

Psitta scene



News about parrot conservation,
aviculture and welfare from

The World Parrot Trust

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SUDDENLY, PARROTS ARE NEWS

By Michael Reynolds, *Hon.
Director, World Parrot Trust*

The British media have discovered the parrot. In recent weeks there have been many reports on tv and in the press, dealing with the trade in parrots, habitat destruction, and the possible re-discovery of a species thought extinct. We believe The World Parrot Trust has helped to focus this interest. Since we launched the trust in October 1989 the first of our stated aims has been 'to educate the general public worldwide about the threat to parrot survival, and seek their interest, concern and support.'

In all our actions since we began we have pursued this aim, more recently through our 'Parrot Bureau' press service. We have attended specialised avian and parrot conferences in the UK, USA, Spain, Canada, Holland, Belgium, Austria, and also more general environmental occasions such as the 'Green Show' in Birmingham, UK. We have built up our membership and contact lists, and developed and contributed to more parrot projects in a single year than any other charity (see our back page for a brief listing of current projects).

But perhaps our most spectacular achievement has been to put a rocket under other organisations which have previously failed to recognise the importance of the parrots. They are important in their own right as a wonderfully diverse order of birds, but they are also important because their beauty, character and adaptability have won them a special place in the hearts and minds of our species. Through

this special relationship the parrots have the opportunity – so far not yet fully realised – to make people aware of the appalling speed at which so many wild and unspoiled places in the world are being ruined. We see the parrots as ecological 'pathfinders', leading the way to a wider understanding of what is at risk: nothing less than the survival of our planet.

Through our initiative in creating this trust – and your support, without which nothing would have been achieved – we have encouraged, we believe, a wide range of actions on behalf of the

parrots. A 'Parrots in Peril' campaign, a new 'foundation' to support parrots, at least one new society in the USA, valuable new conservation commitment and expenditure from a long established British society, and recently a massive concerted campaign, promoted by bird protection and welfare groups, to stop the importation into Europe of wild-caught parrots.

Thus, our comparatively paltry funds have generated a flood of more serious investment from others, and all of this helps the survival and welfare of the parrots.

Every day brings fresh correspondence to the trust from around the world, informing us of increasing interest in our objectives, and situations where we might be able to help. The trouble with the World Parrot Trust, however, is that it has adopted a rather revolutionary financial approach: when it has funds available, it spends them on the cause for which they were donated. If you approve of this novel idea, please try to find a way to increase your support for the trust. You won't just be helping the trust – you'll be helping the trust show the way.



Visitors being photographed with macaws at Palmitos Park, Gran Canaria. Only the parrots have this attraction for people.

“psittacine
(sit à sîn) Belonging
or allied to the
parrots; parrot-like”



THE REINTRODUCTION OF MILITARY MACAWS IN GUATEMALA:

An Example of Private Aviculture's Role in Avian Conservation

by Kevin J. Clubb

The century following the Spanish Conquest of Mesoamerica witnessed the dramatic depopulation of what is present day southeastern Mexico, Guatemala and El Salvador due to oppression and pandemics. While this period marks a rather dark chapter in man's history in the New World, it undoubtedly provided a well deserved respite to the region's wildlife, forced to adapt to the needs of a growing human population for several thousand years. This respite was unfortunately short-lived, and by the mid-nineteenth century the human population of northern Central America was once again rapidly increasing.

As the agricultural frontier expanded once more, the Military Macaw (*Ara militaris*) was to become the first victim on a rapidly growing list of avian casualties in Central America. Its extinction as a breeding bird in Guatemala during the later 19th or early 20th century marked the beginning of the region's localized and/or widespread losses of bird species which now includes Scarlet Macaws over the entire Pacific slope of Mexico and Central America north of Costa Rica, the Atitlan Giant Grebe, the Red-throated Caracara's sudden disappearance in northern Central America over the past decade, and the Orange-breasted Falcon outside of its diminishing forested strongholds of the Peten and Belize. Aside from these birds, the region's ornithologists fear that the year 2,000 may witness the extinction of Harpies and Crested Eagles, Jabiru Storks and a host of lesser-known species north of Panama.

Unfortunately, macaws have shown themselves to be unable to adapt to the twin pressures of traffic in live birds and loss of habitat. As recently as 1965 Scarlet Macaws were widespread and fairly common on both slopes of southeastern Mexico and northern Central America. Twenty-five years later they exist as isolated relict populations in Chiapas and Tabasco states in Mexico, the Mayan Biosphere reserves in the western Peten and northwestern Belize. The population remains under siege by bird trappers.

The story of Military Macaws in Central America essentially begins and ends with an enigmatic reference by the French ornithologist Adolphe Boucard in an obscure 1878 publication. He

recorded a group of Militaries cliff-nesting in the wild, inaccessible ravines on or near the Fuego-Acatenango volcanos in central Guatemala. This report was largely ignored by subsequent ornithologists working in Guatemala due to the fact that they all knew that macaws nested only in trees! The fairly recent twin discoveries of a disjunct population of Military Macaws in Chiapas (on the Mexico-Guatemala border) and the fact that this species often uses cliff nests has led most modern researchers to accept Boucard's record as valid. Conversations with macaw trappers in western Guatemala in the 1970's produced a number of reports of single or paired green macaws mixing with flocks of Scarlets along the Chiapan border. Whether or not these recent reports were true is, at best, a moot point. Scarlets no longer occur there either.

During 1989 and 1990 the Fundacion Interamericana de Investigacion Tropical (FITT), in conjunction with the Peregrine Fund, pioneered the successful breeding and release of both local and U.S. bred Spectacled Owls and Bat Falcons at two sites in western Guatemala. To date over twenty-four birds of both species have been reintroduced to vacant habitat. FITT's primary research objectives include the evaluation of tropical agroecosystems' value in wildlife management and methods to enhance these plantations' value as buffer areas for national parks and reserves. It is now clear that there are activities which have minimum impact on most types of wildlife (poacher-free, low-input coffee plantations under native shade) just as there are scenarios which will efficiently eliminate all wildlife in a very short time (intensively-managed large banana plantations). The foundation's researchers' interest in the feasibility of re-texturing habitat for successful coexistence between man and Guatemalan wildlife includes reintroducing "missing" vertebrate components lost due to man's negligence. The Military Macaw represents the quintessential "missing" component in the highlands of western Guatemala. It was the region's first documented vertebrate extinction in historical times and for its absence, the people and the cloud forests of the western highlands are poorer.

In early 1990 conversations between FITT and Peregrine Fund officers led to initial contacts between the foundation and the Avicultural Breeding and Research Center (ABRC) in Florida. After considerable research by both parties into the feasibility of the release and objective favorable opinions from psittacine specialists, the project was formalized in an agreement signed in July 1990. Co-sponsors of the project thus far include the World Wildlife Fund-U.S. and the National Council of Protected Areas (the national parks authority) of Guatemala.

ABRC is breaking ground in a new era of aviculture, an era of active participation in the conservation of psittacine species as private aviculturists, not government or society funded. Breeding birds for re-introduction projects such as the Military Macaw and Thick-billed Parrot are part of a balanced management program to protect and conserve these species.

The initial release will include twelve, one to two year old, captive bred, non-imprinted Mexican Military Macaws from eight different bloodlines supplied by ABRC. The birds will be equipped with state-of-the-art long range radio transmitters and monitored via telemetry for six months following release. This telemetry equipment will be specifically designed for macaws at ABRC. For obvious reasons, the birds will be certified free of bacterial, viral, fungal and protozoal diseases and will be held for acclimation at the release site for six months prior to reintroduction. The release will be effected in six separate stages and the birds will be provided with supplemental food for some time after they are free-flying. Security for the birds will be provided by foundation staff, municipal patrols and the Guatemalan armed forces.

The release site is located on the southwestern slope of Santa Maria Volcano in the Quezaltenango department of western Guatemala. This imposing strato-volcano looms 12,300 feet over the adjacent Pacific coastal plain and forms part of the Chiquibal-Santa Maria National Park. It is located within 75 km (47 miles) from the location of Boucard's record on the same volcano cordillera. Its avifauna has been well-studied by foundation researchers and over 250 species

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have been documented for the volcano. The pristine climax forests along the intermediate elevations are home to some of the most dramatic and beautiful birds in the American tropics, many of which are endangered; Ornate Hawk-eagles, Solitary Eagles, Horned Guans, Black Chachalacas, Emerald Toucanets, Blue-crowned Chlorophonias, Azure-rumped Tanagers, Yellow-naped Parrots, Mountain Trogons and the undisputed regent of these mist-shrouded woods – the northern Resplendant Quetzal. Apart from the birds, Santa Maria's fauna and flora were exhaustively inventoried and studied during a two-year project between the foundation and the University of Texas at Arlington.

Private aviculturists play an even more important role in conservation of the tropical birds. Properly coordinated research and reintroduction projects carried out by bona fide captive breeding centers and well-staffed conservation organizations in Latin America have the advantage of facility of execution that government and zoo projects do not. This doesn't mean that we should rush out and ship captive-bred birds home. Reintroduction of tropical vertebrates is a slowly developing art, not science, which requires fieldwork, foresight,



Four of the eleven Military Macaws which are now in Guatemala.

planning, biologists, captive-breeders and considerable financial resources. Undoubtedly there will be heartbreak . . . the restoration of the Peregrine Falcon in the U.S. and successful local reintroductions of Bat Falcons suggests there will be successes. Private collectors can make a difference supporting multi-institutional efforts with healthy

birds and cash donations, support of tropical forest conservation efforts world-wide and, most importantly, by only purchasing captive-bred psittacines.

If the international community does not band together to help save the wild populations of parrots and softbills, the world's tropical forests will become empty silent aviaries.

This would write a tragic footnote in the final chapter on the history of exotic aviculture.

