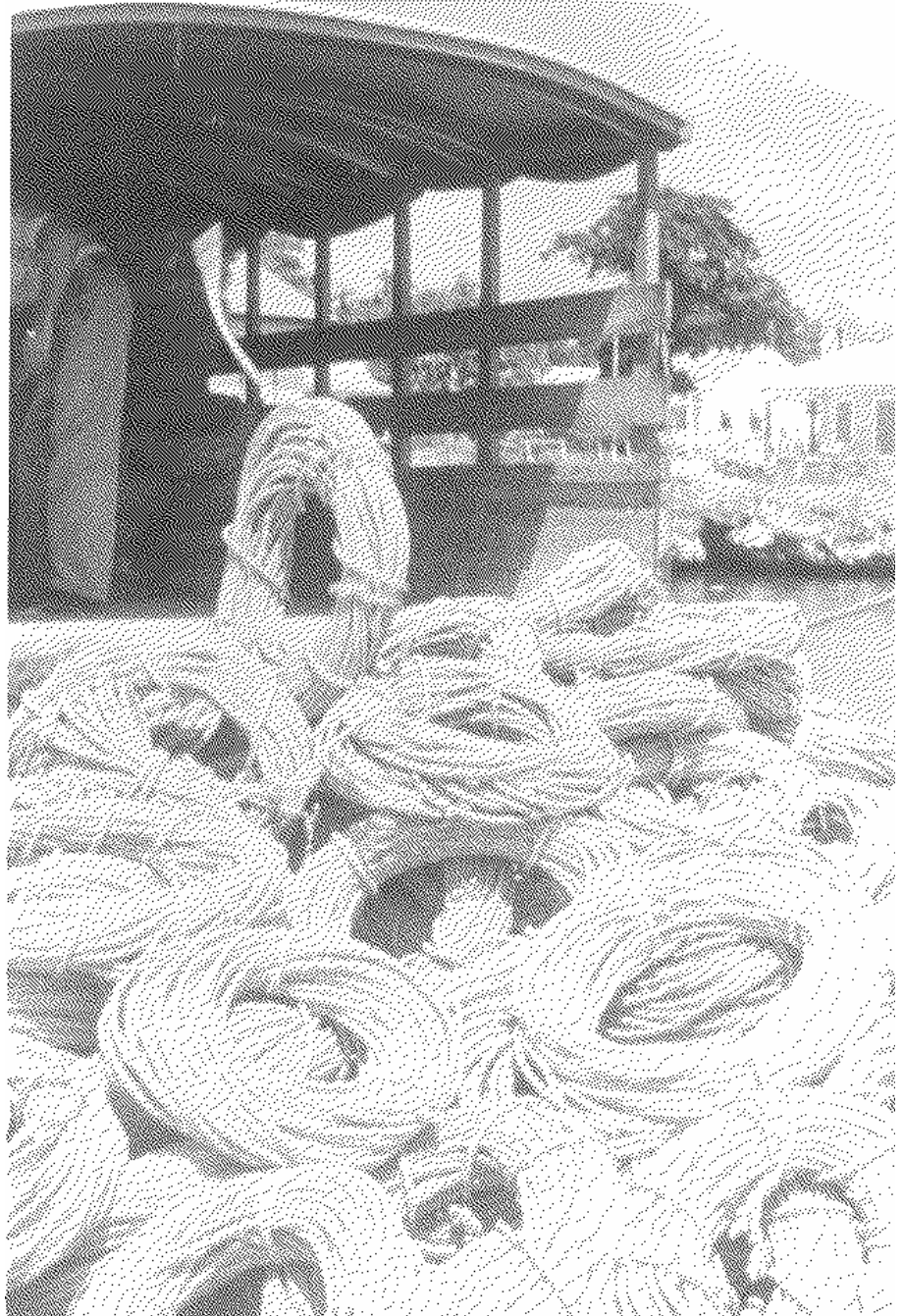


Photo courtesy of Cayman Islands National Archive Collection

In the excitement, some rope of inferior quality was shipped and complaints erupted from the buyers. In response to this, **guilds*** were formed and quality of workmanship was stressed. In order to help insure that all the rope was of good quality, rope makers were asked to sign a pledge.

It read: *“I do solemnly pledge my mind and hands in the production of standard strawrope for the promotion of trade and for one common good.”*

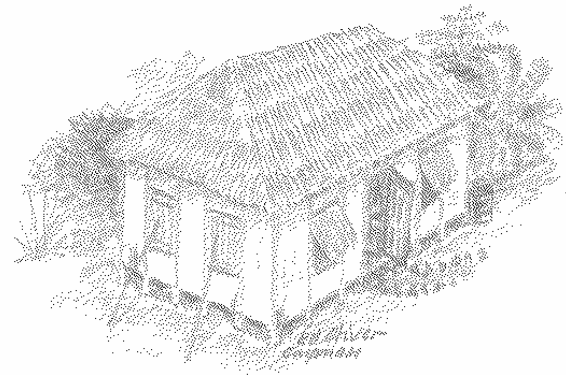
Though the people always used the term “thatch rope,” sometimes in official accounts the word **strawrope*** was used.

Young people from all the districts signed the pledge and made thatch rope. In East End 66 of the 154 rope makers were children.

The thatch rope trade peaked in 1949 and then began to decline. The introduction of nylon rope ended the marketability of homemade thatch rope. The last mention in the National Archive of thatch rope making as an industry was in 1958, however rope was still made and exported regularly until the mid 1960s.

Thatch Roofing

Roofing was another important use of thatch. Thatch roofing would last five to nine years. A thatch roof was cool and kept out the rain, but unfortunately, let in mosquitoes and harboured other insects. It was said that if the thatch were cut on a full moon or just after, the roof would last longer because there would be less sap in the leaves to attract insects. This time, when the moon rose after midnight, was known as the "Old Moon.”



Drawing courtesy of Mr. Ed'z Archive Collection

For roofing the leaves were used immediately, because if they dried and curled up the roofs would leak.

Eight to ten neighbours would work on a roof in exchange for help when it was time to do their own houses. The men would go to cut thatch, taking the whole leaf, sometimes called the “broadleaf”, not the tops. Mr. James Whittaker recalls once using almost ten thousand leaves to roof a house.



Photo courtesy of Cayman Islands National Archive Collections

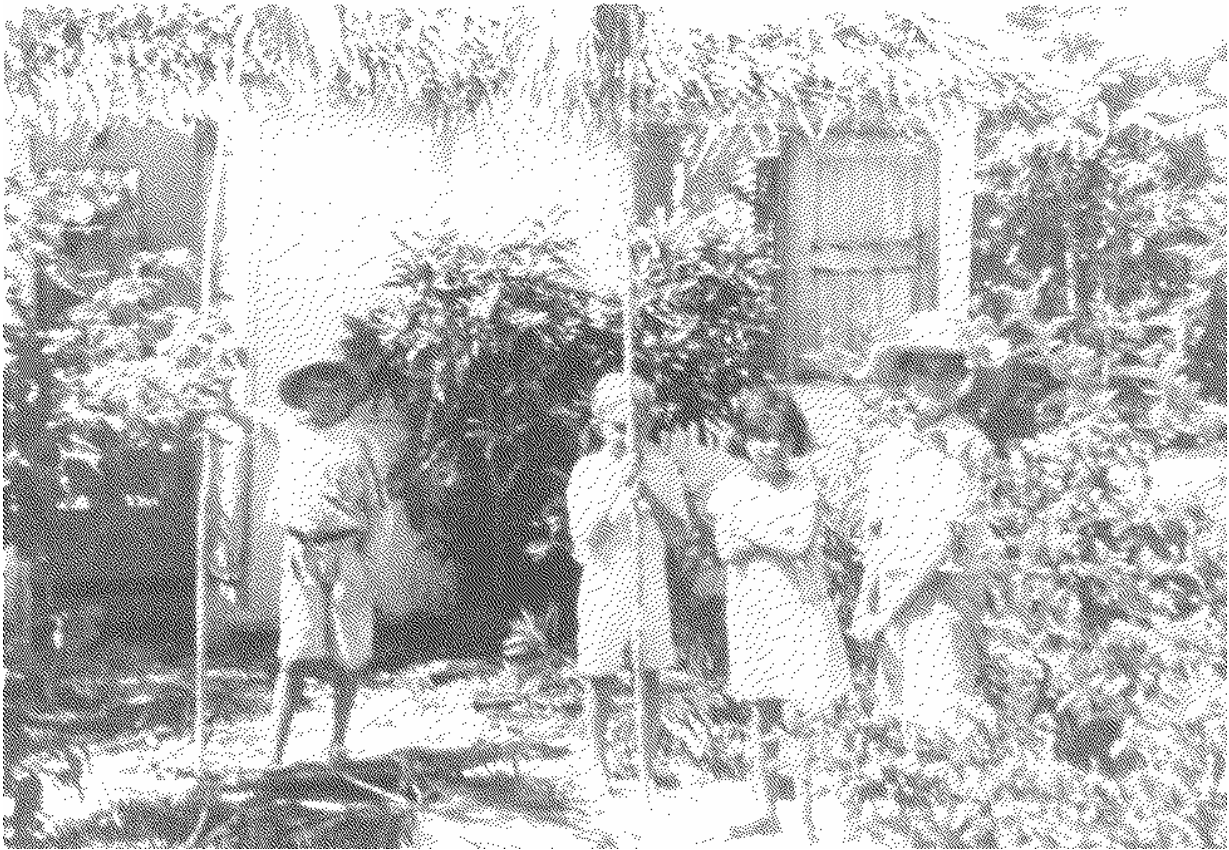
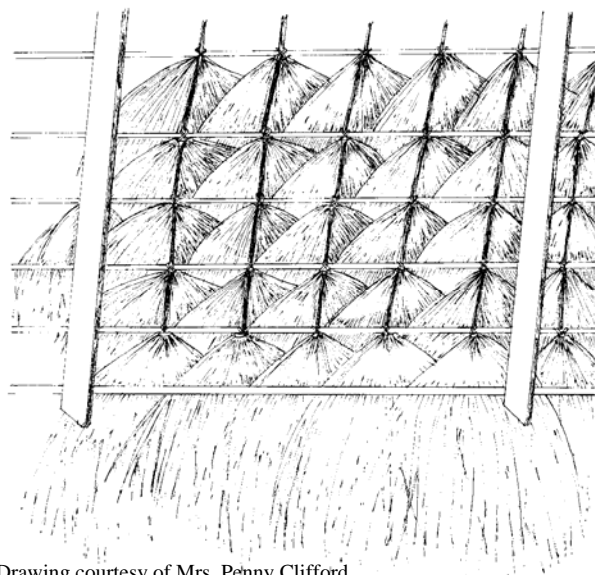


