

first U.S. breeding of the Austral Conure

by Tom Ireland
Lake Worth, Florida
with
Ann McGee

Photo by Lawrence McPhail



Baby austral conures raised by Tom Ireland.

The definition of the word "austral" is "southern"; and, as that name implies, the Austral Conure occupies the most southerly range of any parrot. Its native habitat is Southern Chile and Argentina extending to the island of Tierra del Fuego.

There are two types of Austral Conures. The Magellan Conure, *Encognathus ferruginea*, is a fairly large conure averaging fourteen inches in length. *E. ferruginea minor*, the Chilean Conure, differs from the Magellan only in its slightly smaller size of twelve inches. The overall color of the Austral is dark green, fading to a paler shade on the breast and abdomen. The feathers are heavily bordered with black, predominately on the head and back, thus giving a scalloped appearance to the plumage. This effect and the presence of feathers densely covering the cere are characteristics shared with the Slender-billed Conure which is the only other member of the genus. In the Austral, the feathers on the cere are reddish-brown, encircled by a small, dark grey, naked eyering. The beak is black with the tip of the lower mandible being somewhat more gray in color. The beak is proportionately smaller than that of the *Aratinga* family of conures. The primaries and primary coverts are green tinged with blue. The

tail is maroon, and this color is repeated in a large patch in the center of the abdomen. I have also noticed small areas of this same maroon color on the upper thighs of my young Australs. In immature birds the abdominal patch is slightly less extensive. As with many parrots, the Austral is not sexually dimorphic.

While the Slender-billed Conure, *E. leptorhynchus*, is now frequently imported, the Austral Conure is seldom available and I was pleased to have the opportunity to obtain a pair of the Magellan variety from Gene Hall of Fortune Glen Aviaries. The birds arrived in good condition in May of 1979, and shortly after their arrival I arranged to have them surgically sexed by laparoscopy. I have found surgical techniques invaluable not only for determining gender, but also as a means of revealing sexual maturity and internal disease problems which may not be evident upon external examination. When performed by a competent veterinarian, this procedure can provide maximal information regarding maturity and health while involving little risk to the bird's life.

After they were ascertained to be a pair, the Australs were housed in a 4' x 4' x 3' cage constructed of 1/2" x 1" welded wire. A wooden nest box was lined on the in-

Fine Feathered Friends

proudly presents
Topper's Bird Feed
(average protein 17%)

This seed is coated with all vitamins, minerals & amino acids recommended by most prominent veterinarians.

We have distributors from Chicago to the West Coast. In the Los Angeles area, Your distributor is Fine Feathered Friends.

WE ALSO HAVE

**Diamond Doves, Silver/Normal
Button Quail - Cockatiels
& Eye-Ring Lovebirds**
by Special Order

All Birds Raised On Our Ranch

Hours: 2:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Mon.-Fri.
Sat.-Sun. 7:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.

FOR INFORMATION:

FINE FEATHERED FRIENDS
P.O. Box 1486
Canoga Park, CA 91304
(213) 340-6318

Breeders of Cockatiels,
Lovebirds, and Zebra Finches

BARONA BIRD FARM



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

▪ **WE SHIP BIRDS** ▪
Send stamped, self-addressed
envelope for prices.

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

(714) 443-8315

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

Wickett & Sons,
Exotic Birds



Rt. 1 Box 24
Jefferson, OR
97352

Wholesale Only

Parrots Macaws

Conures Finches

Cockatoos

Cockatiels

Parakeets

Tame Birds

Sexed Pairs

Call or write for
current prices

(503)327-2261



BE A
**WATCH
BIRD**

A major purpose of the WATCH-BIRD is to monitor legislative events at the national level which might adversely affect aviculture. We, however, cannot follow events that take place at the state and local levels of government. We, therefore, call upon the readers to keep us informed of similar legislative attacks in the lower levels of government. We would like to publish the various threats to aviculture, and what the final outcome was. Perhaps your story will aid someone else in keeping aviculture unencumbered by government.

Editors.



Austral conure in a raphis palm. Note how the cere is feathered.

terior with wire in order to prevent its destruction. Despite their smaller bills, Australs chew wood no less voraciously than other conures! Pine shavings were placed in the box to a depth of four inches, and this was the only nesting material used.

