

The Watchbird offers free publicity for member club bird shows by announcing the dates and locations of the shows. To have your show listed it is necessary to get the data to the Watchbird four to five months before the show date. For example, if your show takes place the first week of October, it should be listed in the August/September issue. The deadline for that issue is June 1st. (Copy/ article deadline is two months preceding publication date.)

> Greater Memphis Bird Club will host Feather Fair May 27-28, 1989 at the

Memphis Radisson Hotel Memphis, Tennessee For information contact: Mrs. J.W. Higgins, (901) 476-0736 463-B Rt. 1, Brighton, TN 38011

#### Middle Tennessee Cage Bird Club will be hosting its

Annual Spring Fair

at the Music City Rodeway Inn 797 Briley Parkway at I-40 Nashville, Tennessee For information contact fair chairman: Eva Duffey, phone (615) 361-5939 2545 Forest View Drive Antioch, TN 37013

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## AFA Visits . . . The Aviaries of Lynn Hall

by Jerry Jennings Woodland Hills, California

The dove has been the international symbol of peace for as long as anyone can remember and, if numbers count, the more doves, the greater the tranquility. And tranquil are the aviaries of Lynn Hall, which are filled with the brilliant colors and resonant sounds of over two dozen species of rare doves, pigeons, and

fruit pigeons.

When one conjures up an image of a dove, it is often of the mourning or turtle dove - natives of North America — in their plain, earth tone colors. The word "pigeon" more often than not evokes the thought of swarms of birds begging for handouts at the local park or fast food chain. These duller members of the Columbiformes belie the incredible beauty and diverse patterns of size and color found in so many species, most of which are found in more exotic and further reaches of the globe. Some of the fruit pigeons easily rival the gaudiest parrot and the surrealistic Lady Gouldian finch.

Lynn has been a bird fancier from his earliest days, when, as the son of a wildcatter, the only companions he had were the birds he kept. Life in the oil business meant never staying in one place very long, as his father moved from one drilling site to the

Lynn began his early collection with pigeions — German toys which he enjoyed showing for many years. Eventually, other species caught his eye and he built his first flight for softbills. Of the many he kept, hoopoes were a favorite. In those days softbills were very inexpensive and, unfortunately, were treated as such by many collectors who made no effort to breed them because they were easily replaced. But not Lynn! He was fascinated by their every aspect.

As with most aviculturists, Lynn's interest was not to remain with just softbills. If you like birds, you are bound to like all birds. And, so it went that Lynn's aviary would come to house a wide variety, not only of softbills, but of pheasants, roul rouls and others. The collection eventually forced him to move to his present location in the Santa Rosa Valley of Ventura County, California, which offers him far more room and an ideal Mediterranean climate balmy enough to grow avocadoes, kiwis, strawberries and citrus year around.

The present collection is housed in steel framed, welded wire flights, most of which are approximately 8' x 16' x 8' high and heavily planted with a variety of flowering and climbing plants, most notably Cape honeysuckle. These flights are arranged around a central walk-in flight approximately 16' x 50', which is also heavily planted. All of the flights are filled with a variety of birds. Each contains at least a pair of exotic fruit pigeons or doves, along with grass parakeets, Australian finches, and ground birds such as pheasants or partridge. There are eight species of

## **Bird Clubs of North Carolina**

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FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: Bob Beech, chairman, (919) 855-8292 or write to 3410 Spring Garden St., Greensboro, NC 27407

fruit pigeons alone, including black nape, golden heart, imperial, and superb. There are a variety of seed eating doves including green wing, Cape, nutmeg, nicobar, and crown pigeons. Not to be overlooked are the Luzon and the Bartlett bleeding heart doves. And, most rare and spectacular are the two species of pheasant pigeons, the green naped and the white naped.

The birds in Lynn's aviary are not the type most aviculturists commonly encounter and, in fact, most are nearly impossible to obtain. Lynn discovered this for himself, when he embarked on building the present collection. The birds were simply not available, so what to do? Of course, go Frank Buck it, and "bring them back alive" himself! So off to Jakarta, Indonesia he went in 1984.

Importing exotic doves was not as easy as Lynn would have hoped. Indonesian bird dealers were not always reliable and easy to deal with. Paper work was, at times, tedious and the U.S. quarantine station operators were not all that familiar with the special requirements of pigeons and doves. These were not the stuff of domestic park pigeons, but delicate jewels. Through trial and error, the protocols for running exotic fruit doves through quarantine were established. Over 96% of the birds made it through in good health.

Establishing the collection was only the beginning. Lynn was off to discover ways to breed his doves, and do so quickly. His well planted flights provided excellent cover in which the birds could nest. Nest they did, building their fragile structures in the branches of the shrubs and trees. Over sixteen species have successfully bred in Lynn's aviaries. His greatest triumph, he says, was the successful rearing of the green naped pheasant pigeon. Two chicks were produced last year, both of which had to be hand reared.

The pheasant pigeon is a very difficult species. The incubation period lasts 30 days. The nests are built on the ground, but the parents usually won't sit on the eggs. Further, the pigeon milk available for hand rearing is apparently lacking a necessary enzyme. Lynn has solved this puzzle by mixing in a small amount of fecal matter with the early feedings. Fortunately, there are enough pheasant pigeons in the U.S. at present to ensure their establishment if breeders are cautious and devote enough time

to them.

As with most birds, diet is an important key to success and fruit doves are no exception. Lynn provides an interesting fruit mix containing a variety of chopped fruits, soaked raisins, cooked sweet potatoes, and cooked brown rice. On top of the fruit mix he sprinkles a powdered mixture of ground racing pigeon pellets and Science Diet dog kibble which is added in quantity sufficient to make the entire fruit mix crumbly. In addition, Lynn seasonally offers fruits from his garden such as guavas, pomegranates and kiwis.

