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Asiatic Breeders Association

by Donald Cavender, President

This is an exciting time to be breeding the Asiatic parakeets. I cannot think of any family of birds that has raised so much interest in the avicultural community as these birds. With all the enthusiasm this is a great time for the Asiatics Breeders Association (ABA). Yet we are the new kid on the block.

After the AFA convention in Concord, California last year, the expectations began to mount. There was a group of breeders who felt there must be some way to communicate and disseminate information not only amongst ourselves but to the public as a whole. Out of this, the ABA was born (hatched?).

It is very interesting to take your birds to a mart and hear comments such as "I have never seen a bird as gorgeous as that. What is it?" or "I don't have the real rare ones but, in my way of thinking, for pure beauty the lutinos are hard to beat."


Jack Bastiaan, author of Ring-necked Parakeets and Their Mutations lists over 85 combinations of mutations in the Indian Ring-necked Parakeet. There is one pairing that can theoretically give you 32 different possibilities. Just think, if this pair averaged four chicks a year, it would be theoretically possible to breed the pair for eight years and not produce two chicks alike.

The ABA's first issue of its publication featured an exquisite blue Alexandrine Parakeet—pure blood, not a hybrid with the Indian Ringneck. The photo was courtesy of Roger Bringas, an expert in the field of rare mutation psittacines. And, I am told, the cover of the next journal will be just as exquisite and beautiful.

For Membership Information Contact

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The Asiatic Breeders Association had a commercial booth at the AFA convention. At the left is Don Cavender, President, while Donald Hudson (behind the counter) explains things to Linda Rubin.

Asiatic Parrot Association International

by Mariette Rogers, Henderson, NV

In the January/February 1996 issue of *Watchbird* we told you about the Asiatic Parrot Society of America. On January 1, 1997 the name was changed to the Asiatic Parrot Association International (APA for short) in keeping with the international nature of its membership.

This organization was founded in 1993 by Mariette Rogers. In 1994 the *Quarterly Psittaculid Review* was launched. Its full color, 8 1/2 x 11 inch, comb-bound format was the first publication in the world to print up-to-date information on Afro-Asian parrots, much of it in the "how-to" vein. The *Psittacula* featured were the African and Indian Ring-necked, Mustached, Plum-headed, Blossom-headed, Slaty-headed, Intermediate, Long-tailed, Malabar, Alexandrine and Derbyan species. The QPR was an immediate hit and soon attracted a national and international readership of *Psittacula* owners.

From its onset, the QPR avoided publishing the reprints typical of bird-club newsletters, striving instead to publish original articles by serious breeders of *Psittacula* and also by keepers of pet birds. Reporting was unbiased and every member was given equal time. Many controversial topics were debated in print. The QPR's objective was to produce an attractive, colorful, informative, educational and enjoyable magazine, and it achieved its goal quite well. As a result, today, many more people are buying, breeding and enjoying the Afro-Asian parrots and many more publications are focusing on these birds and publishing articles on them with greater regularity.

In its first year, the QPR also introduced a new section, "The *Tanygnathus* Tattler," to service the rarely kept Great-billed, Müller's, and Blue-naped species, and in its third year the QPR added yet another little-

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Old World Aviaries, Austin, TX
Orchid Tree Exotics, Swanton, OH
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Pretty Bird International, Inc., Stacy, MN
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Pure Air Systems, San Antonio, TX
Rain Forest Exotics, Garland, TX
Raintree Publications, Fort Bragg, CA
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Ronie's For the Love of Birds, American Fork, UT
Royal Bird & Supply Co., Lincoln, NC
Saddleback Farm, Rossville, TN
Santa Barbara Bird Farm, Santa Barbara, CA
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known species, the *Psittinus* parrots, to its publishing format.

The color cover of every issue of the QPR features good photographs of members' birds, focusing on a particular species or sub-species or, in the case of the popular Ring-necked Parakeet, on a selection of beautiful and rare mutations bred and photographed by their member-owners. Every issue has feature articles on the cover bird species plus articles of general interest on other species and articles on the care, nutrition, and breeding information which is a common denominator to all the Afro-Asian species.

Another important feature of the QPR is the APA's list of volunteer advisors who make their phone numbers available to members who need advice or instruction on a given species. Finally, each issue has a classified section where advertising is free to members, and a section for the free publication of member breeders' business cards.

As a service to new members who have asked for out-of-print sets of the QPR from 1994, 1995 and 1996, which are no longer available, Rogers has assembled, edited and reprinted the information from these years into species books. Available today, to members and non-members alike, are individual books containing the collective articles to help the fancier to understand, breed and raise the Ring-necked, Plum-headed/Blossom-headed, Mustached, and Alexandrine species. Being readied for August and September are books on the Derbyan and The Big Care and Maintenance Book on Asiatics. All these QPR Species Books are economically priced.

Membership in the APA includes all issues of the QPR for the year in which you join, and are renewable each January 1st. The membership fee is \$30 to U.S. residents and all others should add \$14 for international postage.

All queries and applications for membership may be directed to:

Mariette Rogers,

**734 S. Boulder Hwy., Suite 400,
Henderson, Nevada 89015**

Please contact Rogers before sending your membership check. ➔

Nest Boxes for Indian Ring-necked Parakeets

by John Vanderhoof, Woodlake, CA

[Editor's Note: Yes, this is the John Vanderhoof who is noted for his success in lorries. He has specialized in lorries in the past but is now in many other parrot species. We welcome his article on nestboxes for Indian Ring-necked parakeets. DRT]

The Indian Ring-necked Parakeets, being early breeders, need to have their nest boxes cleaned and made ready very early in the season. This can be as early as November or at least by the first of the year.

Over the years, I have experimented with a variety of sizes and shapes of nest boxes for these birds. Regardless of the species, curiosity as to finding the "perfect" nest box seemed to have gotten the best of me each Spring. In every case, the changes were to the smaller rather than larger. By smaller, I mean diameter not necessarily depth. With lorries, caiques, Australian parakeets or the Asiatics, I have witnessed the acceptance of small enclosures over larger nests in the majority of cases when given a choice.

In addition to the size of the actual box, the entrance hole is an important factor. Again, I have watched as birds have chewed the opening to their preference. Obviously, if this opening to their nest is too large, they are unable to "personalize" it without making it even larger than they possibly wish. Therefore, I use screws to attach a plate over the larger-than-necessary hole. This plate consists of a piece of wood that is thinner than the box material so that the birds may readily

chew it as they so choose. The opening in this plate is purposely a bit smaller than the size of the bird's body. I feel that the desire to chew this opening is an important aspect to their courtship. I'm not stating that they won't go to nest successfully without this opportunity, but rather it may enhance the progress towards accomplishing the ultimate goal of producing young.

Presently, the nest boxes I use (as do a few other breeders) measure 9.5in. W x 9.5in. W x 30 in. H. The top and bottom are attached by screws for easy removal in cleaning. Inside the box, located 4in. below the entrance hole, there is a shelf running horizontally across the front. This allows for youngsters to stand and look out for a day or two before taking off for that maiden voyage. This shelf idea is not mine, I received it from Gene Hall who has proficiently raised Ringnecks, as well as many other species, longer than I've been alive.

This particular design size and configuration has satisfied all of the Ringnecks in my collection so far. Until such time as another improvement results in greater success, I have no reason to "fix what isn't broken."

Obviously, this is only one person's opinion, resulting from some experimentation. I will hasten to add that when a pair of birds, including Ring-necked parakeets, is ready to go to work, they will usually use whatever accommodation is available as they put into practice their God-given instinct to procreate. ➔

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