

At three months, Clinger's health is beginning to improve but she still has that sleepy-eyed look of illness.

# Raising a Military Macaw

by Sherry Rind  
Redmond, Washington

Sometimes when I am in my backyard feeding the chickens or pulling weeds, I hear a "squawk" followed by "Knock it off!" in the same voice, hoarse but high, rather like a man trying to imitate a woman. I know that both sides of the conversation come from the same source: Clinger, my neighbor's military macaw.

That Clinger even had a chance at life is thanks to his owner, Susan Tharp, a former Sea World of San Diego aviculturist now transplanted to the Pacific Northwest. One summer day in 1979 when tending the military macaws, she found an egg on the floor of the cage. She found two more on alternating

days, again on the floor since the birds had no nest box. These were intended to be show birds, not breeders but obviously they did not agree.

Most eggs at Sea World are incubated to guarantee a better survival ratio, so Susan took them out and asked where to incubate them. The answer was, "Nowhere," because there were no proper facilities for raising parrots; Sea World breeds waterfowl, penguins and sea birds.

Feeling that these eggs were precious commodities, Susan decided to do what she could for them and put the macaw eggs in a waterfowl incubator which was kept at 95 °F, figuring this at least

would give them a chance. And all three did hatch in August, weighing in at 20 grams. Before the babies completely absorbed their yolks, Susan reinforced their feeding response by periodically lifting their heads and moving their beaks with her finger the way a mother bird's beak would. When the remainder of their yolks was completely absorbed, the babies were ready to begin eating. All their plumbing proved to be in good working order, for they all defecated right after feeding, a healthy lime green.

Every night the birds went home with Susan in a shoe box, enclosed in sawdust and eiderdown on top of a towel and sitting close together in an ash tray. They spent their days in a Sea World brooder. Susan fed them whenever their crops emptied. Their formula was based on Wheat Hearts, Karo syrup, egg yolk, water, Sea Tabs (a multi-purpose vitamin originally developed for marine animals), dicalcium phosphate, and chopped lettuce.

