



Artist Michael Piper at work in his studio.

White-tailed Kingfisher (*Tanyiptera sylvia*)



## Artist Profile...

# Michael Piper


Jack Clinton Eitniear  
San Antonio, Texas  
Photos Mark Diamond

Like religion and politics, art is rather personal. Certainly wildlife art is not difficult to find. Most of us are familiar with such names as Peake, Elgas, and Ratnavira as they have made a special effort to communicate with the avicultural community. Of course, there are numerous other well known artists that focus upon exotic birds principally for field guides and ornithological books. Nevertheless, it is always awe inspiring to have the opportunity to view the works of an artist for the first time.

The paintings of Michael Piper have previously been unavailable in the United States although he has been painting "seriously" since 1978. Born in England in 1944, he emigrated to Australia in 1970 being a butcher by trade. In 1974 he began painting, principally oil on canvas, hence he is completely self taught. Since 1986 he has concentrated mainly upon birds with his first successful exhibition in one of Adelaide's most prominent fine art galleries in 1987. Living in Adelaide in the state of South Australia, he has traveled throughout Australia researching the birdlife and habitat of his subjects.

Not only is his work extremely finely detailed, but he also tries to convey a sense of naturalism and where possible a three dimensional sense of movement as opposed to clinical exactness. Michael Piper's ambition is to illustrate the beauty of Australia's birds in a natural setting hoping that it will convey a sense of appreciation even to those outside of Australia. If the sampling I've had the opportunity to observe is any indication of his abilities, he need not worry about instilling a sense of appreciation for his subjects. His paintings are simply breath-taking and should be a part of everyone's home decor, especially if you have a fondness for Australian birds.

A portfolio of Michael Piper's prints including a Kookaburra, Galah, Rainbow Lorries and a Red-tailed Cockatoo is available for purchase at the AFA Business Office (605-484-0931). Additional prints are available for club fundraisers.

(See ad on page 19 in this issue.) 





*Gang-gang Cockatoos*  
(*Callocephalon fimbriatum*)

*Sulphur-crested  
Cockatoos*  
(*Cacatua galerita*)

