

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 persons 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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