

# AFA AVY AWARD CATEGORIES & RULES

By Linda S. Rubin

The deadline is approaching to apply for the most celebrated and esteemed awards presented in American aviculture for those who qualify, the prestigious AFA AVY Awards. The AVY's are considered the highest awards bestowed in U.S. aviculture.

Categories are open to AFA members and in some instances—other aviculturists or institutions—who have uniquely distinguished themselves in challenging and difficult areas of aviculture.

Although it is not mandatory to award all categories every year, nominations in all areas are encouraged.

Nominations for each award category must be submitted by Dec. 31, 2010, to AVY Awards Committee Chairwoman Linda S. Rubin at LSR@CockatielsPlusParrots.com.

Nominees will be published in a future issue of the AFA *Watchbird* and AFA in Brief. Awards merited for previous years will be considered for presentation at the 2011 AFA convention when confirmed by the committee.

## U.S. FIRST BREEDING AVY AWARDS

1. Nominations for a First Time Breeding must be within the past five years (exceptions are permitted by committee ruling).

2. Nominees must have bred the species for a First Breeding within the United States.

3. The nominee does not have to be a member of AFA.

4. Each nominee must submit an article, inclusive of dates, on the avicultural details of the First Breeding, which will be submitted to the AFA *Watchbird*. The editor of the AFA *Watchbird* will form an article for publication if all relevant facts are included.

5. Nominations may be submitted by the breeders of the First Breeding or by any other individual or Affiliated Club.

6. Nominees for a First Breeding must establish that the young of the U.S. First Breeding are completely weaned and self-sufficient before submitting the nomination. Birds that are not weaned before nomination deadline (due to late hatching dates in that calendar year), should be nominated the following year after self-sufficiency has been proven.

7. Confirmation of First Breeding nominations will be verified through the AFA Awards Committee.

8. Nominations for First Breeding Awards will be published in the AFA *Watchbird* to aid in their confirmation.

9. Scientific names will be used from Maron, Boch & Farrand Jr.

10. Only identifiable subspecies will be given recognition. Subspecies of an avian species that has already been bred in the U.S. will not be awarded unless there is sufficient documentation on both the species previously bred, and the subspecies nominated, provided that there is little difference. The AVY Awards Committee will make the final decision.

11. Nominations must be submitted by Dec. 31 of the nominating year. The award will be presented at the AFA convention the following year, which will allow the Awards Committee time to confirm the First Time Breeding.

## Nomination Requirements for First Breeding Awards

Nominees must submit a completed copy of the Breeding History questionnaire.

Nominees must submit photographs of both weaned young and of the parent birds for the purpose of documentation and species identification.

Nominees must submit a name, address, and phone number, of a witness other than the breeder. Confirmed nominee must submit a completed article for publication in AFA *Watchbird*.

## ZOO CATEGORY AVY AWARDS

### CATEGORY I. Most Progress for the Establishment of an Individual Species or Group of Related Birds.

Category I recognizes aviculturists who have made the effort to successfully breed a species or related group of birds on a consistent basis.

Success must be achieved with a minimum of two pair, or through the second generation if it pertains to a single species.

The Awards Committee will judge whether establishment is achieved. Birds with a shorter reproductive life span (such as finches), will need greater numbers produced than birds that have longer reproductive life spans (such as parrots).

The difficulty of each species to reproduce offspring will be taken into consideration by the committee.

### Category II. Breeding a Difficult Species

Breeding a significant or highly difficult species reflects the obvious use of sound Management techniques. This category eliminates chance breedings and must be well documented.

## Nomination Requirement for Zoo Categories

Nominations for the Zoo Category awards may be made by zoo personnel from the nominating institution.

Achievements must have occurred within the United States.

Confirmation of a Zoo Category award nomination will be verified through the Awards Committee.

Nominations must include detailed written qualifications for the institution nominated for the Zoo Category award.

Nominations for a Zoo Category award must be submitted by Dec. 31 of the nominating year.

The award will be presented the following year at the AFA Convention, which allows the committee time to confirm the nomination.

## **GOLD AVY: HONOR AWARD**

The Gold AVY Award is merited for individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to aviculture. The Gold AVY is not solely an achievement award, although achievement may be part of the overall contribution.

The Gold AVY Award is a once in a lifetime award and may be given posthumously.

Nominations for the Gold AVY Award must be submitted by an Affiliated Club and not by an individual.

