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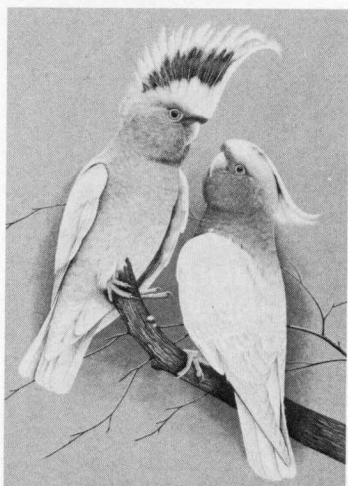
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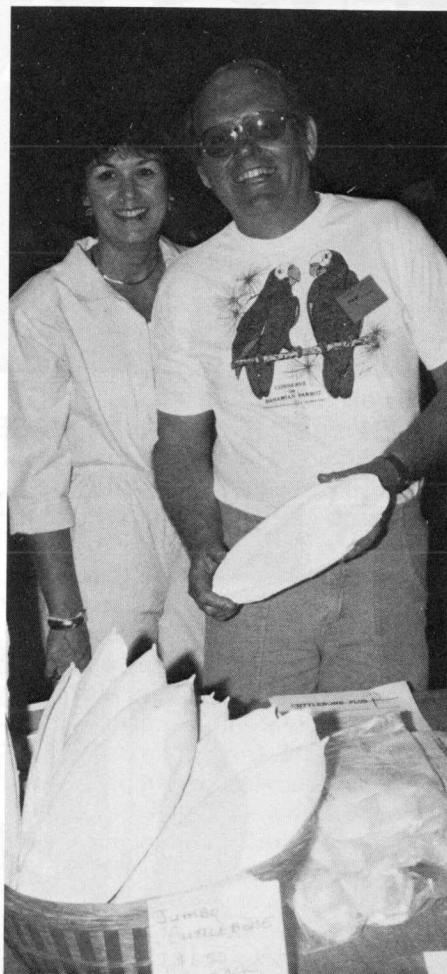


Photo by M. Jean Hessler

*Dick and Maurine Schroeder at their sales booth, March 27, '88 Bird Mart. Dick enjoys a side business of selling clean, fine grade super large cuttlebone.*

## AFA Visits a Member's Aviary...

# Dick and Maurine Schroeder

by Jerry Jennings  
Woodland Hills, California

Few aviculturists have not heard of Dick and Maurine Schroeder, at least on the West Coast. Dick and Maurine have been AFA members since AFA's beginning in 1974 and have continuously supported the AFA throughout the years. They have attended nearly every AFA convention and many regional meetings, an activity they have both immensely enjoyed. "We have met many interesting people at each conference, where we look forward to seeing old friends and making

new ones," Dick says. "Not only do you learn from the program, you learn what others are doing to solve particular problems," he adds.

Dick and Maurine have certainly learned a lot and they have put it to good use. Beginning with a small backyard, they have turned it into a veritable Garden of Eden. The variety of birds in the Schroeder aviaries is both surprising and interesting. Surprising in the numbers of different species kept, and interesting in their arrangement. Although the yard is almost completely filled with flights, they are arranged and landscaped inside and out in a way that leaves the impression there is far more space and garden than there actually is.

The first thing one sees is the large mixed species, planted flight attached to the house. A sliding glass window off the family room provides easy viewing from the comfort of the sofa. And interesting viewing it is. White cheeked touracos fly actively about — a whirlwind of motion. Double toothed barbets search for housing, a palm log to hollow out. Gold fronted leafbirds share a perch with Pekin robins, and southern lapwings strut about the pond, eyeing the red eared slider turtles surfacing and diving like miniature submarines within. Stilts and bustards share the aviary floor, and Bali mynahs fly overhead. All these residents coexist peacefully and most succeed in rearing young.

Occasionally, a resident or two of the communal flight must be removed, though not always due to incompatibility with their mates. Not too long ago, Dick was forced to remove a pair of fulvous breasted woodpeckers that had decided to nest in the wall of the house rather than the nest facility provided. After a couple repair jobs on the stucco, Dick decided to surplus them to another breeder who, of course, went on to obtain a first breeding in the species.

Lining the perimeter of the yard are a series of cages, large and small. Some simple, others planted, but all immaculate. Next to the community flight, one finds a row of lory cages, each suspended with a wire floor and housing one pair of rare lories. Among the various kinds of lories are ornate, Weber's, Meyer's, Stella's, DePanche's, iris, goldies, and the musk. Nearly all of them are nesting and a fine crop is expected.