Photo courtesy of Cayman Islands National Archive Collections

Mrs. Cecily Pierson remembers that children enjoyed helping to thatch the roofs of their houses. They used a long stick to pass the thatch up in bundles to the men on the roof. Women made refreshments, such as cornbread, heavy cake, bread, coffee and tea.

Thatch roofing had almost disappeared by 1935. It was replaced by corrugated "zinc" which was hotter to live under, but did not need to be replaced as often as thatch roofing. Use of thatch continued for kitchens and outbuildings.



Drawing courtesy of Mrs. Penny Clifford

Other Uses of Thatch

Baskets and hats, now the most profitable uses of thatch, were not often sold. Since most women knew how to make them, there was not a large market, though some were shipped to the Bay Islands. Hats made at home were worn for work and school. For "Sunday Best" and special occasions, hats made from Jamaican soft straw (called "jippi-jappas") were worn.

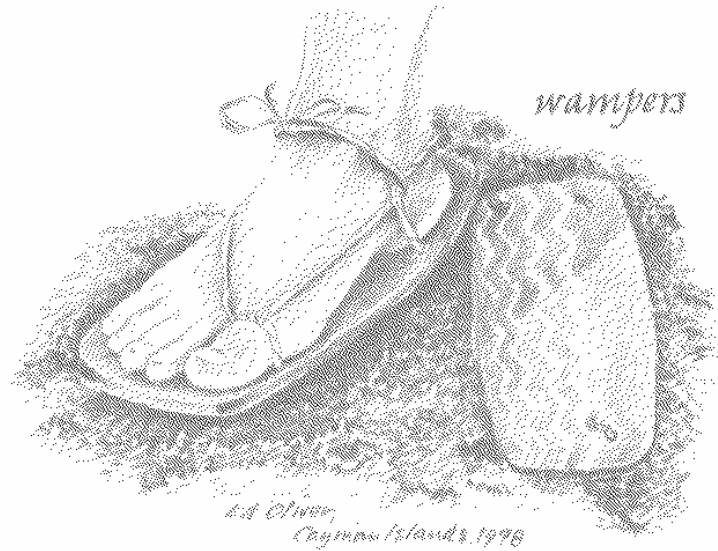


Mrs. Nell Connor of Breakers on Grand Cayman with some of her thatch products
Moses

Photo courtesy of Mrs. Kim Rough

The trunks of the thatch palms were sometimes greased and used as rollers to launch boats, or in the "greasy pole" climbing contests at parties. Trunks were also used for the "platt pole" dances. The dried leaves could be rolled tightly and used as torches for hunting lobsters in shallow water.

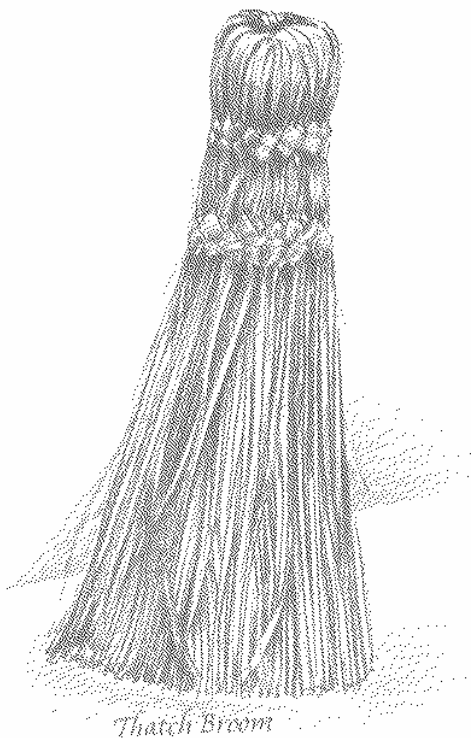
The straps of leather soled sandals called **whompers*** were made of thatch. Mrs. Cecily Pierson says that they were comfortable and particularly useful when it was wet. Slippers were woven entirely from thatch. Later the soles were cut from pieces of old car tyres.



Drawing courtesy of Mr. Ed'z Archive Collection

Thatch was also used to make dolls, mats for tables and for floors, picture frames, belts, brooms, baby beds, flour sifters, mosquito brushes and for stringing fish. Besides large round baskets called “ground baskets,” used for harvesting crops, and “backing sand” for the traditional Cayman sand yard, people made purses, waste

baskets, bread baskets, pencil holders, eye glass cases, tissue box holders and jewelry boxes.



Drawing courtesy of Mr. Ed'z Archive Collection

The people cut the tops for baskets from the shorter palms. It was said that the tops from the tall palms were not as suitable. It was important to gather tops and leaves at certain stages of maturity for specific uses. The green and silver sides would be different shades of tan after they were dried. Other beautiful variations in colour were created by drying the tops in sun or shade.

These colours were woven into

hundreds of different patterns and designs. First, the strands would be woven into bands. These could be plaited from 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 19, 22, or 25 strands. Only the very expert weavers could handle 9 or more. It took about two weeks to thoroughly dry the leaves. They had to be brought in every night, so that the dew would not moisten them. Baskets would mildew if improperly dried leaves were used.



Mrs. Nell Connor's hands weaving thatch leaves Photo courtesy of Mrs. Kim Rough Moses

Thatching Today

In modern times thatch weaving is no longer a necessary part of daily life. There are, however, still many people alive who are skilled in the art. They all have their own variations and specialties. Some use thatch thread to attach handles to baskets and purses, so the whole item is made of thatch. Others use a very fine weave with small threads and make a soft hat, or make patterns by inverting some of the strips. These thatch products are often displayed at heritage fairs and sold to tourists. There are a few people who still make thatch rope as a curiosity.

These people are ready and willing to teach their skills to anyone willing to learn. Even with the pace of modern development, Silver Thatch Palms are still plentiful and tops are readily available.

In North Side, there is a thatching group that is keeping our unique Cayman thatch weaving techniques alive. This group meets weekly and welcomes newcomers.

Young people should be encouraged to learn this traditional art form. Thatch can be woven while visiting friends or watching TV. Baskets can be sold in tourist shops or given as a special gift to a loved one. Thatch weaving can be a satisfying and enjoyable hobby and a way to remember our ancestors and honour our culture.



Mrs. Nell Connor weaving thatch leaves Photo courtesy of Mrs. Kim Rough Moses

Responsible Development

It is not necessary to clear a building lot of all trees before construction begins. Today, some developers are leaving native trees on the sites and working around them. When the buildings are finished, they have instant landscaping.

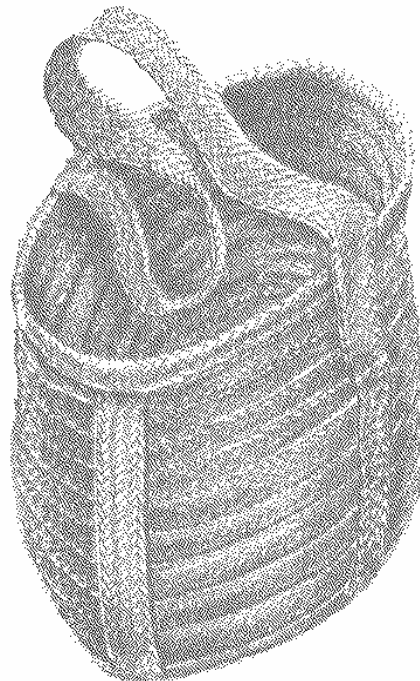
There is one house lot on the Middle School Road where the builders have left thatch palms and other beautiful trees after clearing. This is an example of responsible development without total destruction of local vegetation.