For information on how you can help write:

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 Avicultural Breeding & Research Center
 1471 Folsom Road
 Loxahatchee, FL 33470, USA

INDONESIAN COCKATOOS IN AVICULTURE: A WARNING

by Rosemary Low

As I hold the body of my female Citron-crest I think: I must write this down while the pain of her death is still with me. If what I write can instill a greater conscienciousness in the minds and hearts of a few aviculturists who keep this species, perhaps, just *perhaps*, her death will not have been in vain.

The Citron-crest (*Cacatua sulphurea citrino-cristata*) is one of three cockatoos which is common in aviculture and yet threatened with extinction or, in at least/one case, on the verge of extinction, in the wild. Those of you who read earlier articles in *PsittaScene*, including the resumé of Roland Wirth's paper at the Tenerife convention (*PsittaScene*, Vol. 2 No. 4) will know that trade in Indonesian cockatoos has nearly depleted populations of several species. These are the Moluccan (*Cacatua moluccensis*), the Umbrella (*C.alba*) and the Citron-crest (*C.sulphurea citrino-cristata*). More information is needed on the status of the Goffin's (*C. goffini*) and the Lesser Sulphur-crest (*C.sulphurea sulphurea sulphurea*). Tens of thousands of

Goffin's have been exported from the Tanimbar Islands since 1972. Since the total area of these islands is only 2,000 sq miles and since they have suffered deforestation in recent years, the Goffin's outlook must be bleak. This species does not breed especially well in captivity so two or three decades hence Goffin's could be an expensive avicultural rarity...

Between 1984 and 1986 23,000 Umbrella Cockatoos left Indonesia officially; no doubt many more were smuggled out. Its habitat ranges over a number of small islands, including Halmahera from which large numbers of parrots of several species have been exported during the past two decades. Then Umbrella Cockatoos were seen in large flocks; now they are rare. Fortunately, the Umbrella breeds well in captivity; perhaps it might be described as the easiest cockatoo to breed. It is appalling that trade is the cause of its decline in such a short period but, if its habitat survives, it is perhaps feasible that this species could be bred in sufficient numbers in aviaries to repopulate its native

islands.

Alas, I fear that the same could never be true of the Moluccan, the Citron-crest, the Lesser and, perhaps, the Goffin's – but it is the former three which I wish to discuss here. My fears are founded on one reason for the Moluccan and a totally different reason for the Citron-crest and the Lesser.

Cockatoos are extremely sensitive birds – and this makes them more difficult to breed than many large parrots. We have to remember that at present the majority of cockatoos available are wild-caught adults which are very easily stressed. It is, in fact, the height of cruelty to take adults from the wild; they must suffer terribly, especially in the first few weeks after capture. Some never really recover from this ordeal and remain extremely nervous. Those in aviaries usually disappear into the nest-box at the first sight or sound of a human being.

However, some species are by nature even more sensitive than others. In my opinion, these include the Moluccan, the Lesser Sulphur-

crest and the Citron-crest. Would-be breeders of these species in particular have a very real problem to contend with. If the male is in breeding condition but the female is not responsive to his advances, the male will attack her, severely damaging her beak and in many instances ripping off the upper or the lower mandible. This has, of course, happened with other white cockatoo species but the problem seems to be less common.

In 1985 I obtained a female Citron-crest for the male belonging to my partner, Mike Gammond. Because it had proved impossible to locate a female elsewhere, I obtained a wild-caught bird, straight out of quarantine. From the day they were put together they were instantly compatible, in fact mating occurred a few minutes after their introduction. This took place in a cage in the kitchen so that I could keep constant watch on them. I have always thought the Citron-crest the most beautiful of the small white cockatoos but had never sought to keep them because of the problem outlined.



Lesser Sulphur-crested Cockatoo once commonly imported, now infrequently bred.
Photo: Rosemary Low.

When the weather became warmer, my pair were placed in an aviary immediately outside a window where I could keep a constant watch on them. My fears seemed unfounded and less than two years later they nested. Almost throughout the incubation period the temperature hovered around zero; it was so cold that when one egg pipped I decided to remove it and hand-rear the chick. Alas, it died due to a bacterial infection at five days old.

Then we moved to Tenerife. Again, the pair was placed in the aviary nearest to the window. During two years they nested only once and, sadly, the chick was killed almost immediately. I suspected that the warmer climate of the Canary Islands was not greatly to their liking; they showed little interest in nesting. After two years in Tenerife we moved to Gran Canaria, which is even warmer. Soon after our arrival I noticed the male chasing the female. At once I realised it was because the nest-box had not been put in place. Immediately they were provided with one and I saw no recurrence of aggression.

After the Citron-crests had been in a suspended cage, surrounded by other birds (again where they were constantly visible to me) I became convinced that they were not happy in their environment and would never breed. Generally speaking, suspended cages are not ideal for sensitive birds like cockatoos. I therefore decided to move them to a walk-in aviary that was at the far end of a block of 20, with a covered passage, and therefore very quiet. The disadvantage was that I would see the birds only twice daily when I did my rounds of the aviaries. After more than five years, I had been lulled into a false sense of security by their exemplary behaviour.

After about six months there was a cool period for a couple of

months with occasional showers – very unusual weather for Gran Canaria which has a hot, dry climate. This was the type of weather I considered would stimulate them to breed. They were given a new nest-box and spent long periods inside – I believe. Certainly they prepared the nest. But the female did not lay. Then one day in February, after exactly six years together, the male ripped off the female's lower mandible...

I knew that I was to blame – that for much less than the value of the female I could have purchased another closed-circuit TV camera and rigged it on to the existing system which allows us to observe the Pesquet's Parrots through every minute of daylight (and surprisingly, also when the light has nearly faded). I knew that I should have done this three months previously when one day I saw the female sitting on the aviary floor – a warning, if ever there was one. She never normally descended to the floor.

I suspect that many nervous cockatoos spend much more time out of the nest than their owners know, thus a television observation system would provide an enormous amount of information on their behaviour. From this information any person with some understanding of cockatoo behaviour would pick up the signs of impending problems, even if no actual aggression was seen. In any case, as many cockatoos do not behave normally when they are aware of being observed, this is the only way that one can really get to know the birds. One's knowledge of their behaviour can be increased in a very enjoyable way – armchair birdwatching, as it were!

But on a more serious note, the problem of males killing females is so serious in some cockatoos that ultimately a shortage of females will

result in a very low captive reproduction rate. It always has been low – but looking ahead a decade or so, when no birds will have been imported from the wild for some years and the number of females is inevitably, further reduced, the Citron-crest will be a rare and expensive avicultural subject, with too few bred to hope that Sumba (the only island on which this cockatoo occurs) could be repopulated through the efforts of aviculturists.

What can we do to ensure that this prediction does not come true? Now I am including the Lesser Sulphur-crest in these suggestions. This would have seemed incredible in the 1960s when the Lesser was the most commonly imported species. I can remember wholesalers offering them at £8 each...

We can do the following:

- 1) Not keep the species unless it can be under observation for a large part of the day.
- 2) Keep pairs in large aviaries, a minimum of 6m (20ft) long. In an aviary of this length, wing-clipping the male at the first sign of aggression could be effective. Of course, there is still the possibility that a female could be attacked when inside the nest-box.
- 3) Give very careful thought to the future of a male which has killed a female. I know of males which have killed more than one. Personally, I would not obtain another mate for a cockatoo which had killed once – so what does one do with such a bird? If it is sold, it could go from collection to collection, killing one or more females at each location. If it is given away the same may ultimately occur, since an adult bird which has long been in an aviary is not likely to make a good pet and the temptation to sell it for a handsome profit may be too strong for some to resist. Such a male may either have to be kept alone – a sad fate for such a sociable bird as a cockatoo – or perhaps *loaned* (thus ensuring it can never be sold) to a zoo or bird park which has a mixed aviary of large parrots. It is not likely to attack another species other than a cockatoo as this behaviour surely only occurs towards the bird with which it has bonded.

I would be interested to hear from anyone who has successfully bred from a male which has killed a previous female. Is it worth taking the risk when captive males outnumber females? If one has a female, it should surely be possible to find a male which has proved reliable? It is more than a question of compatibility. There are many instances of pairs which have bred and lived together for many years before the female was killed. We should try not to blame the male. After all, this behaviour is a result of the unnatural captive environment.

And what does one do with a

mutilated female who recovers from her injuries? I know one such Citron-crest which, thereafter, was so frightened of males that she spent most of the time cowering in the corner of the aviary, until it was accepted that she was of no use for breeding, when she was sold as a pet. I would suggest that anyone who is offered a female cockatoo for breeding, looks carefully at both mandibles for signs of previous injury. If this has occurred and the damage has been serious, the beak is unlikely to grow straight and may need frequent trimming.

Now let us look at the situation of the Moluccan in captivity which is different but even more serious. Its natural habitat embraces the small islands in the southern Moluccas of Ceram, Saparua and Haruku; it has been introduced to Amboina. Its total habitat covers less than 20,000 sq km which is about one quarter the size of Scotland, one eighth the size of Florida or 8% the size of Germany. It has been estimated that between 15,000 and 20,000 Moluccans were taken from the wild annually during the mid 1980s. Officially, about 7,500 were exported each year. As already reported, Roland Wirth stated that it is "now threatened with almost imminent extinction".

Three decades ago none of the Indonesian cockatoos were common in aviculture, except the Lesser. Then logging commenced on many of the islands. The ornithologist Randy Milton, who made a report to WWF on the status of various birds, especially parrots, in 1987, reported that bird trappers follow newly cleared lumber tracks and obliterate all populations of trade value. In 1989, just before the Moluccan Cockatoo was placed on Appendix I of CITES, Indonesia's major bird exporters mounted a final large-scale trapping operation of this species, which left it almost extinct.

So many have been exported that supply exceeded demand. The Moluccan had become a "common cage-bird" that might be encountered in any pet shop. And because of this, it is now one of the most endangered parrots in the world. Outside two restaurants in a local shopping centre (on Gran Canaria) are glorious Moluccan Cockatoos, kept on stands and fed little but sunflower seed, to be poked and prodded by hundreds of passers by. This species probably now has less chance of survival in the wild than the Imperial Parrot – yet if these birds were Imperials their presence as tourist attractions would create a world scandal. Because they are Moluccan Cockatoos, of which there are already thousands in captivity, no one is interested.

