

C1 Advanced - Use of English

PARROT RUSTLING

Parrots and macaws have become so 1) that special varieties of these birds are 2)_____ up to £9,000 each on the black market in Britain. Macaws from Brazil cost from £1,000 and parrots from Australia can cost £7,500 a pair. The demand for parrots, cockatoos and macaws has led to a 3)_____ increase in thefts from zoos, wildlife parks and pet shops. London and Whipsnade zoos are among the many places from which parrots have been stolen. Some thefts have not been 4)_____ in an effort to prevent further 5)_____. Parrot rustling, as it is known among bird fanciers, has increased rapidly in Britain since 1976 when imports and exports of 6)_____ birds became 7)_____ controlled. Quarantine controls, 8)_____ with the scarcity of many types of parrots in the wild in Africa, Australia, Indonesia, and South America, have caused a shortage of birds which can be sold legally under 9)_____. This has sent prices to 10)_____ levels. Working at night and equipped with wire-cutters, nets and substances to dope the birds, the rustlers are prepared to 11)_____ serious risks to capture the parrots they want. At Birdworld, a specialist zoo, thieves 12)_____ two parrots after picking their 13)_____ through an enclosure containing cassowaries. The cassowary is a large flightless bird, related to the emu, which can be extremely 14)_____, and has been 15)_____ to kill humans with blows from its powerful legs. (15)___ below 21°C. The area has a particularly low annual rainfall.