

Here Today, Gone Tomorrow Without The AFA Registry

by Sheldon Dingle,
Alhambra, California

We live in changing times. The old style aviculture really *is* gone. What will replace it? How can we strengthen our position? How do we become more organized and professional?

From its inception, I have felt that the AFA Exotic Bird Registry was one of the keys to our survival. It was presented in a preliminary state a couple of years ago and has since been refined and streamlined. I wanted to get a complete update so who better to ask than the AFA's Executive Director, Robert J. Berry?

Mr. Berry's response was so clear, forward-thinking and complete that you all deserve to get it first hand. The following interview presents my questions to Mr. Berry and his lucid responses.

These things impinge directly on what kind of aviculture we will have tomorrow. Pay attention.

Why was the AFA Exotic Bird Registry Established?

The AFA Exotic Bird Registry was developed in 1994 as a service to our members, and to the avicultural community in general, to assist in the management of their collections and to enhance efforts to establish long-term, self-sustaining, genetically stable, captive populations of exotic birds.

What are the Primary Benefits of the Registry?

- First, the Registry is a management tool.

The Registry is intended to serve as a central repository of information on the numbers and kinds of birds that are being kept and bred in aviculture. In addition, the Registry serves to compile population information, or demographics, which, once a significant database is established, will give a general index on the ages, sex ratios, the degree of relatedness (inbreeding coefficients) in the captive population, the numbers of individual specimens reared annually, etc. This kind of valid statistical information is currently lacking particularly for private avicultural efforts. This has a major negative impact on efforts to establish the credibility of private aviculture. We have no proof of the success of our efforts. Without this kind of information we cannot hope to manage captive populations successfully or convince others of the merits of our efforts.

If we are to succeed in maintaining the majority of species that are in captivity today for the long-term, it is essential that we begin compiling these data. These data are not just for our own use in managing our collections. These data will be critical for the use of future generations of aviculturists. This is a legacy that we owe to the future.

Unless we act now, species that are

common in our collections today, could become **aviculturally extinct** in the near future. With only limited or no access to additional breeding stocks for a wide variety of species, avicultural extinction is a very real possibility. This should be a cause for major concern within the avicultural community as this will affect each of us either directly or indirectly. In this sense the Registry is a "noble" effort in helping to ensure the future of aviculture. The reality of avicultural extinction, is a new concept for many of us. In the new age of aviculture in which we are now living, just being able to breed a species in captivity is not enough. It is essential that we improve our skills, increase our knowledge and develop the tools that will enable us to sustain our birds, not just in the short term, but in the long-term and the decades that lie ahead. The AFA Registry is a critical and valuable tool for this purpose.

Additional specimens for some species will **never** be allowed importation into this country again! This is a sobering reality for the future of aviculture in the United States.

- Second, the Registry is a marketing tool.

With increasing emphasis by conservation, animal rights organizations and others that only captive-bred birds should be acquired as pets, a registry system that certifies the captive-bred status of specimens will likely become a valuable marketing tool in the future. For the livestock trade in general, the registered animal is always perceived as having greater monetary value.

- Third, the Registry is a documentation and identification tool.

All specimens submitted for registration must be positively identified by any one of several acceptable methods (e.g. banding, microchipping, DNA sampling). The common and scientific names, the origin of the specimen (whether wild-caught or captive-bred) the estimated age or hatch date, the sex of the specimen and specific identification information such as band or microchip numbers are all recorded on the face of the Registration Certificate. Although other pertinent data such as name of the registered owner, parental information when known, whether

American Federation of Aviculture Exotic Bird Registry Application

Please read all instructions carefully

1. Please carefully read the "Registry Rules" Sheet.
2. Each bird entered into the AFA Exotic Bird Registry **must be positively identified** by a numbered band (open or closed) or a transponder (microchip) or other approved method.
3. Please use a separate form for each bird. **EACH FORM MUST BE SIGNED.**
4. This form may be duplicated, but **must be** copied single page front and back like original.
5. Please be as specific as possible. If hatch date is unknown, please provide a "best-guess" age. Include scientific name (Genus & species). Do not enter subspecies unless positively identified.
6. Fill in all blanks. Use unknown if necessary.
7. Return completed entry forms and fees to :

AFA Registry
PO Box 56218
Phoenix, AZ 85079-6218

Bird Description & Identification

(Please type or print in black ink all information.)

