

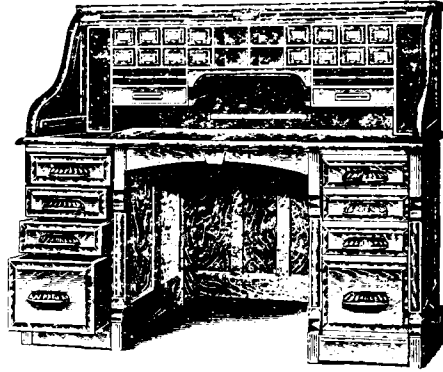
NOTICE

All correspondence intended for the editor of the Watchbird should be mailed directly to his address.

Sheldon Dingle
P. O. Box 340
Norco, CA 91760

From The Editor's Desk

by Sheldon Dingle



Dear Editor,

I will probably have some free time in the future. Would you be interested in articles dealing with Citron-crested Cockatoos, Crimson-pileated Finches and Red-headed Parrot-finches? I have had considerable success with these species in the last few years. Also, I would like to write a piece entitled something like, "The Joys of a Planted Finch Aviary".

I am glad to see you don't shrink from controversy. The other main U.S. cage bird publication, A.C.B.M., seems loathe to print criticism of its articles. I gave up several years ago after my fifth letter commenting on some of the rubbish which had appeared was ignored.

Congratulations on producing a fine magazine. The A.F.A. is the best thing which has happened to American aviculture. It is great to see the organization prosper. In the future I hope to take a more active role myself. I would very much like to see one day the A.F.A. establish a breeding facility under its control similar to the Pheasant Trust and Wildfowl Trust in Britain. Perhaps initially it could concentrate on the establishment of rare psittacines. A few zoos and private individuals are attempting to establish captive populations of rare species but to my mind an ongoing A.F.A. controlled facility where relatively large numbers of the species concerned (10 or more pairs) could be maintained would be better. A few years ago considerable numbers of the Vinaceous Amazon came into the U.S. This bird is now on the endangered list. Has anybody initiated a breeding program for this bird? Recently considerable numbers of the two Jamaican Amazons have arrived. Both these species deserve to be on the endangered list in my opinion. It is a crying shame to see these very rare birds being sold as pets as is happening. Apart from Ramon Noegel (and he is not really working with sufficient numbers) is anybody seriously trying to establish these birds? What is needed is

an organization which can recognize the need and do something positive about it. I hope the A.F.A. will eventually have the enterprise and funds to initiate such an establishment. If the government can see fit to subsidize a plethora of "cultural" activities it might also be persuaded to aid a prestigious organization in efforts to save unique species from extinction. In my opinion this would be money well spent.

Lindsay Clack, Ph.D.
Morgantown, West Virginia

My dear Dr. Clack, the readers of the Watchbird would love to read knowledgeable articles on the birds you have mentioned, and of course the "Joys of a Planted Finch Aviary" would be a welcome upbeat. So many aviculturists wind up on the tread-mill of bird chores that they don't have time for the joys of keeping birds. During good weather my wife and I enjoy sitting under a tree in a grassy little garden watching the birds cavort in the banks of aviaries on both sides and with the swans serenely swimming on the pond to the north. In bad weather we enjoy the same thing — the tree leaks less than the house does.

We don't shrink from controversy; we rarely refuse to publish a letter even if it seems to be a bit controversial. The only sort of thing I don't like is an attack on an individual based upon personality. I thoroughly enjoy controversy regarding various issues. Unfortunately, many readers can't tell the difference. Sometimes I can't either, I suppose. The main advantage to accepting criticism is that it keeps us fairly honest. Not having the fountain of all knowledge easily at hand, we sometimes publish something that is in obvious error and we depend upon our knowledgeable readers to point it out and correct it. After all, sir, as I have often said, everyone is entitled to their own erroneous opinions. In fact, I am still holding your criticism of some canary material we published a good while ago. I

received it a little late to be timely but will publish it the next time we use some canary material (next issue).