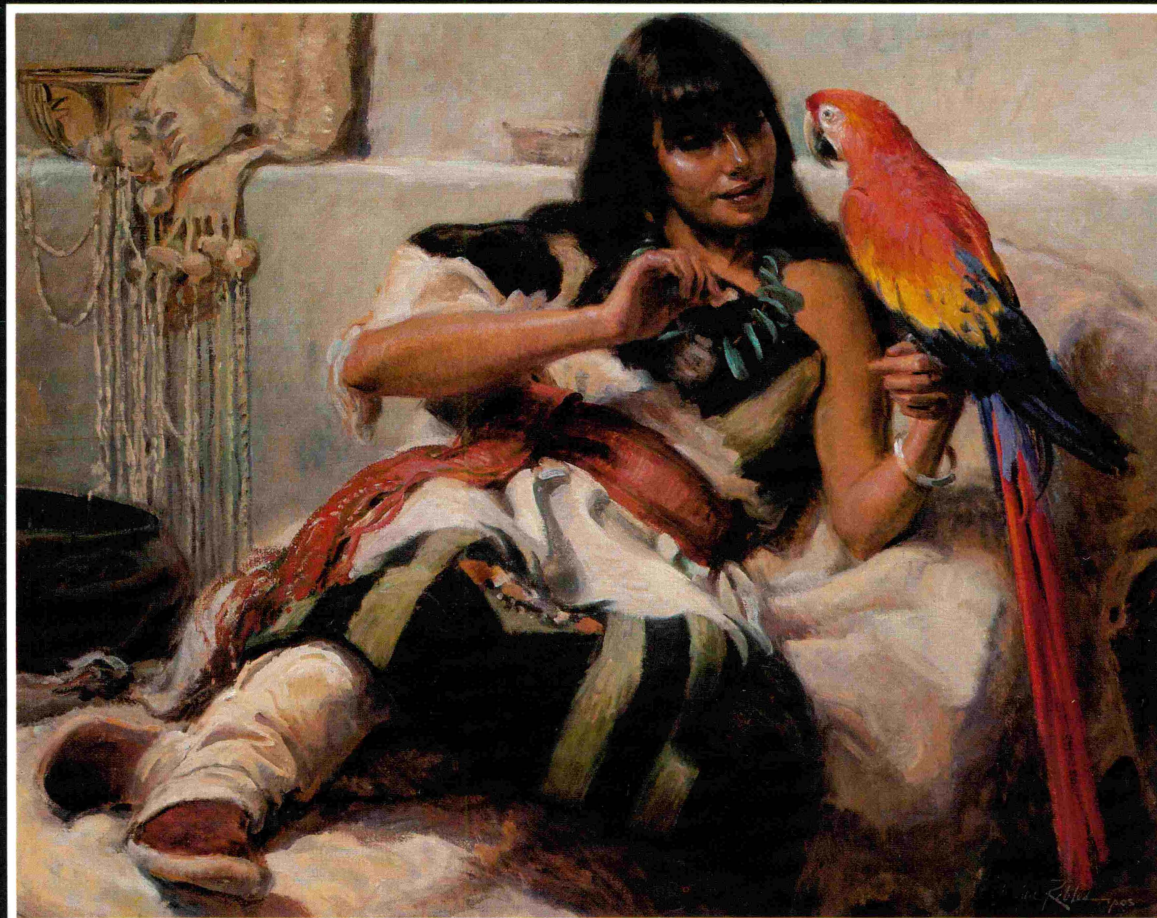
The birds were weighed before each feeding and soon learned that a trip to the torsion balance scale meant food was to follow. They were not shy about voicing their anticipation and each weighing session was accompanied by burbles, gurgles, and hoarse mumblings. Susan fed them with a bent spoon which, when at home, she kept on the windowsill for easy access and hoped no one would get strange ideas about her activities. She sterilized food equipment before each use, knowing that these human-fed babies would not have the antibodies that a bird would get in the food regurgitated from its parent.

After feeding each baby—never more than ten percent of its body weight so that the crop would empty before the next feeding—she cleaned off their beaks with a moistened Q-tip to make sure the food that tended to collect around their faces would not cause any beak distortion. She also spent a few minutes handling each one to accustom them to being touched.

At one week the birds could stand by themselves. Their eyes, which at first showed as pale blue spots, began to look darker under the skin and to grow more prominent. They began to open at three weeks and the beaks turned dark grey. They graduated from the bent spoon to a syringe and then to a turkey baster and seeds at three months. By that time, they had most of their feathers and made some attempts at flying, especially when Susan walked into their cage at feeding time. They would leap onto her from their open perch, flapping mightily, and cling hard

# Feather Way

PRESENTS A FINE ART PRINT  
BY AN AWARD-WINNING ARTIST



**JULIAN  
ROBLES**  
PSA, NWA

"Sacred Macaw of The Pueblo"—Oil.

The young woman is feeding a Scarlet Macaw, considered sacred by the Pueblo Indians of the Southwest. Macaw feathers are used for sacred purposes, headdresses, and in adorning garments. Indian legends relate that the Sun Father used red feathers to make daylight and that the Scarlet Macaw was in charge of taking the sun to its winter home in the South and returning it in the Spring for the planting and growing cycle.

JULIAN ROBLES HAS TO HIS CREDIT 29 NATIONAL AND REGIONAL ART AWARDS.