Silver Thatch Palms and other beautiful local trees such as Red Birch, Sea Grape, Ironwood and Royal Palms could be used more in landscaping. Local plants are adapted to our island conditions and suffer fewer diseases. They also need less fertilizer and pesticide. Why plant foreign palms, when ours are so beautiful and have so much special meaning to Caymanians?

Cultural Significance

The Silver Thatch Palm has been a part of Caymanian life for centuries. The National Archive holds a wealth of fascinating stories about how people's lives were improved and history was changed by its many uses.

As Mr. Otto Watler says, "It is a gallant tree and a tree to cherish."



Ground Bag

Drawing courtesy of Mr. Ed'z Archive Collection

Silver Thatch Palm: Vocabulary List

Back --- carrying thatch or other things on one's back in a sack or basket

Bull Thatch Palm --- a palm that is sometimes mistaken for the Silver Thatch Palm; it cannot be used for rope making and weaving

Cart --- three spindles at one end of a ropemaking machine

Coat of Arms --- design representing a family, country, or other group

Cob --- a part of a rope making machine which was used to control the tightness of the lay of a rope

Endemic --- (en-DEM-ik) found only in a certain area or country

Fathom --- six feet

Guild --- a group of tradesmen who unite to protect their business

Thatch rope --- rope made out of Silver Thatch Palm tops

Thatch walk --- a place where the Silver Thatch Palms grow

Tops -- straight new leaves growing from the top of a Silver Thatch Palm

Strawrope --- a term used in official accounts to refer to thatch rope

Straws --- the strong middle ribs of thatch tops; used to make brooms

Strings --- The strips of leaf removed from the straws; strings were twisted into strands.

Winch --- a crank turned with a handle and used to twist rope

Whompers --- sandals that were made out of thatch strands and pieces of cowhide, or in later times, pieces of old car tyres

Silver Thatch Palm: Vocabulary Work Sheet

Fill in the blanks. Use the Vocabulary List to find the meaning of words.

1. Long ago, people would go to a _____ and _____ Silver Thatch Palm _____ home to weave rope.
2. The Silver Thatch Palm is _____ on all three of the Cayman Islands.
3. The _____ is sometimes mistaken for the Silver Thatch Palm, but its leaves are a deeper green and it cannot be used for weaving or rope making.
4. A machine used for twisting thatch rope was called a _____ and _____. A third piece, called a _____ was used to control the tightness of the rope.
5. A finished piece of rope was usually 25 _____ long.
6. After the tops were dried, the thatch leaves were divided into _____ and _____. One was used for the actual weaving or rope making and the other was made into brooms.
7. There is a piece of thatch rope on the Cayman Islands _____.
8. In official records, the rope made from the Silver Thatch Palm was referred to as _____, though the local people always used the term _____.
9. When rope of inferior quality was shipped to Jamaica after the hurricane of 1944, _____ were formed to help insure a standard quality rope.
10. Thatch was used to make many useful things, from hats for the top of the head to _____ for the bottoms of the feet!

thatch walk	whompers	cob	back	tops	cart	strings
fathoms	winch	thatch rope	Bull Thatch Palm	guild		
straws	endemic	Coat of Arms	strawrope			

Silver Thatch Palm: Key Facts

- The Silver Thatch Palm is the *National Tree* of the Cayman Islands.
- The Silver Thatch Palm is *endemic* to the Cayman Islands. It grows on all three islands and nowhere else in the world.
- Silver Thatch Palm berries *are eaten by iguanas and many species of birds*, including the dove and the Bald Pate (White-Crowned Pigeon).
- The Silver Thatch Palm is *adapted perfectly to conditions in the Cayman Islands*.
- Silver Thatch Palms are *plentiful and are not endangered*. Harvesting materials to weave does not damage them in any way.
- Historically, *thatch rope making* was one of the most important industries in the Cayman Islands.
- There is a piece of thatch rope on the *Coat of Arms* of the Cayman Islands. It is found just under the turtle.
- The Silver Thatch Palm had *many uses*, including stringing fish, making roofs, kitchens, hats, torches, table mats, floor mats, picture frames, fans, mosquito brushes, flour sifters, sandals, slippers, brooms, dolls, baby beds, belts, school book bags and dozens of types of baskets for everything from coconuts to jewelry.
- The introduction of *nylon rope ended the marketability* of thatch rope.
- There are *still people who weave baskets and hats* for sale to tourists and thatch rope is available in a few stores as a curiosity.
- It is hoped that younger Caymanians will *learn the art of thatching*, so that this interesting and historical craft does not disappear in the islands.
- Silver Thatch Palms should be *left in place* whenever possible on new house and building sites.

Silver Thatch Palm: Natural History

On Earth Day 1996, the Silver Thatch Palm was chosen to be our National Tree. It grows in the Cayman Islands and nowhere else in the world. Mr. Otto Watler says, "It is a gallant tree and a tree to cherish."



Drawing courtesy of Mrs. Penny Clifford

The Silver Thatch Palm got its name from the silver colour on the bottom of its leaves.

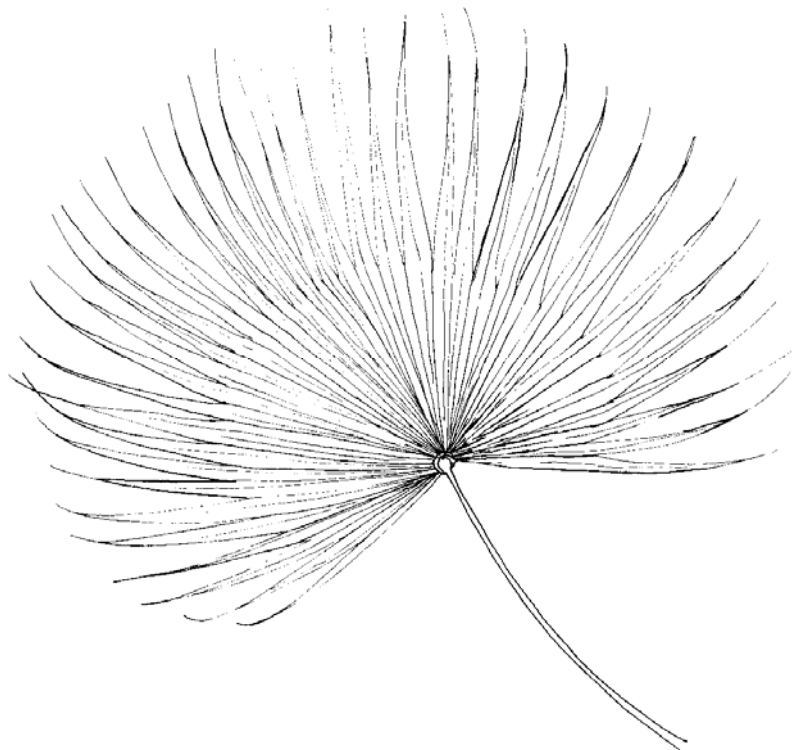
Its berries are blue when they are ripe. Birds and iguanas love to eat them. The flowers are white and honeybees often visit them.

The Silver Thatch Palm grows in most parts of the Cayman Islands. It can live through flooding, salt breeze, hurricanes and dry-spells.

Sometimes, people mix up

the Silver Thatch Palm with the Bull Thatch Palm, but they are very easy to tell apart. The Bull Thatch has bigger leaves that are not silver on the bottom. The Bull Thatch is used for decorations. Bull Thatch leaves are not strong and are not useful for rope making or weaving.

The Silver Thatch Palm is a very beautiful tree to have in your garden. It is a good idea to leave some Silver Thatch Palms and other native trees when land is cleared to build houses. It is better to have our own native trees in our gardens than to have to buy plants from a nursery and wait for them to grow.



Drawing courtesy of Mrs. Penny Clifford

Silver Thatch Palm: Rope Making

Long ago, it was not easy to make money without leaving the Cayman Islands. Men often worked on ships and traveled the world, while women and children stayed at home.

Imagine the excitement when people found out that they could sell rope made from the leaves of the Silver Thatch Palm. The leaves cost nothing and the women and children could weave in their spare time at home.

The Silver Thatch Palm grows only in the Cayman Islands, so no one else could make thatch rope. The rope stayed strong in seawater and men who worked on fishing boats in Jamaica wanted to buy it.

