

BORN IN EAST L.A.

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Maximilian (Max), is a Scarlet Macaw whose origins trace back to Costa Rica. Max, however, was actually born in East L.A. which, according to owner George Cervenka, clearly explains his unruly behavior. Max was named after Emperor Maximilian, a holy Roman emperor, and quite frankly, rules with an iron fist, or rather a powerful beak. On one of their many road trips, from casinos and gambling to

touring the countryside and camping, George and Max made a brief stop in downtown Rogue River before heading out of town. "I take Max with me everywhere I go," said Cervenka. "He's my dog. He's not real good with strangers, so keep your distance."

Cervenka and Max have been inseparable for 10 years. On October 7 of this year, Max turns 11. Scarlet Macaws can live up to 75 years, but more typical is a lifespan of 30 to 50 years. Max has become so attached to George that he is jealous of anyone who takes George's attention away from him. As is common among Scarlet Macaws, they are known to nip and bite their mate to warn them of danger...apparently any attention paid to Cervenka is a form of danger. In addition to requiring large living spaces, Scarlet Macaws require a great deal of stimulation, attention, and affection. They thrive on and need frequent, regular interaction and so should be removed from their cages for long periods to socialize and be slowly socialized with others to retain a friendly disposition towards people; they need time to get to know strangers.

Never make the mistake of approaching a Scarlet Macaw without its owner facilitating the introduction. Scarlet Macaws are large, very sensitive birds with a powerful beak adapted to crushing hard nuts. It is about 32 to 36 inches long, of which more than half is the pointed, graduated tail typical of all macaws. The average weight is about 2 to 2.5 pounds. They love to play and should have plenty of toys in good condition for stimulation; they habitually chew whatever they can get their beaks on and so wooden toys are recommended both for enrichment and to avoid beak overgrowth. Bottom line, if you happen to run into Max around town and he's making loud, low-pitched, throaty squawks, squeaks and screams it's best to keep your distance.