The birds were fed a seed mixture consisting of striped sunflower seed, safflower, scratch, white millet, canary seed, and oat groats. Their daily diet also included a mixture of finely crumbled whole wheat bread, grated carrots, and chopped endive sprinkled with a powdered vitamin and mineral supplement. Fresh corn on the cob was given each day, and fresh apple was fed five times a week. Mineral blocks supplying calcium were available to the birds at all times.

From my experience in breeding many types of psittacine birds, I have learned to be patient; and, therefore, I was not surprised to observe that the Australs did not begin copulating until mid-January of 1980 (though they were always compatible). During this period and the months that followed, the pair began to "work" the nest box by spending more time inside it, and by removing some of the nesting material and chewing the areas of the box not protected by wire.

The first week in April I noticed that the hen appeared very swollen in the vent area—a condition often seen in hens which are about to lay. On April 6th while inspecting the box, I found the first egg. On April 8th, the hen was seen sitting on

the perch, again very swollen at the vent. There was no second egg in the box, and this combined with her lethargic behavior led me to believe that she was egg-bound.

Although I knew that she had been consuming sufficient calcium in the form of mineral block and cuttlebone, I suspected that she was unable to fully utilize this essential mineral. For this reason, I began to supplement her diet with large doses of Super-Hygliceron B and other sources of Vitamin D-3 which is necessary for the absorption of calcium. The effectiveness of this treatment was apparent when, after four anxiety-filled days, the second egg was expelled. Thereafter, as is usual with conures, eggs were laid on alternate days. In all, a total of six eggs were laid.

The hen alone sat tightly during an uneventful incubation period of approximately twenty-six days. The male was not seen to enter the box or feed the hen. The only interruption of incubation occurred when I candled the eggs after two weeks which determined that three of the eggs were fertile and the remainder were clear. Following the return of the eggs to the nest box, the parents resumed incubation without hesitation.

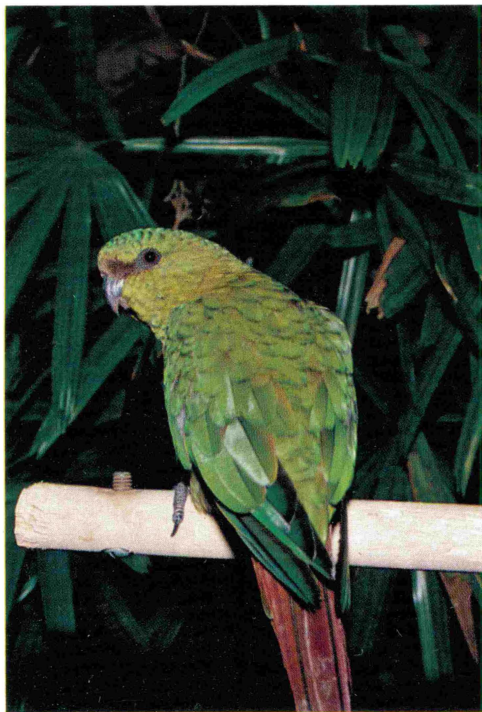
On the morning of May 4th the first chick was found to have hatched in the box. The two remaining eggs hatched on alternate days. The amounts of soft food, particularly fresh yellow corn and bread mixture, were increased as the parents relied heavily on these foods for feeding the young birds. The Australs were con-



Photos by Lawrence McPhail

Austral conure showing the maroon on the thigh and abdomen.

Austral conure



scientific parents, always feeding the chicks adequately.

When the youngest chick was three weeks old, all three babies were removed from the nest for hand-feeding. This was done to encourage the parents to produce another clutch during that breeding season. The young Australs thrived on the formula that I use for hand-feeding all my psittacine birds. This formula is the one described by Velma Hart in *Parrots and Related Birds* by Bates and Busenbark. To this formula I add Science Diet brand Primate Dry (monkey chow).

Three weeks after the chicks were removed, the Austral hen began laying a second clutch of five eggs. Unfortunately, this entire clutch was found to be infertile. The birds had not been observed mating during this period, and I feel certain that the male was not in peak condition as he was in a heavy moult.

Recently, the two baby Australs from last year's breeding which are still in my possession were laparoscoped and found to be a pair.

POSTSCRIPT: May 4, 1981, the hen laid her first egg of this season, and we are hoping for success this year.

