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A Book Review by Sheldon Dingle
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African Parrots

By Rick Jordan and Jean Pattison, 58 full color photos, one table, 144 pages, soft cover, 5 1/2 X 8 1/2 inches, \$12.95 (plus \$4 shipping & handling). Available at the AFA Business Office and at the AFA national convention in Los Angeles, August 2-6.

When aviculturists read books about birds, they generally have some obscure question nagging their subconscious to the effect of "Do these writers really know what they are talking about or is this just some rehash of the literature?"

In the case of *African Parrots*, I can assure you that these authors really do know their stuff. I am personally acquainted with Jordan and Pattison, have read much of their writing, and have listened to them address large groups. Their long-term success in raising African parrots validates their commentary. Their confidence and experience-based breeding results are reflected in this book.

The book is nicely organized with 13 chapters, each of which is broken into subheads which are numbered for the ease of reference. For example, chapter one is titled "Introduction to African Parrots." The first subhead (number 1.1) is "The Different Genera of Parrots in Africa." subhead number 1.2 is "Why Are Some Species Considered Rare?" This is a plus for the person who will read the book and use it time and again.

Chapter two, "Captive Management Programs," presents a crucial element of aviculture but one often poorly understood. The authors state,

"True conservation of a species can only take place through cooperation between captive breeders and field biologists performing studies in the natural habitat."

They go on to suggest that the inbreeding of captive birds can lead to

serious potential problems. Record keeping and the use of studbooks are growing in popularity worldwide. Indeed, say the authors,

"The studbook information can be very useful in determining how offspring should be paired to effect a healthy captive population of that species for generations to come."

I believe Jordan and Pattison are in the forefront of avicultural thought as they encourage bird breeders to keep records, and cooperate with others on programs for any given captive species.

But, yes, I know, I know – this isn't really what you want to hear. You want "hands on" advice that you can take into your backyard aviary. No worries, friend – the book is full of practical advice. With chapter three, we get into the parrot species beginning with the Senegal, Meyer's, and Red-bellied Parrots. Additional chapters cover the Jardine's, the Cape, the uncommon *Poicephalus* such as the Yellow-faced and Niam Niam, then the African Grey Parrots, the black parrots, the lovebirds, and the Rose-ringed Parakeet.


Almost every chapter gives a lot of

practical advice about the species at hand. There are subsections on breeding setups for the African Grey, secrets for breeding African parrots, the breeding diet, and a lot of other subjects you can actually put to use in your aviary.

The final three chapters cover "Basic Husbandry and Breeding Tips," "Incubation Techniques and Methodology," and "Hand-rearing."

Here you will gain information gleaned over many years by two of the most experienced and successful of all parrot breeders. You will read these chapters over and over. I believe your aviaries will show an improvement as you gradually employ more and more of the excellent advice gained here.

African Parrots is an outstanding book. I believe it sets a new benchmark not soon to be equaled.

Buy it from the American Federation of Aviculture business office or, better yet, get it at the AFA convention in Los Angeles this August. Books purchased from the AFA are the *only* ones that include a special commemorative plate personally signed by both authors. Don't miss this opportunity to support the AFA and upgrade your library. 

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