The Watchbird offers free publicity for member club bird shows by announcing the dates and locations of the shows. To have your show listed it is necessary to get the data to the Watchbird by four to five months before the show date. For example, if your show takes place the first week of October, it should be listed in the August/September issue. The deadline for that issue is June 1st. (Copy/article deadline is two months preceding publication date.)

**Santa Clara Valley Canary and Exotic Bird Club**
announces their
Annual Bird Show
November 25, 26, 27, 1988
Peterson Junior High School
Poplar Avenue (off El Camino Real)
Sunnyvale, California
Show will be open to the public Sunday, 27th.
For information contact:
Naomi Claper, (408) 241-0617
1006 Mitchell Court,
San Jose, CA 95128

**Aviary Association of Kern**
14th Annual Bird Show
December 3, 1988
at the
Kern County Fairgrounds
1142 South "P" Street, Bakersfield
For more information:
Bill Novickas, Show Manager
(805) 589-2081

**Greater Memphis Bird Club**
will host
Feather Fair
May 13-14, 1989
at the
Memphis Radisson Hotel
Memphis, Tennessee
For information contact:
Mrs. J.W. Higgins, (901) 476-0736
463-B Rt. 1, Brighton, TN 38011

**AVICULTURAL SOCIETY OF QUEENSLAND**
Welcomes new members
An Australian Society catering to all birds both in captivity and in the wild. We publish a bi-monthly magazine on all aspects of aviculture and conservation. Anyone interested in membership please contact: Ray Garwood, 19 Fabye's Road, Albany Creek, 4035 Queensland, Australia. Annual subscription: $22 (A) airmailed, or $16 (A) surface. Please remit moneys or bank drafts in Australian currency.

**Veterinary Viewpoints**
edited by Amy Worell, D.M.V.
Woodland Hills, California

**Editor's Note:** The AFA is very pleased to present a new series of columns called Veterinary Viewpoints, edited by Amy Worell, D.V.M. Dr. Worell was graduated from Auburn University with a D.V.M. degree, with honors. She has practiced in southern California for the last six years where she sees a large number of avian patients. She has a special interest in pediatrics and nutrition and, as an aviculturist, is currently working with nine species of cockatoos, African gray parrots, scarlet macaws, and pionus parrots. Dr. Worell is active in a number of professional associations and is a frequent lecturer on avian medicine.

A unique thing about Veterinary Viewpoints is that a number of veterinarians are consulted and a broad spectrum of viewpoints are presented. You won't get just one veterinarian's opinion. No single vet can know all about everything so Dr. Worell will solicit answers from various vets. This way we hope to get the best answers from the best people on any given subject.

If there is anything you'd like to know about avian medicine, nutrition, even husbandry or anything else, please send your questions to Veterinary Viewpoints, P.O. Box 1568, Redondo Beach, Ca 90278.

**Question:** We have been using a major brand commercial hand feeding formula this year and the babies' crops get like cement, and have to be cleaned out. Lots of babies died and the manufacturer takes no blame. How many formulas work for baby Amazons and what is the best hand feeding formula for baby Amazons?

**Answer:** I have been hand feeding Amazons for several years, and so will relate to you the diet that I have found to be successful. I have had excellent results and none of the "rock in the crop syndrome" to which you allude. I use several different types of the Gerber's baby food that is available in jars. I just mix these together and feed the babies. I always include at least one strained meat and then add a variety of vegetables. I like this formula as the consistency is constant, and the solid to liquid ratio works well for babies. In addition, this method of feeding babies is both convenient and inexpensive.

**Roger Hartin, DVM, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma**

**Answer:** A well balanced, nutritionally complete, palatable and highly digestable diet is the ideal for hand feeding infant birds. Numerous commercial products are currently available as well as "home recipes." Most of these will be satisfactory although nothing is quite like being fed by Mom and Dad.

Problems can arise when hand feeding infants. Hardening of the crop contents is a common problem. The causes are many. Infections of the digestive tract or any other condition which slows the passage of food may predispose the bird to a crop impaction. Improperly prepared food, rather than type or brand, may contribute to the problem. It would be appropriate to consult with your veterinarian to evaluate if underlying infection or other conditions are the primary cause of an impacted crop.

