



FIRST VISIT TO THE RED SISKIN CONSERVATION CENTER BY ReSSAN MEMBERS<sup>9</sup>

# EXPERIENCE AT THE SERVICE OF CONSERVATION

by Antonio Meza  
 Photograph taken by Raul Jimenez

I am passionate about birds in general. My eager for their breeding and reproduction arises from a very young age by having my grandpa from my mom's side as a tutor. He was a breeder for Spanish Timbrado canaries, with broad experience and from the old school of breeders in Venezuela. I have early memories of observing the Red Siskin from Venezuela (Carduelis Cucullata) to hybridize with canaries in order to obtain specimens of red factor. It was in that moment, when I was around 10 years old, that my interest for this species started to develop.

The objective of every breeder is the preservation of one species in particular. From my perception, in order to conserve nature and the Red Siskin specifically, we have to start protecting the current genetic diversity by utilizing captive breeding as an instrument, and we need to develop processes of species reinsertion to bring them back into their natural habitats.

We have to keep in mind that they need to survive in habitats that are increasingly modified by humans. The threats include habitat loss, unsustainable use, climate change, the appearance of invasive organisms, and factors that can be hard to control. Being the situation as real and tangible as it is for the red siskin (being threatened by habitat loss), tools that allow restoration of existing populations are very much needed. That is why this project operated by Provita in pursuit of the conservation of the species becomes essential. It is the most crucial element to use if we attempt to extend populations in our mountains and fields where this beautiful red-feather bird inhabits.

By being part of the net of breeders chosen to work together on Provita's Project in pursuit of the conservation of the red siskin, I am inspired to make an effort and achieve what we have always wanted to achieve. We are in a process where ideas and real commitment are getting aligned, and this will allow us to move forward in a shorter space of time than we think of. The red siskin of Venezuela is our passion. I offer all my resources without any doubt to work on its reintroduction, strengthening, and re-establishment in one or more of the areas in which our red siskin has been historically distributed.

**Antonio Meza**  
 37 years old  
 15 years of experience

**“The Red Siskin is my passion, and i offer all my resources to work on its conservation”**