**THIS FINE ART REPRODUCTION, IMAGE SIZE 21" × 26"—TRIM SIZE 25" × 31", PRINTED ON ACID-FREE ARCHIVAL PAPER, IS NOW AVAILABLE IN A LIMITED EDITION OF 1500 COPIES. ALL PRINTS ARE INDIVIDUALLY SIGNED AND NUMBERED BY THE ARTIST.**

**THESE BEAUTIFUL PRINTS MAY BE PURCHASED FOR \$150.00 PLUS \$6.00 SHIPPING.**

## FEATHER WAY

RIO GRANDE EASEL ART • WATERCOLORS AND ACRYLICS • PUEBLO POTTERY • WEAVINGS

WRITE: KEVIN SCHNEIDER, 14292 JENNINGS VISTA WAY, LAKESIDE, CA 92040, (619) 561-6303



## AMERICAN FEDERATION OF AVICULTURE

Dedicated to conservation of bird wildlife through encouragement of captive breeding programs, scientific research, and education of the general public.

### MEMBER NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

African Love Bird Society American Budgerigar Society, Inc. American Cockatiel Society, Inc.  
American Pigeon Fanciers' Council American Racing Pigeon Union, Inc.  
British Columbia Avicultural Society National Cockatiel Society Amazona Society Macaw Society  
Southeastern Aviculturists Association National Cage Bird Show, Inc. Avicultural Society of America

### MEMBER CLUBS

#### ALABAMA

Bird Club of Greater Birmingham  
Central Alabama Aviculture Society

#### ARIZONA

Arizona Aviculture Society  
Arizona Budgerigar Society  
Avicultural Society of Tucson  
The Seed Crackers

#### CALIFORNIA

American Canary Fanciers Association  
Aviary Association of Kern  
Avicultural Association of San Francisco  
Budgerigar Research Association  
Butte County Bird Club  
California Game Breeders' Association  
Capitol City Bird Society  
Central California Cage Bird Club  
Contra Costa Avian Society  
Exotic Bird Breeders Association  
Exotic Hookbill Society  
Finch Society of San Diego County  
Foothill Bird Fanciers  
Fresno Canary and Finch Club  
Golden Gate Avian Society  
Golden West Game Breeders and Bird Club, Inc.  
Great Western Budgerigar Society, Inc.  
Hookbill Hobbyists of Southern California  
Inland Game Bird Breeders  
Long Beach Bird Breeders  
Norco Valley Bird Breeders  
North County Aviculturists  
Northern California Budgerigar Society, Inc.  
Nu-Color Bird Association  
Orange County Bird Breeders  
Redwood Budgie Hobbyists  
San Diego County Bird Breeders Association  
San Diego County Canary Club  
San Gabriel Valley Parrakeet Association  
Santa Clara Valley Canary & Exotic Bird Club  
South Bay Bird Club  
South Coast Finch Society  
Tri City Budgerigar Society  
Valley of Paradise Bird Club  
Ventura County Bird Club  
West Valley Bird Society  
Western Bird Breeders Society

#### COLORADO

Rocky Mountain Society of Aviculture, Inc.

#### CONNECTICUT

Connecticut Association for Aviculture, Inc.

#### DELAWARE

Delaware Aviculture Association

#### FLORIDA

Aviary & Cage Bird Society of South Florida  
Central Florida Bird Breeders  
Feathered Friends of Florida Avian Society  
Gold Coast Exotic Bird Club, Inc.  
Greater Brandon Avian Society  
Greater Jacksonville Avicultural Society, Inc.  
Greater Miami Avicultural Society, Inc.  
Miami Parrot Club, Inc.  
Polk County Avicultural Society  
Suncoast Avian Society  
Sunshine State Cage Bird Society, Inc.  
Tropical Cockatiel Club of Miami

#### GEORGIA

Georgia Cage Bird Society  
Greater Middle Georgia Cage Bird Society

#### HAWAII

Exotic Birds of Hawaii

#### IOWA

Mid-America Cage Bird Society

#### ILLINOIS

Greater Chicago Cage Bird Club, Inc.  
McLean County Pet Bird Club  
Mid-west Hookbill Club

#### KANSAS

Capital City Bird Club of Kansas  
Kansas Avicultural Society, Inc.