Krish's Aviary

17971 Sun Knoll Drive
Yorba Linda, California 92686
(714) 996-1296
(714) 996-3906



COCKATIELS

Babies, Yearlings, Breeders
Normals

Lutinos

Pieds

Cinnamons

Pearls

Splits

FINCHES

- Zebras
- Societies
- Gouldians
- Rares

LOVEBIRDS

- Peachface & Mutations
- Fishers
- Blue Masks
- Black Masks

SHIPPED ANYWHERE
IN THE UNITED STATES
From L.A. International

GUARANTEED QUALITY

BUDGIES CANARIES
INDIAN RINGNECKS
GOLDEN MANTLE ROSELLAS

Visitors Welcome
By Prior Appointment Only

THE AVICULTURAL SOCIETY

(founded 1894)

has an international membership, who receive and contribute to 'The Avicultural Magazine', the oldest and most revered journal devoted to the study of wild birds in captivity.

The Hon Secretary
The Avicultural Society
Windsor Forest Stud

Mill Ride

ASCOT

Berkshire

SLS 8LT

England

Subscription for 1980—\$20.00
Sample magazine sent on request.

FINCH NEWS

INFORMATION ON FINCHES

PROFESSIONALLY PRINTED
MONTHLY MAGAZINE
FOR US\$17.00 P.A.

SEND TO:
FINCH NEWS
585 D'ARCY ROAD
CARINA 4152
QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA.



MALE GALERITA GALERITA COCKATOO—Perfect feather, talking and semi-tame. Good for breeder or pet. \$3,500. O.B.O., Kevin Kerr, (714) 421-7888.

WANTED to buy or sell red vented cockatoo for breeding. Kevin Kerr, (714) 421-7888.

Surgically sexed mature YELLOW NAPES, four hens, seven males. Ready to breed. Take \$6,875 O.B.O. for all. Kevin Kerr, (714) 421-7888.

WANTED—mature sun conures or jenday conures. Kevin Kerr, (714) 421-7888.

TAKING DEPOSITS for baby hand fed umbrella cockatoos, Congo African greys, and 5 types of macaws. Kevin Kerr, (714) 421-7888.

FREE ILLUSTRATED CATALOG—Parrot Cup Holders with Stainless Steel Bowls. Parrot Stands. Automatic Watering Systems. Incubators. Flush Ground Cutting Pliers. "J" Clip Pliers. Breeding and Flight Cages. Metal Feeders. Welded Wire. Stainless Steel Feed & Water Cups for Birds & Small Animals, and Much More. AVIARY & ANIMAL PET SUPPLY, 125 Cooper Drive, Hurst, TX 76053. (817) 589-0064.

BACTERIAL DISEASES ARE THE LEADING KILLERS OF CAGED BIRDS. Culture and sensitivity can identify the type of bacteria and drug(s) effective in proper treatment. Tests are performed in the laboratory of an avian veterinarian. Cost of test \$19.00. Send \$1.00 for mailer and transport medium to preserve sample to: SACRAMENTO HOUSECALLS, Box 161131, Sacramento, CA 95816.

Black masked, blue masked, Fischers' lovebirds. Domestically bred, closed banded. GREAT LAKES AVIARIES, 735 Colima, Toledo, Ohio 43609. SASE or (419) 385-1177.

TAME YELLOW NAPES, cockatoos, and variety of other parrots and parrot-like birds. Competitive prices furnished upon request. Paul Canady, Marco Island, Florida 33937. (813) 394-6693.

NOTICE

For a more centralized and convenient administration, the A.F.A. is consolidating its various functions under one roof in a new home office. The office will be run by a well paid office manager who will be directly responsible to the A.F.A. president and executive committee.

Don't panic if you've mailed something to the old office address — P.O. Box 327, El Cajon, CA 92022. It will remain active for some time.

The new office is located in the greater Los Angeles area very convenient to the Los Angeles airport. The address is:

A.F.A. Home Office
2208 "A" Artesia Boulevard
P.O. Box 1568
Redondo Beach, CA 90278
Telephone: (213) 372-2988

CLASSIFIED ADS

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.

FOR SALE—sexed pair of green-winged macaws, green-wing and scarlet pair, Grand Eclectus parrots, Citron cockatoos. Ann Nothaft, 110 Jamaica Ave., Medford, NY 11763. (516) 289-1413.