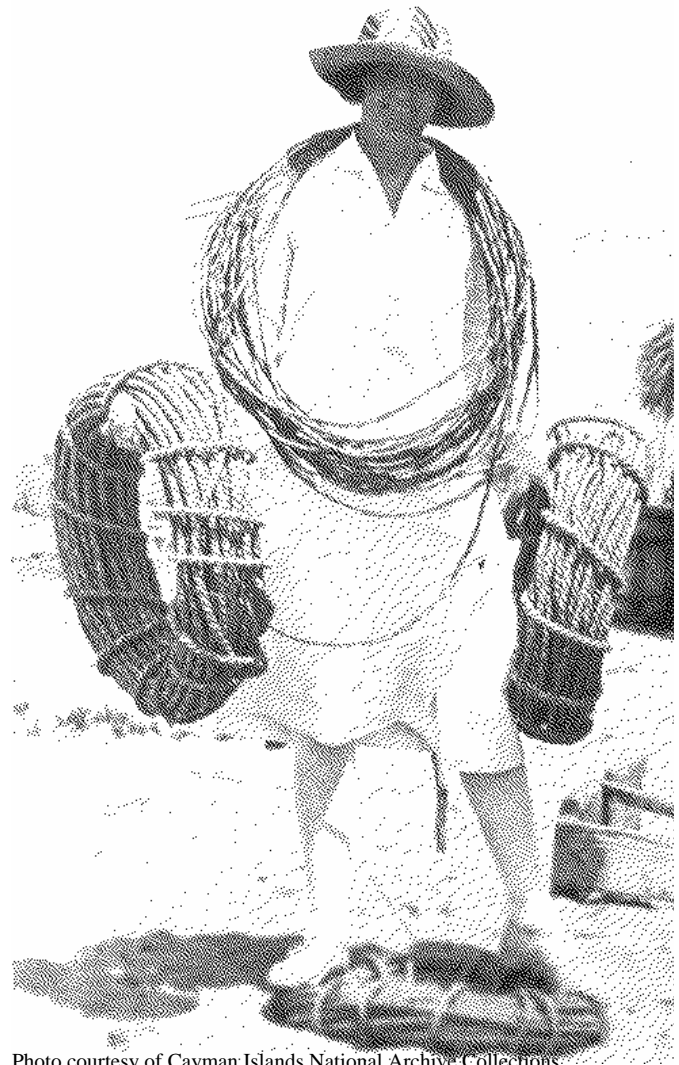


Photo courtesy of Cayman Islands National Archive Collections

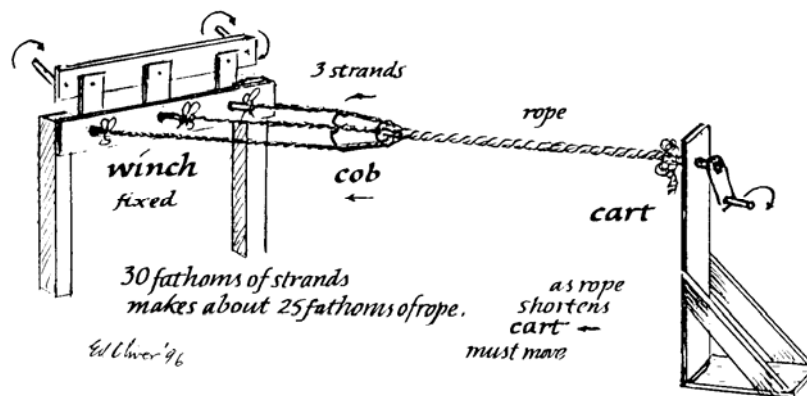
From around 1900 to 1960, thatch rope was sold. Everyone helped, but most of the thatch rope was made by women and children.

The places where the most Silver Thatch Palms grew were called “thatch walks”. People picked “tops” to make rope. Tops are the straight new leaves that grow on top of the Silver Thatch Palm. It does not harm the tree to pick these tops.

They carried the tops home in thatch baskets on their backs. This was called “backing”. Some people had donkeys to carry the thatch for them.

The tops were dried and twisted into strands by hand. It took practice to make the strands even and smooth. Three strands were used to make a rope.

Strands were made into rope on a hand-made machine that was called a “cart and winch.”



Drawing courtesy of Mr. Ed'z Archive Collection

When the rope was made, people could change it at local shops for flour, sugar, oil, lanterns, cloth, or other goods. The store-keeper then sent the rope to Jamaica.

Rope making was the only way children had to get pocket money. Some children made their own rope and were allowed to trade it at the store for cloth for special clothes or some other treasure.

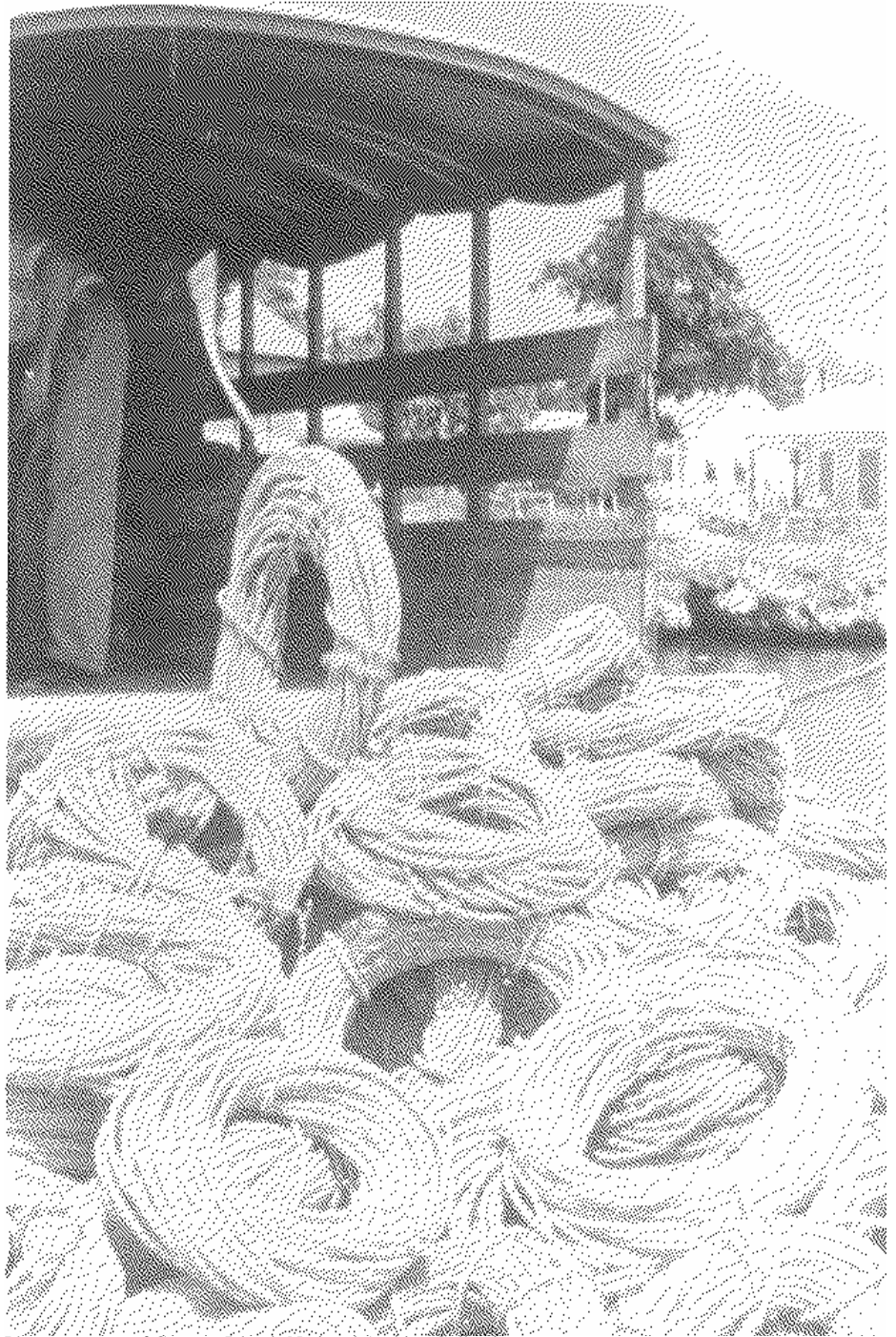


Photo courtesy of Cayman Islands National Archive Collections

For some people, rope making was not a way to buy treats. It was the only way to stay alive. Often, when husbands and fathers were lost at sea, their widows and orphans made rope as their only source of money.

People stopped making thatch rope when nylon rope came into common use around 1960.

Today, a few people still know how to make thatch rope. Maybe your grandmother can do it. It is almost forgotten now, but thatch rope was once very important to the Cayman Islands.

There is a picture of a piece of thatch rope on our Coat of Arms on the Cayman Islands flag. It is just under the turtle. See if you can find it the next time you look at the flag.



Silver Thatch Palm: Roofing

The leaves of the Silver Thatch Palm were used long ago to make roofing for houses. The whole leaf was used for this.

Men would go into the bush and gather leaves to roof a house. They would hurry back with the leaves and start work right away, because if the leaves dried out too much the roof would leak.

About ten men would work on a roof together. Children would use a long stick to pass bundles of leaves up to the men who were on the roof.



Photo courtesy of Cayman Islands National Archive Collections

Women would make cornbread, heavy cake, coffee and tea. It would become a party as all the neighbours gathered to help.



