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Joe and Gloria Krader

by Tony Bucci
 San Pedro, California

When Joe and Gloria moved from Seal Beach to their present residence in Yorba Linda, Gloria was to have her garden again. The back yard of the Seal Beach home was slowly taken over by Joe. Every bit of space was an aviary, and Gloria's garden was reduced to several potted plants in their living room.

As a result of Gloria's plea for equal rights and the necessity to save their marriage, they purchased a new home with a larger yard. Although the aviaries still dominate the space at their new location in Yorba Linda, Gloria has her garden.

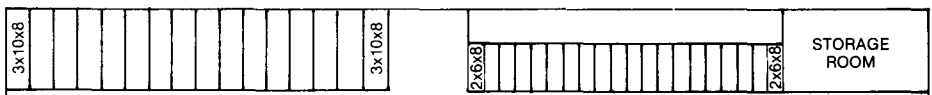
The aviaries form a "U"-shaped complex. The center area (30 x 40, which Gloria hoped would be a shaded garden) is totally enclosed and planted with shrubbery and some tall trees. The roof, besides being made of wire, is also covered with shade plastic netting.

Initially, this large enclosed shaded area had a few finches, which Gloria ac-

cepted as added beauty. Not more than a month later, Joe had snuck a few more finches in there, and the safety double door was installed at the entrance. There is no need to explain; Gloria lost her garden again. Fortunately, there is plenty of yard left outside of the aviaries where Gloria has established her new territory, and a rose garden is flourishing.

Gloria's shaded garden is no longer, but Joe's large planted aviary is an aviculturist's delight. Thirty by forty feet is quite a large area. Finches from almost all of the continents are represented in the collection. Flocks of Australian and African finches literally migrate from one end to the other end of the aviary.

When habitat offers the opportunity, it is interesting how most finches choose to nest in their natural way, instead of choosing the nest boxes. For instance, the owl finches build their nests in a low bush. One of the owl finch



nests I've seen was on the very top of the bush, three feet from the ground, a woven, dome-shaped nest with a small opening at the top. Alfalfa hay is the building material which all of the finches use readily.

Large baskets made of 4 x 4 inch wire mesh are attached to the side of the aviary to hold alfalfa. The large baskets full of hay also make good nesting sites for finches.

Shelves with boxes full of alfalfa also make a good site for nesting. As I approached these shelves many diamond sparrows flew out from their hay-domed nests. I observed many nests on the ground or close to the ground. Some are partially dug in the ground with the hay dome over them. These are the nests of Peter's twin spots. Other birds for which I have observed nests on or close to the ground are red ear wax bills, quail finches, masked grass finches, Australian painted finch and lark finches.

The small flights which house hook-bills and surround Joe's exquisite botanical finch flight are of different sizes. Sixty flights are 4' x 12' x 8' high; sixteen flights are 3' x 10' x 8' high; ten flights are 2' x 6' x 8' high. Each flight has a cement foundation 6" deep and 12" wide around the base of it, with sand in the center, one foot deep. The preassembled frames are made of 3/4 x 3/4 square tubing, with 1/2 x 1 welded wire on them.

Each flight is readily serviced from the aisle. The first five feet of each flight near the aisle is covered with plastic corrugated roofing. This area is accessed by a large door from the aisle. Also in this area is the nesting box, automatic drinker, and recycleable seed hoppers, which are serviced from the aisle.

The overhead water system supplies automatic drinkers. This system is very efficient, but Joe gives a word of cau-

tion. First, overhead pipes tend to heat the water. This is due to the exposure to the sun and the slow-dispensing drinkers, which create virtually stagnant water. Weekly flushing of the water system will eliminate any possible problems. The end of Joe's watering system is connected to the automatic sprinkling system of his yard, and therefore, daily automatic flushing is achieved.

A preventive measure that Krader uses with his birds twice a year is worming. One teaspoonful of "Tramisoll" or "Levasoll" per gallon of water and a little "Sweet & Low" added makes the solution more palatable. Removing all other water from the flight except the Tramisoll solution, the solution is left in the flight for 3 days, taken away for two days, and then again given for another 3 days.

