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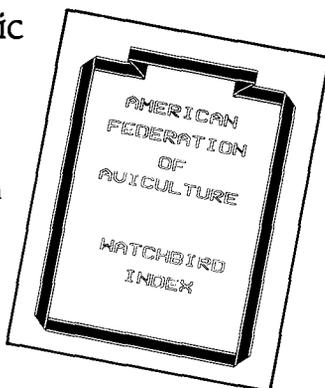
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First Breeding Records for the United Kingdom 1984-85

by Dave Coles
England

Information on first breeding records has long fascinated me, so reading the nominations submitted to committee for possible U.S. firsts in the Feb/March issue of *Watchbird* interested me considerably. During the past few years, I have been researching probable first breeding records for the U.K. and thought that perhaps a summary of the past two years, 1984-85 breeding seasons, might interest fellow aviculturists 'across the pond.'

During this period, a total of thirty-six species have come to light as being reared for the first time. A surprisingly high number for a two year period but this is perhaps a reflection on the attitudes of aviculturists these days, combined with advancements in science and technology — surgical sexing, hand-rearing and specialized diets all playing their part in what is probably the highest two year total for some considerable time.

Despite specialization by a good many aviculturists, psittacines account for quite a high proportion of the new species bred, with a total of ten being recorded. The nominate race of the white-bellied caique (*Pionites leucogaster leucogaster*), military macaw (*Ara militaris*), palm cockatoo (*Probosciger aterrimus*) and dusky parrot (*Pionus fuscus*) are sporadically kept species reared while cobalt-winged parakeet (*Brotogeris cyanopectera*), black parrot (*Coracopsis nigra*) and red-vented cockatoo (*Cacatua laematurapygia*) are comparatively recent imports which have bred. However, the highlight without doubt has been with fig parrots of the genus *Psittaculirostris*, all three members having bred — Salvadori's (*P. salvadorii*), Desmarest's (*P. desmarestii*) and Edward's (*P. edwardii*). Double-eyed figs (*Opopsitta diophthalma*) were also recorded as hatching but the young survived only twelve days.

Very few of the true pheasants remain to be bred but since the formation of the



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quail group within the World Pheasant Association, the smaller galliformes have been the center of increased attention and consequently have done well. Masked bobwhite (*Colinus virginianus ridgwayi*), crested bobwhite (*Colinus cristatus*) and brown-throated partridge (*Arborophila brunneopectus*) being added to an already impressive list.

Of the other ground dwelling families, little black bustard (*Afrotis atra*), Pallas' sandgrouse (*Syrrhaptes paradoxus*), Inca tern (*Larosterna inca*) and white spoonbill (*Platalea leucorodia*) were all new.

Diurnal birds of prey numbered three, black sparrow hawk (*Accipiter melanoleucus*), prairie falcon (*Falco mexicanus*) and New Zealand falcon (*Falco novaezeelandiae*). The latter species reared in both years and a pair of their progeny are now at the Cornell University where future success is hoped for. A solitary brown fish owl (*Ketupa zeylonensis*) was hand-reared at Paignton Zoo.

Softbills fared well during the period with a dozen species being reared for the first time, of which comparatively rare imports accounted for half. Viola-ceous tiracos (*Musophaga violacea*) hatched in two collections during 1984 but reared in only one. Indian roller (*Coracias benghalensis*), fire-tufted barbet (*Psilopogon pyrolophus*), hwamei (*Garrulax rufifrons*), coledo



Inca tern (Larosterna inca)

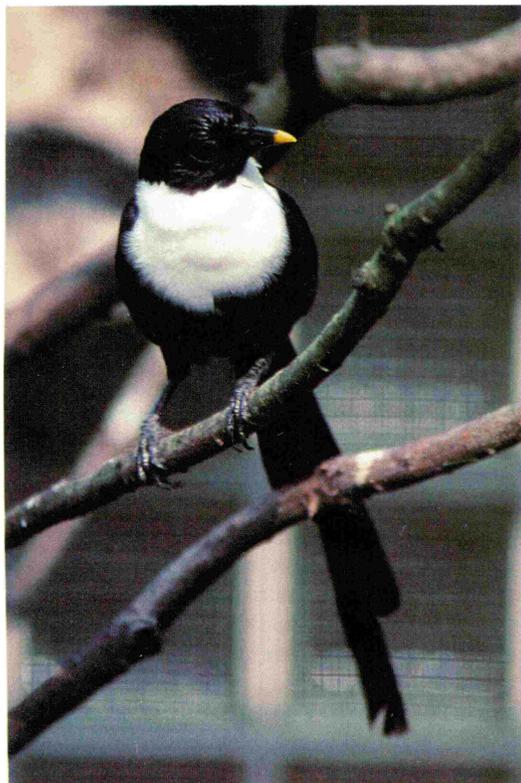
myna (*Sarcops calvus*) and Celebes magpie (*Streptocitta albicollis*) are others of the larger species bred with the barbet, the fourteenth member of the *Capitonidae* to have bred in the U.K.

Other softbills reared include gros-beak starling (*Scissirostrum dubium*), bay-headed tanager (*Tangara gyrola*), Kikuyu zosterop (*Zosterops senegalensis kikuyuensis*), pied flycatcher (*Ficedula hypoleuca*), Formosan yuhina (*Yuhina brunneiceps*) and spot-throated hummingbird (*Leucippes taczanowski*).

Seed eaters are well represented in the U.K. and most of the commonly avail-

able species have long bred but 1983-84 saw the importation of some of the Indonesian *Lonchura* with two, the grey-headed (*L. caniceps*) and five-coloured mannikins (*L. quinticolor*) being reared successfully. The only other seedeater to rear for the first time within the period was the African chestnut sparrow (*Passer eminiibey*).

The above is a condensed summary extracted from the list of first breeding records for the U.K. due to be published towards the end of 1986 containing over 1300 species. Each entry comprising of common name, Latin name, year in which first bred, the breeder and a reference relating to the breeding. ●



Celebes magpie (Streptocitta albicollis)



Fire-tufted barbet (Psilopogon pyrolophus)

Photos by Dave Coles, England