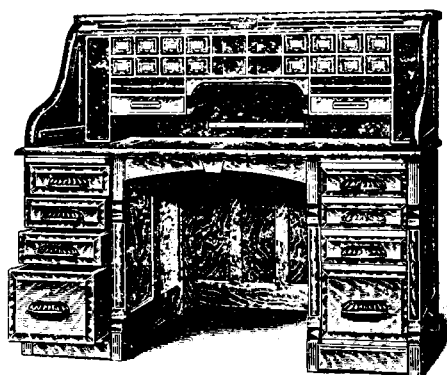


From The Editor's Desk

by Sheldon Dingle



Dear Editor:

My husband and I are quite interested in getting a bird or birds as pets. We have become interested in Cockatiels and the larger parakeets such as the Indian Ring-necked, etc. Any information you can give me will be most appreciated. We want to see as many birds as possible before we make our decision.

Thank you,
L. Kasowski
California

Pet birds can be most delightful but they can also be rather disastrous. Some species of birds have a propensity toward being good pets. Other species never seem to take to close captivity and human attention. Most of the Amazon parrots, the various Cockatoos, and the Macaws are often kept as pets. The Indian Ring-neck is not often kept although I know of a few specimens that have been fine pets. Rosellas tend to be too flighty and unhappy when kept as a pet but again, I know of one beautiful pet Golden Mantled Rosella. If you can get a young hand-fed parrot your chances of having a good pet will be greatly increased. Of course, each bird is its own person, as it were. They have strong personalities that may differ very much from bird to bird even within a single species. My wife has wonderful luck raising pet birds. They turn out friendly, learn to talk, and are in all respects good pets. When I attempt to tame a bird there is always some question regarding who trained whom. I usually end up chirping and whistling while the bird remains mute. I wonder what that means. Hmmm.

Editor

Dear Sir:

I thought you might like to see this picture [a normal Peach Faced Lovebird showing a lot of red feathers down its breast and one its wings]. I have five of these to date; one pair has some babies but I'm not sure how many yet. I'll look in the box next weekend. The picture is

of my best colored bird. She is about four years old and has layed one egg this year but she then stopped. Perhaps she is too fat.

K.L. Davis
Marysville, California

The picture is quite interesting. There have been a number of abnormally red lovebirds in the last few years. Two years ago I had four very yellow pied Peach Face that had beautiful candy-stripe red bars all through their wings. The contrast of red on yellow was beautiful. My red striped birds came out of two different colonies so I assumed the odd coloration was not genetic. I took the birds to the Las Vegas breeding set-up to see if they would breed true and produce red-striped offspring. Alas, the four birds molted out and their new feathers came in without a trace of red on them. The birds are still together and should soon produce babies but I don't expect any red ones.

In Diseases of Cage and Aviary Birds (Petrak, 1969) there is a brief discussion of carotenoids, which are pigments that give birds their orange and red colors. Petrak says, "Carotenoids are deposited in diffuse, non-granular form and, for the most part, cannot be synthesized by birds. They are ingested in plant and some animal foods and are deposited, often unaltered chemically, in feathers and soft parts. These pigments alone, can act to produce a startling array of colors, textures, and patterns."

I assume that in the red Peach Face the birds metabolism got a little out of hand and some of the carotenes were deposited in abnormal places. I don't really know. Any information on this subject would be appreciated. You might also contact the African Love Bird Society. They may have more complete knowledge regarding these red Love Birds.

Editor

Dear Editor:

For the benefit of readers who may never have seen an albino or blue Indian

Ringneck Parakeet other than as pictured on the cover of the April/May 1977 Watchbird, I would like to comment that the tail feathers of all of the pictured birds had been worn off and quite soiled from climbing on the aviary wire and walking on the earthen floor of the aviaries. The tails of the albino and the blue are particularly bad. The tail feathers of all of these would normally be slightly longer than those of the pictured green and lutino and the undersides should not be stained. When the pictures were taken we did not have a huge selection of birds to choose from.

