

BIRD THEFTS

A Possible Deterrent

Suffering from a rash of bird thefts, several dealers on the West Coast decided to find a solution to the problem.

There are many steps to take to protect your birds, but what if they are stolen anyway? The larger, more expensive birds are the ones most often taken because they are an easy item to resell. There is usually no positive means of identifying them even when they are found.

Robelle Animals in Norco, Calif. tattoos all their larger birds and provides a certificate of ownership. The bird is registered to its owner and any successive owners. This seems to be the best method to be found at this time. However, the tattoo is not immediately visible and people are not keyed to checking for tattoos when they buy a bird.

At the dealers' meeting a new system was presented that is in the working. The plan is for a non-removable band made of stainless steel with another strip of metal inside. A special tool would be necessary to apply the band to the bird's leg. The tool would leave its own mark, no two being the same. This mark along with

the number on the band could be used to trace the bird back to the owner on record in a central computer. Again, each successive owner would be on record.

The cost of the banding would be minimal (around \$10). With the cost of birds, this is to be considered a worthwhile investment. ■



THE CASE OF THE MISSING BIRDS

Sue and Steve Ornison returned home to Phoenix from their week-end ski trip to Flagstaff. Tired from the long drive and arriving late that Sunday evening, they went to bed without unpacking, or for that matter, going out to inspect the aviaries in the backyard, as was their usual custom.

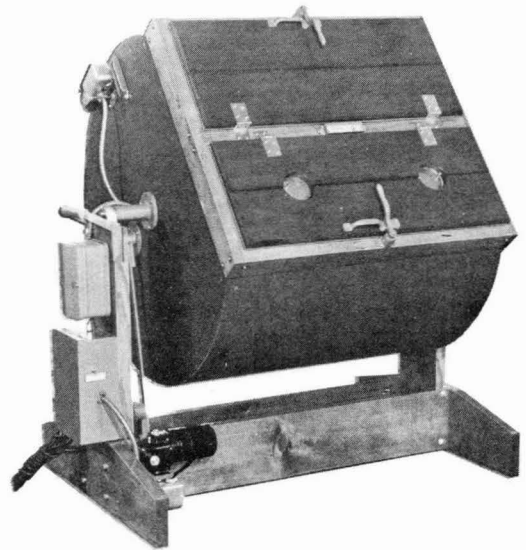
Awaking from a refreshing night's sleep, Steve showered, shaved, dressed and hurried outside to the aviaries to see if any new nests had been built, or eggs hatched. As Steve approached the garage, behind which were located the six ample-sized, well-planted flights, he felt a sense of uneasiness come over him. Where was the chirping symphony of happy birds frolicking in the morning dew?

As he rounded the corner, his anxiety grew to a fever pitch. There was not a movement of feathers to be seen. Heart bearing wildly, Steve raced up and down the isleway separating the two rows of flights. Glancing quickly into each enclosure, he kept thinking he must have forgot something before leaving on vacation and the birds were dead. But that was

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