

# History of the American Federation of Aviculture

- In 1975 AFA successfully combatted three injurious wildlife proposals from the U.S. Department of the Interior which would have sharply curtailed bird imports.

- From 1977 through the present time AFA members have successfully defeated local and state ordinances in over 20 states which would have limited the types and numbers of birds which could be maintained.

- In 1978 AFA successfully instituted litigation against the U.S. Department of Agriculture to change procedures for Newcastle Disease eradication.

- In 1979 AFA successfully mounted the pressure to keep bird imports open when the U.S. Public Health Service attempted to ban the import of all psittacines based on the threat of psittacosis.

- 1979 saw the successful culmination of five years of efforts by AFA to change regulations affecting captive-bred endangered species.

- Also in 1979 AFA exerted enough pressure to re-open quarantine stations that had been closed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture because of Newcastle Disease outbreaks in the vicinity of two stations.

- In 1980 long-term efforts by AFA prevented the destruction of seized illegal birds in favor of the quarantine and auction of such birds.

- Also in 1980 a "hot-line" was established to the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Customs to cooperate in the effort to halt the flow of smuggled birds. AFA has encouraged people to report smuggling operations.

- In 1981 AFA began allocating funds for research grants in avian medicine, nutrition and field studies.

- In 1982 AFA was requested by the Venezuelan Audubon Society to assist in the propagation of the Venezuelan Black-hooded Red Siskin.

- In 1984 AFA members helped set up the breeding consortium for the confiscated Black Palm Cockatoos and insured that the birds would be distributed in pairs.

- In 1984 AFA began disseminating information to its members concerning auctions of confiscated birds by the U.S. Marshal's office.

- Also in 1984 AFA sent a representative to the CITES meeting in Buenos Aires.

- In 1984 AFA established a working relationship with the World Wildlife Fund.

- In 1985 AFA and its members strenuously objected to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's proposal to permit the import without quarantine of birds bred in certain closed facilities outside the United States. The proposal was withdrawn by the USDA.

- In 1985 AFA urged the U.S. Department of the Interior to purchase the Buenos Aires Ranch in Pima County, Arizona as a preserve for the re-introduction of the Masked Bobwhite Quail.

- In 1985 AFA was recognized by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and mentioned in the *1985 Yearbook of Agriculture* as the leading organization of bird breeders. AFA was also commended by the Techni-

cal Assistance Office of the federal government as the "grass roots" organization for the saving of endangered species by captive breeding.

- In 1987 AFA supported the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service in its efforts to captive-breed the remaining California Condors.

- In 1987 AFA was able to stem the confiscation of illegal birds which were breeding.

- In 1987 AFA supported efforts by waterfowl breeders to permit the sale of captive-bred progeny of wild-caught birds.

- In 1989 AFA supported the proposal by U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to introduce captive-bred Guam Rails on the island of Rota.

- In 1990 AFA jointed a World Wildlife Fund coordinated working group on trade.

- On June 4, 1991 the "Exotic Bird Conservation Act of 1991" was introduced to the 102nd Congress of the United States. The bill was the end result of two years of effort by the Cooperative Working Group on Trade.

- In 1991 AFA launched a major campaign against smuggling. The campaign included production of a video tape public service announcement, a special poster to be distributed along the border and a meeting of AFA officials and law enforcement personnel in Washington, D.C.

- In 1991 significant progress was made with the Red Siskin Project. Over 100 siskins are currently within an AFA coordinated consortium. The effort is illustrated in a full color brochure produced with funds from Kellogg Seeds and the AFA Red Siskin Fund.

Among other things AFA recognizes first breedings of avian species with a gold AVY award and commending work with a particular spe-

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cies with a silver award. Presidents Jerry Jennings, Lee Horton, Dr. Richard E. Baer, Tom Ireland, Lee Phillips and Tom Marshall have endeavored to keep AFA in the forefront of protecting avian species.

So, what is AFA? AFA is first of all a federation — a united group of nearly 100 affiliated bird clubs representing over 50,000 aviculturists, a federation interested in all aspects of all avian species, an umbrella organization whose strength lies in its members. ●

## AFA's Conservation Commitment

Listing and brief descriptions of projects receiving AFA Conservation Fund grants from 1987-1990.

### Breeding Biology of the Mariana Crow

Investigator: Gary A. Michaels

Of the 40 true crows in the family Corvidae, the Mariana or Guam Crow (*Corvus kubaryi*) is one of the least studied and only the Hawaiian Crow (*Corvus hawaiiensis*) is rarer. Due to the introduction of the Brown Tree Snake (*Boiga irregularis*) on the island of Guam, the Guam Crows and other avian inhabitants of the island have been suffering abnormal mortality rates. In 1984 the crow was one of five species and subspecies endemic to the island which were added to the U.S. Federal Endangered Species list. At that time the population was estimated to be around 50 birds. In September of 1985, Gary Michaels traveled to the island of Guam to conduct a two months study of the species. During his study he documented the species' vocalizations and pre-nuptial behavior although the one nest observed failed to produce young. The population was estimated, using recordings of crow vocalizations, to be approximately 100 individuals being composed of as few as three immature birds. Gary's current plans are to return to the island and further document the species' reproductive behavior and investigate the possibility of establishing the species in captivity. A special subcommittee of the Conservation Committee has been established to deal with this latter element of the program.

### Development of a Field Based Propagation Program for the Hispaniolan Trogon

Investigators: Steve Amos, Ken Reininger, Jose Ottenwalder, Jack Clinton-Eitnrear and William Hasse

Hispaniola has 73 species of resident land birds, the largest of any island in the West Indies. Twenty species are endemic to Hispaniola. Charles Woods, Ph.D., a researcher from the Florida State Museum, has conducted extensive research on the Haitian portion of the island and lists nine species of greatest conservation concern. Of the nine, eight are softbills, the exception being the Hispaniolan Parrot. With the majority of species that inhabit tropical forests being softbills, it is of great

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