



Parrot Breeding for Conservation

by Al McNabney, Chairman
AFA Committee on Ways & Means
Walnut Creek, California

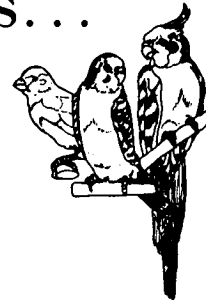
A 200 year old tree falls in one of South America's rainforests, because a chain saw cut it down. The act of cutting that tree took about four minutes. Nature took over 200 years to grow the tree. As the tree fell, a terrified squawk was heard. A multicolored bird flew from a nest, never to return. That bird, the two chicks in the nest, all of whom were killed when the tree fell, represents the fate of many birds. If the tragedy was an isolated instance aviculturists wouldn't be so disturbed.

In the USA's pacific northwest a battle is being fought to save the spotted owl. On one side, the logging industry, on the other, those who are trying to secure the future for the spotted owl. Ninety percent of spotted owl nests are found in old growth timber. The birds live and feed in such habitat. Clear cutting old growth national forests is good business for loggers, whose interest in the future of the spotted owl is usually minimal, but most informed people believe loss of the old growth timber will mean the end of the spotted owl as a native species.

On the island of Madagascar, rainforests are being chopped down to

Continued on page 37

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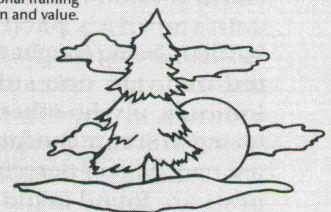
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Continued from page 35

create room for coffee plantations, cattle grazing and general farming. The loss of trees has created a situation so grave that much of the island's wildlife is threatened. Great Britain's Prince Phillip, world renowned conservationist, taking note of the dire situation has asserted to Madagascar's political leaders, "Your country is committing ecological suicide." Still the tree removals continue.

CITES members, looking at the declines in bird life, are moving toward recommending a total ban on export of any avian species from any country. CITES members are heard to argue the "bird trade" is causing declines in avian species.

So, when an American aviculturist looks about, there is substantial evidence of a sharp decline in many avian species in the United States and around the world. Clearly, habitat losses, man's activities and nature's catastrophes are "doing in" bird life the world over.

AFA, an organization "dedicated to conservation of bird wildlife through encouragement of captive breeding programs," becomes ever more meaningful and important.

Present State of the Art

Some aviculturists are already specialists, keeping a number of pairs of a particularly rare avian species. The birds are watched over, tended, fed, and housed under ideal conditions, all for the purpose of achieving successful breedings. More often than not, an aviculturist maintains several species, not because the birds are rare or endangered but because "that's a species easily cared for." The hope is, the birds will eventually lay eggs, produce young, thus enhancing the aviaries and the activities of the aviculturist involved.

There are also truly expert aviculturists. They have practical knowledge, together with information gleaned from reading available literature. The really expert aviculturists understand their birds so well they anticipate and overcome problems almost before they actually arise.

Good Literature

Aviculturists can have a number of sources of information. Good, well written material comes in the form of books, magazines, and newsletters. Add to those sources, personal visits with other aviculturists where information and knowledge is exchanged.

Does a Need Exist?

South and Central America's rainforests provide habitat for hundreds of species of birds. Today, expert after expert is predicting the total elimination of several hundred species of birds and animals within the next few years, unless the destruction of habitat is slowed.

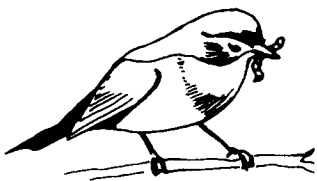
George Smith, the well-known British veterinary surgeon, aviculturist and author, spoke to the Avicultural Convention in Adelaide, Australia in 1980. Referring to ability of aviculturists to obtain birds from overseas for breeding purposes, Smith said, "You have to rely on yourselves. You have to breed birds for aviculture, for there will be fewer and fewer birds available from native regions as time passes." (NOTE: Australian laws do not now permit import of avian species.)