Toucans also interest the Schroeders and they have managed to breed from three pairs representing three species:

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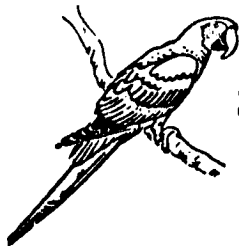
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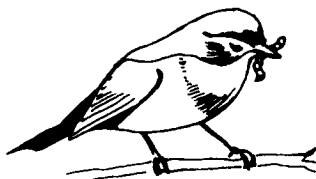
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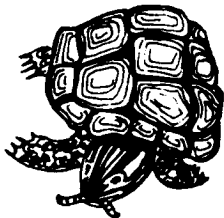
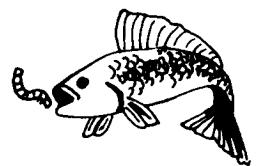
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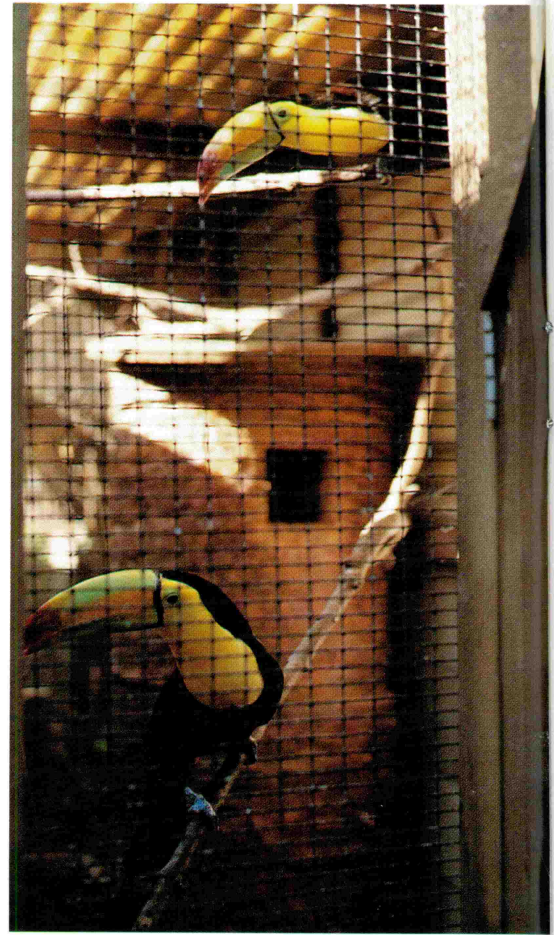
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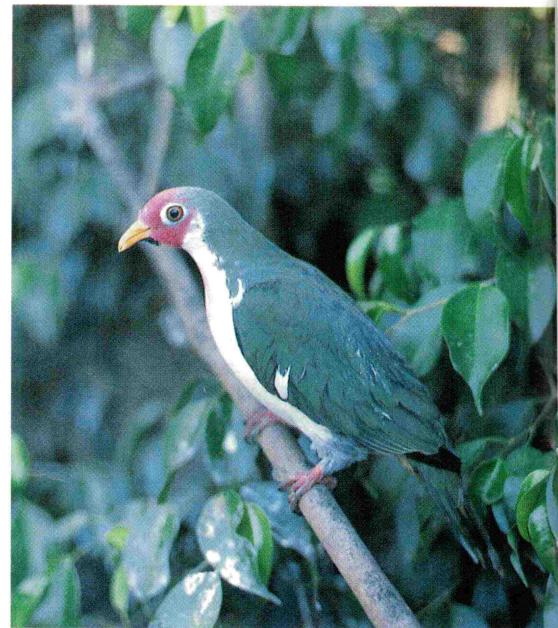
*A bank of lory cages are suspended off the ground.*



*A pair of keel billed toucans do nicely in a 3 1/2 ft. wide by 8 ft. long by 7 ft. high aviary.*