D.B.'S DREAM—The Family Aviary. For information about the American Cockatiel Society contact Diana Baumgart, Washington State Representative at the conference or call 1-206-242-5476.

FOR SALE OR TRADE for cockatiels or rosellas. 1 pr. Hartlaub touracos, 1 pr. White cheeked touracos, 1 pr. Orange cheek Amazons, 1 pr. Alexandrine parakeets. Bob Hemken, 5693 Happy Valley Rd., Anderson, Ca. 96007, (916) 357-3100.

DO YOU HAVE SICK OR SUFFERING BIRDS? All bird owners need a parasitic and bacterial identification service. Ours is fast and accurate. Improper treatments can cost you dearly. Send \$5 for fecal shipping container supply Bacterial I.D. and drug sensitivity tests \$15 each. Telephone replies if your problem is serious. Intelligent people make regular use of their veterinarian or a service like ours. Super Birds Ltd., Rt. 4, Box 242, Ft. Pierce, Florida 33450, (305) 461-6484.

AUTOMATIC SPRAYER AND ONE MONTH'S SUPPLY PYRETHRIN INSECTICIDE. Biodegradable, non-toxic. \$49.00 postpaid. Californians add 6% sales tax. To order or for information write Marsh Farms, P.O. Box 7-CE, Garden Grove, CA 92642.

Hand feeding since hatching: (2) Triton cockatoos hatched 4-24-81 & 6-8-81. Also Sun conures hatched 1981. Will ship. Skip Madsen, Feather Hollow Ranch, 22713 Ventura Blvd., Ste. F, Woodland Hills, CA 91364, (213) 340-5086.

BLUE AND GOLD MACAW, young, tame, and very gentle. Clipped and ready for new home. \$900. After 6 p.m., (617) 944-9529.

THE LORY SOCIETY, forming now. Due to the increased interest in the propagation of lorries we would like to know how many people would be interested in an organization formed to educate all of us. There will be a bi-monthly newsletter with articles from members and individuals specializing in lorries. Contact: Roland Cristo, 11130 Edgewood Rd., Auburn, Ca. 95603, (916) 823-1677.

MEDIUM SULPHUR CRESTED COCKATOOS. 2 pair-bonded pairs, excellent full winged flyers from outdoor aviaries. 3 years plus, (219) 489-9415.

UMBRELLA COCKATOO PAIR, PRINCESS OF WALES PARAKEET PAIR. Both mature sexed pairs/strong pair bonds. Must sell: moving. (617) 287-0099, Daniel or Leslie, Eves./Wknds.

For Sale. BLUE EYED TRITON cockatoo male approx. 5 years old. \$1800.00. Glen Yoder (219) 593-2422.

INDIAN RINGNECK PARAKEETS, normal, lutino, and split to lutino males. '81 hatch. Hand fed Mustache parakeets and cockatiels. Joy and Bob Moye, Box 253, Woodland Hills, CA 91364. (213) 347-6044.

1981 HATCH, ROSELLAS, priced per bird: Golden Mantle \$100, Pennant \$300, Mealy \$175, 1980 Meales \$400 per pair; also pheasants and quail. Ed Benhardt, Reardan, Washington 99029. Phone (509) 796-5001.

COCKATOO BABIES—greater sulphur crested (Galerita galerita), hatched 5/5/81 and 6/17/81 in my own aviary. Beautiful large babies, exceptionally tame and lovable. Ann Nothaft, 110 Jamaica Ave., Medford, NY 11763. (516) 289-1413.

AFRICAN GREY BABIES—hatched in my own aviary and hand raised. Totally tame and lovable. Ann Nothaft, 110 Jamaica Ave., Medford, NY 11763. (516) 289-1413.

WANTED: LEADBEATER COCKATOOS, for breeding program. Pairs or singles. Ann Nothaft, 110 Jamaica Ave., Medford, NY 11763. (516) 289-1413.

BIRD BREEDING FACILITY FOR SALE. 18,454 sq. ft. indoor facility for exotic birds. Largest in U.S. On 10 acres. 5 developed. Zoned comm'l. Includes 2,500 sq. ft. store, 2 wells, pond. 1½ hours north of San Francisco. Call or write for additional details. \$895,000. Scott-McCall & Co., Realtors, 3rd & Irwin Sts., San Rafael, CA 94901. Claire Starr, 415-457-8080 (days) or 415-472-7559 (eves).

