

# WHAT'S IN A NAME?

OR

*how the author discovered that DOVE is  
not synonymous with PEACE*

by Jan Parrott-Holden  
Vancouver, Washington

Just about every bird breed carries its own reputation whether deserved or not. Owls seem to represent wisdom, peacocks—pride, and the dove—peace. Well, I've never had much experience with owls, but the peacocks I've seen certainly appeared haughty.

Doves are something else altogether! No, I'm not setting myself up as an authority on these birds. But, I've lived with a pair of Barbary doves for two years now and have found them jealous, quarrelsome and just plain feisty.

Of course there are a multitude of dove varieties, with varying personalities I am sure. But on the whole there is little evidence to support the notion that doves are peaceful creatures. Now we really can't place the blame on Christmas card manufacturers, who for years have emblazoned our greetings with the "dove of peace." For throughout history each of us has helped perpetuate this false image.

The ancient Greeks associated doves with gods and goddesses. Venus, goddess of love, was believed to have been hatched from a dove's egg and rolled ashore by a fish. In addition, religious prophets were often thought to be embodied in the form of a dove, capable of delivering wisdom and warning with a human voice. Most recently, author B.F. Drury made mention in his writings (1902) of the Phillipine legend which named the dove as the only bird capable of understanding human speech.

With the spread of Christianity, the dove ensconced itself more and more in man's mind as a pure and holy creature. Hymns and sermons, literature, and life projected the dove as the symbol of the holy spirit, a status it

enjoys even today. Yet its relative, the pigeon, has never been able to charm man into considering its potential for greatness.

A brief look at the lives of saints, martyrs, and members of the papacy illustrates the tremendous regard given the dove. Two well-known holy men, St. Francis and Pope Gregory the Great were linked with doves over and over again in recorded documents and artistic works. One popular example concerns the story of St. Francis discovering a pair of doves caged in the marketplace. Francis supposedly hid the birds beneath his robe and transported them outside the city to be released once again to free flight.

Bird lovers enjoy these sentiments. I know I do. Yet my regard for the dove as a peaceful creature was altered the day I was given that pair of Barbary doves by a friend. Dan had kept the birds housed in a large indoor aviary which they shared with a pair of small parrots and a trio of quail. On the surface everything seemed harmonious. But Dan confessed that there had been constant battling and bickering among the populace.

"Poor little doves, really got pummeled," I said, feeling immediate concern for the pair.

Dan just laughed as he described how the dove cock had taken all the other birds to task. Even the hook bills were too shook up to think about nesting. I didn't argue, but secretly doubted that these symbols of peace could ever pose a threat to a hook bill. And as for quail, I'd raised that breed and knew for a fact that they were great scrappers. (It had been my unhappy experience to witness cannibalism in quail and their ferocity was enormous for such small creatures.)

*Continued on page 48*

## Aluminum Leg Bands

PROMPT SERVICE • HIGH QUALITY

### ORDER 1986 BANDS

Coded Parakeet Closed Bands.  
Regular Initial Type Bands, not coded,  
in choice of colors, open or closed.  
Plastic Family Identification Bands  
for keets or canary, choice of colors.  
Leg Band Cutters. Bird Claw Scissors.

SEND SELF-ADDRESSED STAMPED  
ENVELOPE FOR COMPLETE PRICE LIST.

## RED BIRD PRODUCTS, INC.

2786 Fruitridge Road  
P.O. Box 20004 (Dept. A.F.A.)  
Sacramento, CA. 95820

## Walnut Acres Aviaries

*breeding*

*Toucans, Toucanettes,  
Cockatoos, Macaws,  
Edectus, African greys,  
Australian Parakeets,  
Parrots, and Finches*

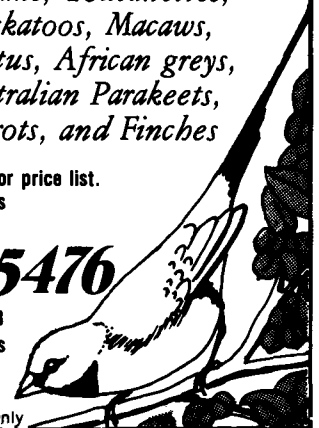
Call or write for price list.

Jerry Jennings  
(818)

**884-5476**

P.O. Box 6393  
Woodland Hills  
CA 91365

Visitors by  
Appointment Only



## Bird Pet and Supplies Retailers —

did you know that one  
of the most prestigious  
bird publications,  
**The Watchbird**  
is available for  
resale in your store?