*Double toothed barbets share space in a mixed species flight.*



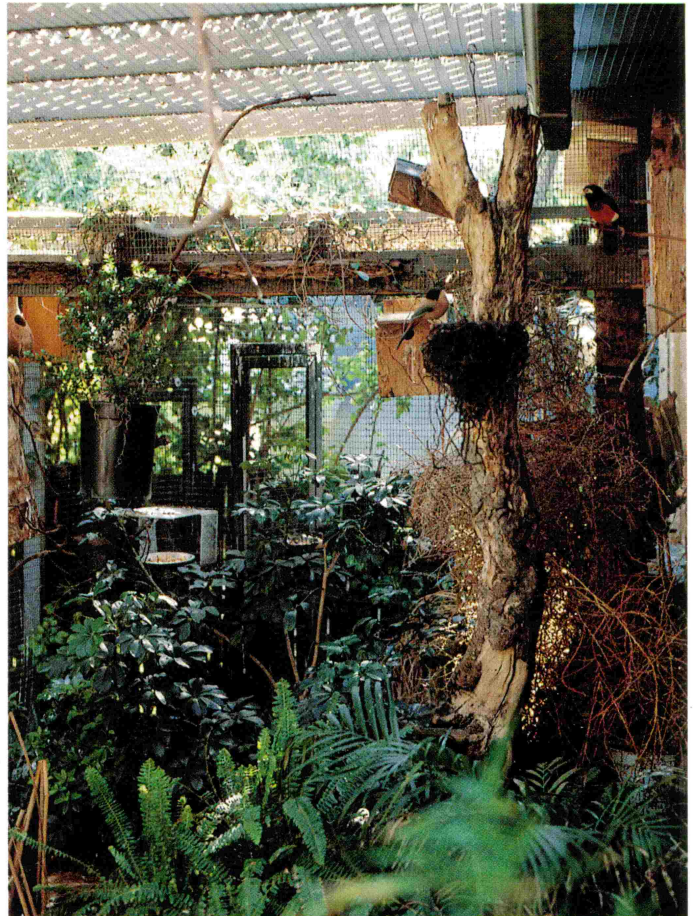
*Jambu dove, one of the Schroeder's elegant backyard residents.*



*A white eared touraco approaches a feed bowl in this mixed species flight.*



*Black headed sibia, one of the Schroeder's softbill interests.*



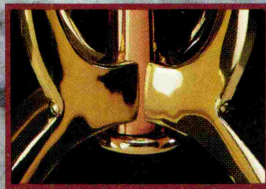
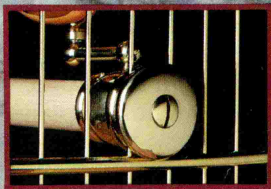
*A view from the Schroeder's family room into the mixed species flight.*

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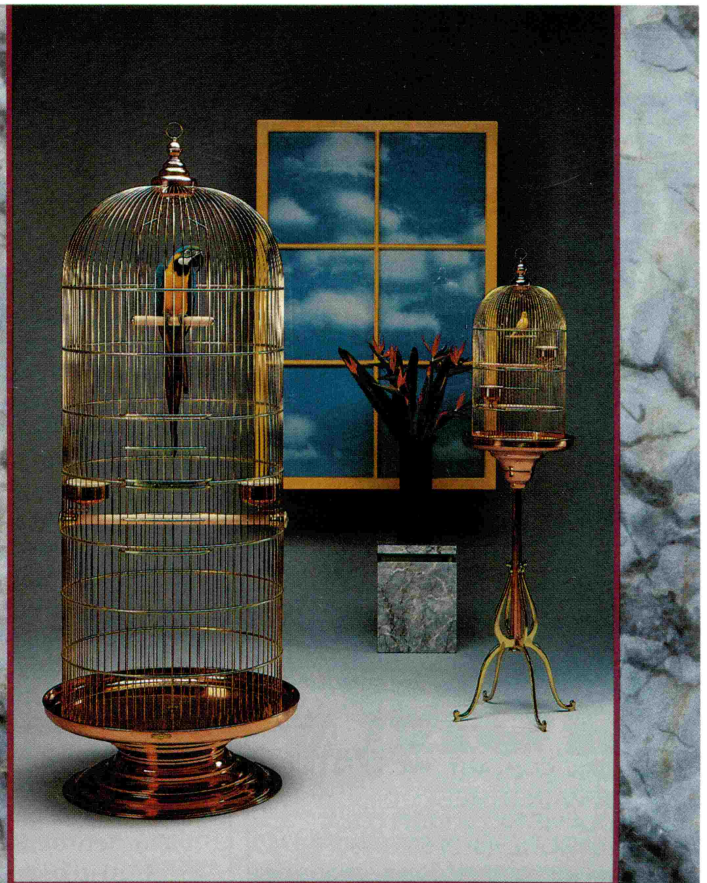
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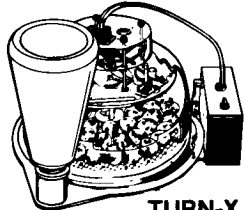
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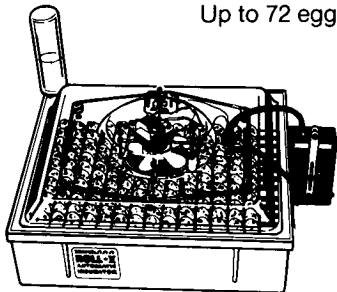


