

John Gould (1804-1881)

John Gould, who served as Curator and Preserver at the Zoological Society of London from 1827 to 1837, went on to become one of England's most celebrated ornithologists of the mid-19th century. His extensive knowledge of birds earned him a reputation as one of the leading naturalists of his time, and it was Gould who helped Charles Darwin identify the significant variations in the beaks of the 'Galapagos finches' - putting Darwin on the path to his famous theory of natural selection and evolution.

Gould was the author and publisher of some of the most magnificently illustrated works on birds ever to have been created, producing nearly 3000 lavish plates to be bound within beautiful imperial-folio size books. The design of this puzzle is created using some of the illustrations from these works. However, Gould did not work alone, and he employed the skill of many well-known (and lesser known) artists of the time to produce the artwork for his books, including his wife, Elizabeth Gould, and the nonsense-poet, Edward Lear.

Elizabeth Gould (1804-1841)

Elizabeth Gould was a British natural history illustrator celebrated for her precise bird drawings, which helped shape 19th-century scientific illustration. She produced more than 600 plates for her husband John Gould's ornithological publications, but her work was long overshadowed by his reputation. Today, her illustrations are increasingly recognised and valued in their own right.

Edward Lear (1812-1888)

Edward Lear, now best known for his nonsense poetry, began his career as a scientific illustrator, work that brought him into close contact with John Gould and ZSL. As a teenager, he illustrated birds for Gould's major publications, including *The Birds of Europe*, producing drawings admired for their accuracy, vitality, and anatomical detail. Through Gould, Lear became associated with ZSL, where he studied and illustrated living specimens in the Regent's Park gardens - a relatively novel practice at the time. These works combined scientific precision with a strong sense of character and movement, setting Lear apart from many of his contemporaries.



BIRD CONSERVATION

Through its conservation zoos, its field conservation programmes and its world-leading science, ZSL is working to reverse the decline of numerous birds. These range from UK natives, including red kites and corncrakes, to some of the most threatened species worldwide, such as the Socorro dove from Mexico and the sihek from the US territory of Guam.

Both of these birds were driven to extinction in the wild after non-native predators were introduced to their home islands, but have survived in the care of zoos. ZSL is breeding Socorro doves at London Zoo as part of an international conservation initiative to reintroduce them to their homeland. Meanwhile, a ZSL-led collaboration has introduced zoo-bred siheks to a new home on the remote Palmyra Atoll, where they are breeding in the wild for the first time in 40 years.

The success of many bird conservation and reintroduction projects is underpinned by ZSL's Wildlife Disease Risk Analysis and Health Surveillance unit, which provides essential health monitoring for species including red-backed shrikes, white-tailed eagles, hen harriers and Eurasian curlews.

ZSL conservationists are also defending heavily trafficked birds such as the African grey parrot, by training law-enforcement professionals in how to identify and care for key species. Meanwhile, many rare birds are breeding successfully at ZSL's Zoos, providing a much-needed boost to their populations, including critically endangered Rüppell's griffon vultures, African penguins and blue-crowned laughingthrushes.



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