



Falconry, Conservation and the Future

By Rebecca O'Connor

Falconry and aviculture have gone hand in hand for thousands of years. Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II, perhaps one of the most well-known falconers in history was also a parrot lover. His pet umbrella cockatoo was unique to 13th-century Europe. Frederick's tome on falconry is still read in translation by modern falconers. The numbers of birds

Considerations When Raising Galliformes

By Dann Dunst

Eggs, chicks or adult birds may be purchased from people propagating the species of birds you desire. The best advice for the novice is to visit as many gamebird collections as possible.

Past, Present and Future of Aviculture

By Susan L. Clubb

First and foremost we need unity in the industry, all working toward the goal of solving problems. In the information age, education of current, and future, pet bird owners will be paramount to creating a tipping point towards enlightened bird ownership. And this educational effort should be part of operations for all aspects of the industry. Topics of



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At the 2011 AFA convention, with the theme “Jewels in Aviculture,” AFA is busy changing to meet the demands of the future of aviculture -not only in who is attending the AFA convention, but in what they’re gaining and contributing to the convention experience. Take for instance **Lynn Hall**, a veteran attendee with over 20 years of AFA conventions under his belt... “I noticed the enthusiasm, and I liked to see that,” he said in reference to this year’s convention. With having been to different animal and bird events, “the enthusiasm is gone,” Hall said. At AFA however, the enthusiasm is alive today, which he believes is important.

Also on Hall’s mind was more talk about bird breeding. “I’ve gone to bird events where there’s nothing but pet bird people.” With an eye toward the future of aviculture, he said he hopes for “a future for the birds.” “Seeing they don’t get regulated out.” At one time, Hall opposed the importation of birds. His current opinion on the matter has changed. “Yes, you can still bring them in, but they (should) have to go through the breeders, not the hobbyists, not the pet stores or anything else. There’s enough captive breeding to put into market; if we have the patience to work on it.” Hall is an avid bird breeder and aviculturist, as well as a Lifetime Member and supporter of AFA.

With a different perspective in the bird world is **Athena Wilson**, an avian keeper with the San Diego Zoo. “For me a big thing has been networking” she said about her first AFA convention. “My boss is the one that recommended I come here” she said. Though not a bird owner herself, she said that many of the keepers who typically attend these kinds of programs also breed birds. “It would be nice to attract other keepers that don’t do that on the side” Wilson said. “There’s a lot of information out there that can be learned for us, too.”



With emphasis on private breeding and pet birds, she said, “I can’t really apply that to my job, but it’s still interesting.”

Having found it challenging to find topics pertaining to her line of work, she envisions future AFA conventions having topics, “that would attract more zoo people.” For instance, she said, “with a zoo setting, you have to make it as natural as possible, so we can’t provide general rainbow toys and things like that. Guests don’t want to see that.” By having vets, and aviculturists with a background or degree in zoology, talk on subjects with a broader, more generalized scale in mind allows her to gain more education to apply towards her work with the birds at the zoo.

AFA Visits the Oakland Zoo

During the convention field trip to the Oakland Zoo the participating attendees could be seen hiking though the uphill and downhill slopes familiar to the San Francisco area as they hurried to see the small zoo’s exhibits. An aerial ride offered a unique view of some of the exhibits, including the mature male lion who watched the riders like a dog watches a child’s ice cream cone from below, waiting for some to drop off. Though not boasting many birds, the zoo featured a few aviaries for viewing and a flock of flamingos. Keeping flamingo lady, **Carol Stanley**, in mind as I wandered the gift shop, I couldn’t help but make note of where each flamingo item lay in the store and whether it might be of interest to Carol. Sure enough! On her way in as I left the shop, Carol asked if they had anything flamingo, to which I replied, “They sure do!”

Raffles and Silent Auctions

The gift shop flamingos reminded me of the wonderful raffles and silent auction items at every AFA convention. These are the highlights of the convention for me! What a great job the raffle ladies **Pat Chinnici** and **Nora Schmidt** do for AFA,!

There are terrific donations from so many people. It was certainly pleasant to be my home state of California, with the ability to finally bid on the big, heavy stuff and know that I would get it all home. It was fun as well to see specific auction items and

AFA 2011 Convention

2011 AFA Convention



know exactly who was going to want to win that item, no matter the cost; such as **Nancy Speed** with the Golden Conure poster, and **Walt Frey** with the Cockatoo poster. Although, I really hadn't pegged **Rockie Mooney** as wanting to win the Scarlet Macaw Barbie I had donated, but then again, you never really know your fellow club members until you go to an AFA convention!

