

Aviculture and Change

by A. B. McNabney
Walnut Creek, California

Can aviculture accept change? Can aviculturists accept change even when it may be brought about by causes far beyond the control of aviculturists, either individually or collectively? Destruction of rain forests the world over is having deadly effects on birdlife. Entire species of highly-prized birds are endangered, or even worse, threatened with extinction. At the same time importation of birds into the United States appears to be on the increase and it isn't hard to find someone who will condemn "the rapacious bird trade" for ALL of the reductions in bird populations in far distant lands. Will aviculturists continue to keep their activities, knowledge, abilities and scientific accomplishments more or less to themselves? Or will aviculturists step out and let the non-avicultural community know of the work they have done to perpetuate avian species? Answers to these questions may well determine the future course of the avian world, as well as the ability of aviculturists to continue with their work.

It is my own feeling that aviculturists are not only selling themselves short, they are not, in fact, even telling the world what aviculture is about and what it has accomplished. Aviculturists come in many different sizes and shapes. They have varied interests ranging from a single pet canary to highly scientific aviary activities resulting in successful breeding of many endangered species.

For the most part, aviculturists tend to talk only to aviculturists about their activities. They write few papers of scientific nature for perusal by ornithologists and other scientists who may be interested. In some instances aviculturists have (seemingly) taken a back seat to the university community. The end result is that many university trained ornithologists and other scientists hold aviculture in generally low repute.

Reasons for the scientific community to write and publish information about their work are easy to find. Scientists in

a university setting have a saying: "publish or perish." Aviculturists have few incentives to take the time and exert the effort to write scientific type papers detailing the knowledge, and successes, they might have had in their avian activities. To many very knowledgeable aviculturists the mere thought of writing a paper on some part of their expertise is enough to give a big case of the screaming meemies.

So there is a difference between the university community and the avicultural community. The scientist in the university setting achieves "something" as a reward for writing while the aviculturist receives literally nothing for his or her writings. Differences between the ornithologist, scientist and the aviculturist are many. These differences should NOT be used as a way to separate or denigrate the aviculturist but should be used instead to build relationships, knowledge and understanding. They should be used to bring about a sharing of knowledge. They should enable the scientist and the aviculturist to better communicate, all with an eye to improving care and perpetuation of avian species.

One way to achieve such desirable goals would be for the aviculturists to do more than has been done to reach out. Instead of just talking to aviculturists, develop lines of communication with the scientific community.

Incentives are necessary. The various avian societies catering to aviculturists can (and should) develop appropriate programs to give incentives to members who do work in informing, contacting and educating non-aviculturists. A.F.A. can play a major role and should lead the way with a national program. Entries from the local societies could be submitted to A.F.A. for consideration. Some incentive should be developed, probably by A.F.A., to encourage the writing of scientifically-oriented papers covering work carried out by individual aviculturists and such writing should be made available to the scientific world having an interest in avian activities. ●

Lady Gouldian Finches

WHITE-BREASTED
NORMAL COLORS



Herschel Frey

1170 Firwood Dr.
Pittsburgh, PA. 15243
(412) 561-7194

AVIARY & ANIMAL PET SUPPLY P.O. Box 514

Fort Towson, OK 74735



Three Types Automatic Watering Systems, J-Clips, J-Clip Pliers, Flush Ground Cutting Pliers, Pop Bottle Water Founts, Plastic & Metal Feeders, Metal Trays, Breeding & Flight Cages, Parrot Stands & Cups, Incubators, Ketch-All Mouse Traps, Electric Foggers, Automatic Light Timer, Kool Mist Foggers, Medications, Vitamin & Mineral Supplements, Books, Nylon Corner for 1" x 1" Steel Tubing, Canary Nests, Canthaxanthin for Red Canaries, *Much More.*

Send \$1.00 for Illustrated Catalog #3 by First Class Mail.

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