

Breeding the Musschenbroek's Lorikeet

(*Neopsittacus m. musschenbroekii*)

by Jan Roger van Oosten
Seattle, Washington

During the latter part of 1986, several shipments of Musschenbroek's Lorikeet were imported into the United States. I purchased ten surgically sexed pairs from Three Star Enterprises in California and they arrived in Seattle during January 1987. The birds looked to be in good shape, however, as I do with all new birds, I medicated them with Bactrum for seven days. In addition, they were given Nystatin for ten days as well as Orlac. Because they looked to be in perfect shape and no worm segments were seen in the water, I broke my own cardinal rule and did not worm them.

After treatment, the females were kept in one cage and the males in another. They did very well on the nectar I provided and fresh cut apples every day. I was aware from reading accounts of maintaining these lories that they would require some seed.

Over the next 30 days, I added my parrot mixture to their diet. At the end of this period, they were eating only the seed mixture and drinking no more than a tablespoonful of the nectar per day. They still received fresh apple every day.

In May I noticed when the weather turned warm that several of the birds were gaping very noticeably. Knowing this as a symptom for worm infestation, I at once gave all the birds worm medicine. I use Ivomec for cattle at a ratio of 1 part Ivomec to 30 parts propylene glycol. The six birds that were gaping, three males and three females, were placed under heat lamps and given medicine but the infestation was so heavy that all six birds died. The remaining 14 birds survived without any problems.

In December 1987, I paired up the remaining birds, seven pairs, and placed them in breeding cages 2 ft.

wide x 4 ft. long x 2 ft. high with an attached "L" shaped nest box on one end. The nest box tube is four inches square.

The nectar formula I use is made of the following ingredients: Purina Trout Chow #1, Purina Game Bird Starter, sugar, Soylac, BVMO, Gerber's Sweet Potato, fresh papaya, banana, carrots and apples. My parrot mixture consists of three parts Purina Hi-Pro Dog Chow, three parts cooked beans and pigeon grains, plus fresh pears, apples, banana, celery, cucumber, red pepper, zucchini, and kiwi. The fruit and vegetables make up five parts and also includes two parts seed mixture.

Pair #1 laid their first egg on January 24, 1988 and the second a day later. The first egg hatched on February 18th and the second egg a day later. Both young were fed by the parents but after ten days one of the chicks died. It had not been fed as well as the surviving chick. The chick fledged on April 26th. The other pairs laid as follows:

Pair #2	2 eggs	2/24/88
	2 hatched, 1 survived	
Pair #3	2 eggs	2/27/88
	2 hatched, 1 survived	
Pair #4	2 eggs	3/10/88
	2 hatched, 1 survived	
Pair #5	2 eggs	3/14/88
	2 hatched, 1 survived	
Pair #6	2 eggs	4/20/88
	2 hatched, 1 survived	
Pair #7	2 eggs	5/ 5/88
	2 hatched, 2 survived	

All the young noted above were fledged. The five young above which did not survive, all died between the second and ninth day from lack of food. One youngster from Pair #7 died at four months of age, killed by its nestmate.

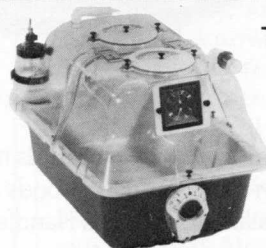
The seven young were surgically sexed in November and they turned out to be one male and seven females. The lone male was from Pair #1. In January 1989, six females died from stress.

Pair #3 and Pair #5 both laid a second clutch but destroyed their eggs within three weeks.

In February 1989, the females of Pair #2 and #4 died from choking on a large sunflower seed that was not cracked but taken whole. The other remaining pairs all laid fertile eggs in 1989 with only two chicks hatched and reared.

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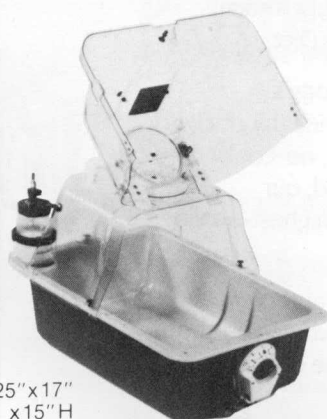


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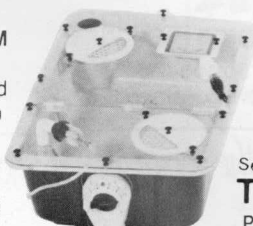
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An adult pair of Musschenbroek's Lori-keets displayed at Loro Parque. They are found in the mountainous areas of New Guinea. This photo shows their prominent yellow streaking on their cheeks.

Photo by Jan R. van Oosten



The U.S. first breeding of the Musschenbroek's Lori-keet was done by Jan R. van Oosten on February 18, 1988. This photo shows the first baby at six weeks of age. The reddish chest coloration is very evident at this young age.

Musschenbroek's are very nervous birds and, even with different, smaller species separating the pairs, the birds were not at ease. Towards the end of the breeding season, I placed a partition between the cages and the birds quieted down right away. Pair #1 which had laid eggs raised the two young mentioned above.

I believe this to be the first breeding of this species in the United States.

If you are interested in lorries and lorikeets, you are invited to join the International Loriidae Society. Write for membership details and a sample issue to Sharon Casmier, Secretary/Treasurer, 17704 S. Tapps Drive E., Sumner, WA 98390. ●

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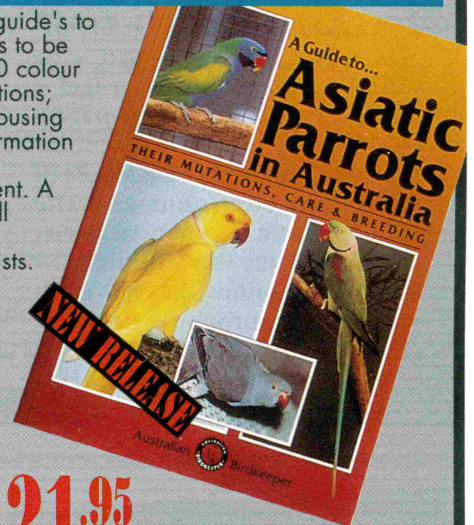
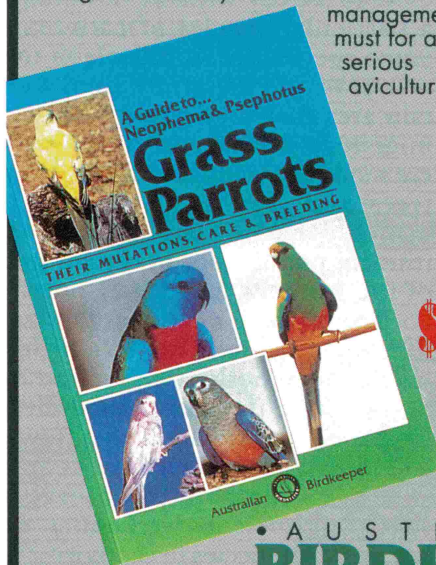
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