

Birdpark "Jagrie" Holland

Very Rare:
AMAZONS · COCKATOOS
PARAKEETS · MACAWS
300 Outdoor Aviaries

Specialized in
Rare Colour Mutations
Please look at our website:
<http://www.birdpark-jagrie.nl>

On demand we
send a price list.

J.J. Postema
Veenakkers 4
9511RC Gieterveen
Holland
phone: +31-599-648382
fax: +31-599-648216

*Visiting the Birdpark only
possible after agreement.*

Letter to the Editor

From:

Birgit Puschner, DVM, Ph.D.
Diplomate, American Board of
Veterinary Toxicology
Toxicology Section Head
CAHFS - Toxicology
University of Davis Davis, CA
August 27, 2000

To:

Sheldon Dingle, Editor
the American Federation of Aviculture
- *Watchbird*

As a veterinary toxicologist and section head of the Toxicology Laboratory at the California Animal Health and Food Safety Laboratory System, I feel compelled to respond to Susan Boyer's article "Are you feeding your myna to death," published in your July/August 2000 issue.

Mrs. Boyer correlated iron storage disease directly to the concentration of iron in food/feed. But the etiology of hemochromatosis in mynah birds is still not clear, and may not be diet induced. Studies have shown that iron storage disease in mynah birds shared most of the important histopathologic characteristics with idiopathic or hereditary hemochromatosis in man, and was not induced by dietary iron. Thus, the role of dietary iron in the development of iron storage disease has not been established. However, it is important to offer mynah birds appropriate, non-toxic concentrations of iron in their diet. As Mrs. Boyer pointed out, veterinary diagnostic laboratories offer testing for metal concentrations, and CAHFS is one of the service organizations in the Western US providing this service.

It is important to mention other factors affecting the absorption of iron from the gastrointestinal tract. Ascorbic acid (vitamin C) enhances the bioavailability of iron in avians. Citrus fruits and green leafy plants can contain large amounts of ascorbic acid and may lead to an increased uptake of iron. Therefore, feeding of citrus fruits can lead to increased absorption of iron.

Once a mynah bird is diagnosed with iron storage disease by a veterinarian, specific treatments have to be initiated.

It is correct that a diagnosis of hemochromatosis is often difficult and involves invasive techniques (liver biopsy). But successful therapy is possible.

The data listed in Mrs. Boyer's article were only partly generated by the Toxicology Laboratory of CAHFS and were not part of a research study. The concentrations reported are based on one sample from each feed, and may not reflect representative and accurate sampling methods. The data can only be used as a guideline. If a diagnosis of hemochromatosis has been established in a bird, feed, fruit, water and other potential sources should be analyzed for iron in order to potentially reduce iron intake during treatment. Please note that a typographical error occurred in the article. The Kaytee Handfeeding Formula contained 485 ppm of iron, not 48 ppm as published in the article.

Sincerely,

Birgit Puschner
DVM/Ph.D./Dipl. ABVT

cc: Dr. Ardans, Director CAHFS ➔

[Editor's Note: The typographical error pointed out by Dr. Puschner was made by the typesetter. The correct data was supplied by author Boyer. The chart is reproduced here with the correction made.]

Product	ppm iron
• Mazuri ZuLife Bird Gel 5ME4	67
• Prettybird Select Softbill Diet	68/90*
• Hagen Softbill	68
• Zeigler's Bird of Paradise	69
• Prettybird Handfeeding Formula	101
• Harrison's	118
• Bogen Myna Food	121
• Quiko Myna Bird food	142
• Bogen Myna Granules	193
• Wayne's Dog Food	202
• Reliable Protein Products	
Low Iron Softbilled Bird-Fare	203
• Kaytee Exact Original	
Softbill and Myna Pellets	208/220*
• Higgins Vita Crunch	221
• Scenic Apple Paradise	228
• 8N1 Ultra Blend	241
• Science Diet Feline	249
• RAFF Realpasta Universal with Fruit	299
• Zupreen Monkey Chow	302
• 8N1 Tasty Dinner	362
• Piki Crumble	465
• Kaytee Handfeeding Formula	485

* These products were tested at 2 different labs



LEG BAND CUTTER

ELECTRONIC SCALES & THERMOMETERS

CLOACAL & MOUTH SPECULUM

FEEDING TUBES

PERCH STAND

HEATING PLATFORMS

CORDLESS DREMEL

AND MORE

LOOK IN OUR CATALOG

VETERINARY SPECIALTY PRODUCTS, INC.
(561) 362-7340 fax (561) 362-9982
ORDERS (800) 362-8138
Web Address www.vet-products.com