Nominations for the Gold AVY Award must be for an individual and does not include research institutions, clubs, or organizations, etc.

Nominees for the Gold AVY Award must be a member of AFA, or a member of an AFA Affiliated Club.

Nominations must be as detailed as possible in order to provide enough information to aid the work of the Award Committee.

Nominations must be submitted by Dec. 31 to be awarded at the AFA convention the following year.

## **SILVER AVY AWARDS**

### **CATEGORY I. Most Progress for the Establishment of an Individual Species or Group of Related Birds.**

This category recognizes aviculturists who have made the effort to successfully breed an individual species or related group of birds on a consistent basis.

Success must be achieved with a minimum of two pairs of

birds, or through the second generation if involving a single species.

The Awards Committee will judge whether establishment is achieved.

Birds with shorter reproductive life spans (such as finches), will need greater numbers produced than birds that have longer reproductive life spans (such as parrots).

The difficulty of each species to reproduce offspring will be taken into consideration by the committee.

### **CATEGORY II. Breeding a Significant or Highly Difficult Species**

Breeding a significant or highly difficult species reflects the obvious use of sound management techniques.

This category eliminates chance breedings and must be well documented.

### **CATEGORY III. Progress in Establishing New Mutations in the United States**

This category demonstrates achievement in establishing a new mutation that has not yet been established in the United States.

To qualify, offspring visible for the mutation must be bred, and demonstrate self-sufficiency, through the second generation. Birds that are not weaned before nomination deadline (due to late hatching dates in that calendar year), should be nominated the following year after self-sufficiency has been proven.



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#### CATEGORY IV. Progress in Show Standards

This category covers birds for which there are written show standards and show classifications.

An exhibitor's bird must have won three or more national level shows (may include annual specialty/large regional shows), judged by three or more certified panel judges, with a bird bred by the exhibitor.

All wins must be achieved by a single entry wearing a closed, coded leg band with a published show report record of the recorded win.

The Awards Committee will determine the inclusion of annual specialty/regional shows based on the number of entries and exhibitors.

#### BRONZE: AVY APPRECIATION AWARD

The AVY Appreciation Award is for individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to an AFA affiliated club. This is not an award for avicultural success, but for personal work for an affiliated club that is of an exceptional nature.

1. Nominations for the AVY Appreciation Award must be nominated by the affiliated club of which the nominee is a member. The nomination must be signed by the president and all members of the board of directors, even if the nominee is a member of the affiliated club's board of directors.

2. The individual nominated for an AVY Appreciation Award

must be an individual member of AFA.

3. Nominees may be either individuals or a married couple. If a married couple is nominated, their qualifications must be the same and for the same reasons.

4. Only one nomination per affiliated club, per calendar year, can be submitted by the deadline of Dec. 31 of the nominating year.

5. Up to three nominations for the AVY Appreciation Award will be awarded each year by the AVY Award Committee. The Awards Committee is not required to use all three awards if there are not enough nominations, or if the committee believes there is insufficient data received or that nominations do not merit the award.

6. Each winning nomination will receive an AVY Appreciation Award and each Affiliated Club to which the winning member belongs will be rewarded with a \$50 cash award going directly to the Affiliated Club.

7. Confirmation of an AVY Appreciation Award will be verified only through the AFA Awards Committee.

8. The more detailed the nomination, the easier it is for the Awards Committee to make a correct decision.

9. An AVY Appreciation Award may only be received once in a lifetime, unless the award is from a different AFA Affiliated Club.

10. Nominations not receiving an award may resubmit the following year, as it does not necessarily mean they were not qualified.



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**RISSER, cont. from p. 12**

enterprise was the departure of a female Blue-shouldered Robin Chat (*Cossypha cyano-campter*) to the Chicago Zoological Park (Brookfield Zoo). This small bird had arrived at San Diego in 1965, a gift from the famous aviaries of Edgar Marshall Boehm (Dolan, 1966) and had lived for years by itself in the hummingbird aviary. The Brookfield Zoo held a male received in the late 1970s. San Diego's hen raised a startling number of chicks in Chicago, as late as 1984, when it would have been at least 19 years old!

