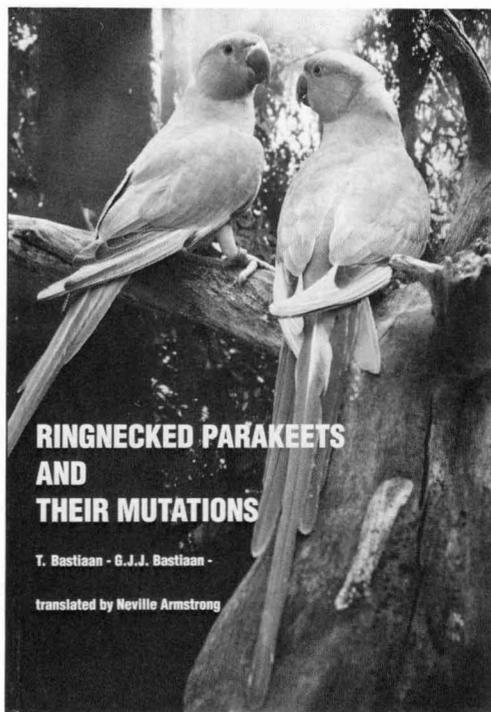


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reviewed by Sheldon Dingle
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Ring-necked Rainbows, a New Book of Colors



A rather odd book came into my hands and I was going to ignore it because I wasn't sure how to describe it. This issue of *Watchbird*, however, with all its literature on Indian Ring-necked Parakeets and their mutations, seems to be just the place to have a go at it and not worry about the unusual format.

Indeed, the title of the book is *Ringnecked Parakeets and Their Mutations* by T. Bastiaan and G.J.J. Bastiaan, translated by Neville Armstrong. There is no fluff or hype about this volume, it goes from the front cover directly to the table of contents. There is no title page at all so I'm not even sure who published it although it has a copyright date of 1995. I suspect the authors published it and if so, blessings on their heads.

But who needs the fluff anyway? If you are interested in mutations of the Indian Ring-necked Parakeet, you surely should have this 128 page hard-bound volume that shows in full, vibrant color more color variations of the Ringneck than anyone will believe.

The book's layout is simple. There is a very short preface, half a page devoted to directions for use (explanations of the symbols used), an equally short section on accommodations for the Ringnecks, and a few words on feeding, care, breeding and mutations. All these sections can be read in about five minutes. Don't buy the book for this data, although it's good stuff and quite true and accurate. This isn't a book on how to breed Ring-neckeds.

You will, however, want the book for the remaining 122 pages. They contain 60 beautiful full color plates depicting the many astounding color mutations of the very popular and beautiful Ringneck.

Can you believe it? There are 79 color mutations listed in the Bastiaan book. I remember when there were just Lutinos and Blues – and breeders had a long waiting list of aviculturists wanting to buy. I must be getting old.

Each of the 79 mutations has its own page or more that gives all the statistical color expectations for various matings. For a simple example, with a

green male split for blue, mated to a blue female, the expectations are 50% green split for blue and 50% blue offspring. The number of these expectations becomes much larger as the combination of mutations are bred together. For instance, if you breed a Fallow Pastelblue Cinnamon with a Fallow Blue Cinnamon there are 16 different possibilities that the offspring could be.

These expectation charts are very well done and easily understandable and are of great value to those breeders working with even the simplest mutations. In addition to the charts, each mutation has some commentary about it – words of wisdom, if you will, that give you a better understanding of the genetic background of the bird. And it is not necessary to be a genius to get the authors' point. They have done a good job of keeping things simple but accurate.

For me, however, the best thing about the book is the color photographs of the birds. Almost all of the photos have been taken in a photo box and show the full bird against a pale background so you can really focus on the colors of the bird. The colors are vibrant. Mutation Indian Ring-necked Parakeets have long been one of my favorite birds and for me, opening this book is like being a kid in a candy store. I drooled a lot on my copy.

The mutations I like best are the Cobalt (a deep, rich dark blue that will boggle your brain) and the Yellow-headed Yellow-tailed (a combination of rich yellow and deep green that is extraordinary). If I weren't travelling so much, I'd lay in a good supply of these jewels. When you see the colors in the book, you'll want to sell all you have and buy all the mutations you can. Don't worry about food, shelter, kids or mundane things of that sort.

Because this work is primarily a picture book there is not much more to say about it. You have to *see* it to appreciate and enjoy it.

In the U.S., *Ringnecked Parakeets and Their Mutations* by T. Bastiaan and G.J.J. Bastiaan, is distributed by the Asiatic Parrot Society of America, 734 S. Boulder Highway, Suite 400, Henderson, NV 89015. The price is \$70.00. Members of the Society get about a 20% discount. Contact the the above address for additional information and literature on the book. ➤