But of those thousands very few have ever bred or ever will breed. There is no way of even hazarding a guess at the percentage of wild-

caught birds which have produced young but I feel sure it would be less than 0.01%. Wild-caught Moluccans are not easy to breed. I know of only one person who has achieved significant success in terms of numbers bred (more than 20 a year) – all as a result of artificial incubation and rearing from the egg. However, as anyone familiar with a hand-reared Moluccan will know, the result is an adorable, demanding creature who identifies more with humans than with birds. Indeed, I can think of no other parrot which becomes so pathetically imprinted on humans. I have no proof but suspect that most of these birds will be totally useless for breeding.

Quite a few Moluccan Cockatoos are now being reared in the USA. But probably 99.9% of these are offered for sale as “cuddly hand-reared pets” at enormous prices because next to a Hyacinthine, Moluccans are considered the ultimate in pet birds. Alas, for these mostly unfortunate young cockatoos, most buyers have no conception of the enormity of the task of taking on a hand-reared Moluccan. A human baby would be less demanding. While a few may therefore end up in a breeding situation, it may not be until neglect or abuse has turned them into neurotic creatures which are totally confused about their own identity. There is no more irresistible creature alive than a young hand-reared Moluccan thus, alas, many

must fall victim to impulse-buyers who have no understanding of cockatoo behaviour.

Unfortunately, the fact that many captive cockatoos do not make good parents (no doubt because of their nervous temperament) means that even those who would like to have parent-reared Moluccans may have to hand-rear the chicks if they are to survive. However, I would appeal to all serious breeders to give their Moluccans a chance to rear chicks. Equally important, parent-reared young *must* be placed in the hands of breeders. Unless this occurs, in 20 or 30 years time there will be no captive-bred pairs to replace the original breeding pairs and although the captive population may still be quite high, it too might be nearing extinction.

It is well known that the first generation from wild-caught birds is often the hardest to produce. We are also now discovering that captive-bred parrots reproduce at an earlier age than wild-caught. If I was asked how old a wild-caught Moluccan would be before it would breed I would suggest four or five years. (Information on this point would also be welcome.) However, a captive-bred parent-reared female in my care produced her first egg when only 23 months old. Thus it appears that aviary-bred birds which have never had close contact with humans, may be much easier to breed than their wild-caught ancestors.



The author's pair of Citron-crest before tragedy struck.

Photo: Rosemary Low.

Finally, let me re-iterate the need to treat the Indonesian cockatoos in our care as though they were highly endangered Caribbean Amazons. They are equally threatened; there has yet to be equal publicity of this fact.

Active conservation projects in Indonesia are in their infancy. A lot could be done if the money was available, including protecting the Moluccan Cockatoo and what is left of the forests of Sumba (origin of the Citron-crest) which are among the most seriously depleted in Indonesia. In order to finance this project \$28,000 are needed. If you would like to make a donation,

please contact Roland Wirth, Franz-Senn-Strasse 14, 8000 München 70, Germany, Fax No. 089 719 3327, or make your donation through the World Parrot Trust. For most of us, a donation is the only way we have of showing our regret for what man has done to Indonesia's beautiful cockatoos. Alas, their beauty has been their downfall...

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THE ORANGE-BELLIED PARROT RECOVERY EFFORT

by Peter Brown, (Tasmania)

The effort to save the Orange-bellied Parrot is perhaps the most concerted attempt to assist an endangered species yet undertaken in Australia. After 12 years of research and management, the effort still continues. At this point in time, there are very hopeful signs for the recovery of the species, but as yet there is no real cause for joy. There is clear evidence that the species is breeding well in the wild, as in captivity, but the dangers of migration and wintering hazards still take their toll when the population is fragmented along the coastal fringes of Victoria and South Australia. We still know little of the effects of the deadly Parrot Beak and Feather Disease on the wild population, which, despite breeding successes has plagued the captive breeding programme. On that front there is some hope for the future as each year the percentage of affected offspring produced decreases.

Perhaps, in some ways, the most positive aspect of the whole project has been its support through a concerted effort by: a) the State authorities where the species occurs and the Commonwealth government, and ;b) the support of other groups like RAOU, WWF, ICBP, and the Avicultural fraternity. It really only is with such widespread support and encouragement that efforts to save endangered species like the OBP can succeed. These research and recovery programmes are invariably long term and end up costing large amounts of money, and the OBP programme is no different with upwards of a half million dollars already spent on it. As a matter of interest, I heard only a few months ago that WWF now work to a budget of 1 million dollars to save an endangered species. I expect that by the end of the century we will have spent that amount on the OBP in one way or another, and at the

end of it, there is no guarantee that we will be successful.

The Early Days

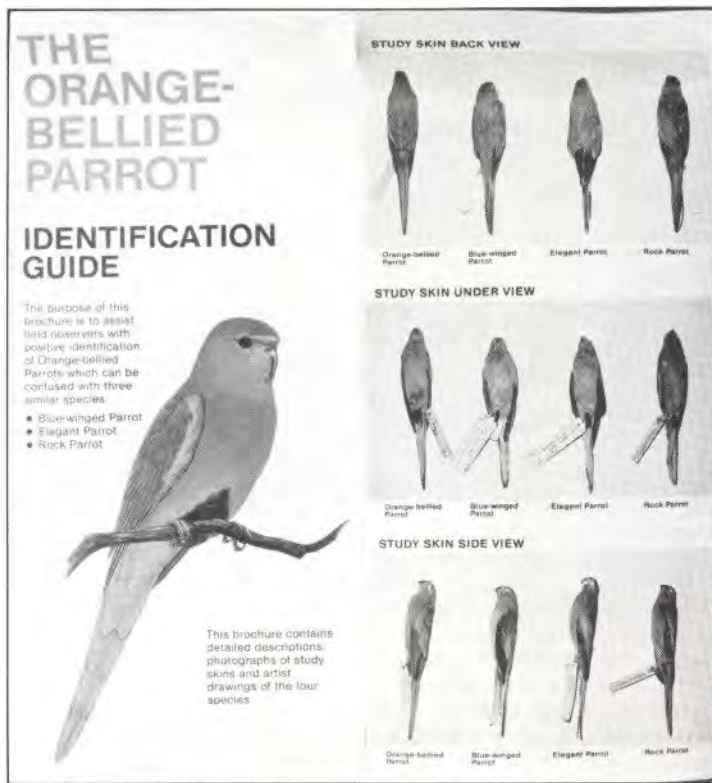
It is a little ironic that one of our least common species and one which has always been difficult to locate even from the earliest days, should in fact have been one of the first Australian birds to be described. Captain Cook discovered that in the sheltered anchorage of Adventure Bay, in the south of Bruny Island, his ships could be re-supplied with fresh water. With this knowledge he made a point of calling in here on each of his visits to Australian waters. Whilst at anchorage the naturalists took the opportunity to collect samples of the local wildlife. It seems probable that an Orange bellied-Parrot was collected by one of the crew on his second voyage. The bird was skinned and dried out before being packed away for return to London

where it was later described. That was in 1779.

The next reference to the OBP is in Gould's *Birds of Australia* in 1848. Gould found it common on the Acteon Islands off south-east Tasmania, only a few kilometres south of Bruny Is. He also found it "sparing" around Hobart. After leaving Tasmania, he travelled to Adelaide where, sure enough he located the species at Port Adelaide.

Just around the turn of the century there was a spate of records which can't help but give the impression that the OBP was not uncommon in some areas around that time with several flocks having been recorded in South Australia, west to Port Adelaide and even further west to Yorke Peninsular although there is some doubt about this last record.

During the latter part of the last century groups of birds were recorded on several occasions in



Identification guide for the Orange – bellied Parrot produced for WWF Australia and Tasmania National Parks and Wildlife Service
Photo: Rosemary Low.

Tasmania, Victoria and South Australia and most significantly in the Sydney area. Here birds were shot and captured at Long Bay, Middle Head, Penshurst, and Blacktown. At Middle Head, a male and female were collected from a hollow stump. There have been no recent records from that area.

In 1898 and 1899, clutches of eggs were collected from Bothwell and Melton Mowbray in central Tasmania more than 100km. from the presently known breeding sites and climatically very different. In the early 1900's we started getting the first of regular sightings of birds in Port Phillip Bay, Victoria, during the winter. In 1918 the OBP was recorded as being present in "thousands" in south east South Australia, with Robe and Millicent featuring consistently amongst the places mentioned in the records. In the period 1918-26, Hinsby reported having found OBP's nesting around Macquarie Harbour in western Tasmania but surprisingly few people paid any heed to his records and it was more than 50 years later that the next nests were found, when we started our study, in an area very close to the place where Hinsby had found them.

Since 1950 we have good records of wintering groups in the range 30 - 100 birds in the Point Wilson area of Port Phillip Bay, and during the 1960s and early 1970s, regular records of up to 100 on Mud Island in the same bay. In 1959 Mr McGarvie of King Island discovered up to 75 Orange-bellied Parrots on his farm at Egg Lagoon in the north during the autumn and winter. Birds

still regularly pass through King Island and my Department continues to monitor the numbers there during migration.

Present Distribution

The study with which I have been involved since 1979 has identified the breeding range of the species as restricted to the south-west of Tasmania, south of Macquarie Harbour in the mid west. It breeds largely along the coastal fringes and usually within 10 Km of the coast or the margins of the large natural harbours of Macquarie and Bathurst/Port Davey. In our experience it is never found very far from water and if it does venture far inland it is usually found in or around timber bordering rivers and large creeks. At the present time there is little doubt that the bulk of the population breeds in the far south-west corner of Tasmania, and fortunately, the entire population either breeds in the South-west World Heritage Area or South-west Conservation Area.