Your idea on an A.F.A. controlled breeding facility is quite good. I should like to see that happen myself. Better yet, I should like to see myself in control of the facility. Come to think of it, everyone I know would like to see themselves in control of it. My qualifications are quite good, however. I am meaner than a junkyard dog and have a .38 to back me up. But then, there may be some younger equally mean fellows with shotguns and rifles who would apply for the job. And then what about the fellows who may not be so mean but have machine guns and artillery? Hmmmm. Perhaps we had better establish some ground rules here. Before we need to worry too much, though, the A.F.A. will have to gain more strength, both numerically and financially. The idea is good and I trust that when it becomes feasible, the board of directors will be able to work out the details with no bloodshed. We should study the organization of the Pheasant Trust and the Wildfowl Trust for clues as to how they work. You are entirely correct in suggesting an organized program should be effected to establish in captivity many of the endangered species that are occasionally available. The A.F.A. sponsored Breeders Guide of Nondomesticated Birds is an excellent first step. At present we don't even know what birds are actually in the United States. When we learn that, we will have some hard data to work with in organizing a program and with good luck, enough money, and lots of work, perhaps your admirable dream will come into fruition.

Ed.



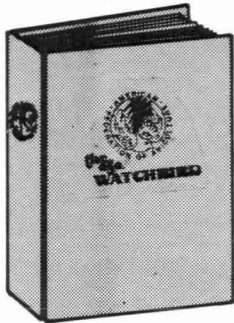
To The Editor:

We just experienced a tragic accident, and feel it worthy to pass it along. As beginner breeders we have learned a costly lesson.

The other night my husband walked into the birdroom and found our female Indian Ringneck Parakeet hanging helplessly on a piece of wire by its leg. We removed the bird and discovered she had chewed her foot off trying to escape. Around the leg was a plastic ty-rap band that was the cause of the bird being hung on the wire. In our investigation, we have found out that they are placed on the bird's leg to signify it has been in quarantine.

This happened after 8 p.m. and unable to reach our veterinarian, we took her to more experienced breeders who are still working to save the bird and what's left of her foot. The doctor says

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Photo by Connie Sosa

Judy Hofferman

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JUDY HOFFERMAN

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Weight - 100 lbs.

Hair & Eyes - Brown

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Sheldon Hofferman

11547 Lilting Lane

Fairfax Station, Virginia 22039

Phone:

Res: (703) 323-0459

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amputation of the leg may still be necessary.

Immediately upon arriving back home, we checked the male and indeed it also had a plastic ty-rap on its leg. Needless to say, we promptly removed the band.

The point we are getting at is that we never saw the bands on their legs. The clear plastic let the natural color of the leg show through, giving the appearance of no band at all. Had we been more experienced we would have known to give the bird a more thorough examination upon bringing it home. My advice is to check all birds for bands.

The plastic ty-rap band is designed to tighten, not loosen. What if a bird chewed the wrong way and tightened the band? It would eventually lose circulation and probably the foot or leg! Why is this type band used? The small cost of such banding seems rather a high price to pay in the long run when you consider the loss of a bird and what it does to the owner. Many tears later I'm still upset for not having found the clear band on her leg. Break-away bands, metal bands, etc. are better than ty-raps.

Can anyone do something to establish a better way of banding birds for quarantine to protect them from harm? Can a law be passed setting a code to prevent the invisible ty-raps from being used? A band should "FIT PROPERLY," and it should be "NOTICEABLE!"

So at the cost of a very beautiful bird, we have learned a valuable lesson. It's too bad we need leg bands at all, but we should work harder at protecting the helpless birds who do wear them.

Carol A. Moore,
Tampa, Fla.

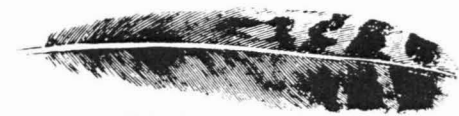
Our condolences for the trauma the accident caused. None of us likes to see a bird suffer—especially unnecessarily. Not all is lost, however. Just a foot. I have known several birds to get on quite happily minus a wing or a foot. In fact we have a beautiful little cherryhead lovebird that lost his foot while still a baby in the nestbox. He is quite happy, comes and goes, flies, perches and does everything the rest of his aviary mates do. Occasionally I notice him looking with pity on the rest of the birds that have that strange four-pronged appendage at the end of their right leg. I have had two birds lose their beaks and that, believe me, is rather more serious.

The problem with banding is quite complex. The only really satisfactory bands seem to be closed bands put on nestlings and even then a bird can get hung up on a bad wire. I don't know the

best answer to the banding hassle.

On the positive side, though, you have learned and shared with our readers a valuable lesson. Inspect new birds very closely and keep cages and flights as free from snags as possible. It's just a shame the bird had to suffer.

