

AFA in action...

NEWS and VIEWS

FEBRUARY 1990

AFA Purchases Commercial Exhibit

In hopes of enhancing its presence at major avicultural meetings, shows and conventions, AFA recently contracted with Alamo Skyline Display Corporation for the development and construction of a professional, commercial display. The display is now available, with advance reservations, from the AFA business office. It is contained in several shipping tubes and comes with a set-up video and written instructions. The display is black with red lettering with full color photographs. Eight feet in length, it comes complete with lights.

Notice

May 12, 1990 — Canadian Parrot Symposium, at the Skyline Airport Hotel, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, will be hosted by Durham Avicultural Society of Ontario and Silvio Mattacchione & Co., publisher. Featured is speaker Tony Silva, author of "A Monograph of Endangered Parrots," and curator, Loro Parque, Tenerife, Canary Islands. For information, contact Jacquie Blackburn, 108 Meadowvale Road, West Hill, Ontario, Canada, M1C 1R1, phone (416) 282-5997, or call Judy Kennedy at (416) 985-9509.

May 26-27, 1990 — Middle Tennessee Cage Bird Club is hosting its annual Spring Bird Affair. This two-day bird fair will be held at the Jack Spence Motor Hotel, 823 Murfreesboro Road, Nashville, Tennessee. For fair information, contact Jean Michael, 4156 Maxie Road, Cedar Hill, Tennessee 37032 or call (615) 696-2786 or (615) 384-0969.

Brazilian Merganser Feared Extinct in Paraguay

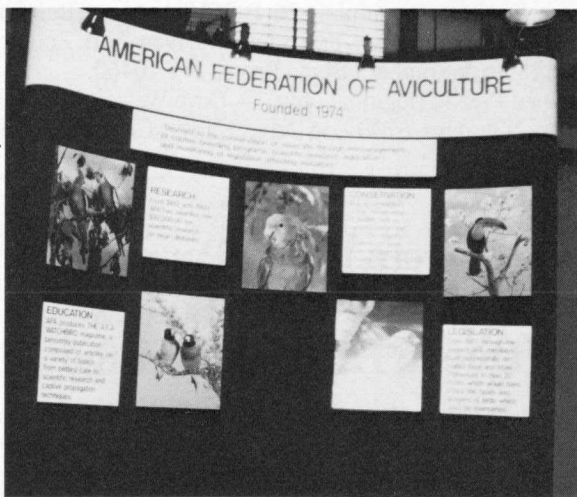
During the annual AFA convention held in Phoenix, Arizona, the board of directors approved funding for a project, led by Floyd Hayes, to search for the last remaining Brazilian Mergansers (*Mergus octosetaceus*) in Paraguay. In the process of forwarding the funds to Hayes, the following report was received by Jack Clinton-Eitniece, AFA Conservation Committee Chair.

"We successfully navigated 198 km of three of the four proposed rivers by canoe but, unfortunately, we were unable to locate any mergansers. The habitat that we encountered along these rivers was seemingly ideal — lots of rapids, some uncharted waterfalls and many seemingly pristine areas — but the mergansers apparently are gone. Our last river, the Nacunday, is directly opposite the Uruguai River in Argentina, where five birds were encountered along a 65 km transect in 1985; we navigated 71 km of this river alone.

Of the remaining large rivers, one was transformed into a lake by the Acaray Dam, several others (including our first two rivers) were half filled by the lake behind the Itaipu Dam, one passes through a major metropolitan area, another passes through a huge agricultural area, and the last, the Yacuy Guazu, appears to be unnavigable by canoe (50 m drop along a 10 km stretch). There are a few smaller streams that may host a family or two of mergansers, but they are pretty much inaccessible and have rather steep gradients — hence risky to attempt in an open canoe. Furthermore, human dwellings are widely scattered along the banks of all rivers, and the navigable stretches of the rivers we explored had fishermen often frequent the rivers. We suspect that if a few families of mergansers exist in inaccessible areas, it is only a question of time until some hunter finishes them off. We see little hope of saving this species in Paraguay if, indeed, it still exists."

The merganser now apparently can only be found in the Paraguai, Parana Rivers of Brazil and parts of Argentina.

Photos by Chris Christman



AFA's new display booth was set up for its first time use at Arizona's December 2, '89 Bird Mart.

1989 Avy Awards Presented at the 16th Annual AFA Convention, Phoenix, Arizona

The following is a list of AFA's Avy Award winners presented at the national AFA convention in Phoenix, Arizona, August 12, 1989:

1. Silver Avy Award (Category I — Establishment of a group of related birds) to Davis A. Koffron for his work with parrotlets.
2. Zoo Avy Award (Category I — Establishment of a group of related birds) to Busch Gardens (Ed Bish, Curator) for their work with lorries and lorikeets.
3. Avy Appreciation Award to Hank Brawley. Nominated by the Pionus Breeders Association.
4. Avy Appreciation Award to Harold Bowles. Nominated by the National Cockatiel Society.
5. Avy Appreciation Award to Dr. Al E. Decoteau. Nominated by the Society of Parrot Breeders and Exhibitors.
6. Watchbird Avy Award to Jayne Yantz for her article on Peter's Twinspots.
7. Watchbird Avy Award to Jack Clinton-Eitniece for his series of articles, "From the Field."