Common Name		Type of Bird <small>finch, parrot, pheasant</small>	
Scientific Name <small>Genus, species</small>			
Color	<input type="checkbox"/> Normal <input type="checkbox"/> Mutation <input type="checkbox"/> Hybrid	Describe Mutation or Hybrid	
Origin	<input type="checkbox"/> Wild Caught <input type="checkbox"/> Captive Bred <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown		
Hatch Date	Or approximate age	Rearing	<input type="checkbox"/> Parent Reared <input type="checkbox"/> Fully <input type="checkbox"/> Hand Reared <input type="checkbox"/> Partially
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown		
Sexing Technique	<input type="checkbox"/> Surgical <input type="checkbox"/> Visual (dimorphic) <input type="checkbox"/> Proven <input type="checkbox"/> Chromosomal/DNA		
Bird is identified by (if more than one supply all)	<input type="checkbox"/> Band <input type="checkbox"/> Tag	Number	Year <input type="checkbox"/> Open <input type="checkbox"/> Closed
<input type="checkbox"/> Transponder (microchip)	Number	Manufacturer	
<input type="checkbox"/> Archived DNA Sample	Lab. Name	File #	
Is the bird entered in an official studbook program?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Studbook #	
Where is the studbook held?			

Parental Information (If known)

Male		Female	
<input type="checkbox"/> Wild Caught <input type="checkbox"/> Captive Bred <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown		<input type="checkbox"/> Wild Caught <input type="checkbox"/> Captive Bred <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown	
Identification	Band # Microchip #	Identification	Band # Microchip #
Other Id		Other Id	
AFA Registered <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		AFA Registered <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
AFA Registry #		AFA Registry #	
Complete only if specimen you are registering is a hybrid:		Complete only if specimen you are registering is a hybrid:	
Common Name		Common Name	
Scientific Name		Scientific Name	

Office Use Only

Date	Species Code	Account Number	Registration Number

Registrant Information

Registrant Status AFA Member AFA Commercial Member Non-member

AFA Member Number _____

Name _____

Business Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

I certify that the information I have provided on the bird herein described is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I also understand that the American Federation of Aviculture, Inc. assumes no liability for accuracy of information submitted to the Exotic Bird Registry or for any consequences arising as a result of erroneous information submitted. In no event shall the AFA be liable for incidental, consequential, special or other damages of any nature even if AFA has been advised of the possibility of such damage. All registration participation and certificates are subject to AFA Exotic Bird Registry rules and regulations.

Registrant Signature

Date

For assistance calculating your registration fee call the AFA Registry Office at (602)484 0931 or fax (602)484-0109

Registry Fee Schedule	Members	Non-members	Amount Due
Special introductory rate for registrations postmarked by August 1, 1997.	\$6.00	\$8.00	subtotal
Discount Schedule	Subtract Per Bird		
Registration of 10 or more birds at one time.	\$1.00	\$1.00	
Bird that is banded with an AFA or AFA affiliated organization's band.*	\$0.50	\$0.50	
One or both parents registered with AFA*	\$1.00	\$1.00	
Introductory Cost per bird if all discounts apply	\$3.50	\$5.50	subtotal
* ID numbers must be included on application.			Total

Additional Savings for AFA Commercial Members Only

Annual Rebates**	Per Bird**
A) If 50 - 100 birds are registered in a calendar year	\$0.50
B) Over 100 birds are registered in a calendar year	\$1.00

