



Breeding the Plain Parakeet

by Glen Cyoerick
Saskatchewan, Canada



Photo by Cyril Laubscher

Plain Parakeet

Breeding the Plain Parakeet *Brotogeris tirica* was a combination of luck and patience.

After trying for many years to find some pairs of its well known cousin, the Grey-cheeked Parakeet, I finally settled on the Plains as there were a few pairs being imported and offered to me.

Measuring about eight inches long, they are the largest of the *Brotogeris* family, but they also have the longest tail of the group. As well, the name given to them, Plain, doesn't give justice to their beauty. At a glance they appear to be a one-color bird, lime green, but in flight their colors come out. The outside wing color is mostly a dark blue, yellow appears sporadically on the tail and head. The beak is horn colored.

I acquired one pair initially, and then received two more pair in a later shipment. The initial pair were from

Europe, domestic-bred and closed banded. I received them in late 1997, and after a six week quarantine, set



Photo courtesy of Glen Cyoerick

The Plain Parakeet isn't really completely plain. Notice the yellow on the face and the blue on the wings.

them up in a four foot long by three feet high by one and a half foot wide suspended cage. The nest box was hung horizontally and measured four feet long with eight inch square interior dimension. Natural perches were used in the cage.

The pair seemed quite calm, but I assume that was because they were domestically bred.

After about six months they started to use the nest that was provided. I would catch the male exiting when I entered the room I kept them in. It was not until about August that I first saw the female in the nest, and by early October she would go to the opposite end of the nest upon inspection – but she would not exit.


She laid five eggs starting on October 15th, 1998, with a very unusual pattern. The second was laid a full week after the first, October 23rd, the third on October 27th, the fourth on October 30th, and the last on November 3rd.

On my inspection, the female would never leave the nest, and when feeding, the male would gorge himself, then go to the nest box entrance where he would meet the female and feed her.

Of the five eggs that were laid, only one proved to be fertile. What I assume to be the third egg laid, hatched on November 21st. It was the smallest chick I had ever seen, and appeared to be naked. After a few days he turned a fuzzy grey. I left him with the parents to raise, although starting at about 10 days old, I took him out everyday and played with him for about ten minutes so he would be used to me.

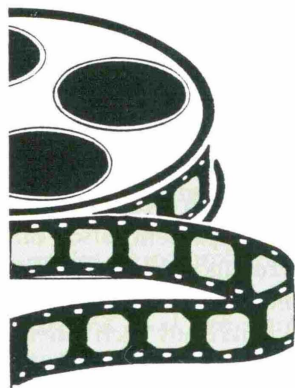
On January 9th, 1999, I observed the baby leave the nest for the first time but he returned to the nest at night for about three days, after which I never saw him go in again.

I left him with the parents for about four months and then transferred him to a cage of his own.

The pair again laid five eggs and I am very happy to say all hatched and were raised to weaning by the parents. They have been introduced to their elder sibling and I hope to pair these birds up when the other unrelated pairs begin to breed. 

Convention Corner 2000

by Kelly Davis, Oakton, Virginia



Great Events Planned for Convention 2000

Lights, camera, action! Be sure to send in your convention registration early and make your hotel plans ASAP – you don't want to miss the fun and excitement of Los Angeles and AFA Convention 2000.

In addition to all the wonderful speakers, seminars, and exhibits at the AFA Convention, we also have planned other activities for you. On Wednesday, August 2, 2000, AFA will be heading to the Los Angeles Zoo for a pizza party and a behind the scenes tour of the Condor Facility. Located in the heart of the nation's second-largest city, the LA Zoo has over 1.3 million visitors a year view a collection of over 1,200 animals from around the world.

The LA Zoo became part of the new California Condor Recovery Program and in 1982 built the extensive "condominiums," still the finest and largest facility in the condor program. Don't miss your chance to see the Condors up close and personal.

In addition to the world famous condors, the LA Zoo boasts an extensive bird collection including softbills, psittacines, eagles, vultures, flamingos, hornbills, roadrunners, starlings, plus many more! Tickets to this event are not included in the registration fee and space is limited, so buy your tickets early!

Join us as our guest, Thursday August 3, 2000 for a special poolside

reception honoring AFA's illustrious past presidents. This is your chance to meet and mingle with the AFA past presidents and find out how much Aviculture has changed the past twenty-five years – and how much it has stayed the same. Ms. Lee Phillips (AFA President 1983-1985) and Co-Chair of the AFA Legislative Committee will be helping us organize the event.

Don't forget to buy your AFA Super Raffle tickets. Tickets are available on the cover of the *AFA Watchbird*, from the AFA office, and will also be available for sale on site at the Convention 2000. Win one of these 10 great prizes generously donated from special friends of the AFA:

- \$300 Gift Certificate from the Animal Exchange
- Signed & Numbered "Green-winged Macaws" by Gamini Ratnavira donated by Animology
- Premium Quality Nina Bird Cage donated by Avian Adventures
- \$300 Gift Certificate from Avitech Inc.
- Brinsea TLC-4 Parrot Brooder donated by Brinsea
- Greater Vasa Parrot donated by Featherlust Farm
- Toco Toucan Artist Proof by Gamini Ratnavira donated by Hidden Forest Art Gallery.
- \$300 Gift Certificate from the Higgins Group Corp.
- Humidaire Model 20 Incubator /Hatcher donated by Humidaire.
- \$300 Internet Gift Certificate from the Kookaburra Pet Shop

Be sure to stock up on your tickets today so you can win one of these terrific prizes!

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American Federation of Aviculture
PO Box 56218

Phoenix, AZ 85079-6218
602-484-0931 fax 602-484-0109
<http://www.afa.birds.org/afa/> 