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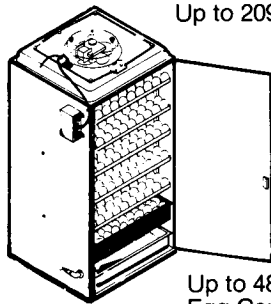
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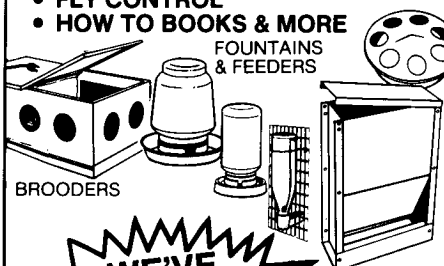
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the toco, keel billed, and spot billed toucanette.

Contrary to popular belief, the Schroeders have proven that large flights are not a prerequisite to the successful breeding of toucans. They have reared keel billed toucans and spot billed toucanettes in flights measuring three and a half feet wide by eight feet long by seven feet high, and done so consistently over several years. Of course, only one pair of birds is housed in each flight.

Another, smaller community flight, approximately the size of the above mentioned toucan flights, houses an interesting array of small softbills. Black necked barbets are currently exploring a palm log.

A silver beaked tanager and a Jambu dove are currently awaiting mates. The flight is well planted, which serves to highlight the colorful birds within.

One of the important success stories in the Schroeder aviaries is their progress with the Bali mynah, which is severely endangered in the wild. Two flights are devoted to their breeding, and a large number of young have been produced. The Schroeders are participating in the Bali Mynah Studbook, a project of the American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums, of which the Schroeders are members.

Dick's interest in birds has been a lifelong fascination. Starting with owls and hawks as a kid, he soon obtained a double yellow headed Amazon parrot. Other parrots followed, but his leap into aviculture really began when he gave a pair of peach faced lovebirds to Maurine in 1972. They reared young, and the bug had bitten. Finches soon followed, including zebras, fires, and Gouldians. More Amazons arrived. In fact, the large community flight in their yard at one time housed ten Amazons and a blue and gold macaw. The original flight was torn down to make way for a room addition to the house, but when it was rebuilt, the parrots went to stay at his cabinet factory. The noise would have been too much for the neighbors.

The Schroeders still maintain a nice collection of parrots at the cabinet factory, including macaws, cockatoos, Amazons, African greys, and conures. These have a large second-story room to themselves, where they may squawk as loud as they please, without disturbing the neighbors.

The Schroeders have been actively involved in organized avicultural activities from the beginning. He first became active in the South Bay Bird

Club, an AFA member club. In 1980, Schroeder met several members of the Long Beach Bird Club at the AFA winter regional meeting in San Francisco, and subsequently joined the group. At Long Beach he served as vice president, then president, as well as the AFA club delegate.

After serving Long Beach, Dick served several years as a board member of the Avicultural Society of America, the oldest avicultural group in North America — founded in 1927. He is now the Society's immediate past-president.

Dick has served AFA as a regional coordinator. He is now actively involved in the Lory Society as its vice president, and is their studbook keeper for the Meyer's lory. He is also a founding member of the International Softbill Society, and encourages others to participate in specialty clubs, where he feels a great deal can be accomplished, not only on a personal level, but for the species on which the specialty group focuses.

Dick finds softbills the most challenging and interesting birds with which he has worked. He is currently working to establish several species of barbets in his collection, which includes the double toothed, black colored, gaudy, D'Arnaud's, and bearded. He would also like to begin work on kingfishers, but is out of space to house them — a perennial woe of aviculturists in general.

The impressive collection at the Schroeders requires a commitment of energy, which Dick and Maurine share. Maurine, however, does most of the handfeeding, of which there is plenty to do — a testament to their success.

Dick has other interests as well. He was one of the early surfers in California, a sport he still pursues. The Schroeders also enjoy cross country skiing, traveling, exploring islands, and have an interest in reptiles (witness the water dragon — two feet of green lizard running free through their home). Actually, the reptiles are under the care of one of their three sons, two of which are attending college at University of California, San Diego (UCSD).

"People should specialize in addition to having a Noah's ark," Dick says. "People should also not have more than they can care for. If it becomes a job, it isn't fun anymore," he feels. It is certain that Dick and Maurine are having fun with their birds, for it shows in the carefully planned aviary they maintain and in the success they have enjoyed. ●