Breeding

The data we have on breeding is based on material which resulted from the first two years of the study when intensive studies of nesting behaviour were made. The birds start to arrive in south-west Tasmania in early October. Here there is a tendency for groups to accumulate in certain locations prior to dispersal for breeding. Birds roost communally in tea tree scrub and forage widely in the surrounding sedgelands feeding on the seeds of a range of sedges and heaths. Experienced breeders will quickly

return to a previously successful nest site and start cleaning it out. For younger birds, although there is strong evidence that many will have paired before arrival in Tasmania, some have yet to pair up and a great deal of vying for mates takes place, hence nest site selection is delayed.

Despite the fact that some nests are occupied in mid October, it is unusual for eggs to be laid before the second week in November. The nest is invariably in a eucalyptus, either in a hole in the trunk, or in a hollow limb. The eucalypt is often along a creek line or river bank, in a small forest copse or on the edge of a large substantial forest. We have not yet located a nest more than 100m from a forest margin. The nest site will invariably overlook a large open area of buttongrass sedgeland plain. Nests have varied from 7m to 25m above ground but most nests are in the 10-15m range. Average nest depth is 45cm or 18in, four to six white eggs are laid.

Incubation takes 22-24 days and the chicks remain in the nest for 5-6 weeks. During incubation and the first 10 days of the chick's life, the female will brood alone. The male will visit the nest with food on average each 3 hours during incubation. He will call the female out and both birds will fly to to an adjacent tree where he will feed her by regurgitation. If laying is still in progress, he will also mate with her on most visits. The eggs are laid on alternate days, with incubation starting on the second or third egg, although she occupies the nest prior to the laying of the first egg.

Most young leave the nest between late January and mid late February. On emergence, the tail of the juveniles is about two thirds its full length, but they are most easily distinguished by their bright caramel coloured beaks as opposed to darkish slate grey of the adults.

The young form up into feeding and roosting creches during late February and early March, whilst the adults seem to disappear from the breeding areas. Evidence from the age structure of birds located on King Island suggests that the adults head off on migration fairly soon after the young become independent.

The young will then remain in the south-west until late March and early April before they too head off to the mainland, quite unaided by their parents: an instinctive urge and obviously not something learned.

The Captive Breeding Trials

Ornithologists in Tasmania and Victoria had been very concerned about the status of this species during the 1970s and in 1979 a meeting was arranged between State and Commonwealth wildlife authorities and a number of wildlife conservation groups. The outcome of this meeting was that the States

were to combine to support a research project on the species which would be administered by the Tasmanian National Parks and Wildlife Service, owing to the fact that the species bred in that State. The giant chemical company I.C.I. at that time had funded an impact study on the species for their proposed new plant at Werribee and they would be approached to finance the study through World Wildlife Fund. This all eventuated and the study started in 1979.

In 1984, a Management Plan for the recovery of the OBP was produced following these studies, and amongst the recommendations, it was decided that consideration should be given to a captive breeding programme as the indications were that the population was still in decline at a level of not much more than 100-150 birds.

In appreciating the problems which the species faced, the then National Parks and Wildlife Service of this State constructed a range of aviaries at a location on an isthmus of the River Derwent about 15 km upstream from Hobart. The purpose was to undertake trials in the aviaries to determine of their suitability should the need arise later to try and breed OBPs in captivity.

These trials were based on two species. One of these was the Rock Parrot, a *Neophema* which aviculturists had found difficult to breed, and which seemed to suffer the same problems of lethargy as had the OBP in past efforts to breed it. The other species was the Blue-winged Parrot. The Blue-wing is perhaps the species most similar to the OBP. It is native to Tasmania and like the OBP, most of the population migrates to the mainland in winter. All of the Rock Parrots used in the trials were wild caught in South Australia and 12 of the Blue-winged Parrots were wild caught, another nine having been bred in aviaries in Hobart.

Over the next three breeding seasons, a total of 43 Rock Parrots and 52 Blue-winged Parrots were bred. The principal reasons for our success in breeding these birds was put down to the fact that we were breeding on the colony system with, in all cases, at least three pairs to each aviary. This proved conclusively that the aviaries were adequate for breeding *Neophemas* and therefore in all probability would suit OBPs.

The Real Thing

With these results, we were fairly confident that we could if necessary manage a captive breeding programme for the OBP, and following the OBP Recovery Team meeting of November 1985, when unanimous support was given to commence the breeding programme, a total of 10 OBPs were taken from, the wild and brought into the aviaries They were kept in



The Spit, wintering grounds of Orange – bellied Parrots, just outside Melbourne. There were three parrots feeding in the salt bush in the centre of the picture, when it was taken.

Photo: Rosemary Low.

two small indoor aviaries to start with, five in each, together with a fairly tame Blue winged Parrot in each aviary. They settled down well and when released into larger aviaries a month later had increased their weight from an average 44.5g to 52g, an increase of 17% body weight. One bird had increased its weight by 49% over that period. Initially they were fairly bemused and lethargic in the larger aviary, but soon settled down and became quite active. One bird caught and weighed after a further month had lost 4g and returned to exactly its weight when originally caught.

At this point I should perhaps describe the aviaries in which these birds were and are maintained. The design is somewhat unusual and was partly designed to fit into the landscape where they were being constructed close to the River Derwent, north of Hobart. This area is subject to cold winter winds created by the cold air drainage off the central plateau. These winds can be bitter and create fogs which prevent the sun from warming the aviaries and birds.

The aviaries were built into a bank with a curved roof to enable the winds to flow over the aviary top. Another reason for the curved roof was to reduce the likelihood of diurnal or nocturnal predators casing any damage. The occupants of the aviary would find it difficult and uncomfortable to cling to the aviary roof. The mesh is approximately 1/2 in (12.5mm) square.

The aviaries are serviced from a covered back passage and consist of 10 separate compartments, each of 4 x 7m floor dimensions and 3m at the highest point. The higher back

sections are covered and each aviary has its own service door into the passage. There are five compartments either side of the central service room, all in a straight line. The aviaries can be kept as singles or with any combination, up to all five as one aviary.

The floor of the aviaries are of bluestone metal gravel, as we try to avoid worms which can be a real problem with planted aviaries. Perches are a mixture of 45 x 19mm tile battens and branches of wattles or eucalyptus, etc. Food is provided on feeding trays mounted at 1.2m on the walls at the covered rear section of the aviaries. Water is provided in stove enamel bowls, which are scrubbed out every one or two days.

Food is a mixture of plate, panicum, and Japanese millets, some canary seed and a little rape, niger, linseed and sunflower. During the breeding season, seeding grasses, plantains, dandelions, etc., are given every second day.

The breeding programme met with its first major obstacle in May 1986, when some of the young birds which had been taken from the wild started to develop yellow feathers in their plumage. At first we thought it was a deficiency or goitre problem and with veterinary advice a number of remedies were tried. These had no effect, and as time progressed birds started to lose feathers which were either not replaced or were replaced by undeveloped distorted feathers. Some of the birds also developed bill malformations. Their condition deteriorated and eventually seven of those 10 birds died.

We were left with three birds, one male and two females, which were not affected visibly and which came through the moult in perfect feather. They were left together as the breeding season approached and a range of nests were erected under cover. These were all natural logs.

The long and short of it was that both the females were fortunately mated by the one male and four young were reared, three in one nest and one the other.

The next difficult decision was where to go from here. Do we try to build up from the existing stock which were basically all closely related and risk severe inbreeding depression or do we take more from the wild and try again? Eventually it was agreed we should take more and the following year six more were captured, meanwhile two of the four chicks reared died as a result of the viral disease we had by now had identified as Psittacine Beak and Feather Disease (Pbfd).

In the second season eight young were reared from three nests, clutches of four, three and one.

Subsequently in 1988/89, seven of the eight females in the collection laid and reared young and in that year 22 young were reared. However losses from Pbfd still continued and, in order to escape the cold winter conditions which caused some stress to the birds, it was decided to move the complex to a new and climatically more moderate site.

This was a lengthy protracted affair and resulted in completion much later than had been anticipated, which meant we almost lost

the 1989/90 breeding season, and only three young were reared. However 24 infertile eggs were laid.

In the just completed breeding season, there has been a considerable improvement with 14 young being reared from six breeding females. The encouraging news is that none of the 1989/90 young were affected by Pbfd and of course it is still too early to say if any of the latest young were affected. It is, however, encouraging that the percentage of affected young has reduced each year. Birds, incidentally, only show visible signs of the disease in their first moult. Once past this they do not appear to become affected. It would, however appear that we have Pbfd carriers in the population.

As we still seem to be a long way from a vaccine or even a blood test for the disease our greatest hope is that we are breeding our way out of it.

Another problem which has made life difficult for the captive programme is the imbalance of females over males. At the beginning of the most recent breeding season out of the potential breeding stock of 25 birds, we only had seven males and 18 females. To maximise the use of males, we doubled and trebled up with females to males. In one aviary we had three females and one male and in another four females and two males and no young were reared in either aviary, whilst in a third aviary there were four females and two males and on that occasion all four females reared young. In a fourth breeding aviary with four females and two males, two of the females reared.

The three young from the

previous season were kept in an aviary with no males. All three went to nest and of course laid infertile eggs.

We use both natural logs and artificial boxes in the aviaries. Both types were used and young were reared in both. However, there is a clear preference for natural logs. We try to average a nest depth of between 45 and 60cm. The nests are all mounted in the covered part of the aviary. I realise this will keep the boxes very dry but I think this is preferable to the nests and their contents being cooked in the sometimes fierce sun.

The big unanswered problem centres around Beak and Feather Disease. We do not know for certain if it is endemic in the wild population, but the evidence suggests that it is. Several birds have been seen

which have yellow feathers or scruffy plumage, and the first birds we captured from the wild developed the disease almost immediately after arrival.

We still maintain a flock of Rock Parrots for cross-fostering in the aviaries but all the Blue-winged Parrots have been released. There has never been a single incident of PBFD in Rock Parrots, nor in the Blue-winged Parrots whilst we had them.

The disease has been identified in many Australian Parrots in the wild, and in Tasmania it has been recorded in Eastern and Green Rosellas, Sulphur-crested Cockatoos and Musk Lorikeets.

