



**THE FEED BAG**

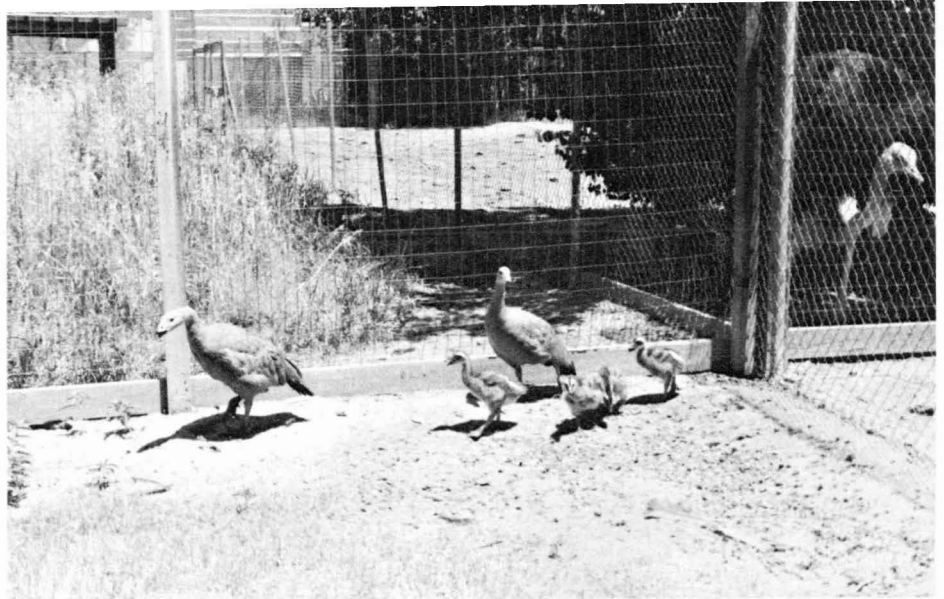


BUY • SELL • TRADE  
BIRDS  
BIRD SUPPLIES  
AND EQUIPMENT  
SEED, FEED

Halfmoons  
Cockatiels  
Lovebirds  
Parrakeets  
White Headed Nuns  
Green Singers  
Golden Breasted Waxbills  
Cordon Bleu  
AND MANY OTHER TYPES  
OF FINCHES  
AND HOOKBILLS



18247 East Valley Blvd.  
(at Yorbita Rd.)  
La Puente, CA. 91744  
**213/964-8473**



Mickey Ollson's Farm — Family of Cape Barren Geese with Ostrich in background.

## Getting a Good Start in Aviculture

by Mickey Ollson

What birds should I keep? Many times a new Aviculturist is confused about what species or family of birds are right for them. This question is not all that easy to answer, because the answer itself depends upon many factors. Ask yourself, how does the climate in which you live compare to the climate the bird is used to? Can the bird you have chosen be acquired without much problem, or is it an "endangered species" requiring a complicated permit? Do you have the ample space required for the bird? Can the proper diet be provided? Is there a "market" for the birds you wish to raise? And, since most beginners start with the help of someone else, do you really like the type of birds that have been suggested to you? These questions are the ones any new Aviculturist should answer before taking the first step. I would like to elaborate on these guidelines, hoping they will help the would-be hobbist become a bonified Aviculturist, who has a keen interest in his birds and a genuine concern in the captive propagation of more of the rarer species.

Much consideration should be given to the climatic conditions the bird is used to. Knowing what ranges of temperature, amount of rainfall, etc. the bird can tolerate will save a lot of worry and loss of valuable stock. There is always an exception to the rule, but usually, you will be better off to form your collection from

an area of the world where the climatic conditions are similar to your own. For example, Australian and South African species, which are from desert and semi-desert areas, do quite well in Southern California and Arizona.