I have included bird breeding statistics for 1996 (the last year for which the *International Zoo Yearbook* published breeding records) and (as best

I was able, from the International Species Inventory System) for 2009, to demonstrate the rather remarkable stability of the San Diego Zoo Bird collection over the decades after Art's curatorship. Though probably somewhat smaller than actually the case, the figure of 73 taxa for 2009 is surprisingly similar to the 70 for 1985 and the 75 for 1974. The most recent collection statistics I have are for the end of 2007, when 1,964 birds of 364 taxa were present. At the end of 1996 there were 1,652 specimens of 411 taxa.

The 1996 records stand out for the remarkable number of taxa bred—and a complete shift in emphasis in the sorts of birds propagated. Most striking are the 20 taxa of pigeons and doves, with half of them

traditionally considered softbills. There are also 11 other sorts of non-passerine softbills and 14 passerine softbills. On the other hand, only 14 psittacine taxa appear, fewer than half the number hatched in 1984. Comparison between these statistics and those for 2009 show remarkable consistency in the numbers and proportions of pigeons, psittacines and softbills propagated.

Around the same time in 1986 that Art Risser became general manager of the San Diego Zoo and Al Lieberman succeeded him as curator of birds at the zoo, Jim Dolan became director of Animal Collections for both the zoo and the park. In fewer than two years the bird collection had undergone dramatic changes. The "Bird Yard," where, since

the 1930s a major proportion of the parrot collection had been exhibited, was transformed into a another series of geographically themed planted aviaries. Whereas the parrots surplusd during Art's curatorship had often been single specimens, or in non-breeding situations, breeding colonies of species well established in U.S. and American private aviculture now made way for displays of softbills and other more esoteric birds. The late Marvin Jones told me Jim expressed consternation that Indian Ring-necked Parakeets were still part of the collection in 1986 (Table IV). Likewise, the extensive series of Australian parrots was largely dispersed. In their place arrived the largest series of pigeons and doves exhibited at one

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time in an American zoo, with an encyclopedic emphasis on fruit-eating species.

I have heard some people credit Art with the reduction of San Diego's parrot collection. Actually, the person who really de-emphasized parrots there was the same man who made the collection encyclopedic to begin with. Jim Dolan began his career with the Zoological Society of San Diego in the early 1960s when he arrived from the Catskill Game Farm as Associate Curator of Birds. The explosion of the zoo's bird collection from around 600 taxa at the beginning of the 1960s, to more than 800 in 1964, to over a thousand a year later, was, in to a considerable extent, due to Jim's influence. In those years, the parrot collection was a "particular interest" of his (Dolan, 1966) and it grew to more than 200 taxa by the time he assumed new duties in 1969, as general curator of the San Diego Wild Animal Park. The Wild Animal Park opened in 1972 and immediately took on a life of its own. Along with building the enormous collection of hoofed animals, he assembled a major bird collection in a very short time, specializing for a time in waterfowl, then emphasizing hornbills and other softbills, achieving several North American first breedings fewer than two years after the park opened. Off-exhibit breeding facilities were constructed at the Park by the late 1970s and by the mid-1980s, the bird collection was the third largest in the U.S., with only San Antonio standing between the Wild Animal Park and the zoo. Of

course, the programs of the zoo and the park are inextricably woven together, but if I attempted to discuss them in them here, this would be a much longer account.

The collection of Ptilinopus was inaugurated during Art's curatorship, with the arrival of Yellow-breasted Fruit Doves in 1980 and Superb Fruit Doves in 1985. Lou Ordonez, a long-time bird keeper, whose father had worked for K.C. Lint, brought back a long-anticipated collection of several species, directly from the Philippines, in 1987. In the next several years, Jim Dolan greatly expanded the zoo's representation of this genus (as evidenced in Table V), acquiring an startling array of species from Irian Jaya, Sumatra and other places in Indonesia, commercially imported through Europe with the collaboration of the legendary dealer and broker Fred Zeehandelaar. In the same way, an amazing series of other birds arrived from around the world in the late 1980s and through the '90s. These included extensive series of laughing thrushes, cotingas, rollers, hornbills, starlings and many other softbills.

In former days, such a collection would have made a marvelous exhibit and that would have been the end of it. But with the creation of the Avian Propagation Center, the aforementioned renovation of public exhibits and the training of an energetic, expanded staff who expected to achieve breakthroughs in propagating "non-traditional" avicultural subjects, the results were startling, as seen in Tables V

and VI. The accomplishments of Art's decade as curator of birds paved the way for an entirely different approach to avian husbandry, when the scarcity of birds he initially contended with gave way to unexpected opportunities to work with species no one would have imagined seeing in America in 1974.

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