ED.



Dear Mr. Dingle:

First, let me say that I greatly enjoy reading the Watchbird and have learned quite a bit about aviculture from reading some of the excellent articles presented.

I cannot, however, agree with you and your "good friend Richard Topper" about sunflower seed. Evidently you feel that sunflower seed is bad for birds, since you said that you had substituted safflower seed for sunflower seed in your bird feed. You asked for evidence about teflon poisoning, for or against; but you offered no evidence against sunflower seed.

I spent good money going to Seattle and Dallas last year, where I heard Mr. Topper tell assorted aviculturists, ornithologists, veterinarians, pet trade representatives and others just how bad sunflower seed was. Among other things, he said sunflower seed was narcotic, contained cholesterol and that it was the worst thing you could feed your birds. He offered not one shred of scientific evidence.

I interpret my nutrition and veterinary books to indicate that sunflower seed and safflower seed are practically identical in composition and nutritional value. Too much of either one of these oil seeds might at least cause problems with absorption of the fat soluble vitamins and calcium in the intestine. Both of them should be limited in the ration and should be supplemented with good sources of animal protein containing all essential amino acids. Neither of these seeds contains cholesterol, it being a component of animal fat. If there is any narcotic in sunflower seed, I wonder why the Department of Health, Education and Welfare permits them to be sold without controls. I might also add that a "name brand" cooking oil is advertised on national television as being 100% sunflower oil and containing no cholesterol.

Now, Mr. Dingle, I challenge you to come up with a complete report of the nutritional research conducted by Mr. Topper, the name and amount of the narcotic in sunflower seed and a comparison by scientific analysis of sunflower

seed and safflower seed. I further challenge you to publish this information, along with the opinions of such reputable people as Dr. Murray Fowler, Dr. Richard Austic, Dr. Gregg Harrison and Dr. David Graham.

I have no axe to grind in this matter, as I do not sell feed. I could be wrong on this, but it just seems odd to me that Mr. Topper is the only one who claims to have discovered the cholesterol and narcotic in sunflower seed. I would just like to know how he arrived at his conclusions.

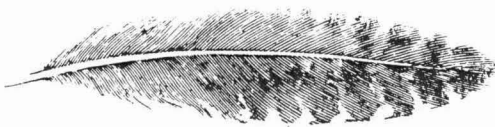
Thank you very much. I shall be looking forward to your reply.
Luther Dean,
Dripping Springs, Texas

I try never to be hasty and my response to your letter is written proof. When your letter arrived in November of '79 I called Dick Topper and sent him a copy. He said he'd respond in detail.

The fact that he has not responded yet is proof, I suppose, that when it comes to writing (not talking) Topper is even less hasty than I am.

Without Topper's help I have failed your challenge to come up with his research data. Undismayed, however, I'll forge ahead and have Dr. Tkachuck come up with some answers. Equally undismayed, Dr. Tkachuck suggested that our first line of research be to throw the question open to our readership. Dr. Tkachuck agrees that cholesterol is a component of animal fat and is not found in sunflowers. The question is, then, what type of narcotic is found in sunflower seed and in what amounts.

If any of you good readers have hard data on this matter please communicate it to me and save our Dr. Tkachuck about ten miles of work. Mad scientists aren't all that easy to come by these days so we'd like to save ours for only the most essential work.
ED.



Dear Mr. Dingle:

Having only recently become involved in aviculture I read Watchbird with great excitement.

In the Feb/March issue I carefully read Mr. Shelton's article on his proposed "Non-Domestic Bird Registry."

I own a palm cockatoo and would like to find someone who would like to breed them, yet I don't know how to find anyone with the same interest.

I truly believe Mr. Shelton's idea is one that can benefit someone like myself who has a rare bird and is interested in breeding, but has neither the knowledge or the space, to say nothing of having a mate.

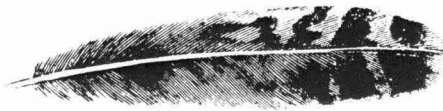
I only hope more people will take an active interest in Mr. Shelton's idea. It can only benefit aviculture.

James Gorman,
Orange, Ca.

Mr. Shelton is working very hard on the A.F.A.'s "Non-Domestic Bird Registry" and he'll give us a progress update at the Las Vegas convention in August.

Your problem is precisely the kind that could be solved by a broad and full use of the registry. For it to be effective, however, it needs the support of all of the keepers of non-domesticated birds.