When you have it narrowed down as to what birds it is possible to keep, then you must be sure just what type of birds you would truly enjoy keeping. Although there may be some financial profits from Aviculture, it is usually considered to be strictly a hobby. As such, it must be enjoyable, because I have found that if someone is trying to raise a bird he does not appreciate or like, he will soon lose interest. It can happen very simply. A beginner can end up spending time and money on a bird he cares little for, just because someone told him they were "easy", and he acquired the birds before considering his own feelings.

Keep in mind the compatibility of the birds you are thinking of raising. If you can't house one species with another, you will need more aviary space. All too often I've seen new Aviculturists overcrowd an enclosure with too many species, resulting in loss of stock, lack of breeding, and discouragement. It is much better to have 2 or 3 species propagating successfully, than many types doing poorly. Care must be taken to see that all of your birds receive the proper type shelter, with plenty of cover, or nesting areas that are

“private” enough, and that they are housed with other birds they can accept without becoming distressed. You must come to a “happy medium”. I have seen people try to keep Rheas, or some other Ratite, in a pen more suited for a group of Pheasants, resulting in depressed, maybe even crippled birds. Then, there are the people that lose valuable birds in an aviary that is too large. The birds fall subject to weather exposure, or to predators. It is very important that you fit the aviary to the bird.

Whether we agree with it or not, there is another factor we all must contend with, and that is the limits put upon us by Federal Legislation. Several of the more commonly raised Pheasants and Grass Parakeets have been placed on the “Endangered Species List”. Certainly, you can apply for a permit if you are a “competent” Aviculturist, but few people want to wait the several months it takes to go through the “red tape”, not to mention the time it takes just to fill out the many blanks of the permit. Then there’s always the chance that you’ll get turned down, then what? All of this bother is caused by the incompetents who suggest such foolishness, because few officials have taken the time to really research the captive populations of these “endangered” birds or are aware of the number propagated by aviculturists. With all the laws, the market for many of these species has disappeared. An aviculturist unable to dispose of surplus young birds will fast lose interest, so these birds will decline in captivity. If we could work together, it could be helped, but despite promises from Washington Officials, little has been done to help this situation.

After all that, one final consideration is the actual “saleability” of species. I have often suggested to beginner and experienced Aviculturist alike that it is really no more expensive to keep valuable birds than it is to keep the more common types. The results are not only profitable, they are rewarding to the individual! It takes no more time, space, or money to raise Peacock Pheasants than to raise Ringneck Pheasants. The only difference is the original investment. But at the price, Peacock Pheasants pay for themselves much faster and better, with more profit. I agree, beginners should start with common species, but as they gain knowledge, they should graduate to rarer species.

All in all, I do hope these guidelines serve in helping the beginners to get started and encourage the ones started to keep up the good work. I know of quite a few established Aviculturists this has helped, including myself! (We all have to start somewhere.) ■

Breeders of Cockatiels, Lovebirds, and Zebra Finches

# BARONA BIRD FARM



**BIRDS  
OF ALL KINDS  
and  
everything you need in  
bird supplies**

Hours:  
9 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Closed Mon.

▪ WE SHIP BIRDS ▪

Send stamped, self-addressed envelope for prices.

**(714) 443-8315**

12995 Old Barona Road • Lakeside, California 92040  
(near San Diego)



# TOPRITE

## GAME FARM NETTING

MADE FROM NEW OLEFIN MATERIAL—NOT WIRE  
SPECIALLY DESIGNED FOR TOPS OF GAME PENS

- TOPRITE comes in wide widths (25 and 50 ft).
- Extremely lightweight
- Cuts installation time by 65%
- Strong but flexible on impact.
- Rust and mildew proof.

WRITE FOR FREE SAMPLE AND BROCHURE

**J. A. CISSEL CO., INC.**

Mailing Address/P.O. Box 339, Farmingdale, New Jersey 07727  
Plant and Office/Squankum-Yellowbrook Rd., Farmingdale, New Jersey 07727

**(201) 462-8181**