#### LOUISIANA

Central Louisiana Budgerigar Society  
Gulf South Bird Club

#### MARYLAND

Baltimore Bird Fanciers, Inc.  
Maryland Cage Bird Society, Inc.

#### MASSACHUSETTS

Boston Cockatiel Society Inc.  
Exotic Cage Birds of New England  
Massachusetts Cage Bird Assoc., Inc.  
The Boston Society for Aviculture, Inc.  
Western New England Cage Bird Society

#### MICHIGAN

Ann Arbor Cage Bird Club  
Mid-West Canary Club, Inc.  
Motor City Bird Breeders, Inc.

#### MINNESOTA

Minnesota Cage Bird Association  
North Star Parrot Breeders Society

#### MISSISSIPPI

Mississippi Budgerigar Society

#### MISSOURI

Greater Kansas City Avicultural Society  
Heart of America Parrot Society  
Missouri Cage Bird Association

#### NEBRASKA

Greater Omaha Cage Bird Society

#### NEVADA

Las Vegas Avicultural Society  
Silver State Budgerigar Society, Inc.  
Vegas Valley Caged Birds Association

#### NEW HAMPSHIRE

Birds of Feather  
New Hampshire Avicultural Society

#### NEW YORK

Finger Lakes Cage Bird Association  
The Greater Rochester Hookbill Association

#### NORTH CAROLINA

Carolina Avicultural Society  
Charlotte Metrolina Cage Bird Society  
Smoky Mountain Cage Bird Society

#### OHIO

Central Ohio Bird Fanciers, Inc.  
Cleveland Cage Bird Society  
Golden Crescent Cage Bird Club  
Mid-American Exotic Bird Society, Inc.

#### OREGON

Cascade Budgerigar Society  
Columbia Canary Club  
Emerald Exotic Bird Society  
Exotic Bird Club of Oregon  
Northwest Bird Club

#### PENNSYLVANIA

Central Pennsylvania Cage Bird Club  
The Greater Pittsburgh Cage Bird Society  
York Area Pet Bird Club

#### SOUTH CAROLINA

Carolina Cage Bird Club

#### TENNESSEE

Middle Tennessee Cage Bird Club

#### TEXAS

Alamo Exhibition Bird Club  
Capital City Cage Bird Club  
Dallas Cage Bird Society  
Fort Worth Bird Club  
Gulf Coast Aviculture Assoc.  
North Texas Cockatiel Club

#### UTAH

Avicultural Society of Utah  
Utah Pheasant Society

#### VIRGINIA

Commonwealth Avicultural Society  
National Capital Bird Club  
Parrot Breeders Association  
Peninsula Cage Bird Society  
Virginia Ornamental Bird Society

#### WASHINGTON

Avicultural Society of Puget Sound  
Northwest Aviculture Society  
Northwest Exotic Bird Society  
Washington Budgerigar Society, Inc.

#### WISCONSIN

Wisconsin Cage Bird Club, Inc.

### COMMERCIAL MEMBERS

Animal Exchange, Rockville, MD Pritchard Bookkeeping Service, El Cajon, CA Valentine Equipment Co., Hinsdale, IL  
Nekton U.S.A., Inc., St. Petersburg, FL Kellogg, Inc., Milwaukee, WI Fins, Furs, 'N Feathers, Boca Raton, FL  
Mason's Exotic Bird Services, San Bruno, CA Auerhahn Ranch, Boerne, TX Serdna Machine, Fullerton, CA  
Parrot Jungle, Inc., Miami, FL Norshore Pets, Marengo, IL Pet Farm Inc., Miami, FL  
East Coast Aviaries, Inc., Conway, S.C. Royal Plaza Resort Motel and Aviaries, Pompano Beach, FL

For information about contacting any of these member clubs, please call that club's closest state coordinator. There is a state coordinator listing with phone numbers elsewhere in this publication.

wherever they landed—on an arm, a leg, a hip. There they would stay while she fed each one its formula. Clinger received her name because she was the most stubborn clinger of all who, even as a tiny youngster, had clamped onto her bent spoon so hard that she could be lifted up by its handle.