As I said, it is fairly conclusive that PBFD occurs in wild OBPs and indeed it may be an important reason for its rarity. We are now at

the stage where we have sufficient captive stock to undertake a release of birds back into the wild. We have addressed some of the management problems in its wild habitat and we continue to do that. A release programme is high on the agenda for the next meeting of the OBP Recovery Team which takes place in Tasmania in March. I will certainly be supporting a recommendation that we go for our first release in south-west Tasmania in October this year.

Conclusion

I suppose in conclusion, I should address the matter of the value of dedicating so much time and money to trying to save one small species. Some might say so what, what does it matter if we lose one species? Fortunately, I believe that I do not

have to try to justify this effort to aviculturist. There is little doubt that the OBP is the thin end of the wedge. As time goes by, more and more species will become endangered in Australia. If we are to stand any chance of managing our planet, then we must be able to prevent the extinction of macro species. No doubt there are micro species becoming extinct all the time without our ever having known them.

The forces which brought the OBP to its present parlous state are still not absolutely understood; it seldom is with any species. It will not be easy to bring the OBP back to the situation where we can say with confidence that it is secure, but we must try and, at present, in my view, things are looking encouraging.

No. 2 IN OUR SERIES

"If I could keep only one pair of parrots ..."

Richard M. Schubot
Avicultural Breeding & Research
Center, 1471 Folsom Road,
Loxahatchee, FL 33470

When asked to write about my favourite pair of birds I couldn't find an answer, as a pair of birds really belong to each other. However, if rephrased to ask "What is my favourite bird", there is but one answer, "The Palm Cockatoo". In my opinion there is no other bird as regal and majestic. Uncommon in captivity and rare in the wild, it's most often seen as a picture, used as a trademark or emblem, or seen in a zoo. It is listed on Appendix I of C.I.T.E.S. and on the Species Survival Program of the A.A.Z..P.A. (American Association of Zoological Parks & Aquariums).



Richard Schubot and one of the 20 Palm Cockatoos he has bred.

The Palm ranges in size from a small bundle of love, 400gms, all the way to 1,300gms. Palms have soft black plumage, a fan tail and a beautiful crest perpetually in some form of erection, be it half mast or fully erected. To maintain good colour and condition Palms should be exposed to the open air, sunshine and rain. Its bare cheek patches, tongue and throat are a vivid deep red. If you have seen pale pink to ashen gray cheek patches and dull coats that's because they are not kept outdoors or on a proper diet.

Some of my fondest bird memories are of Palms. I have seen no greater sight than to behold a baby Palm emerging from the trunk of a tree 80 feet in the air with its feathers fluttering and its crest waving in the breeze looking around as though it were his first look at the world. I saw that vision one afternoon while searching for Palms in the Cape York Peninsula of Australia. I spent hours watching this awesome beauty surveying the horizon for sight of his parents, whom I could hear near by.

Palms have a stately attitude, magnificent colour and tremendous stature. Perhaps it's his ritual dance and conversation with the female when he's desirous to mate that makes him so endearing. The male stands erect, crest erect and cheeks blushing brilliant red. He pounds his foot, often while holding a stick, to get the female's attention. Then he struts, and bows while making a beautiful call. The conversation is



Young Palm Cockatoo in the wild

personal and stimulating to entice his female.

Of course he must have his nest in order. The nest is constructed of sticks chewed to toothpick size, leaves and food and may be 3 feet deep in a hollow tree or nest box. This ritual very often extends for 2 or 3 years till all is right. Then they lay only one egg. Sometimes they eat the egg or it's not fertile and next year is soon enough for a second attempt.

My experience indicates that Palms must be at least 10 - 12 years old to produce and during all of those years you must feed them well.

For those of you who have heard Palms don't eat fruit and vegetables, don't believe it. They thrive on them, but also love pine nuts, queen palm nuts, pandanus fruits, papayas and pomegranates. We also serve them a finely ground mash composed of all kinds of fruits and vegetables mixed with whole wheat bread.

Probably my favourite bird of all is a Palm I call Love. I spent 18 months hand feeding him when he was desperately ill to the point that several veterinarians recommended euthanizing him. I refused to accept

death for this bird so I personally accepted the challenge of saving him. He lived inside my shirt for 30 days, at night I slept sitting on the floor resting vertically against a wall to keep him in an erect position to keep food down. Slowly I turned the tide and during a period of 18 months I gave him over 100 shots of antibiotics, vitamins and appetite stimulants and 1,500 tube feedings. He slept on my bed or on his cage in my bedroom during that entire period never being far from me. Never once did he have an irritated oesophagus. We finally determined that he must have had a stroke. I varied his diet with specially prepared foods and on New Year's Day, 1988 he ate on his own for the first time in 18 months and has continued to thrive ever since. We paired him with a beautiful hen named "KISSES". He now lives just outside my bedroom in a huge flight cage.

All of these experiences, in addition to having successfully raised over 20 babies, all still in my possession, makes me appreciate and love the Palm more than any other bird.

NO FRIEND OF THE PARROTS

by Michael Reynolds

For leading UK bird publication 'Cage & Aviary Birds' it's 'cash before conservation' and 'profits before parrots'. That is the grim conclusion we have to reach, following over a year's correspondence with that paper and its owners IPC Magazines Ltd.

It all began shortly after the launch of this trust, when Paradise Park (where the trust is based) tried to book an advertisement in 'Bird Keeper', another IPC magazine. The ad was refused, much to our astonishment, and when I enquired the reason, I was told it was because we had mentioned the World Parrot Trust in the copy.

When I protested, I was told that the World Parrot Trust were 'protectionists' and therefore unacceptable to these publications. It seems that other 'protectionist' organisations, like WWF TRAFFIC, RSPCA, RSPB, and ICBP, are excluded from mention, unless they are being attacked in some way.

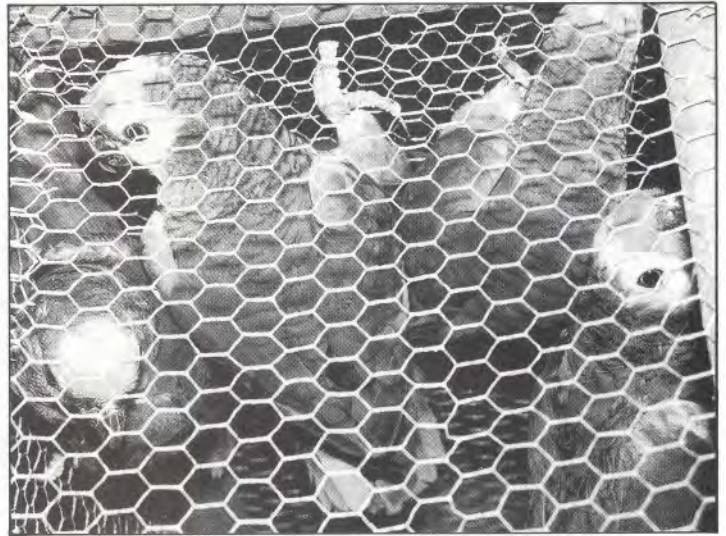
I wrote to the Chairman of IPC Magazines Ltd., and he suggested a meeting with the publishing director Steven Curtis and the editor Brian Byles. This meeting was not a great success, since Brian Byles in particular seemed to be rather aggressive and inexperienced at rational discussion. Curiously, though, I gained the impression that he knew he was in the wrong but felt obliged to maintain his Canute-like stance in favour of continued mass exploitation of wild bird populations.

They wanted me to water down our stated aim No. 4: 'By advocating

effective controls on the international trade in wild-caught parrots, and its replacement by captive-bred birds'. When their Managing Director wrote to me subsequently he inferred that we should cease to show unpleasant pictures of birds in transit etc., if we wished to be allowed to advertise in their papers. Clearly, we cannot allow these people to censor our publications or re-write our objectives.

Further absurdities followed when 'Cage & Aviary Birds' edited our name out of an article written by The Parrot Society, and thereby gave the impression that our two largest projects – the conservation bus for St. Lucia and the four wheel drive vehicle for Mauritius – were entirely Parrot Society initiatives. Both The Parrot Society and The World Parrot Trust wrote to object and ask for a correction, but the eventual 'correction' was so irrelevant and illiterate that it amounted to no correction at all. I have now contacted the Press Complaints Commission, who have instructed 'Cage & Aviary Birds' to print a proper correction. Negotiations on this continue.

The sad thing about all this is that 'Cage & Aviary Birds' and 'Bird Keeper' are the only professionally produced magazines in the UK dealing with aviculture – at present, that is. They are undoubtedly the main channel through which wild-caught parrots reach their UK destinations, mostly as individual pets. In my correspondence with them I suggested that they were in



This must be the kind of picture 'Cage and Aviary Birds' don't want us to publish.

an ideal position to demonstrate any genuine concern they might have for the parrots, by giving a year's notice to their advertisers that they would cease accepting advertisements for birds which were obviously wild-caught. This would save the lives of perhaps a hundred thousand birds each year, if you count in those which die back along the way. (In 1989, 29,235 parrots were imported into Britain, 4,094 were dead on arrival or died in quarantine – but who really knows how many died in the hands of trappers and traders to get those 29,235 into the UK? And then of course there's the rest of Europe, USA, Japan etc., but that's another story.) I pointed out that the production and sale of aviary-bred parrots would soon restore any lost advertising revenue.

I believe they thought I was joking, and they wrote to say that their aim was to protect the interests of their readers and advertisers. How short sighted. What a missed opportunity to show that a commercial organisation can

occasionally act with integrity and compassion, while at the same time creating for itself a caring conservation image.

