

Breeding of the Timor Red-winged Parrot

(*Aprosmictus jonquillaceus jonquillaceus*)

by Lee and Sharyn Bolivar
El Segundo, California



Young Timor Red-winged Parrots have the gray down similar to the young of King parrots and the Australian Crimson-winged Parrot.



These young Timor Red-winged Parrots show the red wing coloration of the male.



Photos by Lee and Sharyn Bolivar

The adult Timor Red-winged Parrots differ from the Australian Red-winged (Crimson-wing) Parrot in that the male does not have the black back and full red on the outer wings. The female does not have any red on its wings.

We acquired a pair of Timor Red-winged Parrots (*Aprosmictus jonquillaceus jonquillaceus*) in May 1989 from a private party who had purchased them through quarantine a year prior. This individual had decided to concentrate his efforts on the larger cockatoos and thus sold off the smaller birds. We were unable to find much information about this particular species other than what is found in Joseph M. Forshaw's *Parrots of the World*, i.e. that the Timor is native to the island of Timor in the Lesser Sunda Islands of Indonesia. The birds we purchased had been surgically sexed and were approximately 2-1/2 years old. They had not been previously mated with other birds.

We set them up in our garage for the next eight months while we were working on our aviaries at our warehouse. During this time they were set up with Vita-Lights which were set to turn on and off automatically with natural sunrise and sunset. Once a day they were fed a mixture of seven different fresh fruits and vegetables and large hookbill seed.

On February 11, 1990 we set them

Editor's Note: Any persons knowing of a successful breeding of the Timor Red-winged Parrot prior to the dates stated in this article, please notify Dale R. Thompson, Avy Awards Committee, through the AFA Home Office in Phoenix, Arizona.

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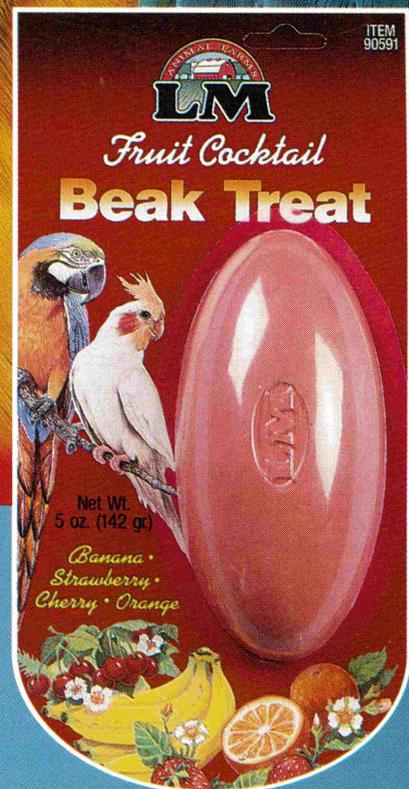


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up in their permanent cage in our breeding facility where they were housed in one unit of a four-unit cage. Their unit measured 4' x 3' x 3' with wooden panels sandwiched between their unit and the adjoining ones. At this particular time these were the only South Pacific birds we owned and the birds in the other units were Amazons. We originally hung a wooden nest box measuring 10" square by 14" high that was lined with pine shavings.

On March 2, 1991 we found two eggs in the nest and a third the following day. The eggs measured 1.014 mm wide by 1.235 mm long. We candled at ten days and all three were found to be fertile. At 2-1/2 weeks we again checked the eggs and found numerous cracks in the shells and the chicks dead. We examined the shells closer and noted that they were very thin.

On April 5th, 7th, and 9th, 1991, the hen again laid fertile eggs. The same problem occurred with the cracks and soft shells and all three chicks died. We determined that one of the problems was with the nest-box, as the eggs bumped against the sides of the box whenever the hen moved. At this point we decided to add extra vitamin D-Cal-Fos to the seed mixture. We also decided to change the nest box to an L-shaped box measuring 10" square and 14" high with a 14" length to the boot. We felt this would eliminate her jumping on the eggs whenever she entered the box. At this time we also decided to change the nesting material to Eucalyptus shavings.

On June 1st, 3rd and 6th, 1991, three more eggs were found. When we opened the box to check on the eggs they almost fell out as they were sitting directly at the opening of the boot. Fertility was obvious by seven days and we opted again to leave the eggs with the hen. We candled them every five days and were pleased to note that the chicks were growing nicely. You could tell by the light that these shells were harder than the first two clutches.

Since we were not sure of the incubation period we started to add papaya to the birds' diet on the 20th day of incubation. We do this with all our pairs of birds since papaya carries a lot of natural vitamins and enzymes. The chicks hatched on June 23rd, 24th and 26th, 1991 and we had no problems with the parents feeding them. The male would feed the hen

who would then in turn feed the chicks.

The chicks were pulled on July 8, 1991 for handfeeding. They were fed Pretty Bird Hand Rearing formula (12 percent) which was very watered down for the first two days. On the 3rd day the formula was mixed as directed and fed this way until the babies reached five weeks. At five weeks of age we supplemented the formula with commercial jars of baby food (banana, papaya, squash, beans, peas, etc.) and at six weeks plates of finely chopped apples, oranges, potato, cooked beans, rice and frozen mixed vegetables were introduced. The chicks tried these immediately.

All three babies weaned at approximately eight weeks of age and fledged on August 2, 1991.

The largest problems we have had owning the pair and subsequently have chicks is the confusion of the species. Most bird owners consider them Crimson-winged Parrots or some sub-species of them. Since the hatch of the chicks we have tried unsuccessfully to locate additional birds to increase our stock. We cannot find anyone who has the species. We contacted Zoogen for DNA testing and had to pull blood from the parents in order to get a line for Timor Red-winged Parrots. This allows us to have the chicks sexed as they are not sexually dimorphic until much later. By visually checking at the age of six months we believe we have two males and one female. The samples of the parents came back clear so the babies are in the process of being done.

Another problem is the lack of information on the species. The most we have found in any source is description and location. No nesting, incubation or egg information is available.

We kept one of the chicks as a semi pet and the other two were kept in the same cage at the breeding facility. At about five months of age, the two were fighting constantly, and had to be separated as each was being plucked by the other. These are the two we believe to be males. They had become completely plucked.

An interesting note — the one we have kept as a pet is housed in the same room with our pet Amazons and cockatoo. By 6-1/2 months the bird began to talk and whistle. The sound is similar to a cockatiel but is clear just the same. ●

* Position open — contact regional vice president if interested

** Indicates 2 year term has been fulfilled. If no new interested party comes forward and indicates a desire to serve, incumbent remains in position.

For information about contacting any of these member clubs, please call that club's state coordinator.

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Photos by Ron and Joanne Schoenwald

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*Adult breeding pair
of Golden Conures.*

*The quintuplets pose for a formal
portrait dressed in their juvenile plumage.*