As Mr. Shelton perfects the program point by point we will relay the information through articles in the Watchbird.
ED.



Dear Sir:

I have just purchased an albino cockatiel. Shortly after, a friend of mine told me that the probability of its going blind in a few years was fairly good. I would appreciate any opinions and reference to any back issues which may pertain to this matter.

Darla Gray,
Sandy, Utah

Not to worry. Over the years I have had hundreds of red-eyed cockatiels and only two of them became blind—and they were over ten years old. I also had a normal (dark-eyed) lovebird go blind so I'm not sure how much a factor red eyes are in potential blindness. All three birds were put into small parlour cages and became wonderful pets.

God forbid, but if your bird's luck is bad and it actually does dim out, don't despair. Put it in a small cage and get it dark glasses. If you would still like to see your bird "flying blind", so to speak, you can get a seeing-eye bird—a crow should do—and attach the one to the other with a string. I recommend the blind bird wear a crash helmet on the first few landings. A jiffy scarf and goggles (a la Snoopy) are always good for the old morale too.

And why stop there? Get a seeing-eye bat and you'll have the only white night flyer in the country. My God, woman, the possibilities are endless.
ED.

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CLASSIFIED RATES — \$5.00 minimum charge for 4 lines of type (average 7 words per line). Additional charge of 9¢ per word for ad running over 28 words. (28 words to include name, address and phone.) All copy to be **RECEIVED BY 10th day** of month preceding publication. One inch boxed ad - 58 word maximum — \$12.00.

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New Book about Budgies "BUDGIE TALK" by Larry Baumhardt. Approx. 160 pages. Hard cover. Pictures. The latest Budgie info. Baumhardt's, 1012 Park Center, Ft. Worth, Tx., 76126. \$10.95 Prepaid.

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For Sale: Pair PALM COCKATOOS, Macaws: Scarlet, Green-Wing. African Grey Parrot \$325. Will trade. Wanted: Queen of Bavaria, Rose-breasted Cockatoo, Hooded Parrots. Male Citron-crested Cockatoo. Saul Fruttero (213) 799-3533.

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Red Factor Canaries - 1979 Hatch sold out. I am now taking reservations for 1980 Hatch of Rubino, Rose Ivory, Deep Red, and Satinets. Write for free Price List. CANARIES PLUS, P.O. Box 6285, Dept. W, Anaheim, CA 92806. (714) 535-9508 after 5 p.m.

The high protein-vitamin supplement recommended at two workshops of the 1970 AFA Convention is \$6.95 for a one-pound and \$18.95 for a four-pound container, including shipping. Booklet "Society Finches as Foster Parents" \$4.00 postpaid. Pharoah D-1 Quail hatching eggs \$20 per hundred, postpaid. Robert G. Black, Route 10, Box 131-B, Franklin, North Carolina 28734.

LOVEBIRDS: normal peachface, blue peachface, cherryheads, fishers, black masked, blue masked. Also normal, albino cockatiels. Jim Fouts Lovebirds Unlimited, Box 148 Halstead, KS 67056. (316) 835-2149.

AFFECTIONATE COCKATOO WANTED: Very tame bird who enjoys handling sought. Young domestically bred bird preferred. Will consider adult or legal import (not recent). Health must be certified by independent veterinary examination. Seeking summer delivery. Any reasonable price. Write: Cockatoo, P.O. Box 57026, West End Station, Washington, D.C. 20037.

FOR SALE: Cockatiels and Lovebirds. Normals-\$30, Albinos-\$50, Pearlys-\$45, Heavy pieds-\$60. Peach face-\$20, \$15 for 5 or more, Blue peach face-\$50, and 8 other mutations. 1980 hatch. Lyman Lockwood, ph (805) 498-2007.

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PARROTS—Surgically sexed African Greys, talking Mynah Bird, young Cockatoos, Cherry Head Conures, tame Grey, Cheer Parakeets, Cordon Blues, Finches, Macaws, Tame Blue & Golds, Amazons, Toucanets, Breeder Cockatiels, Canaries, Doves, Love Birds. We ship. We buy, sell and trade. Large selection. Phone 704-867-8629. SASE Only. HOFFMAN'S AVIARY, Rt. 1, Box 294A, Kings Mountain, NC 28086.