In 1984, 31 parrot species were listed in CITES, Appendix I. They are: Red-necked Amazon

- Amazona arausiaca*
- Yellow-shouldered Amazon
- Amazona barbadensis*
- Red-tailed Amazon
- Amazona brasiliensis*
- St. Vincent Amazon
- Amazona guildingii*

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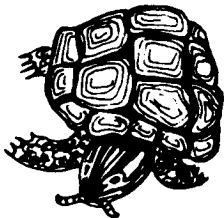
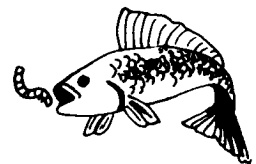
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Amazona versicolor
Vinaceous parrot
Amazona vinacea
Puerto Rican Amazon
Amazona vittata
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Anodorhynchus glaucus
Lear's macaw
Anodorhynchus leari
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Ara rubrogenys
Caninde macaw
Ara glaucogularis
Queen of Bavaria's conure
Aratinga guarouba
Spix's macaw
(Cyanopsitta spixii
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Red-fronted kakariki
Cyanoramphus novaeseelandiae
Coxen's double-eyed fig parrot
Cyclopsitta
Night parrot
Geopsittacus occidentalis
Orange-bellied parrot
Neophema chrysogaster
Ground parrot
Pezoporus wallicus
Red-capped parrot
Pionopsitta pileata
Golden-shouldered & hooded parrot
Psephotus chrysopterygius
Paradise parrot
Psephotus pulcherrimus
Maruitius parakeet
Psittacula echo
Principle grey parrot
Psittacus erithacus princeps
Blue-throated conure
Pyrrhura cruentata
Thick-billed and maroon faced parrots
Rhynchopsitta
Kakapo
Strigops habroptilus

The CITES group will meet again in 1989. It is widely anticipated an effort will be put forward to place essentially all parrot species on the Appendix I listing. If that situation actually arises, American aviculturists will be in the unfortunate position of not being able to replenish their avian stocks. They will not be in a position to place endangered species in their own aviaries for attempts at breeding the species. Nearly every aviculturist will say,

when asked, "Such a situation would deal a setback to the idea of captive breeding of rare and endangered species in an avicultural setting."

A World Class Avian Facility

Avicultural efforts to breed rare and endangered species are, at present, sporadic. There is no overall plan for ensuring that rare species are, in fact, being bred in aviaries in the United States. With the spectre of a complete shut down of avian imports it is time for AFA to take the lead in the planning and establishing of a system, location, personnel, funds and the interest in captive breeding of rare and endangered avian species under avicultural conditions.

AFA should sponsor and establish a non-profit, educational company, dedicated to keeping, breeding, studying rare and endangered avian species. The facility would be "world class" so, as time passes, it would come to be recognized as one of the major resources for information, knowledge and perpetuation of avian species.

Management

The facility would be managed (policy-wise) by a board of directors. The members of the board would be separate from AFA but AFA would have substantial input in the decision-(policy-) making processes. A capable director would be employed to oversee and actually handle the day-to-day operations, in keeping with policy established by the board of directors. The director should know, understand and support aviary breeding of rare and endangered avian species. The actual facility would be established so the latest, most effective aviary designs would be utilized.

Informational material would be developed through the world class avian breeding facility for use by aviculturists. Educational programs concerning birdlife would be created to be used in the nation's schools.

Development Funds

Initial funding for the world class avian facility would eventually be derived from contributions of AFA members, the public and outside sources. A major fund raising campaign would be created so as to ensure sufficient funding for start-up of the project. Additional fund raising projects would be undertaken as necessary. The world class avian facility should be so developed, that it would be self-sustaining.

Can Such A Project Be Accomplished by AFA?

When asked the question, "Can AFA actually, successfully create a world class avian facility?" the obvious answer is YES! Certainly! AFA has, among its members, aviculturists who have superb knowledge. Interest in perpetuation of avian species is high. Determination to avoid loss of *any* species as a result of deforestation is a major concern among informed AFA members. The world class avian facility would attract other than AFA people. AFA could take great credit for successes the facility would be certain to achieve. Those successes would enhance AFA's standing, which would be of value to *all* aviculturists. Education of non-bird people, as well as aviculturists in all matters pertaining to birds, would represent a major achievement. Educational activity should help ensure the future for birdlife. Legislative support would be likely on state and federal levels.

Funding this project is seen as developing an adequate plan for the project. The plan should be presented to AFA members, the general public and to special groups interested in funding major bird protection projects.

"A project like this could excite the interest of major fund donors," so said one individual who has been involved in fund raising activity on other projects.

So, we in AFA ought to support and work for creation of a world class avian facility. The sooner such a project is on the drawing boards, the more likely it will be that aviculturists and the general public will see the whole issue as a matter of importance. Lastly, the sooner the project is completed, the more likely it will be that rare and endangered birds will be cared for. The future of many rare and endangered birds will be assured.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The Watchbird editor would be very glad to receive pro and con letters on the world class avian facility to publish in the editor's column. This turning-point concept deserves to be debated. All opinions are solicited.