Name Withheld by Request

An old Oxford professor once told his class, "Never apologize; Never explain." The photograph is a masterpiece and the birds are fantastic. We have received a plethora of accolades regarding that cover picture. Our thanks to the photographer, Janee Salan, and to you for your cooperation and for your dedication to aviculture. Very few people have had the foresight and patience to produce such stunning color mutations in the parrot family.

For you readers who can't live without owning a few albino or blue Ringneck Parakeets there are one or two birds available. Please write a note to this editor indicating your interest in the mutation birds and their owner will contact you.

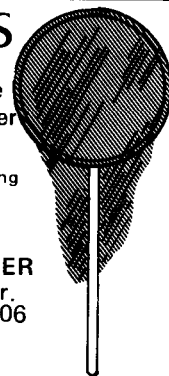
Editor
continued on next page

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Dear Editor:

I don't want to use your magazine as a place for contention or strife but it is a good place for an exchange of views. Since the last conflict between me and Mr. Moore regarding the scientific name of the Gouldian Finch I have done some research and have written a short article expressing my opinion and understanding of the situation.

You and I have visited and are friends but perhaps the readers of this magazine should know that I am not of Anglo-Saxon origin. It may not occur to your readers but often the English way of thinking is not like it should be and it sometimes seems strange.

Edward Vladislav Necek
Parkside, South Australia

You are quite welcome to express your views in this column; and a little contention shouldn't harm anyone. Your article on nomenclature and taxonomy is printed in this issue for all of the readers to study. In a forthcoming edition of the "Watchbird" Mr. Steven R. Wylie, Curator of Birds at the St. Louis, Missouri Zoo, will present an article on Avian Nomenclature and Taxonomy. Thus, we shall have two approaches - the serious aviculturists', and that of the professional bird man.

Regarding the English way of thinking - I am not sure if you mean that your foreign way of thinking in English is not like it should be or that the Anglo-American way of thinking is not like it should be. No doubt both interpretations are valid.

Editor

Gentlemen:

I beseech your aid regarding cage wire. I wish to build a flight cage in my living room. The only type of cage wire that looks half way decent inside an apartment is the 1/2" by 6" wire used on commercial cages. Can you please tell me where I can purchase finch spaced wire such as this or some other suitable wire? The only wire I can find in my neighborhood is the 1/4" by 1/4" hardware cloth or the 1/2" by 1" weldwire. These both look terrible in a living room.

E. Kohan
Hallandale, Florida

There are several alternatives. You might move to a more promising neighborhood - one with a larger selection of wire - or you might drive up to Miami which is about fifty miles north, I believe. In a large town such as Miami you should be able to find what we call half inch aviary netting which is quite suitable for a finch cage indoors. If you don't drive,

you can call the Miami hardware stores and arrange for them to have some wire delivered.

The aviary netting is rather thin wire and if you paint it with a dark colored non-toxic paint it will be almost invisible on the front of your cage. It will reflect very little light and your vision will be attracted to the bright, flitting finches. I'm sure you can make a most delightful and entertaining display.

Dear Sir:

I am a member of your organization and a bird lover forever. I have a question. A number of people have told me that they have never given stones, grit, or shell to their birds of the type that have gizzards. I find this hard to believe. Is there some type of diet that is so soft that the bird wouldn't require grit?

S. Tahri
San Francisco, California

Peanut-butter sandwiches, banana creme pie, biscuits and gravy, tea and

crumpets, beer, coffee, etc., etc., etc., are all foods that are soft enough to digest without grit. Don't laugh! A rather large number of caged birds in the sundry parlours of our country subsist on a diet quite like that I've listed. Granted, the birds only hold out for about a fourth of their normal life span but then one can always buy a new bird. Come to think of it, most youngsters I know eat about the same sort of ill-conceived food and, God knows, there is no shortage of kids.