Joe's psittacine collection consists mostly of medium-sized Australian parrots including the following: Kings, Barrabands, Rosellas, Twenty-eight, Port Lincoln, Princess, Red-capped, Rock Pebbler, all grass parakeets and their mutations, Moustached parakeet, Swift, Many-color, and Crimson wing.

The basic all-year diet for the Krader's psittacine birds is sunflower seeds (medium black), and parakeet mix (42% canary). Alternate supplements are apples, oranges, greens (Swiss chard and comfrey), corn-on-the-cob, and carrots.

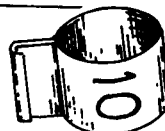
Krader is an accredited bird judge and has judged many shows in past years. His specialty is hook bills and finches. He is a very active member of many bird clubs, and a staunch supporter of the A.F.A.

Joe does not mind visitors at his place, providing a phone call is made prior to the visit. And if you tell him you are an A.F.A. member, he will gladly show you his place!

Photos continued on next two pages.

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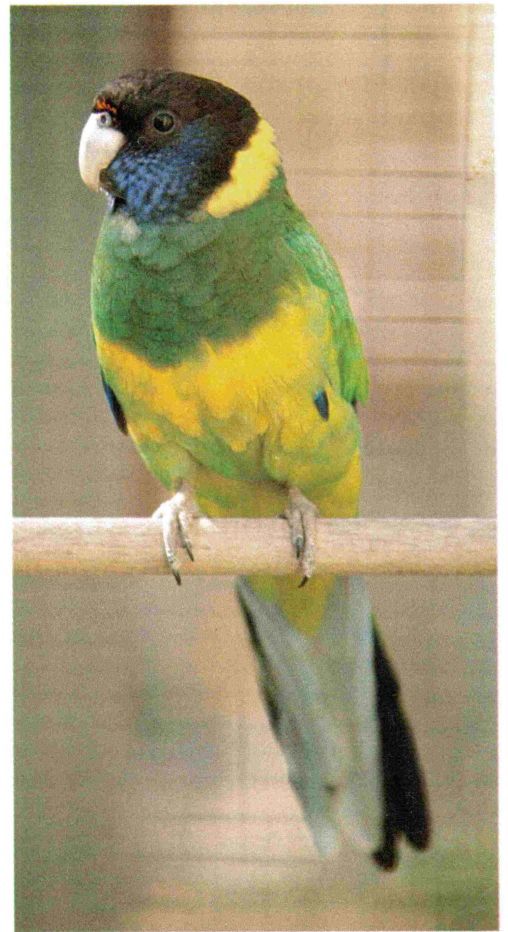


Joe and Gloria Krader in the rose garden.

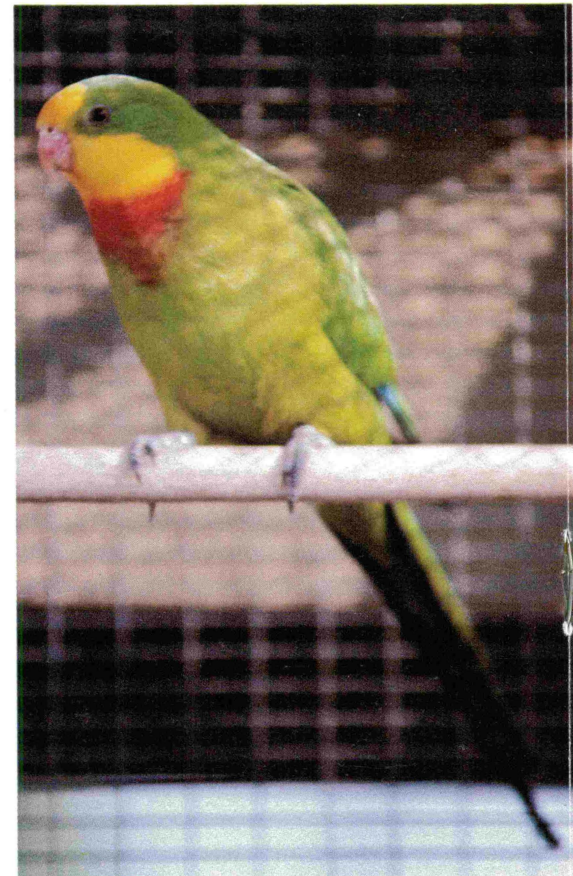


A view of the aviaries

A finch nest built upon the ground.