It's no good writing to the recalcitrant Mr. Byles, but you could help the parrots by writing to the Chairman of IPC Magazines Ltd., and telling him what you think. His name is: Mr. John Mellon, Chairman, IPC Magazines Ltd., Kings Reach Tower, Stamford St., London SE1 9LS. He really loves getting letters about 'Cage & Aviary Birds', so let's send him a sackful. You could ask him (a) to instruct his bird publications to stop advertising parrots which are obviously wild-caught, (b) to remove the ban on accepting ads from The World Parrot Trust, and (c) to give fair and accurate coverage of The World Parrot Trust's many initiatives to help the parrots. Perhaps, between us, we can persuade him that his bird publications' current policy is intellectually and environmentally unsustainable, and is also commercially unsound.

BUS BREAKS NEW GROUND:

By P. J. Butler (RARE Center)

Early last year the World Parrot Trust was given a challenge when Paul Butler, RARE Center's Caribbean Programme Director, invited it to join with his organisation in developing a mobile interpretive center for the island of Saint Lucia.

Quite a step for a newly-formed, and still relatively small organisation for it meant a considerable commitment of both cash and manpower resources.

Nevertheless the Trust rallied to

the cause seeing merit in an idea that would carry the conservation message into every community in a lively and attention getting format. Today thanks to you, the membership of the World Parrot Trust, JACQUOT EXPRESS is a reality.

This vehicle comprises a renovated British Leyland Bus stripped of its interior seats and fitted with interactive displays illustrating some of the environmental problems facing Saint Lucia.

Named after the island's National Bird, decorated with forest motifs and squawking like a parrot it

instantly attracts attention.

Wherever there is a road the bus will travel, being parked in school fields, outside churches or by the roadside. It can remain in a village or community for a day or a week before moving on, and the exhibits may be changed periodically so that the bus always carries a fresh message out into the community.

Thanks to the sterling work of the WPT's David Woolcock the Jacquot Express arrived on island "ready to roll" and complete with the following exhibits:-

- 1) Putting the Pieces in Place: This environmental jigsaw illustrates the forest ecosystem with each piece representing a single component such the sun, trees, river, snake, or bird. The exhibit explains that in nature all the pieces are connected and that if one is removed the whole picture is destroyed. The puzzle's pieces are large and colourful catching the eye of even the bus's youngest visitor.
- 2) Forests for People . . . : This exhibit describes the functions that trees serve with



David Woolcock of the World Parrot Trust hands over the bus keys to St. Lucia Minister of Agriculture Mr Ferdinand Henry

Ferdinand Henry, Minister of Agriculture; his Permanent Secretary, Mr Losmos Richardson; Chief Forestry Officer Brian James and a number of invited guests. Also present was David Woolcock, Programme Director for the World Parrot Trust; Paul Butler and renowned US actor Lou Gossett Junior.

Media coverage was impressive with National Audubon TV, an independent UK producer, local press, radio and television.

At the ceremony Mr Butler indicated that through the bus the Forestry Department's environmental message could be carried island wide. He added that when the bus eventually breaks down, hopefully after having given years of service, it can be towed to prominent location to serve as a fixed educational facility. By that time, everyone will be familiar with the bus and likely to seek it out to learn more.

Mr Butler added that space on the back of the bus is available to local businesses and invited them to rally to the cause to help maintain the vehicle and fund new exhibits.

By the second week in April Jacquot Express was on the road. Its effect on the population was stunning. Open mouths, looks of disbelief followed by radiant smiles greeted the bus wherever it went. Since then it has travelled to communities in the north and east of the island giving children and adults alike an opportunity to tour the exhibits and to learn about the importance of the forest.

regard to the production of timber and the conservation of precious soil and water resources. Visitors are invited to write down (using chalk & a blackboard) all the various uses of wood and water.

3) Proud of my Parrot:

This photo display highlights one of the more important denizens of the island's forest ecosystem - the Saint Lucia Parrot, *Amazona versicolor* - known locally as Jacquot.

The panel highlights its beauty, uniqueness and rarity as well as its symbolic value as the country's National Bird. Information on its feeding, breeding habits and status are given and a plea made for the public's continuing support in its conservation.

4) Mirror, Mirror on the Wall . . . :

The use of a mirror shows the visitor who threatens the forest the most, and whose responsibility it is to ensure its protection!

5) The Population Problem:

This interactive display lights up at the press of a button correlating the decline of Saint Lucia's forest resource with the island's rapidly growing population and poses the question "What will remain in the year 2000?"

6) Not a Drop to Drink:

Perhaps the highlight of the bus is two exhibits that illustrate the effects of deforestation. Constructed at a cost of US\$ 8000 these show a forested watershed and compare it with one under poor management.

The press of a button starts a process where rain falls on the

mountainside, percolates down into the river and flows out of the model into a glass. The water in the "well managed model" arrives clean and can be drunk. The water from the model that depicts hillsides ravaged by deforestation produces a muddy coloured water supply which looks far from being good to drink.

7) Forests in the Future:

The final display is a photo panel which details what is being done

to protect the forest and what the individual can do to help.

The bus is also equipped with a generator, slide projector, VCR and television, as well as cassette recorders to provide supplementary information and a PA system to hail passers by. Discovery boxes, posters and handouts complete the facility.

Jacquot Express was handed over to the Forestry Department at a small ceremony on April 4th. Present at the event was Mr



Some of the first St. Lucia children to visit the "Jacquot Express"

In late April the bus visited the town of Micoud where more than 350 farmers were shown its displays thereby carrying the conservation message into the heart of the agricultural community.

Under the direction of senior education officer Anita James, a travel schedule has been prepared and it is anticipated that over the next 6-8 months the bus will visit every major community on Saint Lucia. After making this initial round, its exhibits will be removed and housed in the Department's interpretive facility at Union. New exhibits will be designed and constructed so that the bus may revisit Saint Lucia's towns and

villages carrying a fresh environmental message.

Local businesses are rallying to the cause, Avis & National Car rental have agreed to service the bus free of charge whilst the Hotels Association have agreed to pay for any parts required. Windjammer Landing has pledged to fund the next set of exhibits and negotiations are ongoing with a gas company to provide free gas and oil.

RARE Center offers its sincerest thanks to the membership of the World Parrot Trust and its congratulations to David Woolcock. Jacquot Express has exceeded our wildest expectations. Next stop Dominica.

"JACQUOT EXPRESS" would not have been possible without the help of the individuals & organisations listed below

British Airways	Brewers	World Parrot Trust
Western National	Geest	The Parrot Society
McDougall Rose	Victoria Ewart	Rare Centre
Jewson	Bill Faulkner	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
TOA	Lawrence Fleming	Porthminster Beach Ltd
Graham Bee	Ken Linderman	Communication Systems
Jeff Bromley	O'Dell Signs	Nexus Colour Laboratories
Lloyd Burchell	Parc Signs	Southwest Power Tools
Jack Butler	Philp's Bakery	Westcountry Signs
Ian Caple	BBC Radio Cornwall	St. Lucia Forestry Dept
Philip Craig	BBC TV Southwest	Sham Ambivagar
Charles Crowle	Blue Peter	Jersey Wildlife
Wendy Duggan	Television Southwest	Preservation Trust

THANK YOU

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor

Sorry it has taken so long to update you on our macaw workshop, held in Honduras, in January. First, I want to thank you and the World Parrot Trust for your generous donation of 600 Pounds.

The objective of the workshop was to gather together Latin Americans with an interest in macaw conservation. Representatives were present from Mexico, Belize, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama. A very informative presentation was also given regarding the conservation program ongoing with Lear's macaw in South America and on the macaw research program in Manu Park, Peru. Participants included representatives from governmental wildlife departments in Belize, Costa Rica, Guatemala and Honduras. Noel Snyder (Wildlife Preservation Trust International), David Wiedenfeld (TRAFFIC), Martin Kelsey (ICBP Americas Project Officer) were also present.

Currently, thirteen of the presentations are being typeset for publication in the proceedings. This publication will undoubtedly provide all of those interested in macaw conservation in Mesoamerica with the most updated information available. The final day was devoted to "recommendations". A copy of such is enclosed for your membership. After the workshop an evaluation form was sent to all of the participants. As a result of the evaluation some changes will be made in the organization of the next workshop planned for January 1994 in San Jose, Costa Rica.

Again many thanks for WPT's financial support.

Jack Clinton-Eitnrear, Dir. Centre for the Study of Tropical Birds, Inc.

PRE-PUBLICATION OFFER

A limited number of copies of the proceedings of the First Mesoamerican Workshop on the Conservation and Management of Macaws will be available April 1, 1991.

Thirteen original papers are included in the proceedings, including:

- Status of the Scarlet Macaw in Belize, *Rafael Manzanero*
- Status and Conservation of Macaws in Nicaragua, *Juan Martinez-Sanchez*
- Management and Conservation of the Scarlet Macaw in Carara Reserve, Costa Rica, *Michael McCoy*
- Conservation of Lear's Macaw, *Judith Hart*
- Macaw Research in Manu Park, Peru, *David Ricalde*
- Plus workshop resolutions

To reserve your copy, forward \$25 to CSTB, P.O. Box 20219, Charleston, South Carolina 29413. Specify either Spanish or English editions with your order.

Dear Sir

Firstly I must congratulate you on setting up the World Parrot Trust. Its aims, I feel, are honourable and it must be a lot of work for a part-time job. However, I felt compelled to write to you about the certificate. The idea that somebody should get a certificate for trying to help some parrots is pathetic and I would not have thought the people interested in trying to save parrots would be interested in a certificate praising them. I feel the certificate is wholly inappropriate and should be replaced with a small membership card.

Things I would like to see in the magazine are a list of the endangered species and those registered as such with CITES so

that we can keep an eye open for illegal importation. At least one address per issue for letter writing campaigns to exporting/importing countries or MP's, MEP's etc. I also believe that we should campaign for registration of every bird kept in the country to ensure that they are well looked after.

I believe that 'Cage & Aviary Birds' will not let you advertise, and you are doing a feature in the next issue but I would like you to survey the advertisers and issue 'Which' type results for advertisers in terms of imported birds/hand reared/English bred/ range of birds etc. so that people who are interested in buying birds recognise the more 'moral' suppliers. The same should be done for 'Exchange & Mart'.

I hope these comments are helpful.