In Bird Diseases (Annall and Keymer, 1975) Dr. L. Annall says, "Insoluble grit is essential in the diet for seed eating birds which have a well developed muscular gizzard. Special grit for cage birds can be purchased, but where birds are kept in aviaries with a soil base this is not so important as the birds may find suitably sized particles for themselves."

The next time someone tells you that they never feed their bird grit deliver them a vigorous bash with your purse and stalk off with great indignation.

Editor

CLASSIFIED ADS

CLASSIFIED RATES - \$3.00 minimum charge for 4 lines of type (average 7 words per line). Additional charge of 9¢ per word for ad running over 28 words. (28 words to include name, address and phone.) All copy to be **RECEIVED BY 15th day of month preceding publication.**

BIRDS FOR SALE: Complete line of birds, large and small, from Canaries to Cockatoos. Call or write for our newest price list. All birds U.S.D.A. quarantine released and guaranteed healthy. Call now! SMITH'S EXOTIC AVIARIES, P.O. Box 305, Herndon, VA. 22070. Call (703) 620-2222.

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WANTED: Information on Feral Amazon Parrots - for graduate research on behavior and ecology of So. Cal. populations. Numbers, species, locations, activities, etc. Jeff Froke, Box 174, Sierra Madre, CA 91024. (213) 355-3685.

Hyacinthine Macaws, tame, \$4,000; Palm Black Cockatoos, tame, \$3,500 or best offer. Private party. Box 014116, Miami, Florida 33101.

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WANTED: pair Stanley Rosellas, unrelated, healthy birds, and one Many-color hen (P. varius). **FOR SALE:** One Massena's Lorikeet. Rudy Yarbrough, 2155 Ferry, Salem, OR 97301, (503) 585-8074.

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WANTED: Zebra Finches in quantities of 150 to 1000. Looking for 1st class birds - top prices paid. Write to Novak's Aviary, 113 K Brook Ave., Deer Park, NY 11729.

FOR SALE: Blue-eyed Sulphur Crested Cockatoo, exceptionally beautiful and super tame, has extensive vocabulary, does tricks, has made TV appearances. Price, \$3000. Also Black-capped Lorikeet - semi-tame, \$250.00. Phone (312) 338-4638 (Chicago) after 10 p.m. Wayne Weige.

Canaries: "American Singers" bred from A.S. banded birds. Crested and regulars, all colors, 1977 hatch. Will ship (reasonable prices). G. Gambino, 6566 Ave. A., New Orleans, LA. 70124. (504) 488-2079.

FOR SALE: Baby Chattering Lories, Rainbow Lories. \$150 each. Marianne Hayes, Route 5, Box 135-B, Denton, Texas 76201. (817) 382-7097.

FOR SALE: 1 pair adult Umbrella Cockatoos in immaculate condition, \$1500. Abyssinian Lovebirds, \$90.00 each. Young unsexes Ring-necked Parrakeets, \$50.00 each. Young Philippine Green Parrots, \$450.00 each. 1 pair European Gold Finches, \$150.00. Male Red-headed Lady Gould, young domestic breed, \$75.00 each. **WANTED:** Hen Lady Gould, Male Blue & Gold Macaw - tame or semi-tame, breeding age. HAPSBURG KENNELS & AVIARIES, 14043 24th Ave. S., Seattle, WA 98168. (206) 243-2160.

WANTED: Parrots, Cockatoos, Macaws, maimed - defective, or otherwise unsaleable; free of disease, for private collector with limited funds. Good permanent home. Bethany Franco, 320 Farmington Ave., Hartford, CT. 06105. After 6 p.m. call (203) 527-9941.

Fishers Lovebirds (Green) Dec. 76 - \$45.00 ea. PEACHFACE MUTATIONS: Green Split White and Blue - \$100.00 ea. Green Split Blue and pos. White - \$45.00 ea. Blue - \$85.00 ea. RED RUMPS (Spring 77) - \$115.00 pr. 5% Discount for AFA members. Clifton R. Witt, 5615 Nevada Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20015. (202) 686-0658.