'81 HATCHED: Rock Pebblers, Princess, Manycolors, Yellow Redrumps, Normal Redrumps. Also mature pairs Derbyans, Alexander Ringnecks, and Moustache. Ralph & Betty Woodbridge, Waterford, CA. 95386. (209) 874-2176. No Shipping.

SURGICAL SEXING—The only *sure* way to avoid wasting your time trying to breed the wrong two birds. Performed by experienced avian veterinarian. Call for an appointment or information. Blake Milam, D.V.M. (408) 476-2699.

BEAUTIFUL HAND FED BABIES We raise our own babies from beautiful parents. Available now. Scarlets, Blue & Gold, Green Wing, Catalina, Umbrella and Moluccan cockatoos, African Grey, 3 types of Eclectus parrots, Sun Conures, Thin Billed conures and others. We also have our own quarantined birds. In now are Hyacinth babies, Scarlet babies, Toco toucans, Blue Fronts, Red Lored, African Greys and many others. All birds are healthy, guaranteed, and in perfect feather. Will ship. Wholesalers please call for special prices. If you need a special bird, please call, we can get it for you. Once you buy from us, you will always buy from us. Call Golden Crest Wholesalers. Ask for Kevin Kerr (714) 421-7888, San Diego, Ca.

FOR SALE: COCKATOOS—mediums, \$1,900 per pair. Leadbeater, \$12,000 breeding pair. Gang gang, \$16,000 pair. Galans, \$6,000 pair. Also Crimson wings, \$950 pair and rare Australian parakeets (pair). Contact Ms. Perry, 7600 Sun Island Dr., #8017, St. Petersburg, FL 33707. (813) 585-2306.

FREE 1981 COLOR CATALOG
Raise birds year round. Complete source incubators, brooders, cages, fountains, feeders, books, More. Marsh Farms, Box 7-CE, Garden Grove, CA 92642

DID YOU MISS OUT! Many of you did not take full advantage of your aviculturist activities for the 1980 tax year! Don't be left out in 1981! In addition to fun and enjoyment in your aviculturist pursuits, you too may be entitled to valuable tax deductions which could save you hundreds or even thousands of dollars! Keep what's yours! Rush Business size SASE and \$5.95 to TAX TRENDS LTD., P.O. Box 203, Alta Loma, CA 91701.

QUARANTINE STATION FOR RENT. Write or call C & K birds, 3386 Seagrape Ave., Naples, FL 33942. (813) 774-4394

SAVE OUR PARROT

The St. Lucia Parrot needs your help. Help preserve one of St. Lucia's treasures. Please report any captive birds, parrot hunters, or smugglers to the Forestry Office. Telephone 3231.



The St. Lucia Parrot, *Amazona versicolor*, is St. Lucia's national bird. It is found nowhere else and is one of the most endangered parrots in the world. They mate for life and lay only two eggs yearly in their nests in

Gommier trees in the Central Forests. The St. Lucia Parrot's future is most threatened by illegal hunting. Please help us enforce our hunting regulations and protect our beautiful parrot from hunting, capture, and exportation.

Produced by, and presented with the compliments of:



Rare Animal Relief Effort, Inc.
c/o National Audubon Society
950 Third Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022

(a non-profit, volunteer organization devoted to endangered wildlife)

Painting courtesy of Don R. Eckelberry

Reproduced with permission from
Houghton Mifflin Company

Designed by Ron Ziemann

With the cooperation of: Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry Department
St. Lucia National Trust
St. Lucia Naturalists Society

Copyright © 1990 by Rare Animal Relief Effort, Inc.

Time is running out for this special parrot. As the island's national bird, the St. Lucia Parrot is found nowhere else in the world.

RARE is doing all it can to save this unique and endangered parrot but we need your help. For a minimum tax-deductible contribution of \$15.00, you will receive a full color poster depicting either the St. Lucia Parrot or the Sisserou Parrot of Dominica (please specify your choice).

We hope you will be as generous as you can.



Rare Animal Relief Effort, Inc.

c/o National Audubon Society
950 Third Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022