References

- Habitat Management for the Spotted Owl, Pacific Northwest Region, USDA Forest Service, April 1987
- Mittermeir, Russell A., *International Wildlife, Strange and Wonderful Madagascar*, July-August, 1988
- Low, Rosemary, Captive breeding can save many species — aviculturists have a major role, *Cage & Aviary Birds*, 18 July, 1988
- Low, Rosemary, *Endangered Parrots*, Blandford Press, 1984 ●

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Dick Dickinson, Raffle Chairman
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Prize Item (Donor in <i>italic</i>)	Winner	Prize Item (Donor in <i>italic</i>)	Winner
Umbrella cockatoo.....	Annette Lotito <i>Pet Farm Inc., FL</i>	Goffin's cockatoo (female).....	June J. Halfon <i>AFA raffle fund</i>
African grey parrot	Enrique A. Oti, D.D.S. <i>Parrot Paradise, MI</i>	Rose breasted cockatoo	Betty Kent (s/s male, 2-1/2 yr. old domestic, hand raised <i>AFA raffle fund</i>)
Fine art print, parrot, framed	Len Brewer <i>Eric Peake, U.K.</i>	Rose breasted cockatoo pair	Annette Lotito <i>AFA raffle fund</i>
Blue fronted Amazon baby	*	VCR	Mark Bishop <i>AFA raffle fund</i>
<i>Gators of Miami, Inc., Buzz Pare', FL</i>		35 mm camera	Tom & Sharon Kochen <i>AFA raffle fund</i>
Mutation peach faced lovebirds (3 pair)	C. Rugge <i>Bronze Wing Aviaries, CA</i>	Fine bird print, signed, numbered,.....	Karen Feltz "Birds of a Feather" <i>Thomas and Sharon Kochen, NC</i>
Amazon parrot	Maurice Hinton <i>Blue Ribbon Pet Farm, FL</i>	Four 25-lb. bags Topper Bird Ranch Diet	Birgit Ankone L & J Egyes Maribeth Addleman Henley R. Roberts
Medi-Mist air compressor with nebulizer	Sabra N. Ewing <i>Thermocare, NV</i>	Video VHS, Gouldian Finches	Don & Diane Morris <i>Bicheno Video, Henry Hofmann, CA</i>
Cockatiel breeding unit.....	Lee Phillips <i>Corners Limited, MI</i>	Video VHS, Australian Finches	Edith Warrenner <i>Bicheno Video, Henry Hofmann, CA</i>
Nanday conures, surgically sexed pair	Sam Mancuso <i>Coleman Aviaries, FL</i>	Two bird toys.....	Bud Spaulding <i>Sharon's Toys, VA</i>
Conures, pair of handfed surgically sexed	Deborah Sullivan <i>Tom Ireland, FL</i>	One week condo on Waikiki, HI	B & D Greenberg <i>Slocum Main Properties, HI</i>
25 calendars featuring baby birds	*	Pirate/parrot tee-shirt.....	*
<i>Aves International, Gail Worth, CA</i>		African grey tee-shirt.....	*
Six 1-lb. Or-Lac avian powder	Tina Cesa <i>Or-Lac Pet Products, WA</i>	Cockatiel tee-shirt.....	*
Twelve 36-gram Or-Lac avian powder	Peter S. Moran, D.O. <i>Or-Lac Pet Products, WA</i>	Yellow nape tee-shirt	*
Twelve 80-gram Or-Lac avian powder	E.P. McCabe <i>Or-Lac Pet Products, WA</i>	Yellow nape tee-shirt	*
Fine art original hyacinth macaw portrait, framed	Karen Feltz <i>Denise Cabral, MA</i>	One case (2 lbs.) hand feed (20 bags per case)	*
Book, "Parrots, Their Care and Breeding,"	Ken Dodge by R. Low, <i>Animal Exchange, MD</i>	One case (5 lbs.) hand feed (8 bags per case)	*
Egg candler (10" Probe Lite)	Albert Ortiz <i>Medical Diagnostic Service Inc., FL</i>	50-lb. bag pellets	*
Twelve (four each of three varieties) NylaBird	Charles Reaves Illya Chee George Hendricks	50-lb. bag crumbles	*
Macaw wall plaque	J & D Bird Farm	Handbag, bird design.....	Diane Ralston <i>Texstyles, Catherine Ventura, FL</i>
<i>A-1 Aviary / Jose and Maren Aleman, FL</i>		25 lbs. Vita-Vittle parrot feed.....	Robert Phillips <i>L/M Animal Farms, OH</i>
Two bird rubber stamps	Roger O'Connell <i>A-1 Aviary / Jose and Maren Aleman, FL</i>	25 lbs. Vita-Vittle cockatiel feed	Liz Andreoli <i>L/M Animal Farms, OH</i>
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50 lbs. Quinn's Critter Litter.....	Jack Voerker <i>Frey Ltd. / Dignan Enterprises, FL</i>	Bird breeding cage	Bob McMorris <i>Cal St. Clair, FL</i>
Book, "Parrots of the World"	Grace Popec <i>Exotic Bird Club of Florida, FL</i>	10 lbs. Breeders Best soft food mix	Jose Esteban Case <i>The Egg Farm, FL</i>
50 lbs. Kaytee Forti-Diet parrot food	Robert D. Steinberg <i>It's For The Birds, Raymond M. Gera, FL</i>		
American Cage Bird Magazine,.....	Fran Coomer C.P.N. <i>Arthur Freud, ACBM, NY</i>		
Indian hill mynah bird.....	Mr. & Mrs. A.J. Veschio <i>AFA raffle fund</i>		
Indian hill mynah bird	Jerry Jennings <i>AFA raffle fund</i>		
Goffin's cockatoo (female)	Judy Best <i>AFA raffle fund</i>		