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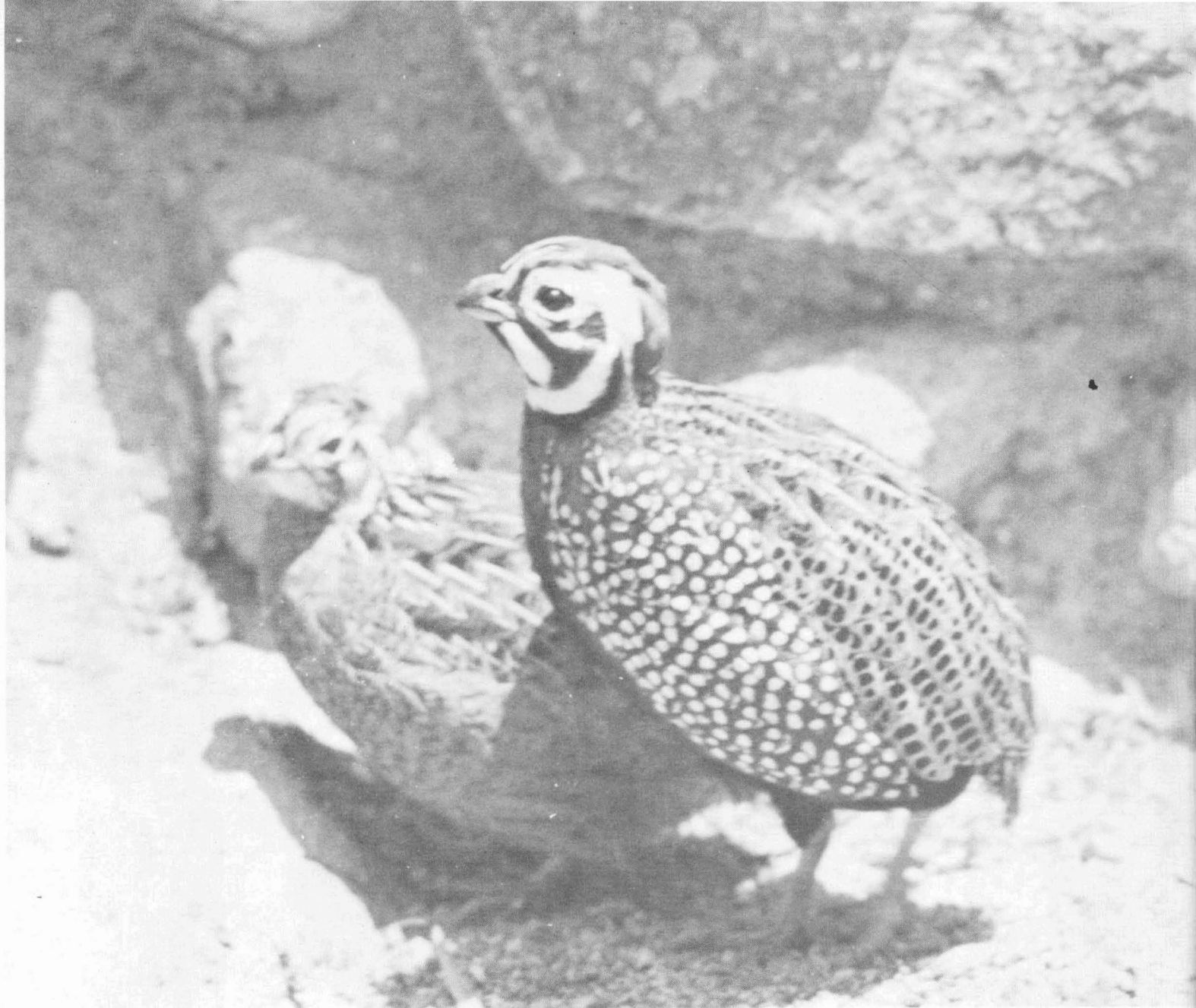
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