

### SPRING HAS SPRUNG



Jim C. Hawley, Jr.

**A**t least in Arizona it looks as though spring has sprung. The cacti are starting to bloom and their thorns are shiny new, we no longer can see snow capped mountains far in the distance (as in the pictures sent to us from friends in Colorado), and the thermometer has already hit over 90°. In Arizona we usually get only two choices of seasons - hot and hotter (Winter and Summer); and

the way we tell when it is Fall is that the license plates on the cars start changing colors (our winter visitors' annual pilgrimage to our Valley of the Sun).

Speaking of choices, I would like to remind everyone that their freedom of choice to keep birds is **FIRST** of all not free at all and **SECONDLY** there is still a great throng who would want us to believe it is a "loaned privilege" that should be under government supervision and either limited or even curtailed altogether! How many costly battles has the American Federation of Aviculture entered into on behalf of the belief that we should still have the choice and the right to keep our birds? I'll tell you, there have been more than I can count on my fingers and toes! The rights we enjoy are truly our privilege as long as we continue to keep watch (the AFA WatchBird) over our birds and those (legislators and special interest groups) who might, and we believe will, continue to challenge our rights and ability to make choices. The American Federation of Aviculture is the **RIGHT** Choice! Thank you for your continued support.

The other choice I want to mention is inviting you to choose to attend the Annual Convention of the American Federation of Aviculture in St. Louis, Missouri this coming July 30th through August 2nd. This will be the 34th Convention of the American Federation of Aviculture. Many years ago we had only a few choices of bird-related seminars and conventions. In fact the AFA was, for a while, the only convention choice one had. Now there are many choices, as it should be, to attend seminars and conventions. Some can be right in your backyard, so to speak, and others halfway around the world in exotic places. The choice today does not seem to be between right and wrong, but rather between Good, Better or Best time and place.

This year as you evaluate your choices and consider where your sources of support, knowledge and associations may be, please look closely at the convention of the American Federation of Aviculture. Also, I would like you to consider this your personal invitation to the AFA convention in St. Louis from me and the entire Board of Directors, Committees and Staff. I look forward to seeing you in St. Louis and making new friends.

**Jim C. Hawley, Jr.**  
**President, American Federation of Aviculture**

## A CELEBRATION OF BIRDS!

by Jamie Whittaker

**A**re there more joyous creatures on the planet than birds? Listen in the early morning when all is quiet and the sun starts to rise. The nighttime sounds fade away and the day is started with the boisterous songs and calls of the winged wonders of the sky, cheering the end of the night and celebrating the beginning of the new day!

In our aviaries and in our homes the birds still celebrate the new day, another opportunity to face the challenges of life and renew the relationships of yesterday. Aviculturists discover new reasons to celebrate every day with their birds. A pair of birds form a bond, an egg is found in the nest and new life begins. The egg is checked and watched and one day that new life emerges. There is another life to add to the morning celebration, another life to add to the future gene pool to prevent the extinction of the species.

**CELEBRATE! CELEBRATE!**

***The sun is up! Don't be late!***

***I shout at the world, I scream to the sky,***

***"Hear me! Look at me! I am Bird, I am I!"***

***Don't mourn that I live in captivity***

***- rejoice that I live, and that I am Me!***

Birds are unique among the creatures of the world in many ways. Their adaptability to new situations allows them to continue their celebration of life even as their habitats are disappearing. Many species have found their way into our aviaries and into our homes. Some retain more of their natural behaviors and thrive in large aviaries with good care. Others have adapted to life in the living room and have become a part of the family. There are many others that are still in their ever-changing natural habitats, adapting as the world around them transforms.