Yours sincerely

P. Prenton-Jones
Merseyside

Editor's Comments

1. Oh dear, we knew the Membership Certificate was a bit over the top, but didn't think it offended people. Could we have more comments on this?
2. Good point about providing a list of Appendix I parrots. We'll include it in our next issue.

From Jay Beckerman, Editor of "Parrot World", USA

Let me tell you how much I enjoy the work you are doing with 'Psitta Scene'. I always look forward to receiving it and make the time to sit and read it through at once. That is no small accomplishment, given the nature of my usual 7am to 11pm or 12.30 am day.

Dear Sirs

I have today received my subscription renewal. Normally monies outgoing are greeted with groans and much wailing but this 'expenditure' is given with only one regret - I wish I could give much more.

May I tell you a little about 'Shangri La'. It is a small property (6 acres) on the out-skirts of the township of York, a wheat-belt town 96km inland of Perth. I moved here nearly 3 years ago and slowly people are getting to know that there is now a wild life refuge in the Avon Valley.

I get a lot of calls from people 'out-bush' for Western Australia is a vast area sparsely populated. Variety is certainly the spice of life. We've had all sorts. In the bird family it has ranged from Swallows through to a little Eagle, but the largest group of casualties are the Galah (*Eolophus roseicapillus*) and the Port Lincoln (*Barnardius zonarius zonarius*).

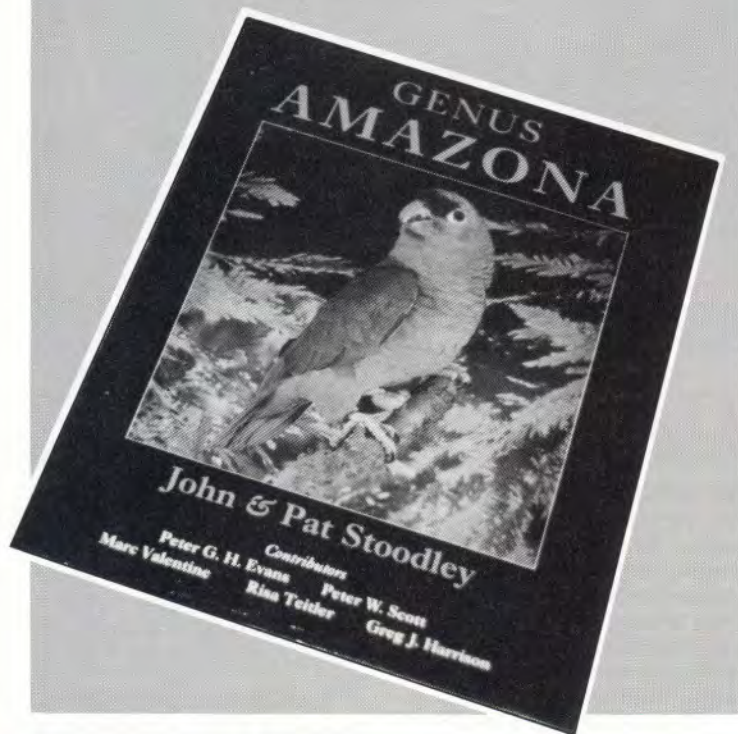
There is a lot of heart-break involved but when you have a 'happy ending' and the bedraggled bunch of feathers is finally released as a brilliant jewel winging its way back into the wilds (our main aim is to return all fauna back to their native habitat) it gives you a good feeling inside that no money on earth can give. It's worth all the blood, sweat and tears.

Keep up the good work.

Organisations like The World Parrot Trust give me hope that our tired old world won't end up a concrete jungle with only fellow humans for company.

Regards
Sue Cheadle
Shangri La
P.O. Box 157 York,
WESTERN AUSTRALIA 6302

BOOK REVIEW



GENUS AMAZONA by John & Pat Stoodley

How time flies in the world of parrots. It's only eight years since these authors shared their knowledge by publishing 'Parrot Production'. At the time this was a bold, almost provocative title, but it described perfectly the achievements of the Stoodleys. Tireless application to every detail of bird keeping was married to an unparalleled sensitivity – on the part of both authors – to the needs of adult birds, eggs and chicks. Parrots were indeed produced on a scale not previously seen anywhere in the world.

Next came 'Pionus Parrots', giving the complete lowdown on this interesting genus, and including further guidance on breeding, accommodation, incubation, hand-rearing and diseases (this latter chapter written by Susan L. Clubb DVM.)

Now we have 'Genus Amazona', which takes further the concept of including contributions by others: there are excellent chapters by Peter Evans, Greg Harrison, Peter W. Scott, Risa Teitler and Marc Valentine, plus valuable 'field observations'. The review of the members of the genus is very good, but in some cases I wished for more

information. The photographs, the majority by John Stoodley, are exceptionally crisp and informative.

The main value of this book, however, is the way it updates much of the information and insights given in the previous two books. I found the chapter on 'Surrogate Parents' most instructive and illuminating, although in my own collection I will be slow to follow the Stoodleys' initiative in giving incubator-hatched chicks to reliable foster parents. Perhaps I lack the necessary imagination, because I would never have thought of enclosing an already hatched chick within a larger eggshell in order to introduce it to its foster parent!

It is very much that type of creativity which distinguishes the Stoodley contribution to aviculture, and makes this book essential to every serious parrot breeder. It is not a cheap book, but it will repay its purchase price many times over.

Michael Reynolds

GENUS AMAZONA by John & Pat Stoodley. Available from : Bezelz Publications, Lovedean, Portsmouth PO8 0SW, England. Price £42.00, plus £2.00 post and packing.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS ROUND-UP



UNITED STATES HAS TWO NEW BIRD PROTECTION BILLS

The following information has been received from 'Defenders of Wildlife', Washington, DC. For the moment we publish it without comment, apart from welcoming the provisions in The Wild Bird Act to allow imports for captive breeding and zoological and scientific purposes. As readers and members will know by now, The World Parrot Trust wishes to see an end to trade in parrots as commodities for the pet trade, but strongly supports controlled importations to sustain conservation-minded aviculture.

THE WILD BIRD TRADE: AN OVERVIEW

Each year at least eight million birds are taken from the wild for sale as pets. The United States, one of the largest importers of wild birds, brings in over 450,000 yearly.

On average, 50% of the birds die before leaving the exporting country. The birds themselves endure unspeakable conditions during capture, holding and transit to a point of export where they can be shipped to the U.S. For every wild-caught bird making it to its final destination – the local pet store – three have died.

Into this pipeline of wild-caught

birds is fed a steady stream of illegally caught birds. Despite the best efforts of enforcement agencies, this laundering continues; about one in five birds imported into the U.S. is smuggled. Smuggling becomes especially lethal for wild populations of endangered species. For example, by 1990, trapping had diminished the wild Spix's macaw population to one individual.

THE WILD BIRD ACT

The Wild Bird Act would immediately ban imports of wild birds for the pet trade. Experience with banned species (such as Australian species) shows that by ending wild birds imports, captive breeding will become financially viable and the source of supply for the pet trade. Birds bred in bona fide captive breeding facilities in foreign countries would be another source for the pet trade. Imports of wild birds would be allowed for captive breeders as long as import would not cause substantial mortality in transport, quarantine or captivity; and would be of a species of which suitable specimens are not reasonably available in the United States. Zoos and scientific institutions would still be allowed to

import wild birds for the conservation of the species.

The Wild Bird Act will be introduced by Representative Gerry Studds (D-CA). Representative Studds will also be introducing a related bill, the Exotic Bird Conservation Act which has been drafted by the Cooperative Working Group, a coalition sponsored by the World Wildlife Fund.



There are significant differences between the two bills. The Wild Bird Act requires an immediate ban on all imports for the pet trade. The Cooperative Working Group's bill calls for a five-year "phase-out" period before a complete ban would take effect.

We rightly question how effectively the quotas of a "phase-out" period could be implemented. Serious problems presently exist concerning the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services' ability to insure export quotas of foreign nations are observed. For example, in 1989, the government of Indonesia's export quota of 1,000 on Moluccan cockatoos was exceeded in U.S. imports by over 4,000 birds. Luckily, this species was placed on CITES Appendix I in 1990, banning any further legal trade.



The Wild Bird Act requires banding of both imported wild birds and captive-bred birds. This way American consumers would be able to make an informed choice when purchasing a pet bird as to whether that bird was caught in the wild. The Cooperative Working Group's bill does not require captive-bred birds to be banded. If any birds are allowed to circulate in the market without being banded, as is the present situation, laundering of smuggled birds, now estimated at 150,000 each year, would surely continue.

Some suggest that smuggling would increase if an immediate ban is required. This is speculation. Since enactment of the NY State Wild Bird Bill in 1984, there has been no evidence of increased smuggling. Furthermore, the largest numbers of birds illegally imported and seized by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the past year were those which are already legally imported in great quantities (e.g.: blue-fronted amazon, African grey parrot, Senegal parrot).



With 77 species of parrots in danger of extinction, and many species facing an immediate threat from the international wildlife trade, only an immediate ban, as required by the Wild Bird Act, is sufficient to protect wild bird populations.



BRAZIL

UPDATE ON THE SPIX'S MACAW (*Cyanopsitta Spixii*) RECOVERY PROJECT

Tony Silva Curator of Birds, Loro Parque, Tenerife

On December 27 of the past year, the Brazilian Institute for the Environment and Natural Resources (or IBAMA), informed the committee members that the Brazilian government has issued its official position on the Spix's Macaw. In the *Diario Oficial* of 30 October 1990, section 1, page 20605, article 1, it is stated that given the very special circumstances, the government of Brazil will not request that any Spix's Macaw held privately or publicly, be confiscated by fauna authorities if the holder follows the management plan proposed by the committee.

This establishes an unusual precedent in which a government recognises the private individual in particular as a means of saving a species and considers birds which may have left the country illegally as legal.

In the same notification, the government urges that an exchange between Antonio de Dios and São Paulo Zoo take place as soon as possible so that two new pairs can be formed. This was a proposal of the committee which the government has accepted. Recently the bird from Walsrode Bird Park in West Germany reached Brazil where it has been paired with the egg-laying female owned by Nelson Kåwall.