Despite Susan's attempts to keep the birds clean, correctly fed, and protected from drafts, two factors worked against her: she had little experience with psittacines and, in 1979, few of the resources for knowledge that even the rankest beginner has now. Problems developed. Starting at two months, the babies developed Candida, a yeast infection of the crop, one after the other. Its appearance was frighteningly sudden, beginning with a small scab on the skin over the crop. In only one day, the scab was much larger. The vet prescribed an antibacterial powder which Susan applied to the outside of the crops. On one baby the infection was too far gone. The sore, and the skin of the crop, broke. The tear was too irregular for the skin to be completely stitched back together. The vet showed Susan how to feed the bird through a tube in its stomach. But the bird died.

Of the two who recovered, one had another problem. Its upper mandible was growing twisted. Various theories were advanced to Susan to explain the distorted beak. The problem might have stemmed from the wrong incubating temperature, the wrong diet, a chronic case of nasal dripping which the vet only called by the general term sinusitis, or a combination of the three. At a little over three months of age he died in a fall from his perch. Susan theorizes that his equilibrium might have been affected by the sinusitis, which the vet had been unable to cure.

Clinger, too, did not get through unscathed. During the Candida episode, she fractured her leg. The babies, Susan discovered, were gaining weight fast but had soft bones—the old calcium problem. She switched to a formula given her by the keepers at San Diego zoo. Clinger's leg, which tended to scoot out from her body, was taped and healed quickly with only a small lump at the joint just above the foot to show where the fracture was. Her flexibility was not impaired but arthritis could develop there in later life, just as in people.

Five months after the hatching, Susan was left with one bird, a lot of sadness, and some ideas on what she would do if she had a second chance at macaw rearing. In the seven years that have passed since then, much more know-



**1986 OFFICERS**

JERRY JENNINGS/President  
DON CAVENDER/1st Vice President RAY H. RUDISILL/2nd Vice President  
HUBERT MORRIS/Chief Financial Officer NANCY VIGRAN/Corresponding Secretary  
LORENE CLUBB/Executive Secretary

**REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENTS**

Linda Rubin/Northeastern (617) 469-0557 • Bill Maynard/Southeastern (305) 968-4214  
Bill Wilson/Mideastern (815) 568-5611 • Gary Morgan/Central (303) 422-6399  
Rex Kennedy/Western (801) 571-6183 • James H. Coffman/Northern California (415) 692-2234  
Aletta M. Long/Southern California (213) 596-7429