** Commercial rebates accrue on a calendar year basis and will not be applied until the end of the calendar year.

Method of Payment

Credit Card

Master Card

Visa

Check Enclosed

Credit Card Number _____

Expiration Date _____

Authorized Signature _____

Attention All AFA Members: Support the AFA 1996 Membership Drive and...
**If Your Name Is Drawn- You Will
 Become The Owner of a Magnificent**

Leadbeater's Cockatoo

Simply recruit a new member between June 1st and December 1st, 1996. Your name will be automatically entered into a drawing to receive an AFA Registered, Closed-banded, Captive-bred, Leadbeater's (Major Mitchell's) Cockatoo! (Donated by Hill Country Aviaries, L.L.C. Dripping Springs, Texas)



**Yes, Count me as a Member and Supporter of the...
 American Federation of Aviculture**

P.O. Box 56218, Phoenix, Arizona 85079-6218

Please accept my application for membership in the American Federation of Aviculture. Send me 6 issues (1 year) of the a.f.a. Watchbird Journal, and a membership card which entitles me to all the rights and privileges of AFA Membership.

The Watchbird Is the Official Bi-Monthly Publication of the AFA. A Not-For-Profit Organization.

Check Membership Category desired: New Renewal
 Individual \$30/year Family \$35/year Supporting \$50/year
 *Commercial \$100/year Includes Listing in Watchbird

My Check is enclosed for \$ _____ or Charge my MC Visa
 Account # _____

Name _____ Expiration Date: _____
 Address _____ Signature: _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Telephone Number () _____

Referred By: _____ Phone: _____
 (Print) (One Referral Name per Application)

How To Enter: Simply recruit a new member to the American Federation of Aviculture and write: "Referred By" and your name and phone number on any official AFA membership form or use the form provided above. The referred by name will be taken from the applications received between June 1st and December 1st, 1996 and will be entered into the drawing to receive the Leadbeater's Cockatoo. **Every time your name appears as a referral on a new member's application, you are entered into the drawing again! The more new members you refer, the more chances you have to own the Leadbeater's Cockatoo.** It's Simple-Entry is automatic!

Note: You must be an AFA member in good standing at time of drawing to claim prize. Drawing will be held Dec. 15, 1996.

**Refer a New Commercial Member and your name is entered into the drawing twice!!*

Conditions: No Purchase Necessary. Void where prohibited. Available to AFA members only. Prize winner will be required to sign an affidavit of Publicity Release. Winner must claim prize within 30 days. Valid only in the USA. Shipping and any taxes are the responsibility of the drawing recipient. No substitutions by winners. Prize not redeemable for cash. To qualify, membership applications must be postmarked by 12/1/96 and received by the AFA by 12/14/96. AFA is not responsible for delays in postal delivery. Complete list of rules available from the AFA home office upon request. AFA Paid Staff and their families are not eligible for prizes.



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Membership Benefits Include:

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and as a **Special Bonus to You**

A chance to win a **Leadbeater's Cockatoo**

for each of your Gift Memberships processed by Dec. 14, 1996

To _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone _____

From _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone _____

Individual ___\$30 Family ___\$35 Supporting ___\$50

Bill My MC/VISA # _____ Or \$ _____ Check Enclosed

American Federation of Aviculture, P.O. Box 56218 Phoenix, AZ 85079-6218

Voice 602-484-0931



Fax 602-484-0109



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Endowment Fund



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For Further Information on How to Participate
Through Honoraria and Bequests, Please Contact

Jim Hawley, Jr., AFA Chief Financial Officer

P.O. Box 56218

Phoenix, AZ 85017

hand reared or parent reared, etc. are also recorded in the registry files this information does not appear on the Certificate.

The AFA Exotic Bird Registry Certificate provides an official document that indicates a specific bird is registered as a captive-bred specimen. Some states already have laws that only allow commerce in captive-bred birds and there have been reports that in some instances airlines have requested evidence that birds to be shipped were captive bred.

Who May Participate?

