

NOTICE

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

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From The Editor's Desk

by Sheldon Dingle

In the last issue of the Watchbird there appeared a letter to the editor written by Luther Dean. Mr. Dean wanted Mr. Richard Topper to expound on his (Topper's) particular seed mixture and explain more fully why the mixture contains no sunflower seed.

I relayed that request to Mr. Topper but because of faulty communication Topper sent his answer directly to Mr. Dean rather than to me. Hence the data was not published. Now, however, the misunderstanding has been cleared up and Topper has sent a plethora of data to me for publication. Because of an unavoidable advance in our deadline I was unable to prepare Topper's material in time for publication in this issue. It will appear as an article in the Oct/Nov issue and will thoroughly and definitively answer the questions Mr. Dean raised.

Dear Mr. Dingle:

Re: letter from Martha Ann Medlar in Dec/Jan issue. I, too, got the merry run-around by Jan van Oosten. We sent our check in on July 1978. On Dec. 11, 1978, in answer to our several letters, we received copy of enclosed form. My very latest communication with the elusive van Oosten came back, unopened, marked: "Addressee Unknown".

Am enclosing a letter from Mr. Dracup of the Parrot Society of England which is self-explanatory. I didn't quite know what to tell him. Unfortunately, since I was hospitalized until recently, my answer to him reached him too late to be noted in the April issue of The Parrot Society Magazine. They advise their members to either get in touch with Mr. Dracup or van Oosten.

Since my husband was appointed as representative for the Cage & Aviary Bird Club of New Jersey, he did receive some information on what has been done about this situation. Do I understand it is not a closed subject, or is it? After 2 years, I guess it becomes a little difficult to get after something like this.

It could not possibly come under postal fraud, since it was advertised in several publications as being available? Cage Bird Magazine was one who advertised and also the Parrot Society. It all sounded so above

board that how could anyone suspect otherwise?

I would appreciate anything else you might know about the above so that I could pass it on to Mr. Dracup.

Sincerely,
Catherine C. Tyler

Dear Mrs. Tyler

I hope you do not mind me writing to you but I am wondering if you ever received or had any news about the Proceedings of the National Symposium advertised in Parrot Magazine July 1978.

I ordered and paid for a number for British members but have not received them.

I did speak to van Oosten on the phone and had several promises, none of which turned out to be true.

It therefore appears that van Oosten is a rogue, a liar and a cheat. The problem is what to do to get the money back.

Would there be any point in writing to the police in Seattle? Do you have any contacts there who might be able to look into the matter? You will appreciate I am sure that the people who sent me the money for the books think I am the rogue.

I would mention the address used for IECF appears to be what we here call an accommodation address and van Oosten does not actually work there. I did have another phone number (which I have mislaid) which was answered I seem to recall as Pacific Sciences or similar but the international telephone operator is unable to trace it now.

I would be very pleased to have your comments.

Sincerely,
Eric Dracup Bedford England

Dear Sir,

By coincidence I saw an article in your magazine written by Mrs. Martha Ann Medlar about her score with IECF. In the same way I have something to tell about IECF. As IECF started, it seemed to me that it was a very good idea, and as I know many of the big names, who attended one of the first meetings, a couple of them personally, I was very proud when I got a very nice letter from IECF with inquiry on my books about Tanagers, and in good faith I send the books to IECF c/o Jan R. van Oosten. Since then I have never heard a word from that side.

I am an active bird fancier myself, and have been so for about 55 years, and as I found that the Danish bird literature wasn't very extensive, I started rewriting and printing the first big Danish book on birds, which was edited for the first time in 1894.

Like Mrs. Martha Ann Medlar's puny little breeding "farm", my publishing firm can hardly be smaller than it is, as I am alone with the work of setting up, printing and distribution. Since then I have published many other Danish books about tropical birds, and among them 2 vol. about Tanagers, which later has been translated to English, but after my experience with IECF, I have only one firm in the USA to distribute my books, and that is: BUTEO BOOKS, PO Box 481, Vermillion, SD 57069. At last I have only to repeat Mrs. Martha Ann Medlar: "Unfortunately I have not hit upon such a wonderful, easy money making scheme".

Yours sincerely,
Aage Paulsen Skibby — Denmark

The above three letters are typical of the mail we receive about Mr. van Oosten. The postal authorities have been contacted but their inspectors were unable to locate van Oosten. The A.F.A. ethics committee has a file full of complaints on van Oosten and we have done everything possible to try to resolve the problem. In fact, the Watchbird editor, your humble servant, had a suspicious feeling in his beady little gizzard and refused to publish van Oosten's ad for the "proceedings" in the first place.

Now, when all is said and done, I think Mr. Dracup has said it all: "It therefore appears that van Oosten is a rogue, a liar, and a cheat".

Ed.



Dear Editor,

I have subscribed to the Watchbird for two years now and the only mention I've ever seen of Moustached Parakeets (*psittacula alexandri*) is as a donation in a raffle.

Why aren't they bred more often? They are very colorful, gentle birds and not expensive — I think they make better pets than lovebirds, and yet they are rarely ever seen.

I would like to breed them in good number, as I believe they deserve more attention. Do you think they would be popular in avicultural and pet-trade circles if they were more plentiful? Everyone who has seen mine has been quite impressed with their unusual beauty.

Thank you,
Wendy Borders

Like plumheads, the moustached parakeet is an inexpensive, beautiful but rarely bred bird. I suspect you are right in thinking that they would make good pets

and could become popular in aviculture and the pet trade. To my mind, those ever-present but rarely bred birds are in a precarious position. They are, in effect, endangered species here in the United States.

Like it or not, I feel that bird imports are going to be gradually squeezed and restricted until no more than a trickle of birds enters the States. We will then have to make do with the species of birds that have self-sustaining populations in our aviaries. I doubt that the moustached parakeet falls into this category. Do everything in your power to establish lots of pairs of moustaches. Some day you'll be one of the few people who has any for sale.

Of course if it's just the colors and pattern of the bird that you like you could take the common ringnecked parakeet, fatten it up, paint its breast pink, attach a moustache and voila — flood the pet stores with moustached birds. Teach them to drink a little wine and speak French, Italian, or Spanish and you will have created a masterpiece.

Ed.

BUSINESS OR PLEASURE? How many tax dollars did you pay Uncle Sam last year? Fight back! In addition to fun and enjoyment in your aviculturist pursuits, save hundreds or even thousands of dollars in taxes as a result of this activity. Keep what's yours! Send SASE & \$4.95 to: Tax Trends LTD., P.O. Box 203, Alta Loma, CA 91701.

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YELLOW COCKATIELS. First time this new mutation offered. Limited number for sale, \$400.000 each. Irma Vowels, 14551 S.W. 26th St., Fort Lauderdale, Fla., 33325, (302) 472-6436.

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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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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.

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