The following U.S. First Breeding Avy Awards were also presented:

1. Yellow-faced Amazon, *Amazona xanthops*, hatched April 25, 1985 by Chris Rowley.
2. Salvin's Amazon, *Amazona autumnalis salvini*, hatched May 8, 1983 by Chris Rowley and Dr. Nathan B. Gale.
3. Yellow-headed Black Bird, *Agelaius icterocephalus*, hatched June 8, 1986 by National Aquarium in Baltimore, Steven H. Amos.
4. White-eared Brown Fruit Dove, *Phapitreron leucotis*, hatched June 13, 1988 by Ann and Don Hurst.
5. Lilacine Amazon, *Amazona autumnalis lilacina*, hatched April 23, 1986 by Richard L. Miller, D.V.M. and Life Fellowship, Ramon Noegel and Greg Moss.
6. Timor Sparrow, *Padda fuscata*, hatched May 15, 1988 by Richard Schmidt.
7. Red-faced Liocichla, *Liocichla phoenicia*, hatched June 2, 1988 by North Carolina Zoological Park, Ronald E. Morris.
8. Pondicherry Vulture, *Sarcogyps calvus*, hatched spring 1983 by Jacksonville Zoo, Forest Penny.

We welcome Avy Award nominations for all categories. An article suitable for the *Watchbird* should accompany all U.S. First Breeding Avy Award nominations. Direct all nominations to Dale R. Thompson, Avy Awards Committee, through the AFA office, P.O. Box 56218, Phoenix, Arizona 85079-6218.

The following were recipients of 1989 AFA Service Awards:

1. "AFA in Brief" — Gary Clifton
2. Continued service — Davis A. Koffron
3. "1989 Fund Raiser" — Mark Sargent
4. Legislative action — Janet Lilienthal
5. Legislative action — Gary Lilienthal
6. Conservation committee — Jack Clinton-Eitniece
7. "1988 Convention - Tampa" — Phyllis Martin

Miami Metrozoo Reports Hatching Of Writhe-billed Hornbills

Two Writhe-billed Hornbills (*Acreos leucocephalus*) fledged on July 20 in the Wings of Asia exhibit. The two chicks hatched on April 20 and for 92 days remained in the nest, which was constructed out of a plastic food barrel. The female emerged the same day as the chicks, having spent 127 days in the nest. We believe this to be the first captive breeding for this Philippine species. The Writhe-billed Hornbills share the Wings of Asia exhibit with 80 species and over 300 specimens of birds.

(AAZPA Newsletter, Vol. XXX, No. 10, October 1989)

Bird Studbooks Published

The following international studbooks were published in 1989. Individuals holding specimens of these species are encouraged to contact the various studbook keepers listed so their specimens can be registered.

Wattled Crane — Fred Beall, Baltimore Zoo, Druid Hill Park, Mansion House, Baltimore, MD 21217.

Congo Peafowl — Roland Van Bockstaele, Royal Society of Antwerp, Koningin Astridplein 26, B-2018 Antwerp, Belgium.

White-naped Crane — Chris Sheppard, New York Zoological Society, 185th & Southern Blvd., Bronx, NY 10460.

Crowned Pigeon (regional only) — Dave Wetzel, Kansas City Zoological Gardens, 6700 Zoo Drive, Kansas City, MO 64132.

Puerto Rican Parrots Suffer Heavy Losses Due to Hurricane Hugo

At least 13 Puerto Rican Parrots, a quarter of the wild flock, survived the hurricane, and a captive flock of 53 all survived. The number of Plain Pigeons in Puerto Rico seemed to increase, as enough leaves blew off their preferred trees to allow a count larger than before the storm. Boobies were reportedly hard hit in Puerto Rico as well.

(*Ornithological Newsletter*, Number 73, December 1989)

Flamingos affected by Hurricane Gilbert (1988) continue to face major obstacles. With the movement of their breeding grounds, a telephone line now passes near the area and is adding mortalities to the already declining population. Flamingos have never had to navigate around telephone wires.

AFA Credited for Support of International Council for Bird Preservation (ICBP)

In its 1988 annual report, the International Council for Bird Preservation gives credit to the American Federation of Aviculture for its major financial support for ICBP projects in 1988. Copies of the report can be obtained by writing: ICBP, 32 Cambridge Road, Girton, Cambridge, CB3 0PJ, United Kingdom.