Registry participation is not limited to AFA members, although AFA members do receive reduced fees. The Registry is initially being offered as an "open registry." You do not have to be the breeder in order to register a specimen and, any species of bird can be registered, provided the specimen is positively identified in an acceptable manner. Ultimately, however, the Registry may be converted to a "closed" system where only the progeny of registered parents will be accepted.

How does the Registry Work?

The entire Registry program has recently been up-dated and revised. The application form is very easy to fill out by entering a limited amount of specific information and simply checking certain boxes and signing the application [see the insert in this issue for Registry forms]. Once a completed application form is validated and processed by the AFA Registrar, an official Registry Certificate is issued. All pertinent information pertaining to identifying the actual specimen is included on the certificate, but the certificate does not list the name or address of the individual registering the bird. A transfer of ownership form is printed on the back of the certificate. If a new owner wishes the ownership of the specimen to be entered into the Registry file, a transfer fee is required. The original certificate is surrendered to AFA, changes are up-dated and a new certificate is issued.

All participants must agree to be bound by the Rules and Regulations established by AFA. An affidavit of

agreement to this effect is printed on each individual application and must be signed before an application will be processed. Payment in full must accompany the application.

What are the Direct Benefits?

Aside from the marketing aspects, amassing the demographic information on what is actually occurring with species management in captivity will provide the greatest long term benefit to aviculture. These data when summarized will provide the following kinds of information that are critical to sustaining viable captive populations:

- Total numbers of specimens of a given species that are included in the Registry.
- The ratios of the numbers of males, females and unsexed individuals.
- Ages at which successful breeding has commenced.
- Whether the population is growing numerically or is decreasing.
- The numbers of captive-bred generations that are represented in the population.
- The numbers of pairs that are successfully reproducing.
- Whether certain pairs are dominating the captive gene pool with their progeny.
- The incidence of inbreeding that is occurring, etc.

What Does it Cost?

Introductory discount fees have been established to encourage greater participation in the Registry. If all offered discounts apply, individual specimens may be registered for as little as \$3.50 per bird. Rebates for Commercial Members reduce this introductory rate down to \$2.50 per bird.

Which Birds Should I Consider Registering?

In situations where there are very limited numbers of individuals of a particular species available for breeding, it is important that these "founder" birds be registered. The major emphasis of the Registry, however, is to include as large a percentage as possible of captive-bred birds produced

each year whether or not they are a common or rare species.

When considering which birds to register, remember that any bird (including mutations and hybrids) can be registered at any age, whether captive-reared or wild-caught. Also, you do not have to be the actual breeder of the bird in order to have it registered. The primary determining factor is that each specimen must be positively identified in a method approved by the AFA Registrar.

Why Should We Participate?

First and foremost you are contributing to the future of the practice of aviculture. Ensuring a continuing supply of captive reared birds for the pet trade helps support the future of the pet industry. Without a continuing supply of captive reared birds, there will be little need for cage manufacturers, feed supplies, equipment, etc. As our present breeding stocks slowly die off, there will be no access to replacement birds. If we do not manage our breeding stocks effectively, we could easily be left with inbred, reproductively incompetent birds.

Talk to some of the pheasant breeders about the serious long-term effects of continuous inbreeding. Talk to some of the senior members of the avicultural community and see how easily a species can slip away and disappear from aviculture.

Where are the Nyasa Lovebirds? Where are the Edwards' Pheasants? Where are the *Goura cristata* crowned pigeons? Where will all our African waxbill finches be 10 years from now?

So, What is the Bottom Line?

The AFA has provided a valuable tool to aviculture. This program will not succeed in fulfilling its promises to the future if you do not actively support the Registry and begin filling out your forms today. Don't deny the joy and pleasure and the opportunities that you have experienced as aviculturists to your children or their children's children.

The AFA is looking to the future with a keen sense and awareness of our avicultural responsibilities. We ask that each of you do so as well. ➔