Photo courtesy of Cayman Islands National Archive Collections

Later, people made roofs from a metal called "zinc." Zinc roofs were hot to live under, but they lasted longer and were easier to put up than thatch roofs. People still used thatch roofing for their outside kitchens and other small outbuildings.

Silver Thatch Palm: Other Uses

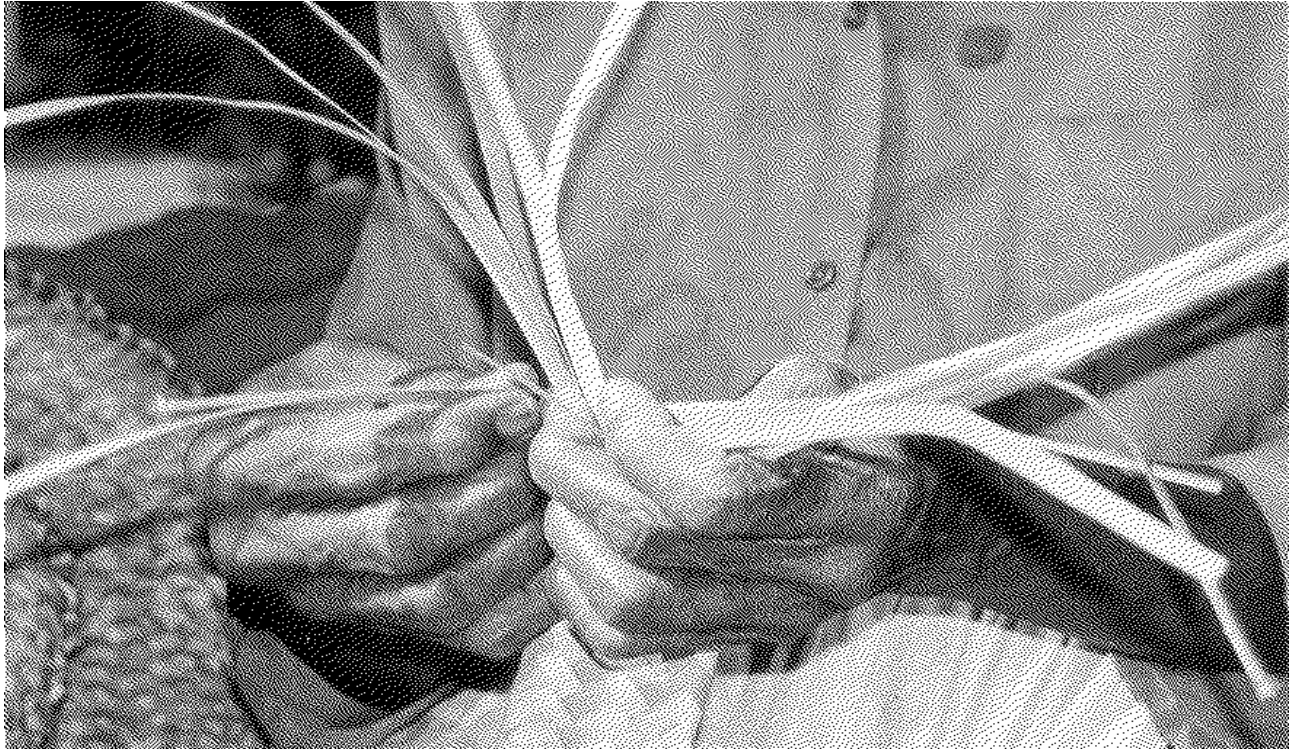
Silver Thatch Palm trunks were sometimes greased and used as rollers to launch boats, or for “greasy pole” climbing contests at parties. The trunks were also used for the “platt pole” dance.

Thatch was also used to make hats, dolls, table mats, floors mats, picture frames, belts, brooms, torches, baby beds, flour sifters, mosquito brushes, fish ties, slippers and the strings for sandals called “whompers”.



Mrs. Nell Connor of Breakers on Grand Cayman Island with some her thatch products

Photo courtesy of Mrs. Kim Rough Moses



Mrs. Nell Connor's hands weaving thatch leaves Photo courtesy of Mrs. Kim Rough Moses

All kinds of baskets were made of thatch: People made large round baskets for harvesting crops and “backing sand” for their sand yards. They also made purses, wastebaskets, breadbaskets, pencil holders, eyeglass cases, school book bags and jewelry boxes.

Thatch weaving was once taught in the schools and everyone knew how to do it.

Weaving with thatch can be an interesting hobby. Ask someone to show you how.

Silver Thatch Palm: Key Facts

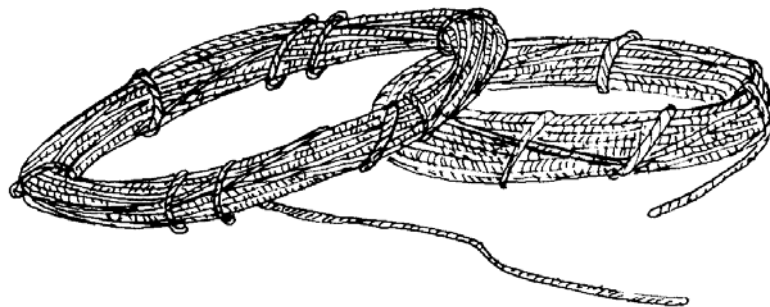
- The Silver Thatch Palm is our *National Tree*.
- The Silver Thatch Palm grows *only* in the Cayman Islands.
- Silver Thatch Palm grows well on *Grand Cayman, Cayman Brac and Little Cayman*.
- The Silver Thatch Palm is named for the beautiful *silver colour* on the bottoms of its leaves.
- *Birds and iguanas eat the berries* of the Silver Thatch Palm.
- *Rope making* from thatch leaves was an important way to make money for many families in earlier times.
- Thatch rope is *strong and waterproof*.
- Silver Thatch Palms were *used in the past to make many things* such as roofs, shoes, slippers, belts, hats, baskets, ropes, fans, flour sifters, dolls, mats, torches and rollers for boats.
- Silver Thatch Palms *look nice in gardens*.
- There is a piece of thatch rope in the *Coat of Arms* on the Cayman Islands Flag.



Little Neatha And The New Blue Shoes

Little Neatha (NEE-tha) McLaughlin was sad. She had to go to Sunday School barefoot because her family had no money for shoes. Most of the other children didn't have shoes either, but that didn't make it any easier for Neatha. "It just doesn't seem right," she said to herself.

She thought for a long time and came up with a plan. She was only ten years old, but she had been helping her mother make thatch rope for as long as she could remember. Thatch rope was a special rope made from the leaves of a tree that grew only in her own Cayman Islands. Fishermen needed it because it stayed strong even in seawater. "I'll make my own rope," she thought, "and sell it like Mama does!"



Dreaming of her own pair of shoes, she made the long trek to the "thatch walk" where the palms grew. Her older sister, Dolly, came along to help.

It was a hot day. Neatha was very tired when she got there. She just wanted to lie down under a tree and go to sleep, but Dolly said they had to hurry.

They filled their baskets with tops. Tops are the straight new leaves that grow from the top of the Silver Thatch Palm. Then they "backed" the tops home. "Backed" is an old fashioned word meaning to carry on your back.

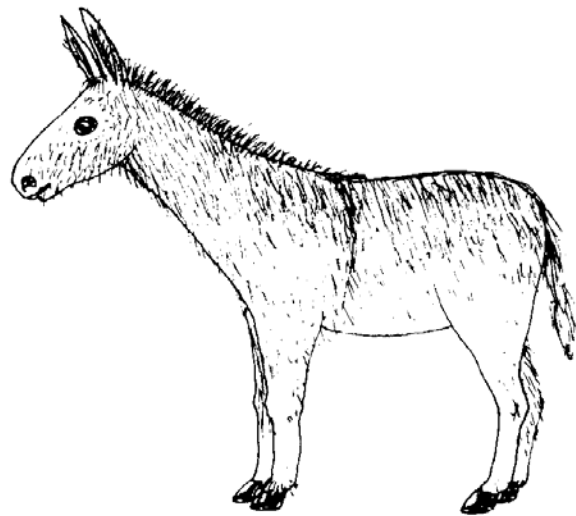
They returned three more times and still didn't have enough tops.

"Papa, I am so tired! It is such a long way." Neatha said to her father one day as she came home with her basket of tops.

He smiled at his hard-working little daughter.

"Next time, you can take Jacko, the donkey," he said.

"Oh, thank you, Papa!" Neatha said, beaming.



The dream of the new shoes was getting closer. Jacko could carry so many tops, that she would only need to make one more trip to the thatch walk.

"Now, I have all the tops I need," thought Neatha, "but I still have to make the rope." The new shoes were not so close after all.

Neatha tied her green tops into bundles and placed them in the sun. She could hardly wait for them to dry. After three long sunny days the tops were ready to weave.



Neatha worked and worked. She stripped the hard little rib from the back of the leaves. Mama would use these “straws” to make a broom to sweep the house. The rest of the top was called the “string” and this was the part used in twisting the strands.