Call or write for information:  
American Federation of Aviculture  
P.O. Box 1568  
Redondo Beach, CA 90278  
(213) 372-2988

(703) 759-7687

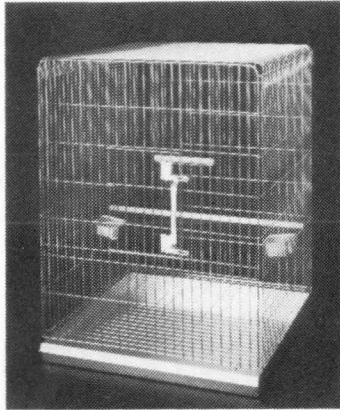
# PET-PAL

Pet Supplies Nationwide at Discount Prices  
P.O. Box 176  
Great Falls, Virginia 22066

**SPECIAL  
\$199**

(Shipping Incl.)

Perfect for one or more macaws, cockatoos, greys, amazons, etc. Give your birds some ROOM to enjoy themselves.



3 feet x 3 feet x 4 feet  
Knockdown cage, folds flat  
but will set up in seconds.



**Tom Marshall,  
President**

"If you see something you want, check with me for a lower price."

**CALL OR SEND FOR FREE CATALOGS!**

## **R & L EXOTIC BIRDS, INC.**

11805 S.W. Cnty. Hwy. 484  
Dunnellon, Florida 32630  
**(904) 489-6965**

*When quality counts, come to us for  
Domestic & Imported Birds  
Surgically Sexed Birds  
Wholesale to Pet Stores & Breeders*



We are proud of our breeding ranch and wholesale operation. We would like to add you to our list of satisfied customers. Send your name, address and tax number to start receiving our current price list - or just call.

We ship out of Orlando weekly.  
Open 7 days a week by appointment.

### **NEST BOXES**

R & L's nest within a nest design for added privacy & comfort  
or  
custom built, your design.  
call or write for specification sheets and prices.

### **BOOKS**

*A must for your library*  
**PARROT PRODUCTION**  
and  
**PIONUS PARROT**  
by John & Pat Stoodley  
**\$29.95** each  
plus \$2.50 each handling

Within two days of settling the doves into a private aviary, the hen had laid the first of her two milk-white eggs and was arranging the bits of straw brought to her by her mate. Unlike the pigeons I had raised, these doves were far less social. Oh, I knew that all birds were territorial, but the doves were extremely displeased by even the slightest intrusion. I had only to pass the open nest box and the brooding hen would fill her crop with air, puffing herself up to nearly twice her size, while lifting a wing in preparation for a skirmish.

With the passage of time there was still no bond of trust between the doves and their keeper. But I was content to wait for the eggs to hatch and see whether or not I could befriend the offspring.

I looked forward to the birth of those babies. But as Emerson once said, "nature is no sentimentalist." Sixteen days came and went. There was no sign of pipping. Another day elapsed and the mood of the brooding hen, though still determined, seemed to be tinged with disappointment. There was to be nothing this round, yet the doves were reluctant to abandon their project.

I phoned a friend who raised doves and asked if he had a squab I might adopt. He obliged with a two-day-old lifted from a pair of white doves. It didn't seem worthwhile to consider whether the doves would sense the baby was not their own. I had a youngster that needed feeding and a waiting nest. I took the eggs and replaced them with the squab. Two hours later the baby was being fed by an exultant new father.

This happy parent/child relationship continued until the squab was nearly four weeks old. Then the parents grew increasingly impatient with their lazy progeny. Even after it ventured from the nest to peck at seed, it had a strong desire to return to the nestbox with mom and dad in the evening. This was tolerated only briefly and finally, with a great deal of commotion, the floor-runner was subjected to doing just that. So adamant were the pair that I was forced to complete "basic training" myself. The young dove found his third set of parents in my husband and myself. Luckily, maturity was just around the corner.

Perhaps it was my sentimentality that caused me to take so completely to this clumsy little dove. But it was given all the attention a busy schedule could afford. Both my husband and I fed and fondled the creature till it should have been touched by our loyalty. But was it?



*Barbary, ringneck, and laughing dove are all names attributed to this variety with the "ring around the collar."*

*This fawn hen hovers over what she believes to be her baby. Actually it is a white baby transferred to her nest at two days of age. The dedication of a brooding dove is truly awe inspiring.*



*There is nothing lazier than a three-week old squab, at least that's what this parent seems to think.*



*Doves can be slow to find their food and water dishes but when they do they really "throw themselves into their work." This dove is now ready for life on his own at the age of five weeks.*

Photos by Steve Holden



Oh, no! It was quite obvious with the passage of time that this was one bird that would never fly out of a magician's hat.

Today we have two walk-in aviaries devoted to doves. They see me every day, watch me slave over cleaning their perches and mixing them a healthful blend of seeds, fruits and vegetables. But they never light on my shoulder or come to take an offering from my outstretched hand. They bicker with their neighbors and quarrel over the seed tray. Birds of peace? Decidedly not, and yet that soft, laughing, musical cooing which wakes me each morning is such a pleasant sound. You can almost believe. . . . ●