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President's Message

Gary Clifton, Phoenix, Arizona President, American Federation of Aviculture

atchbird Magazine made its debut 25 years ago in August of 1974. In those days there were no such things as "avian veterinarian," "surgical sexing." or "DNA sexing." Handfeeding formula was all "do-it-yourself" as there were no handfeeding diets on the market. For those who were not around back then, imagine trying to set up a pair of macaws or Amazons without modern sexing techniques to know if you had a pair or just two birds.

Now, 25 years later, we have surgical sexing and the non-invasive DNA technique. We have knowledgeable avian veterinarians, and we can actually buy handfeeding formula - our choice of several brands and mixes. We are producing more birds than ever before, both in overall numbers and in the diversity of species. Imported birds are now for the most part harder to find than handfed, domestically-bred birds. Never before have birds been a part of so many households all across the nation.

For the next 25 years our greatest challenges will be two-fold. First, since avian importation is virtually a thing of

the past, the steps we take today will determine the extent to which we are able to maintain genetic diversity in the populations we have as well as the diversity of species we have. The future is up to us, and depends on whether or not we can find ways to work together cooperatively to preserve this genetic diversity as well as our present diversity of species.

Our second challenge will be to increase public awareness of this fascinating pursuit we call aviculture. Even today, most people might know someone who has a bird but very few know anyone who breeds birds. Not only do we need to take steps to preserve our captive populations throughout their generations, we also need to wake up and pay attention to where we might find the next generation of aviculturists. Will our kids and grandkids take up bird breeding just because we have? Or do we need to find ways to encourage interest in aviculture.

What can we do to encourage those who might be inclined to make the transition from bird-owner to breeder? The future is in our hands, waiting for us to take action. 🐊

CONSERVATION CONCERNS

Birdlife International Announces a Unique Opportunity to Help Save Birds From Extinction

part of its Globally Threatened Species Program, .BirdLife International will ensure that by next year there is up-todate information on all bird species threatened on a global scale. This information will be published in a book Threatened Birds of the World, which will discuss the status, threats and

potential conservation measures for every threatened species.

Each species will be illustrated and will be accompanied by a map depicting its range. Once published, Threatened Birds of the World will be a powerful tool to encourage governments, policy makers, and communities to take the necessary steps to

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ensure the survival of over 1,200 species now facing extinction.

BirdLife International is looking for individuals, not-for-profit organizations, and commercial companies to play a special role in the Globally Threatened Species Program. Each species in the book can be sponsored and the funds raised will be used to ensure that the book is distributed as widely as possible. We can then work with BirdLife Partner to put the conservation recommendations into action.

Individuals can sponsor one species for US\$165, not-for-profit organizations can be sponsors for US\$430 and commercial companies for US\$850. Species are allocated on a first come, first served basis. All sponsors will be making an invaluable contribution to a major conservation project and will have their name printed as an acknowledgement alongside the species of their choice. This is a unique chance for birders. ornithologists, bird clubs, expedition teams, researchers, conservationists, and companies to choose a bird that matters to them and publicly to support international conservation efforts to save it from extinction.

Choose your bird soon – before someone else does!

For further information and a sponsorship form please contact Naomi Hawkins at:

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