

International Softbill Society



by Jack Clinton-Eitniear
San Antonio, Texas

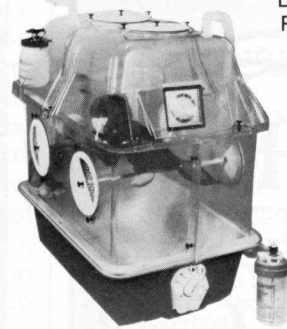
The majority of the birds that inhabit tropical forests are small fruit or insect eaters. Despite this the group has received little attention in terms of their housing and breeding as well as other aspects of their captive management. To address this gap in the avicultural literature and to encourage more aviculturists to breed and maintain softbilled species the International Softbill Society was formed. Although only formally an organization since early 1986, the society's membership surpassed 100 by the fall of that year. The society's first publication was distributed in August and its first meeting held at the 12th Annual Convention of the American Federation of Aviculture (New Orleans). Since that time the membership has grown and its quarterly publication "The Honeycreeper" steadily improved upon. Its recent meeting held in Seattle in conjunction with the 13th annual AFA Convention was attended by more than 40 individuals.

Softbills have been traditionally thought of as being delicate and difficult to deal with aviculturally. After recent successes with such species as the Bali mynah and Guam kingfisher receiving national attention due to their frequent breedings in captivity, many individuals have started to re-evaluate their opinions as to the avicultural potential of these species. One of the certain reasons for their increasing popularity is the society's bulletin. Articles on diet, maintenance and status in captivity are dealt with in every issue. For anyone who has an interest in softbills, membership in the only society devoted solely to soft-billed birds is a must. Additional information can be obtained by writing Steven H. Amos, Membership Services, National Aquarium in Baltimore, Pier 3, 501 Pratt Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21202. The society is a member organization of the American Federation of Aviculture and holds its annual meeting in conjunction with AFA's annual convention.



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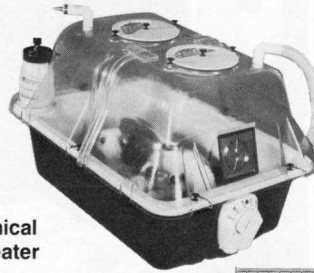
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