Younger People Spotted at the Convention

Rockie's son, **Nick Mooney**, and I discussed how there seemed to be a lot more young people here this year, although not necessarily for the workshops, but for AFA4Kids and family vacations. With both of us lifetime members of AFA, and from the same local club, we've watched all our friends in aviculture disappear. With me, I watched all my friends leave and discover the wonderful world of boys. Which is why it's so great to see other young people attending these events and taking a genuine

interest in birds. The parents of two such young people happened to be at this year's AFA convention. Though home, feeding baby birds, their children "are very involved in what we do, so they might not be involved on a club or an organization level, but they are involved in the feeding, the raising, the socialization, manufacturing of nestboxes and cages," said **Alycia Antheunisse**.

She and her husband, Eric, were both speakers at the AFA convention, and co-own Cedar Hill Birds, a commercial bird breeder for pet stores and retailers. They also have a bird store which they own and operate. Eric's first AFA convention attendance reaches past 14 years prior, with this year making a long-awaited second arrival and a warm welcome to first-time attendee Alycia. For her, "the ability to share with other people, and to be able to network with other people" was a definite plus. Putting a name to a face "strengthens the business bond as well as the friendship bond" she said, in reference to people they've communicated with for years, but never met.

Speaking Out About the Convention

From a speaker's perspective, the audience was interactive, said Alycia Antheunisse, with great questions and great overall reception of the talks being presented. Though not able to attend many workshops themselves, **Eric and Alycia Antheunisse** both said the lineup of talks and those attending was a good variety. Alycia said, "that's what makes aviculture successful, the different types of points of views that come together with one common goal." They'll be taking one such point of view from this convention to apply to their own practices, from speaker Steve Duncan's presentation.

Eric said, "I really feel like all my employees and myself are guilty of this." When **Steve Duncan** talks about nursery management, referring to how sweeping and vacuuming floors stirs the dander and contaminants into the air, it's "something that



when it's told to you it makes sense," he said. Hearing how Duncan rolls his cages out, sprays the floor to dampen the particles, and then wet mops the area clean is common sense, Eric said. "It's things like that, that are so simple, and you know about it, but it takes a different perspective for you to stand back and look," he said.

Another speaker this year was **Johanna "Jeleen" Briscoe**, DVM, Diplomate, ABVP (Avian), presenting on behalf of the USDA. Her presentation on the future of regulations pertaining to birds could have been daunting, save for the USDA's seeking the guidance and collective wisdom of AFA as it pertains to the keeping of birds. We're sure to be hearing more on this, which is why it's important to stay in the loop with AFA and encouraging every person you know with birds, to join and support AFA so that AFA can support individuals keeping birds as pets or in avicultural pursuits. Understanding what is being voted upon on a ballot comes from being informed, and making an informed decision thanks to the help of AFA's team disseminating information.

One thing I learned this year, is that it's a lot of work to build yourself an outdoor aviary, but there are a lot of pre-made structures you can convert and save yourself some effort, thanks to **Nyla Copp**'s presentation on Urban Aviaries. Living local, she was kind enough to bring a sample of the different bug mesh to show me the difference—how great is that? You don't find this kind of camaraderie or sense of pulling together to help each other everywhere you go nowadays, and even outside of the bird world. It's different at AFA...there's a sense of togetherness that AFA invokes, a sense that compared to the big picture of keeping and raising birds that applies to all of us, that differences must be set aside.

Importance of AFA

The importance of attending AFA conventions is far understated. Yes, it's fun to hang out with a group of people who are passionate about birds and don't find you the "odd one out" because you like birds. There are the great workshops and presenters, which each year are different than the last.

AFA needs to be every bird owner and breeder, bird show, pet and bird shop, zoo, and conservationist's first and top

resource for accurate and up-to-date bird related news and information regarding all aspects of birds, including laws and regulations around them. Anyone with any connection to birds, no matter the role or industry, needs to take an active role in AFA by keeping a membership, telling other people why they should care about their role with birds, and attend AFA, because AFA is the parent or umbrella that helps and looks out for everyone with a role with birds.

Your next opportunity is coming up! Please join us at AFA's 38th Annual Convention on Aug. 15, 2012, in San Antonio, Texas! What are you going to do to get yourself there? Keep in mind AFA's new payment plan, where you pay for your registration in monthly installments, and if flying, buy your airfare early for the best rates. Why not have your bird club JOIN AFA?

Feeling generous? Or perhaps your club wants to purchase an AFA membership and/or registration to put on your club's monthly raffle or fundraising event? There are many ways to get yourself and other people to AFA. What will be your role in ensuring AFA is big in Texas in 2012? You won't want to miss the fun of the River Walk and all the great food in San Antonio. Get a custom made pair of Luchese boots that not only look good, but feel good! The San Antonio Zoo is one of the best and there are going to be lots of other surprises, so plan to be there—we're looking forward to seeing you, too!