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3 memberships to S.P.B.E. <i>Society of Parrot Breeders and Exhibitors, MA</i>	Dianne De Chambeau Craig Snodgrass Lynn Deuschle
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4 2-1/2-lbs. of Lory Luncheon <i>John and Mary Vanderhoof, CA</i>	Jo Daniels Jan Delaney Claire LaMere Sandra Woosnam
Lutino peach faced lovebirds, pair..... <i>Al and Jane Howard, CA</i>	Barry Wold
Princess of Wales <i>Lona Schmalz, CA</i>	L. Sohn
Bird toys..... <i>Pet Play, MI</i>	Robert Johnson
Barnard's parakeet, male..... <i>David Drumm, MI</i>	Lee Hughey
Book, "Birds and Their..... Latin Names Explained", <i>The Dog Cart, CA</i>	Frances Wojtaniec
\$500 gift certificate <i>Custom Parrot Network, NJ</i>	Roberta M. Nolan
Male sun conure..... <i>Norshore Pets/Bill Wilson, IL</i>	Deborah Sullivan
Umbrella cockatoos, pair <i>Erect Easy Wire, CA</i>	Shirley Thompson
Set of "Know Your Birds" series cassettes..... <i>Chris Davis, CA</i>	Durell J. Wilson
\$25 gift certificate <i>Pyramid Birds, CA</i>	Lyn Olson
Bird lithograph by Moscovitz..... <i>Kathy Lyon, CA</i>	Elaine Banzi
Four 5-lb. pkgs. of cuttlebone..... <i>Dick and Maurine Schroeder, CA</i>	Kathleen Harring Albert Ortiz Judy Beckley Larry E. Turner
Credit of \$1300 toward bird purchase <i>Edenville Aviaries, Terry Veraldo</i>	*
Assorted Blue Feather bird toys..... <i>Wood Krafts Unlimited</i>	Joan Holcomb
Lovebirds, pair <i>Snead Island Aviaries, Louise Auger, Chuck Saffell</i>	*
Cage..... <i>Pacific Cage</i>	Daniel Basson
Goffin's cockatoo, tame male..... <i>Pat & Mary Dunn</i>	Judith Russell

Prize Item (Donor in italic)	Winner
Black Hoei cage..... <i>Karen Feltz</i>	Rose Turner
Book, "A Complete Guide to Eclectus Parrots" <i>Laurella Desborough</i>	E.P. McCabe
Yellow red rump parakeets, pair <i>Heidi & Joe Gallagher</i>	Virgil & Mary Jo Thomas
Talking parrot..... <i>Rad Rita's Toy</i>	Ray Gera
Six pair of cockatiels..... <i>Thelma Scott</i>	G. Schader
Cage..... <i>Pearl & Mort Skoll</i>	B & D Greenberg
Two Nekton-S..... <i>Ed Wineberg</i>	John McLean
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