**LEGISLATIVE VICE PRESIDENT**

Lee Phillips (301) 798-1353

**STATE and REGIONAL COORDINATOR CHAIRMAN**

Ray H. Rudisill (314) 645-6757

**STATE COORDINATORS**

ALABAMA Horace Gardner (205) 874-7937	LOUISIANA John C. Lawrence Jr., DVM (504) 343-2622	NORTH DAKOTA/SOUTH DAKOTA Carol Hamilton (605) 535-2541
ALASKA	MAINE Archie Fairbrother (207) 394-2252	OHIO Michaelen Rogers (419) 639-3673
ARIZONA Mickey Ollson (602) 939-1003	MARYLAND Ro Dahle (301) 551-6967	OKLAHOMA Roger W. Harlin, DVM (405) 636-1484
CALIFORNIA (north) Hank Johnson (209) 233-3322	MASSACHUSETTS Gary Lilienthal (617) 542-7070	OREGON Kay Mahi (503) 543-6042
CALIFORNIA (south) Dick Schroeder (213) 645-5842	MICHIGAN Glen Pace (313) 785-0757	PENNSYLVANIA Bill Lumley (717) 234-0732
COLORADO	MINNESOTA Carol Schmitz (612) 890-6164	SOUTH CAROLINA Jerry Sanders (803) 578-6541
CONNECTICUT Walter J. Willoughby (203) 528-7296	MISSISSIPPI	TENNESSEE
DELAWARE Diane Korolog (302) 731-0170	MISSOURI Gus Piros (314) 837-3063	TEXAS
FLORIDA Mrs. M. Simmons (305) 772-2632	MONTANA G. Allan Taylor (406) 587-3338	UTAH
GEORGIA Christer Jonsson (404) 344-0816	NEBRASKA Robert G. Travnicek (402) 821-2490	VERMONT Heather J. Beck (802) 948-2371
HAWAII Joyce M. Ferguson (808) 262-7278	NEVADA Paul R. Castella (702) 645-9022	VIRGINIA Carole Wheeler (703) 323-5048
ILLINOIS Ken Newby (618) 259-5453	NEW HAMPSHIRE F. Lawrence Brandt (603) 642-5074	WASHINGTON Jeri Wright (206) 937-0234
INDIANA Carol Musselman, DVM (317) 881-3125	NEW JERSEY Terry Veraldo (201) 447-3378	WASHINGTON, D.C. Ruth Hanessian (301) 424-PETS
IOWA Ted Pulla (515) 225-0302	NEW MEXICO Debbie Mills (505) 865-0331	WEST VIRGINIA Patty Knoblauch (304) 725-5601
KANSAS Hal Prester (316) 788-4505	NEW YORK Arthur Freud (516) 265-6479	WISCONSIN Greg Schauer (414) 629-9292
KENTUCKY Thomas B. Angel, Jr., DVM (606) 371-4929	NORTH CAROLINA R.M. Mack Long (919) 674-9328	WYOMING Jerry Youmans (307) 237-9564

**SCHEDULE FOR AFA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS**

Mark these dates and plan to attend!

**August 6 thru 10, 1986**  
New Orleans, Louisiana — Fairmont Hotel  
12th Annual Convention

ledge about avian husbandry and medicine has been accumulated and Susan wonders if she would have been able to save all three, were they to hatch today. She would expect no guarantees, only better chances.

As if to make up for her absent siblings, Clinger developed enough personality for three—but perhaps any proud and loving owner would say that about her bird. At any rate, Clinger apparently did not know that macaws make poor talkers. At six months she was making mumbling sounds Susan did not even notice until one evening when she was relaxing in a hot bath after work and heard a voice say, "Hi!" She nearly jumped straight out of the tub, thinking someone had broken in, until she realized the voice was Clinger's.

Susan never had to teach Clinger words by repetition; Clinger simply seemed to pick up what she liked. (Sue became very careful about her choice of words when angry.) Clinger's repertoire soon ranged from various human and animal greetings, to endearments, to comments such as "Are you a bat?", "Ouch, that hurts," and "Shame on you." When Susan says, "Goodbye," on leaving the house, Clinger answers, "Bye. You be good now."

Like other military macaws, Clinger does have a temper. When she gets angry, the blood rushes to the white skin of her face. She is definitely a "watchbird," squawking whenever she sees someone—man or beast—approaching the house. If Susan leaves her alone while working in another part of the house or does not give Clinger the tidbits she feels she deserves, Clinger tries to get them by squawking and then scolding herself or jumping down from her perch and going looking for Susan. When it is time for Clinger to go from her portable perch to her cage, Clinger meows like a cat to charm Susan into giving her a few more minutes of play. It worked a few times. Now Clinger keeps trying.

When Susan married Pat Tharp, Clinger had to learn to share. Clinger and Pat are slowly getting used to each other, with Clinger ready to take advantage of Pat's inexperience with birds by biting now and then. But in this "love me, love my bird" situation they will have to make a truce.

Maybe Clinger sounds obnoxious with her noise and demands for constant attention, but to anyone who has worked as hard as Sue did to give her life and good health, a bird like Clinger is a jewel. ●