Neatha knew just when to add new strings to the strands so that they would be even and smooth. When she had three very long thin strands, she knew she was ready to make her first piece of rope. Neatha was very excited!

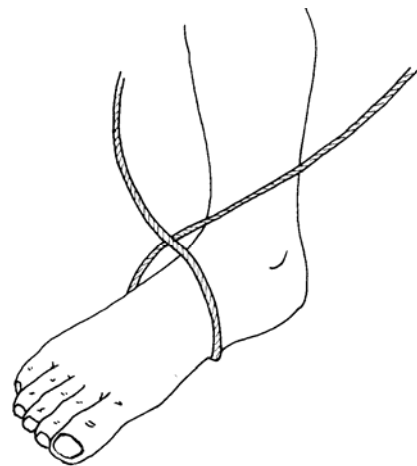
Dolly and her little brother Lymon helped her work the handmade wooden machine called a "cart and winch" that was used to lay the rope.

Neatha couldn't believe her eyes. There before her was a coil of rope twenty-five fathoms long and she had twisted it all herself!

But one coil was not enough. She worked many weeks and made more and more rope. Neatha kept her rope separate from Mama's and she knew exactly how much she would need to buy her new shoes. Finally, the happy day came. She was ready to trade her rope.

Her neighbour, Mr. Thomas Rankine, was a crewman on a sailboat that went to Jamaica. "Please, Mr. Thomas," she begged, "will you take my rope with you and trade it for a pair of shoes for me?"

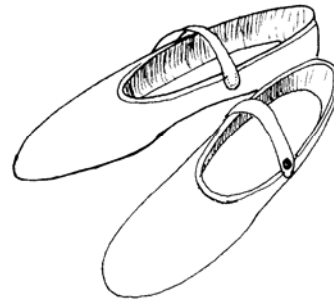
Mr. Thomas smiled at his young friend. "We will have to measure your foot," he said, "so I can bring you the right size." Neatha took a piece of string and tied a knot at each end to show how long her foot was. Then she did the same to show how wide it was.



Mr. Thomas was gone for a long time at sea. Finally, one day Neatha saw him walking toward her house with a parcel. She knew what was inside that parcel!

Mr. Rankine held the parcel high over his head and laughed as Neatha jumped about him trying to reach it. "What makes you think this is for you, Little One?" he teased. They opened the parcel together and inside were a little pair of blue canvas shoes.

That Sunday, as Neatha walked proudly into Sunday school in her new blue shoes, she thought about the thatch tops growing in the hot sun miles away and how hard work had made her dream come true.



Based on the true story, as found in the Cayman Islands National Archive, of Mrs. Neatha Connolly nee McLaughlin of East End. Written by Mrs. Lois Blumenthal; illustrated by Mrs. Penny Clifford.

Suggestions for Class Activities

Ask students to look for Silver Thatch Palms in their neighbourhoods or on the drive to school.

Point out that though Little Cayman and Cayman Brac have their own subspecies of Wild Banana Orchid and Cayman Islands Parrots, and Grand Cayman has its own subspecies of the two, the Silver Thatch Palm is the same on all three islands.

Discuss the reason for using Latin names for plant identification, and that Dr. George Proctor, whose name is honoured in the scientific name for our Silver Thatch Palm has written a book called Flora of the Cayman Islands. See if students can think of more than one common name for some of our local plants. (Dr. Proctor's book is quite scientific and very expensive - watch for a new book on Cayman Islands Trees soon to be published by Mr. Fred Burton of the National Trust.)

Discuss the history of the Silver Thatch Palm. Why was it put on our Coat of Arms? Is the Silver Thatch Palm still valuable to us economically? Is there any other value to the Silver Thatch Palm, other than as a source of income?

Arrange a visit with one of the thatch weavers named on the Resources - Thatch Weavers page; Can be demonstration only or rudimentary thatch weaving lessons.

Arrange a field trip to the Eastern side of Grand Cayman. Include the Botanic Park, the Mastic Trail and Mrs. Nell Connor's home at the Breakers Post Office for a demonstration of real thatch weaving.

Arrange a field trip on Cayman Brac to an area of native trees that includes Silver Thatch Palms. Combine the trip, if possible, with a visit to an older citizen who will demonstrate the techniques of thatch weaving.

Cut a few "tops" and demonstrate the strength of the fibres compared to Bull Thatch leaves and other plants. Research Caymanian "Sand yards". Each district grew different plants. Plant a small sand garden in the school yard. Give students the experience of "backing" sand using the thatch "ground baskets". This garden can be used to teach new students each school year.

Assign students to write a poem, limerick, play, or a short story about the Silver Thatch Palm history or natural beauty. Try the simile, initial or telescope poem idea outlined in the orchid class activity section. Role play a family making rope, waiting for Papa to return from the sea, trying to make ends meet through thatch work. Role play someone planning to build a house on a lot covered with Silver Thatch Palms; a builder saying that it is all "just bush" and should be cleared.

Though Silver Thatch Palms are very hardy in the wild, they are difficult to grow in pots and even harder to transplant. If you attempt the "Planting a Silver Thatch Palm" project ask an experienced gardener to help so that a successful outcome will be more likely.

Mould Silver Thatch Palms from clay, or design pottery tiles featuring them. Have students draw Silver Thatch Palms or do cartoon stories about the old days. Point out the Silver Thatch Palm stamp, sold by the Post Office and design another one.

Planting A Silver Thatch Palm

1. Find a thatch palm with a spray of dark purplish black berries. The seeds are inside the berries. You can plant the whole berry.
2. Fill a flowerpot with good quality potting soil.
3. Press three to five Silver Thatch Palm seeds just under the surface of the soil. (Not all will sprout.)
4. Moisten the soil with water.

Maintaining A Silver Thatch Palm

1. Check the soil every day to make sure it is moist. If the soil dries out, pour a little water on it.
2. As your little thatch palm grows, carefully transfer it to larger containers so the roots have plenty of room.
3. Congratulations! Your palm is now three feet tall. Put the pot where you intend to plant it permanently. Allow it to get used to its new home for a week or so before you disturb the roots by planting it in the ground.
4. Dig a large hole and place the young tree in the ground with plenty of good quality soil. Water heavily.
5. Continue to water and watch your Silver Thatch Palm grow into a beautiful tree.





Resources

Cayman Yesterdays features personal stories and photos of thatch workers (especially rope making). It is in the public library, bookshops, the National Museum, National Archive and National Trust House.

“Nell Connor, Here” A Woman At Work in the Cayman Islands by Ronald Fouls and Morris Jackson (out of print) This wonderful book can be seen in the National Archive.

The National Archive contains letters and records of the commerce in thatch rope. In the Colonial Reports from 1904 until 1957 there are many references to rope-making. The Oral History Memory Bank contains many fascinating stories that are available in transcript form.

Magazine articles and written historical accounts of the thatch rope trade, such as the article from Key to Cayman magazine, called Heros, by Mrs. Heather McLaughlin are also available at the National Archive.

The National Museum is a source of information on all aspects of the history of thatching.

The National Trust can answer questions and provide additional scientific and historical information about the Silver Thatch Palm and its uses.

The Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park is raising thatch palms and is a source of information. The Silver Thatch Palm is in the Botanic Park Logo.

Mr. Steve Smith of George Hicks High School can provide a list of activity ideas and will help design materials for special needs students.

Mrs. Debbie Van der Bol at Pure Art for information about local thatch artists and for possible ideas for activities using thatch.

On Cayman Brac, Mr. Wallace Platts is available to accompany students on field trips and to explain more about the Brac Parrot Reserve and Nature Trail. He can be reached by calling 948-2390. A brochure produced on Cayman Brac about the Brac Parrot Reserve and Nature Trail is included at the end of this book, and can be photocopied and folded to be pocket-sized.

Visit the National Trust website at www.caymannationaltrust.org

Resources - Thatch Weavers

Mrs. Marcie Hydes works for the Department of Education and can be called to visit the schools to teach thatch weaving and rope making. James T. Watler at the Department of Education will demonstrate rope-making.

The following is a list of well-known thatch workers in the Cayman Islands. These people are under no obligation to visit schools or to give their time to teach thatch weaving. They are included here as possible contacts. This is only a partial list. Many older people, especially women, can weave thatch and twist rope. Ask students to ask their grandmothers and other older relatives if they would be willing to demonstrate thatch weaving for the class. Each thatch weaver has a unique style or specialty and techniques vary throughout the districts.

Mrs. Carmen Connolly of East End is a teacher at the Community College and used to teach thatch weaving. Other thatch weavers in East End include: Mrs. Ariel Forbes, Mrs. Eileen McLaughlin and Mr. Rosewell Rankine.

In North Side, a thatch-weaving group meets every Tuesday night at the United Church. In this group are Mrs. Virginia McCoy, Mrs. Adelaide Ebanks and several other very knowledgeable women. Also in North Side are Mrs. Mary Miller, Mrs. Rebecca Pouchie and Mrs. Nell Smith.

Mrs. Nell Connor lives and works at the Breakers post office and could be visited after or before a field trip to the Botanic Park.