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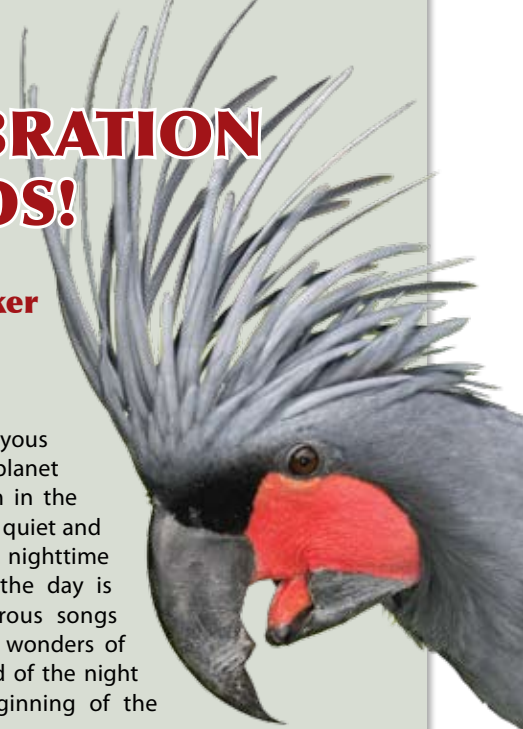
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The birds in the living room and the birds in the garden have different challenges and make different adaptations. They celebrate with their owners the joy of sharing their lives and their homes. The interactions between family and flock, the special foods, the opportunities to learn every day for both the feathered and human members of the household are reasons to celebrate the day.

Recently there has been a trend to attribute some less than desirable characteristics to birds. Some believe that the joyful morning calls are more like the crying of an unhappy child. They see depression where there is calmness; they see nervousness where there is energetic play. Often these people seek to stop the keeping of birds in captivity. Their lack of understanding about the body language of birds leads them to treat birds with pity and sadness. Birds everywhere should be celebrated for their lives, for their nature, for their intelligence, for their uniqueness, for being birds!

Celebrate comes from the Latin word celebrare - to frequent, go in great numbers, or to honor. The convention in St. Louis will be such a celebration, a gathering of great numbers of people who want to honor birds in many ways. Some will educate, some will learn, many will do both. Discussions among the experienced aviculturists and those new to aviculture will center on birds and their past, present and future. 🐦

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The American Federation of Aviculture, Inc. (AFA) is a non-profit, 501(c)3 educational organization, established in 1974, whose purpose is to represent all aspects of aviculture and to educate the public about keeping and breeding birds in captivity.

AFA's primary goals are the education and dissemination of information related to aviculture among pet owners, hobbyists, avicultural societies, zoos, veterinarians, research institutions, the pet industry and government officials. In addition, AFA is concerned about the welfare and humane care of all birds and promotes the establishment of high standards of avian care both in the United States and abroad.

The AFA supports your rights to acquire, keep, breed and sell birds in a responsible manner. The organization monitors proposed laws and regulations at the state, federal and international level that affect your future as an aviculturist and the well being of birds.

The AFA is primarily a volunteer organization. Our efforts to ensure the future growth and development of aviculture are totally dependent upon people like YOU joining and supporting AFA. The AFA believes that aviculture is a valuable conservation tool and that the care and breeding of birds in captivity is an exciting and fulfilling endeavor. AFA offers many different services to its members because AFA has so many different types of members.

### Membership Services and Benefits include:

-  **AFA Watchbird** - the official publication of the American Federation of Aviculture, filled with articles covering topics such as: avian health, nutrition, housing and care, breeding, species profile, conservation, legislative updates and more!
  -  **Classified Ads** - nationwide ads for exotic birds, bird related supplies and bird events in each issue of the *AFA Watchbird*
  -  **AFA Educational Course** - *Fundamentals of Aviculture*, available online
  -  **Traceable AFA Logo Bands** - both open and closed bands available from Canary to Macaw
  -  **National Conventions** - Fun and educational, featuring world-renowned speakers, the latest and newest bird products, exciting behind the scene tours and YOU, the member, making AFA's Convention the MAJOR bird event of the year
  -  **Legislative Information and Updates** - information provided on laws and regulations that impact avicultural activities
  -  **AFA Exotic Bird Registry** - one of the only non-profit registries for exotic birds in the world
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*Cuban Macaw by Wayne E. Smyth*

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