It would also be appropriate to maintain high standards of sanitation in the facility caring for young birds including all equipment used to prepare, feed and store formulas. Last, one should remember an adequate volume of fluids is needed by a bird each day. Fluids supplied in the formula are absorbed from the digestive tract to supply the body's needs. There must also be adequate water present to keep the contents of the tract in a semi-solid or liquid consistency.

In the absence of underlying medical problems, the most common cause of hardening of crop contents is simply not adding enough fluid to the formula.

**James Harris, DVM, Oakland, California**

**Question:** I keep both exotic parrots and pigeons in my back yard. Recently, I attended a talk where mention was made of the parrots catching diseases from the pigeons and dying. I am quite concerned but do not want to sell any of my birds. If the birds are kept in separate areas of my yard, is that sufficient to prevent these diseases?

**F. Hills, Texas**
Disease, and often will develop only a 

James Harris, DVM, 

Pigeons may infect either your parrots 

and it is often fatal in these birds. Feral 

one-eyed cold. Parrots, on the other 

hand, can show a variety of symptoms, 

as well as an evaluation by your veteri- 

narian for the presence of any poten- 

tial disease that may be present. 

Last, remember that wild birds are a 

potential source of infection and 

efforts need to be made to limit expo- 

sure of captive birds to both wild 

birds and their droppings. 

James Harris, DVM, 

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 

Answer: I keep hookbills, waterfowl, 

and pigeons in my backyard and have 

had no problems with disease out-

breaks amongst my birds. I suggest, 

when servicing your birds, that the 

parrots be taken care of first and then 

the pigeons. The disease that comes to 

mind immediately when talking about 

these two types of birds is chlamydiosis. 

This disease, commonly called 

parrot fever, affects parrots and 

pigeons differently, as the strains 

affecting these two species is different. 

Pigeons are basically resistant to the 

disease, and often will develop only a 

one-eyed cold. Parrots, on the other 

hand, can show a variety of symptoms, 

and it is often fatal in these birds. Feral 

pigeons may infect either your parrots 

or your pigeons and, therefore, contact 

with your birds needs to be avoided. 

Roger Harlin, DVM, 

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 

Question: I recently have had a scarlet 

macaw go through what was diag-

nosed as hepatitis after receiving an 

avian panel blood test. You never see 

articles on hepatitis in birds and I 

haven’t been able to find much 

about it. I realize there are different 

kinds. I would appreciate information 

on the subject. 

In Rosemary Low’s Parrots, Their 

Care and Breeding, she mentions a 

veterinarian she knew associated mold 

on peanuts to be related to liver dam-

age in macaws. 

K. Lostetter, New Mexico 

Answer: Hepatitis, by definition, 

refers to an inflammation of the liver. 
The causes of hepatitis are many, both 
in birds and in mammals. These 

include insult to the liver cells from 
such agents as toxins, viruses, bacteria, 

parasites, chlamydia psittaci, and 

trauma. Recent research with pigeons 
demonstrated that lactate dehydrogen-

ase (LDH) was the most sensitive indi-
cator of liver cell damage. LDH is an 

enzyme which is released by the liver 

upon insult, and is commonly assayed 
on routine avian blood panels. 

Definitive diagnosis of the cause of 

hepatitis is not always possible. Liver 

biopsy is usually performed. This test 

involves removing a small amount of 

the liver tissue for analysis, often will demonstrate the 

cause of the liver inflammation. On 

occasion, though, the offending agent 
is no longer detectable in the liver 
sample or the part of the liver which is 

affected was not sampled, and thus no 
etiological agent can be demonstrated. 

A liver biopsy should be considered, 

though, in those birds which do not 

respond with appropriate therapy. 

Certain strains of fungi are capable 
of producing mycotoxins or toxic 

fungal metabolites. Cultivated grains 

and stored feedstuffs may become 
exposed to these fungi, either during 
the growth stages of the plant or after 
it has been harvested. Certain strains of 
the fungus Aspergillus are capable of 
producing a type of mycotoxin called 
an aflatoxin. These aflatoxins may be 
hepatotoxic, in other words, produce a 
toxin which will damage the liver cells. 

Peanuts as well as some cereal grains, 
cheese, beans, and fruit juices are often 
involved. Thus, peanuts affected with 
this type of toxin could very easily 
result in liver damage in any bird. 

Amy Worell, DVM, 

Woodland Hills, California