Thatch weavers in West Bay include Mrs. Ivy Powell and Mrs. Laris Ebanks of Boatswain Bay, Mrs. Francis Ebanks and Mrs. Erna Jean Ebanks of Barkers and Mrs. Miriam Muirhead.

In George Town, Mrs. Clifton Bodden and Mrs. Carmen Forbes of Rock Hole are thatch weavers.

On the Brac, Mr. Lonsdale Christian makes very authentic thatch baskets that are sold through NIM (Native Island Made) Things in Spott Bay. He can be reached by calling 948-0161. Also on the Brac are Mrs. Annie May Ebanks and Mrs. Colleen Gibson of White Bay (948-1372), Mrs. Valda Watson of The Bight and Mrs. Iva Keener of Cotton Tree Bay.

What YOU Can Do

- **Point out Silver Thatch Palms growing in your neighbourhood.** Explain to your friends and family the interesting history of our National Tree.
- **Ask someone (perhaps an older family member) to show you how to weave thatch.** Older people will enjoy passing on their knowledge and younger Caymanians should have a working understanding of this traditional Caymanian occupation. Baskets, hats, picture frames, belts, Christmas ornaments and other small items make unusual and meaningful gifts.
- **Speak out about the preservation of our woodlands.** When clearing land for development, it is often possible to leave native trees in place to be part of the landscaping plan after construction is finished.
- **Do not attempt to take Silver Thatch Palms from the wild to plant in your garden.** Silver Thatch Palms are extremely difficult to transplant. Many expert gardeners have tried and failed to do this. If you would like a Silver Thatch Palm of your own, purchase it growing in a pot from the Botanic Park, or plant one from seed.

What Kids Can Do

- Tell your friends and family about our National Tree. Point it out when you are riding in the car or walking to school.
- Learn to do some simple thatch work crafts. These make nice gifts and will remind Caymanians of our history.
- Try planting a Silver Thatch Palm from a seed. You will have to water it carefully until it is big enough to live on its own.
- If your family is planning to build a new house on wooded land, look for Silver Thatch Palms and see if they can be left in place while the house is built. Then, you will have a beautiful Silver Thatch Palm in your garden and you won't have to wait for a seedling to grow.



A Piece Of Rope

A piece of rope
to tie a horse,
to moor a boat,
to hang a light,
to fly a kite.

A piece of rope
around a pole
and down a hole
around a cask
and up a mast;

A piece of rope
long,
short,
thin,
fat,
one strand,
two strand,
good,
bad,
weak,
strong.

A piece of rope.

A piece of rope
to ring church bells
to bail out wells,
to make a swing,
to hoist a jib,
to make a crib,

A piece of rope,
many a man's hope:
to moor a skein
or work a crane,
to hold an ox
or tie a box,
to play tug o' war
and any other "or".

A piece of rope
cobbed on two carts
twenty-five fathoms apart.

A piece of rope:
product of much toil
and the thatch of the soil.

A piece of rope
sold for a penny, nowadays, do you see any?

Curtis Barnett, 1976

The Thatch Palm

...the thatch - no match for these practical palms
that fashion into rope as long as yesterday
or baskets round as now.

Together with the patient hands of island people
how willingly they blend the skills of centuries
with current needs for new interpretations
of design and form - while uncut fronds
their silvery underside strangely vulnerable
against a cloudless sky
remain a metaphor of island winsomness.

This is part of a longer poem covering all the Cayman trees by Mrs. Sandi Van der Bol

Imagine

Imagine standing in a thatch grove
many years ago.

The trunks of the palms stand like stately silver
pillars,
reaching for the heavens.

Their leaves make a living ceiling of
green and silver
that blows aside to reveal
flashes of blue sky.

The earth underfoot is many shades of brown,
dappled with shifting patterns of
sunlight and shade.

A thick carpet of leaves
muffles your footfalls,
and the only sound is the wind
and the liquid trill
of a mockingbird.

Janice Blumenthal, Age 16

Cayman Thatch

Thatch trees,
Swaying uselessly in the wind.

NOW

but not THEN.

Then they were used to roof the houses
To make rope to exchange for food,
And baskets for the plantation.

But now, they just stand

Waiting,

Waiting to be destroyed.

The builders are chopping them down.

Without a care in the world.

Poor Cayman Thatches!

Sian Jones

Name _____ Class _____

Silver Thatch Palm Quiz

Multiple Choice: circle the correct answer.

1. Traditionally Caymanians used the Silver Thatch Palm to:
a) Build boats b) Weave rope c) Burn for charcoal
2. The word endemic means:
a) Endangered b) Found only in a certain area c) Very rare
3. The Silver Thatch Palm is endemic to:
a) The Cayman Islands b) The Caribbean c) Cuba
4. Rope making ended as an industry in the Cayman Islands because:
a) There were too few palms b) People didn't need money c) Nylon was cheaper
5. The Silver Thatch Palm is:
a) Still very plentiful b) Endangered c) Very rare
6. Most of the thatch rope was made by:
a) Men b) Women and children c) Slaves
7. Silver Thatch Palm berries are eaten by:
a) Birds & iguanas b) People c) Nobody, they are poison
8. Traditional thatch hats and baskets are made from:
a) Silver Thatch Palm "tops" b) Bull Thatch leaves c) coconut fibre
9. Thatch roofs lasted:
a) About a year b) 5 to 9 years c) 20 to 25 years
10. Thatch palm are important in the Cayman Islands because they are:
a) Historically significant b) Beautiful in landscaping c) Both

Name _____ Class _____

Silver Thatch Palm Quiz

True or False: if the answer is true, circle T. If the answer is false, circle F.

1. The Silver Thatch Palm is our National Tree. T F
2. The Silver Thatch Palm bears delicious fruit. T F
3. Thatch rope appears on the Cayman Islands flag. T F
4. Silver Thatch Palm leaves are silver underneath. T F
5. The Silver Thatch Palm grows all over the world. T F
6. People can make hats from the Silver Thatch Palm. T F
7. Thatch roofs lasted longer than “zinc” roofs. T F
8. Thatch rope is good for use on boats. T F
9. No one now remembers how to weave thatch. T F
10. Even small children wove thatch in the old days. T F
11. People had lots of money and wove thatch for fun. T F
12. We should cut down all our Silver Thatch Palms and build lots of houses and hotels. T F
13. It is possible to build houses without cutting down all the trees on the lot first. T F
14. Silver Thatch Palms are not endangered in Cayman. T F
15. Silver Thatch Palms are beautiful in gardens. T F

Name _____ Class _____

Silver Thatch Palm: Natural History Quiz

Fill in the blanks: choose the correct answer from the word box below.

1. The Silver Thatch Palm is one of our _____ Symbols.
2. The _____ Thatch Palm is sometimes confused with the Silver Thatch Palm.
3. The Silver Thatch Palm's leaves are _____ on top and _____ underneath.
4. Silver Thatch Palm berries are often eaten by _____ and _____.
5. The Silver Thatch Palm is found nowhere else in the world. This means that it is _____.

Word Box

endemic green birds Bull
National iguanas silver

Name _____ Class _____

Silver Thatch Palm: Rope Making Quiz

Fill in the blanks: choose the correct answer from the word box below.

1. _____ rope was made from the Silver Thatch Palm.

2. Places where Silver Thatch Palms grow are called “thatch _____”.

3. _____ are the straight new leaves on a Silver Thatch Palm.

4. No one else could make thatch rope because the Silver Thatch Palm grows _____ in the Cayman Islands.

5. Thatch rope was so important to the Cayman Islands that there is a picture of it on our _____ of Arms.

Word Box

walks

only

Coat

Tops

Thatch

Name _____ Class _____

Silver Thatch Palm: Roofing & Other Uses Quiz

Fill in the blanks: choose the answer from the word box below.

1. Silver Thatch Palm leaves were used in times past to make _____ for houses.
2. _____ would pass bundles of thatch up to men working on a roof.
3. _____ and _____ were made of thatch, but were seldom sold.
4. Sandals called _____ were made using a piece of leather for the sole and thatch string for the strapping.
5. Silver Thatch Palm trunks were sometimes greased and used as _____ to launch boats.

Word Box

baskets

rollers

whompers

hats

Children

roofs

Answer Key

1. Long ago, people would go to a **thatch walk** and **back** Silver Thatch Palm **tops** home to weave rope.
2. The Silver Thatch Palm is **endemic** on all three of the Cayman Islands.
3. The **Bull Thatch Palm** is sometimes mistaken for the Silver Thatch Palm, but its leaves are a deeper green. It cannot be used for weaving or rope making.
4. A machine used for twisting thatch rope was called a **cart** and **winch**. A third piece, called a **cob** was used to control the tightness of the rope.
5. A finished piece of rope was usually 25 **fathoms** long.
6. After the tops had been dried, the thatch leaves were divided into **strips** and **straws**. One was used for the actual weaving or rope making; the other was made into brooms.
7. There is a piece of thatch rope on the Cayman Islands **Coat of Arms**.
8. In official records, the rope made from the Silver Thatch Palm was referred to as **strawrope**, though the local people always used the term **thatch rope**.
9. When rope of inferior quality was shipped to Jamaica after the hurricane of 1944, **guilds** were formed to help insure a standard quality rope.
10. Thatch was used to make many useful things, from hats for the top of the head to **whompers** for the bottoms of the feet!

