

Pionus Breeders Association

*From the World Wide Web Page
of the*

Pionus Breeders Association.

*Authored by Jennie Bolton
with the PBA Board of Directors*

Mission Statement

Founded by aviculturist Hank Brawley in 1980, the Pionus Breeders Association is a worldwide network of breeders, pet owners, scientists, and conservationists with the following aims:

Education

Disseminating and exchanging avicultural and scientific information to its members and other interested parties about the husbandry, reproduction, and biology of parrots of the genus *Pionus*.

Preservation

Eliminating the need to import wild-caught *Pionus* by establishing a self-sustaining captive population; by monitoring that population through a regular census and by maintaining records of the genetic relationships of captive birds by the establishment of a studbook for each species.

Conservation

Supporting and assisting in the protection of habitat critical for the long-term survival of *Pionus* parrots in the wild.

Projects and Membership

The PBA Studbook Project

The studbook project was undertaken to track the genetic relationships between *Pionus* in captivity, as a tool to

maintain the genetic diversity of captive *Pionus* and to prevent inbreeding. A studbook form is included with each newsletter, and should be filled out for each hatch, sale, trade, or death. Formerly, these forms were kept on file and sorted through by hand; now, they are being entered into SPARKS, the Single Population Analysis and Records Keeping System, a relational database system used by the International Species Information System (ISIS) to track relationships between animals kept in captivity (mainly in zoos) worldwide. This program will allow us to test hypothetical matings between individual birds in the database as a service to members, measure inbreeding in the captive population, and help track how the genetic makeup of captive birds is changing compared to a wild population. Participation in the studbook program has always been an important contribution that PBA members have made to *Pionus* preservation—several hundred birds have already been registered and entered into the SPARKS databases.

The South American Research Project

The PBA has an interest in conservation of *Pionus* in the wild and lends support to conservation projects. We are very happy to announce that our members have raised funds to perform one of the first field surveys of the

White-headed, or Massena's Parrot. This is the rarest of the *Pionus* parrots, and its status in the wild is currently unknown. Habitat in the areas of Ecuador where these birds were formerly seen has been disappearing. We are providing funds allowing an Ecuadorian biologist to perform a survey of Ecuador for *Pionus seniloides*. Information obtained in the field survey will be shared with the government of Ecuador to enable conservation agencies there to have information necessary for protecting critical habitat for this rare *Pionus*.

The first phase of this research was finished in Fall of 1995 and the results reported to PBA members in the Fall 1995 Newsletter. The second phase was completed in Summer of 1996 and the results were reported to PBA members in the Fall 1996 Newsletter. A third, limited survey of selected areas is still forthcoming. The results of surveys of southern Ecuador made in August 1995 and northern Ecuador made in January 1996 are now being made available to the Internet community.

PBA Membership

Membership in the Pionus Breeders Association is open to anyone interested in the breeding, conservation, or pet qualities of *Pionus* parrots. Dues are \$12 US or \$15 CDN per year (\$20 US for overseas membership). As a PBA member, you will receive a quarterly newsletter with tips for breeding *Pionus*, articles about topics in aviculture, and shared information from other members on the pet qualities of these gentle and uniquely beautiful parrots.

You will participate in the studbook program and receive a yearly Breeder's Directory, a valuable resource for breeders and pet owners alike. Membership in the PBA runs from January through December.

To Join the PBA

Send your dues payment to:

Pionus Breeders Association
Barbara Avery, Secretary/Treasurer
6580 Providence Hill Road
Garden Valley, CA 95633 ➔

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Video Produced By Bird Lady Productions: utahjungle@aol.com.