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AVIARIES: Wood frame—4x8x6 \$129.50 each, 4x8x8 \$159.50 each. Steel frame—4x8x8 \$275.00 each, or custom built. Quantity discounts. Glen Avon Aviaries, 9938 Mission Blvd., Riverside, CA 92509. Ph (714) 685-1776.

SEEKING CONTACT with breeders of mutation Zebra Finches and Society Finches. Wish to share experiences between America and Germany. Write Mr. Gunter Oppenborn, Kantplatz 6, D 3007 Gehrden, West Germany.

Wanted: Baby parrots 3-6 wks. old for hand feeding. All types. J. Ryan, Route 2, Adena, Ohio 43901 (614) 546-3075.

Large, substantial exotic bird breeding facility is seeking breeding pairs (or any known breeders that have lost their mate). Macaws, especially Scarlets; Double Yellow Headed Amazons; Cockatoos; African Greys and Thick Bills. We will trade birds or give cash and bird combination. Call Immediately. Connie (213) 984-3666, Behavioral Study of Birds and Animals, Ltd. 10520 Magnolia Boulevard, North Hollywood, California 91601.

FOR SALE: Male Moluccan Cockatoo, young. Owner anxious to sell. Discuss price with owner. Call Jeanine Vore, (213) 254-6369, L.A. area.

FOR SALE: Blue Bonnets, Barnards, Yellow Rosellas, Adelaide Rosellas, Barrabands, Rock Peblars, Princess of Wales, Crimson Wings. Other rosellas and grass parakeets. Jerry Jennings, 1803 Pontius Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90025. Ph (213) 884-5476.

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FINCHES: zebras, society, star, hex grass, owls, shaft-tails, gouldians, tri-colored parrot, diamond sparrows, fire lavender, cherry, green singing, gold breasted, spice, strawberry, cut throat, red headed aurora, silverbills, red cheeked & blue capped cordon bleus, orange cheeked, red eared, scaly headed, St. Helenas, pin-tailed non pariel, chestnut breasted manakin, black & white headed nuns. Fouts Zoological Co., Box 148, Halstead, KS 67056. (316) 835-2149 or 835-3326.

Parakeets, finches, cockatiels, lovebirds, doves, quail, many parrots. Canaries, nest boxes, feeders. We buy and sell all types of birds. We wholesale and retail. J & J Birds, California, (213) 538-2076.

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AVIAN SEXING SERVICE by laparoscopy. For appointment, please call Hannis L. Stoddard III. DVM. (213) 541-0650 or (714) 737-1242.

HAND-FED BABIES—Rose-Breasted Cockatoo—\$200.00 ea.; Eclectus Parrot—\$200.00 pr.; Blue and Gold Macaw—\$1500.00 ea. Reserve now. Gail J. Worth, Aves International, (213) 541-1180/328-6285.

SOFT-BILLS—Shamas, Fairy Bluebirds, Hartlaub's Touraco, Crimson-Rumped Toucanette, Aracaris, Tanagers, Orangequits, Honeycreepers, Siskins, Hummingbirds. Aves International, 2808 Oregon Ct.-Unit L8, Torrance, CA 90503. (213) 541-1180/328-6285.

PROBLEMS WITH FINCHES is a booklet designed to assist every finch breeder in keeping finches in good health and in handling daily problems with them. All common problems in maintaining finches are covered. Order direct from the author \$9.50 postpaid in North America. Add \$1.00 for overseas airmail. Robert G. Black, Route 10, Box 131-B, Franklin, N.C. 28734.

BLUE AND GOLD MACAWS: Jamaican Yellowbill Amazon; Tucuman Amazon; Jenday, Sun Conures. Gail J. Worth, Aves International, 2808 Oregon Ct.-Unit L8, Torrance, CA 90503. (213) 541-1180/328-6285.

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RINGNECKS FOR SALE: Two adult males, 1979 and 1980 young. Some splits. Phone: Lewis Rems (503) 548-5451.

Guaranteed sexed pair approx 3 years age	Caninde Macaws \$17,500.00
Guaranteed sexed pairs age unknown	Edwards Fig Parrots \$1,500.00 pair
Guaranteed sexed pair age unknown	Hawkhead Parrots \$1,850.00 pair

The above birds have been quarantined and have been released by U.S.D.A., Federal Fish and Wildlife Dept. For further information please contact, B.R. SLOCUM II, area code 305-888-7262 or 305-823-5813

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