

Fostering the Green Aracaris

by Mary Jo McConnell, Marblehead, Maine

(See color photo on outside back cover)

In November 1987, I purchased a pair of Green Aracaris (*Pteroglossus viridis*) for breeding. They were in poor condition, having multiple gram-negative enteric organisms. Over the next year they were treated repeatedly with appropriate antibiotics as determined by culture and sensitivity results.

In August 1988, the male was observed feeding the female. On February 26, 1989, a hollowed nesting log was placed in the aviary, a 3 x 6 x 5 foot area consisting of a bunk bed converted into a cage by means of chicken wire and staples. Vita Lights were installed and potted trees were placed nearby for security and environmental purposes. On September 24th, 1989 nesting behavior was observed (the male making crying noises inside the log). By October, both birds were working on the log.


On April 22, 1990, the female began incubating eggs. On May 8, 1990, egg shells were tossed out of the log and many chicks could be heard inside. It was quiet only at night. During the afternoon of the second day, the male was observed eating a chick. An hour later he was sharing another with the female. The log was forced open and the two remaining chicks were removed. Attempts at hand feeding were difficult as *Pteroglossus* has no crop and the nature of the beak made it necessary to insert a syringe of food.

The chicks were kept in a Marsh Farms incubator (95 degrees dry bulb, 85 wet bulb) and became extremely dehydrated by the next day. At the suggestion of Dr. Leah Postman, who conferred with Dr. Amy Worell, Pedialite was administered and feedings were increased to every fifteen minutes. A variety of strained baby foods were fed and the chicks were thriving. As this feeding schedule was impossible to maintain, it was decided to attempt fostering the chicks to a pair of Spotbilled Toucanettes (*Selenidera maculirostris*) that had successfully raised young. The two well-fed chicks were placed in the Spotbill's empty palm log in the early morning. The male immediately became interested in the sounds and after half an hour finally entered the

log where he remained until nightfall when the hen took his place. There was constant crying (except at night) throughout the next morning. By afternoon feeding could be observed. Two female chicks fledged June 22, 1990.

Addendum: It should be noted that

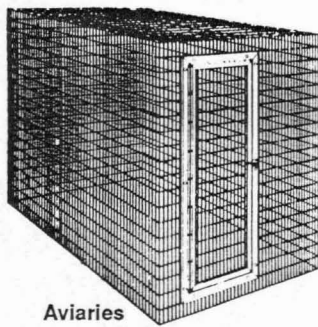
on the very day these chicks fledged, more chicks hatched in the Green Aracari nest log. Mealworms and crickets were added to the parents' diet and two male chicks fledged August 4th and 5th, 1990, raised successfully by their biological parents.



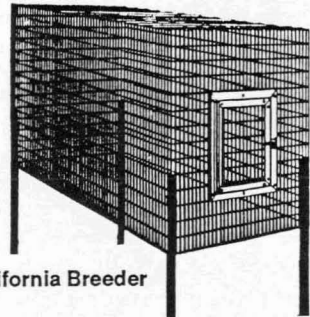
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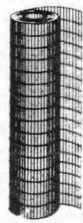


Aviaries

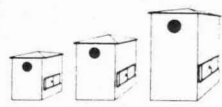


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
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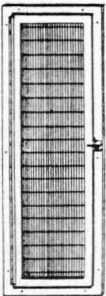
Wire latch



Spring latch




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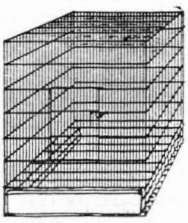


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