This twenty-eight parrot whistles a complete "Yankee Doodle."



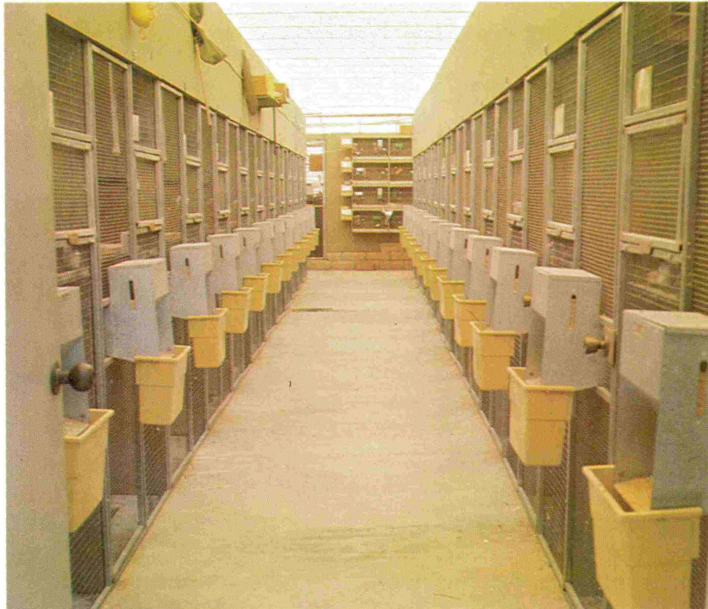
Barraband parrot — native to Australia.



The seed shelter in the large finch flight.

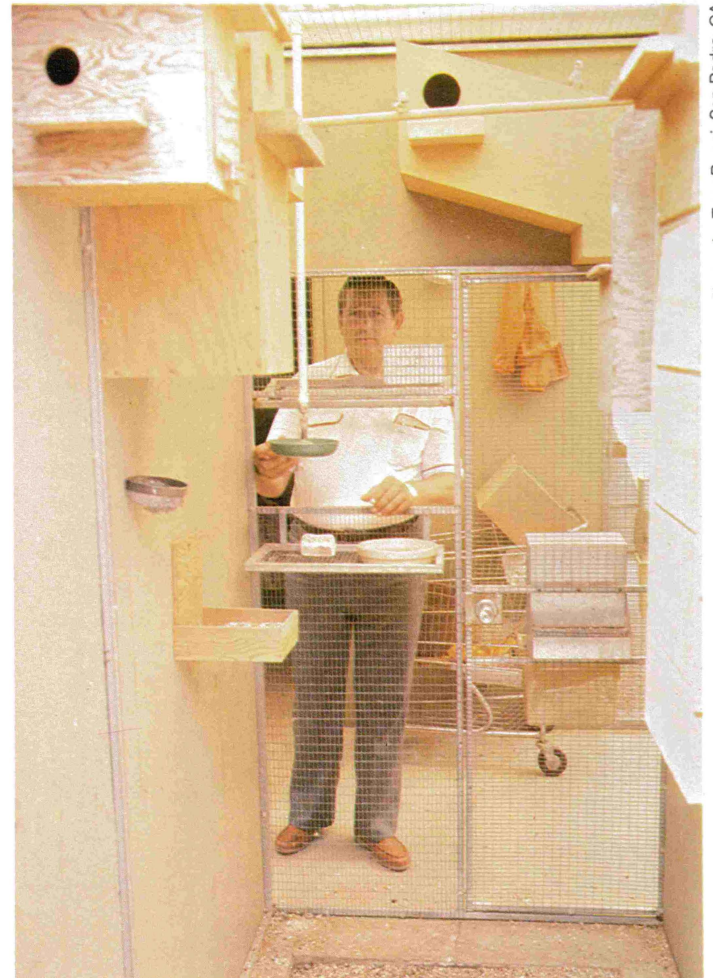


4" x 4" wire mesh basket stuffed with hay offer ideal nest sites for finches.



A view down one of the long service aisles. Note the seed hoppers.

From inside the flight looking toward the aisle. Note hanging waterer and food shelf that are easy to service from the aisle.



Photos by Tony Buccci, San Pedro, CA



The blue form of the Princess of Wales parrot.