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Photo by Chris Christman

Tribute to Mr. Gerald Schulman and the Aviculture Institute

by Dale Thompson
Canyon Country, California

Schulman at the speakers podium
February 1987 IFCB Symposium.

Editor's Note: It is with great regret and a true sense of loss that the avicultural world noted the withdrawal of Mr. Gerald Schulman from avicultural activity. Schulman headed a huge international business conglomerate of which aviculture was a small part. Due to shifting business responsibilities and in response to unexpected financial considerations, Schulman made the personally difficult decision to liquidate all his avicultural assets for the ultimate health of his entire operation. Never, to my knowledge, has one man entered aviculture in such a significant way and done so much good in so short a time.

In 1977 Mr. Gerald Schulman became involved in the exotic bird field. Little did we all know then that, through his high interest and unending energy, he would make a major impact in the many fields of aviculture: conservation, avian medicine, importation and ornithology.

In 1979, the International Foundation for the Conservation of Birds (IFCB) was founded by Gerry as a non-profit organization for the express purpose of contributing support to the many facets of conservation of exotic birds, both in captivity and in the wild.

Over the years many significant achievements were accomplished through the IFCB. One of the first was a major grant to the Zoological Society of San Diego toward the construction of their Avian Propagation Center. This facility aided the propagation of many species of exotic birds at the zoo including the first California condors that were removed as eggs from the wild and reared at the San Diego Zoo.

Through the IFCB, many field studies were done. These included a

hornbill study in Thailand which contributed new information on nesting and their behavior. An intensive study was done on penguins along the coast of Chile and Peru. This also led to more understanding of the effects of El Nino.

The IFCB hosted two international symposia, one in 1983 and another in 1987. Through these symposia an exchange of ideas and information was given in many fields. Speakers from around the world shared their expertise in fields of aviculture, ornithology, veterinary medicine and legislation. The information was published in two journals by the IFCB so that it would be accessible by any who needed the information.

Dr. Jean Delacour, noted ornithologist, aviculturist and author, was recognized at these symposia and they were named in his honor.

In the avicultural field, Schulman established two large facilities that initiated many new and exciting techniques in the propagation of large psittacines and in the estrildid finches. Through the years, many innovations in avian medicine, cage designs, diets and management were shared with the world of aviculture.

These facilities provided training for many aviculturists, veterinarians, pre-veterinarian students and biologists. In addition, various members of the staff have lectured, produced research papers, and consulted throughout the world in hopes of disseminating the knowledge, so that the successful captive propagation of avian species would become a closer reality.

Indeed, Mr. Schulman has contributed significantly to the world of aviculture and we thank him for it. ●

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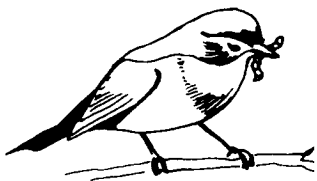
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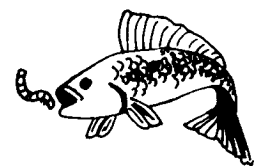
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