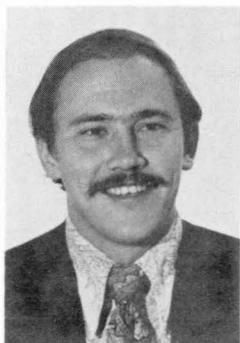


the 'Ills' of Illinois Endangered Species Act

ILLINOIS ENDANGERS ENDANGERED SPECIES

by Jerry Jennings



Jerry Jennings

As with many well-intentioned but ill-conceived government programs, the Illinois Endangered Species Act has spawned regulations that may very well critically reduce if not eliminate the number of aviculturists breeding endangered species of birds in that state.

The Illinois Act provides for the confiscation of any endangered species, however, a moratorium was granted aviculturists until adequate permit procedures could be drafted. In addition to providing adequate care, the permittee will be required to justify his reasons for desiring to breed endangered species. He must demonstrate that his breeding program will further scientific or educational purposes and that he is qualified to handle endangered species. Breeding for the pleasure and satisfaction so worthy an endeavor provides is deemed insufficient grounds for issuing permits. "Unqualified" aviculturists will likely be forced to give up the birds they already have.

The Department of Conservation unfortunately is more concerned about whether aviculturists, in selling endangered species offspring, might "make a profit" than whether these endangered species are being bred at all. The high cost of maintaining a breeding operation is considered irrelevant while the Department's ensuing search for justifiable motives has all but obscured the most basic right of any endangered species — the right to survival.

An appreciation of the Department of Conservation's appalling unfamiliarity with the biology and ethology of birds provides the necessary perspective of the Illinois aviculturists' dilemma. Administrative detail is preferred at the expense of providing pragmatic conservation measures.

At a time when the importance of captive propagation is on the ascendance, the Federal Government has taken measures to encourage such efforts. Their recent issuance of permits to private aviculturists to import captive-reared White-eared Pheasants, for example, is indicative of the good faith approach desperately needed in Illinois.

Since the U.S.D.I.'s Office of Endangered Species has effectively regulated the international traffic in endangered species in the U.S., it is reasonable to assume state jurisdiction should be limited to those species native to that state, as is the case in California. Exotic species reared in captivity should be of least concern, especially since many have been domesticated.

The U.S. Department of Interior has stated they intend to re-classify many common avicultural subjects from endangered to threatened. Hopefully, this will occur before those species become extinct in Illinois.

LETTER TO AVICULTURISTS

by Kai Juhl



Kai Juhl

We can no longer afford to sit back and be Mr. Nice Guy. Undoubtedly we are a minority, but when you are right, you must not give in to political bureaucracy. The time has come for us to take a stand and then search our souls to see how much of an effort we are willing to put forth. When you fight bureaucrats, time and money is on their side. They use our money and they have plenty of time. So, before we even start

they are way ahead of us. We are, however, lucky in one respect. The unjustness of the regulations that have been or are in the process of being passed are great enough to upset us to a point where we can no longer sit quietly in the background. The wrong-



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doings are making us join together and combined we will become stronger and I know we can win. If the various departments would have taken a different avenue, piece by piece, they might have been able to destroy the art of aviculture. I know this column should only pertain to endangered species, but it goes much deeper than that. Many states are forming endangered species boards, but unfortunately, most of these are in name only. They are more concerned about what you can do with skins of animals killed years ago than they are with preserving the live ones. That's not what my dictionary calls preservation.

It angers me to hear an administrative officer of the conservation department say he believes that when the natural habitat is destroyed, then the wildlife should go with it. A man like that does not belong in the conservation department. It angers me to know that my state taxes pay part of his salary, so he can try to cut my throat. It angers me to know that under the disguise of an endangered species program, the state conservation department is eligible to receive some of my federal tax dollars, which can then be used to chop my head off.

What I am trying to say to you is that all of you must write your political representatives and write all of them, not just one. Keep in mind that though you may not have any endangered species, the birds you have now may be on the list tomorrow. Tell them in your own words that as a breeder you expect the conservation department to work with you and not

against you. There are enough difficulties and heart-aches in raising birds when everything goes well. We certainly do not need someone whose only obvious interest is collecting a paycheck to tell us what we must do.

Think about what you have just read, and then get to work on your own letters. Believe me it is necessary NOW!

Aviculturists should address letters concerning the endangered species laws to the following:

ILLINOIS
Mr. Anthony Dean
Director, Dept. of Conservation
605 State Office Bldg.
400 So. Spring
Springfield, Ill. 62706

FEDERAL
Mr. Marshall L. Stennett
Asst. Spec. Agent in Charge of
International Investigations
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Washington, D.C. 20



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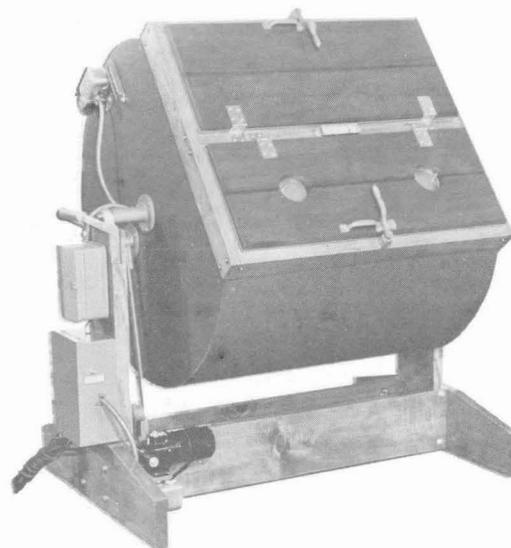
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