While most breeders feed their birds in the morning, Lynn prefers to feed in the afternoon. In this fashion, the fruit stays fresher, as the birds eat their fill and the leftovers keep cool during the night and are still relatively fresh in the morning. Fruit fed in the morning dries out during the day, especially when afternoons are hot, so Lynn's method helps cut down on waste.

There are a number of seed eating doves at the Hall aviaries which are fed a seed mix prepared on the premises. The mix consists of sunflower hearts, safflower, and a good wild bird mix that does not have any cracked corn or wheat. No commercial pigeon mix is ever offered.

Once the birds begin to produce, there are several methods employed to see the embryo to hatching. The preferable method is to allow the parents to incubate their own eggs, but often that doesn't work out. So, Lynn keeps a bank of small cages full of broody pairs of domesticated ringneck doves, which are only too happy to sit on any other species' eggs. To be successful with this method, the ringnecks must lay within three days of the laying of the eggs to be fostered. Further, the incubation period of the ringneck is only fourteen days, so only species with a similar incubation period may be used.

Some species, such as the crown pigeons and pheasant pigeons, do not incubate well on their own, nor do their incubation periods coincide with the ringneck. Their eggs, therefore, must be artifically incubated. Lynn employs a Marsh Farms Roll-X incubator for that purpose. Temperature is set at 99.6 degrees F. This procedure works well on the rare birds, but Lynn has some difficulty with the common species.

Lynn hopes to get the crown pigeons and pheasant pigeons to suc-(Text continued on page 62)



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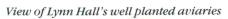
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 $Lynn\ Hall\ with\ tame\ green\ naped\ pheasant\ pigeon.$ 









Black naped fruit dove

Photo by Lynn Hall

All of Hall's automatic waterers are covered to prevent droppings from fouling the water.

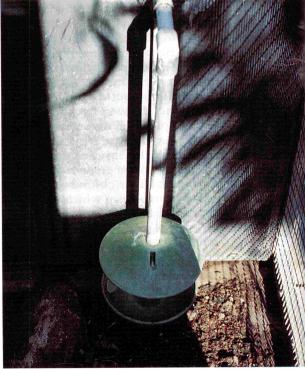


Photo by Jerry Jennings

Fennec foxes (Fennecus zerda) are another special breeding interest on the Halls' estate.

Photo by Lynn Hall



White naped pheasant pigeon

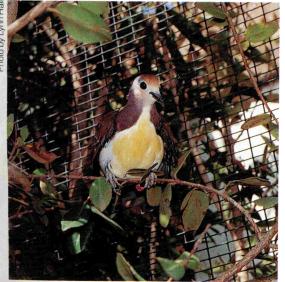
Superb fruit pigeon



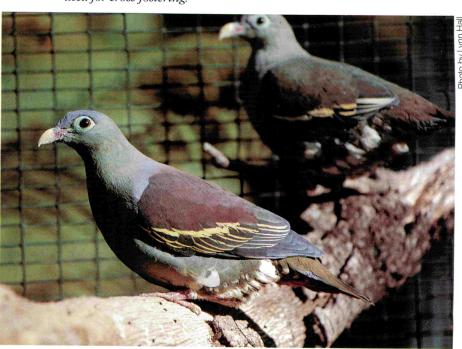
Celebes ground pigeon



This is a partial view of cages housing brooding ring-necked doves used for cross-fostering.







(Continued from page 59)

cessfully rear their own young. He is striving to develop this characteristic in his stock, which is difficult since the crown pigeons have a habit of breaking their eggs and the pheasant pigeons' ground nesting habit encourages the young to fledge early and walk around where they can get into trouble.

Lynn is an aviculturist of long experience and strongly believes many aviculturists need to really understand the birds with which they wish to work, *before* they acquire them. He advises, "don't buy birds until you've read up on them and know where they come from, their type of habitat, diet in the wild, etc. Otherwise it is difficult, if not impossible, to keep them properly and they won't thrive. It is easy to starve birds by virtue of misunderstanding their dietary requirements."

Lynn is an avid conservationist who sees aviculturists as "the only salvation for many birds, because we are destroying them in the wild, not through trapping, but through habitat destruction. We need to get them established in captivity."

In pursuit of establishing birds in captivity, Lynn states, "We need to pay attention to inbreeding, and avoid breeding animals that are defective, i.e., crooked toes, etc. Breeding brother and sister is a no no," said Hall, "but if they are the last of their race, then do it, but not just because they are the last you have. Instead, acquire the necessary unrelated stock. As far as hand rearing and the imprinting controversy goes, worry about the hand rearing first, and the imprinting later. Most species won't imprint, or can be reversed. If we don't worry about rearing the birds first, we won't have the opportunity to worry about the other."

Hall's interest in animals extends to a small collection of African fenic fox, which he has had some success in rearing. He is also an avid traveler and has seen much of the world's wildlife on location. Lynn has been a strong supporter of the AFA over the years, donating generously to its causes. He has been a booster of a number of AFA member clubs including the Avicultural Society of America, the California Game Breeders, Simi Valley Bird Society, and the West Valley Bird Society.

Lynn Hall is making a strong contribution to the establishment of exotic doves in captivity in the U.S. and the AFA wishes him the best success.

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#### Aug / Sept '89

June 1 — editorial copy June 15 — ADS, classified & display

#### Oct / Nov '89

Aug. 1 — editorial copy Aug. 15 - ADS, classified & display

#### Dec / Jan '90

Oct. 1 — editorial copy Oct. 15 — ADS, classified & display

#### Feb / Mar '90

Dec. 1 — editorial copy Dec. 15 - ADS, classified & display

#### Apr / May '90

Feb. 1 — editorial copy Feb. 15 — ADS, classified & display