Silver Thatch Palm Quiz - Multiple Choice

1. **b)** Rope making was a major source of income for early Caymanians.
2. **b)** Endemic means found only in a certain area
3. **a)** Thatch palms grow only in the Cayman Islands
4. **c)** Nylon rope was cheaper and took the market away from thatch rope.
5. **a)** The thatch palm is still very plentiful.
6. **b)** Women and children made thatch rope while the men were at sea.
7. **a)** Wild birds and iguanas eat the thatch palm berries.
8. **a)** Only the “tops” are used for basket, hats and rope-making
9. **b)** Five to Nine years was the average life of a thatch palm roof.
10. **c)** Both.

Silver Thatch Palm Quiz - True-False

- 1.-T 2.-F 3.-T 4.-T 5.-F 6.-T 7.-F 8.-T 9.-F 10.-T 11.-F 12.-F 13.-T 14.-T 15.-T

Silver Thatch Palm Quiz: Natural History - Word Box

1. The Silver Thatch Palm is one of our three NATIONAL Symbols.
2. The BULL Thatch Palm is sometimes confused with the Silver Thatch Palm.
3. The Silver Thatch Palm’s leaves are GREEN on top and SILVER underneath.
4. Silver Thatch Palm berries are eaten by BIRDS and IGUANAS.
5. The Silver Thatch Palm is grows nowhere else in the world. This means that it is ENDEMIC.

Silver Thatch Palm Quiz: Rope making - Word Box

1. THATCH rope was made from the Silver Thatch Palm.
2. Places where Silver Thatch Palms grow were called “thatch WALKS.”
3. TOPS are the straight new leaves on a Silver Thatch Palm.
4. No one else could make thatch rope because the Silver Thatch Palm grows ONLY in the Cayman Islands.
5. Thatch rope was so important to the Cayman Islands that there is a picture of it on our COAT of Arms.

Silver Thatch Palm Quiz: Roofing and Other Uses of Thatch - Word Box

1. Silver Thatch Palm leaves were used in times past to make ROOFS for houses.
2. CHILDREN would pass bundles of thatch up to men working on the roof.
3. HATS and BASKETS were made from thatch, but were seldom sold.
4. Thatch was used to make sandals called WHOMPERS.
5. Silver Thatch Palm trunks were sometimes greased and used as ROLLERS to launch boats.

**“In the end, we will conserve only what
we love,**

We will love only what we understand,

**We will understand only what we are
taught.”**

Baba Dioum, Senegalese conservationist



Why become a member?

The National Trust for the Cayman Islands is a non-profit, statutory body with a mission:

“To preserve natural environments and places of historical significance in the Cayman Islands for present and future generations.”

This is accomplished through:

Environmental Programs, Historic Programs, Educational Programs

IN November of 1987, the National Trust gained official recognition with the enactment of the National Trust for the Cayman Islands Law, 1987 (Law 22 of 1987). Under this legislation the National Trust is empowered to declare Trust property in the Cayman Islands as *inalienable*: **To be held in trust forever for the people of the Cayman Islands & to be used ONLY for the preservation of Cayman’s Natural & Historic Heritage for people like you.**

What are some Trust properties?

Heritage properties under the auspices of the Trust include Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park, Fort George, Bodden Town Guardhouse Park, Dr. Roy’s Ironshore Historic Site, Governor Michael Gore Bird Sanctuary, Heritage Beach, Mission House, Mastic Reserve & Trail, Booby Pond Nature Reserve and the Brac Parrot Reserve. Visit the Trust House or our website for a complete list and more information on each site!

What is the Trust doing?

Some of the preservation projects and programmes of the Trust include the *Know Your Islands* programme including Mastic Trail Tours, Historic Walking tours, Traditional Cooking Classes, Mangrove and Bird Watching tours; the Blue Iguana Recovery Programme; Historic and Environmental Youth programme; Visiting Scientists programme.

The National Trust is a membership-based organization. Members include local residents, businesses and people living overseas who care about the Cayman Islands. Fundraising events are held for specific projects as well as for general funding. The Trust also works with a number of local & overseas organizations to obtain technical assistance, occasional funding & collaboration on topics of mutual interest. But we always need more – preservation knows no boundaries!

What are District Committees?

District Committees are in each of Grand Cayman’s five districts as well as Cayman Brac & Little Cayman. They are responsible for preservation projects within their own districts & are actively pursuing more support from residents.

How can you get involved?

- Join us through Membership
- Volunteer with Special Events & Fundraisers or call the Trust to volunteer & find a specific project that interests you dealing with Cayman’s Natural or Historic Heritage
- Attend District Committee Meetings in your District.

Please join us and receive:

The fulfillment of knowing that you are helping to preserve Cayman's natural & historic environments for present & future generations of the Cayman Islands, and...

- Regular emails providing our calendar of events and information on special activities
- Regular newsletters which provide updates on our efforts, and suggestions on how you can help
- Junior newsletters written by our new Explorers Club!
- Invitations to Special Events & Trust Programmes
- The opportunity to be actively involved with the preservation of these islands
- Special prices on Trust Products available at the Trust House
- *Voting* privileges at all General Meetings
- Representation by an organization that truly cares about Environmental & Historic Preservation!

Why the National Trust?

Together we, the people of the Cayman Islands, can make a difference in preserving Cayman's Natural & Historic Heritage for generations to come. The Trust is made up of people who care about the future of Cayman...

People like YOU!

JOIN YOUR NATIONAL TRUST



National Trust for the Cayman Islands

P.O. Box 31116 SMB, Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands

Name: _____

Address: _____

Home Tel: _____

Work Tel: _____

Email: _____

- Individual – CI\$ 30.00 Family – CI\$ 45.00
- Youth (under 18) – CI\$ 15.00
- College Student – CI\$ 15.00
- Senior (60 years and up) – CI\$ 15.00
- Life – CI\$ 500.00 Additional Donation

Amount enclosed: _____

Are you a: _____

- New member
- Renewal

Payment Method: _____

- Cheque Credit card Cash
- Card type: Visa Mastercard Amex
- Credit card number: _____

Expiration date: _____

Authorized signature: _____

Which district do you reside in: _____

Would you like to be involved with your District Committee? _____

NATIONAL TRUST PUBLICATIONS USEFUL TO TEACHERS

Colouring books, leaflets, flyers, brochures are available at the National Trust Office, 558 South Church Street, Dart Family Park.

We add new materials constantly. Please come in and browse.

Information Sheets: Please see our website for a complete list

Cayman Islands Map of Historic & Natural Attractions

Little Cayman: A Nature Lover's Paradise

Cayman Brac: Natural Beauty Awaits

Fort George

Dr. Roy's Ironshore

A Historical Walking Tour of Central George Town

A Historical Walking Tour of Central West Bay

Bodden Town – Cayman's First Capital

Cayman Island's Bird Identification Cards

Checklist of Birds of the Cayman Islands

Cayman's Endangered Species

Cayman Islands' Extinct Animals

Cayman's Iguanas

Grand Cayman Blue Iguana Trail

Caring For Your Pet Parrot

Cayman's Butterflies

North Sound Colouring Book

National Symbols Flora & Fauna Colouring Book

A Book of Cayman's Birds Colouring Book

Parrot Colouring Book

Who Needs Bats? You Do! Here's Why...

Bats in the Roof Space and What to do

New PVC Method of bat exclusion – simple, fast and permanent

Bat Proofing Your Building

Why Should We Save Our Bats?

Why Put up a Bat House

How and Where to Place your Bat House

Bats of the Cayman Islands

Cayman Sea Sense: Sustainable Seafood Information Sheets

Cayman Sea Sense Seafood Wallet Guides

Circle of Life

Traditional Homes

Mastic Deep Forest Trail Guide

Laminated Butterfly Chart & Checklist

Prints & Posters of Birds and Iguanas

BOOKS AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE FROM THE NATIONAL TRUST OFFICE

Birds of the Cayman Islands – Patricia Bradley	\$16.00
Cookin’ in Little Cayman – Gladys B. Howard	\$12.00
Creator’s Glory – Richard Ground	\$12.00
Cayman Yesterdays – Heather McLaughlin	\$15.00
Birds of Cayman Brac – Keith Prescott	\$12.00
Fish Tea: A Collection of Caymanian Tales – children’s stories	\$7.00
Brenetta & Her Menagerie – Brigitte Kassa	\$20.00
Toes in the Sand: Caymanian Tales and Thoughts – Curtis LE Barnett	\$8.50
Destination Cayman	\$8.00
Founded Upon the Seas: History of Cayman Islands – Hard Cover	\$50.00
Founded Upon the Seas: History of Cayman Islands – Soft Cover	\$34.00
Islands from the Sea: Geologic Stories of Cayman – Murray Roed	\$19.00