We hope that with these changes more Spix Macaws will be reared and the species brought back from the brink.

MEXICO

Here's proof that the World Parrot Trust doesn't hang about. We reported in the previous issue of *Psittascene* that we have been contacted by Mexican veterinarian Dr Miguel Angel Gomez-Garza about his concern for the Maroon-fronted Parrot *Rhynchopsitta p. terrisi*. Last month your Hon. Director, Mike Reynolds, visited the Sierra Madre habitat of this parrot, and a full report will appear in our August '91 issue. Meanwhile, here is a shot of Miguel Gomez-Garza looking disapprovingly at an unidentified Amazon parrot chick found in the Monterrey bird market.

AUSTRIA

EUROPEAN AVIAN VETS MEET

The first European Conference of the Association of Avian Veterinarians was held in Vienna, Austria, on March 13-16 1991. Previous meetings of AAV have all been in the United States and this was the first attempt by the European section of AAV to host a major meeting. By all standards, it was a great success. About 260 people attended from most European countries and Israel. A very large contingent came from Germany and Austria, many of them interested students, but there were a lot of vets with a serious active interest in bird medicine. Unfortunately, a number of promised American speakers did not turn up because of fears over the Gulf war, but the support of Greg and Linda Harrison and the AAV President was greatly appreciated.

Speakers came from 15 countries and topics ranged from raptor anaesthesia to the medical problems of young ostriches.

To: Mike Reynolds, World Parrot Trust
From: Ann Michaels
Defenders of Wildlife
1244 Nineteenth Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036
Phone: 001-202-659-9510
Fax 001-202-833-3349

Thank you for speaking with me about legislation soon to be introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives concerning the importation of wild-caught birds for the pet trade. Our bill is called the Wild Bird Act; the Working Group bill, the Exotic Bird Conservation Act.

The five year phase-out period in the Exotic Bird Conservation Act could be implemented in two ways, the choice of which would be made by the Secretary of the Department of the Interior:

- he could choose any quota numbers for species during that period;
- based on the average of the past five years of trade, he could reduce this number by 70% in the first year and by 15% every year after, until five years;
- at any time the Secretary chooses, he can over-ride b) with a).

There are two very big problems with these choices of implementing the phase-out period:

- The Secretary would be allowed to establish quotas, if he/she chose, for species which were not imported during the past five years!
- Using the present data available from the U.S. Department of Agriculture on the trade (thru 1989), a 70% decrease from the average for the past five years of trade would actually result in a quota greater than the number of birds imported before the 'phase-out'!

USDA data:
Total of birds imported into the US (1985-1989): 3,080,460
Average number of imports (1985-1989): 616,092
First year phase-out with a 70% decrease: 431,264
Number imported in 1989: 365,655
Difference: an increase of 65,609!

I hope the World Parrot Trust can join us in supporting the Wild Bird Act, which requires an immediate ban on the importation of wild-caught birds for the pet trade.

Thank you very much!

Ann

Refreshingly, there was a considerable divergence from the usual AAV theme of the "pet parrot" although psittacine medicine inevitably dominated the programme. Particularly valuable and typical were a long careful study of 'Macaw Wasting Disease' from Giessen University and a pointed illustration of the dangers of over-feeding parrots by Guy Harrison. It is to be hoped that these meetings will be repeated on a two-yearly basis, with the next to be held in 1993 or 1994.

A.G. Greenwood., MA, Vet MB, MRCVS.
(Trustee, World Parrot Trust)

URUGUAY

Spanish speaking members please note that TRAFFIC (Sudamerica) have launched a quarterly publication entitled 'ALERTA' which covers conservation legislation, smuggling, and other issues affecting the fauna of South America. The first issue includes an item about the reintroduction of Hyacinth Macaws in Brazil. 14 were released, the survivors of 40 confiscated in Argentina in October 1987. Copies can be obtained from: TRAFFIC (Sudamerica), Carlos Roxlo 1496/301, Montevideo, Uruguay.



NEW ZEALAND

The large flightless parrot, the KAKAPO (*Strigops habroptilus*), is behaviourally unique, and one of the most interesting birds in existence. Alas, it is also one of the most endangered. For several years it has been the subject of intense management in an attempt to prevent its extinction. However, the population continues to decline and no successful breeding has occurred during the years in which it has been studied. But at last there is a shred of hope for its survival.

Last year there was a marked increase in breeding activity on Little Barrier Island with at least 3 females laying, one or more for the second year in succession. This is very encouraging as it seems that the supplementary feeding programme has stimulated breeding activity. It was previously thought that Kakapo nested only every three or four years, but now eggs are to be removed from nests to discover whether double clutching will occur. An egg was transferred from Little Barrier Island to Auckland Zoo. It hatched, but sadly the chick died at about one week old.

USA

In February at the South East Wildlife Exposition, Charleston, S.C., well-known parrot artist Eric Peake included the Trust's display board in his presentation. Eric reports that 46000 people attended the show and that everyone loved the display with live parrots. Some new memberships resulted and we are grateful to Eric for his help.

DENMARK

I hear from our knowledgeable and active correspondent, Peter Them that he has presented two of our 'PROTEGA' Hyacinth Fund T-Shirts to HRH Prince Frederik and HRH Prince Joachim. If you would like to join this elevated company, please take a look at our 'One for you, one for me' proposal on our 'Action Page'

American Federation of Aviculture 17th Annual Convention, San Diego, 7-11 August 1991

The World Parrot Trust would like to be represented at the Convention, but is unable to send anyone from its UK headquarters. If any US member might be able to help, please phone or fax us as soon as possible. Expenses can be met by the Trust. Phone: (0044) 736 753365. Fax (0044) 736 756438

CANADA

Congratulations and thanks are due to Desiree and Kevin Wyant of Hamilton, Ontario, who represented the Trust at the recent Canadian Symposium. Their achievements were remarkable, and included adding 24 new members and raising over \$1,200 in sales of T-shirts etc. They also provided a paper on this Trust for the Proceedings.

Thanks are also due to Silvio Maticchione, who has distributed considerable numbers of our membership application forms throughout the world, while shipping out bird and general wildlife books, including those he publishes himself. Members could always write for his list, to: Silvio Maticchione & Co., 1793 Rosebank Rd. N., Pickering, Ontario, L1V 1P5, Canada.

The Trust was given two copies of Tony Silva's 'Monograph of Endangered Parrots' by Mark Hagen of the Hagen Avicultural Research Institute, Rigaud, Quebec. One copy was for the Trust's library, the other to be used for fund raising purposes. After having discovered that an international raffle was illegal, we decided to raffle the book at the Parrot Society's Sandown show last April. The very useful sum of £200 was raised, and our sincere thanks are due to Mark Hagen.

AUSTRALIA

With the invaluable help of Joseph M. Forshaw, the Trust has undertaken an important new project in Australia - its first in the "Land of Parrots". Full details of this will be in our next 'PsittaScene', due out at the end of August.

CARIBBEAN

Word has just reached us from Paul Butler of RARE that most of the necessary funds may be available for the Trust to produce a second 'Conservation Bus', this time for Dominica. If any member wishes to contribute towards this bus, please get in touch.

ACTION PAGE

MAURITIUS

More funds for the Echo Parakeet. The Trust was recently able to send a further £3,000 to help the work to preserve the world's least numerous parrot – the Echo Parakeet of Mauritius. This brings to £20,000 the total amount put towards this important project. Our main contribution has been to provide

the cost of a new Mitsubishi L200 four wheel drive vehicle, pictured below with the 'parrot team'. These are, from left to right: Steven Rault, Carl Jones (the boss), Julie Dixon (on back of truck), Sian Waters, and Kevin Duffy. Once again, we must thank The Parrot Society for contributing £2,500 towards the total of £12,000. Cooperation in the world of parrots is a wonderful thing – let us hope it will continue to thrive.



FUND-RAISING IDEA FROM BELGIAN CLUB

Our thanks to Belgische Vereniging van Parkietenliefhebbers who have recently devised an excellent method of raising funds for the Trust. Members have been asked to pay a little more for their advertisements in their magazine *Parkieten-Revue*. The extra revenue will be donated to WPT. Other societies might like to take up this idea! Our thanks also to Simonne Goris-Coeck whose article on the Trust appeared in the January 1991 issue of *Parkieten-Revue*.

SEXING TECHNIQUES

Several members have been in touch to express doubts about some techniques for sexing parrots. If any member has incontrovertible proof that a bird or birds have been incorrectly sexed, by any technique, the trust would appreciate receiving full details.

Parrot Studbook Keepers

Once again we publish a list of Studbook Keepers. All readers holding these species would do well to register their birds with the relevant studbook keeper. Holders of Buffon's Macaw (*Ara ambigua*) are especially asked to contact David Woolcock at Paradise Park.

PALM COCKATOO *R*
GREEN-CHEEKED AMAZON *R*
LILACINE AMAZON

Mark Pilgrim, North of England
Zoological Society, Chester Zoo,
Caughall Road, Upton-by-Chester, CH2
1LH.

MOLUCCAN COCKATOO *R*
Rob Colley, Pencyrnor Wildlife Park,
Cilfrew, Neath, Glam., S. Wales.

GOFFIN'S COCKATOO *R*

SCARLET MACAW *R*

BUFFON'S MACAW *R*

RED FRONTED MACAW *R*

David Woolcock, Paradise Park, Hayle,
Cornwall TR27 4HY.

THICK BILLED PARROT *R*

David Jeggo, Jersey Wildlife
Preservation Trust, Les Augres Manor,
Trinity, Jersey, Channel Islands.

HYACINTH MACAW *R*

Colin Bath, Paignton Zoological &
Botanical Gardens, Totnes Road,
Paignton, Devon.

GOLDEN CONURE *I*

Alan Lieberman, San Diego Zoo, PO
Box 551, San Diego, California, 92112-
0551 USA.

GOLDEN CONURE *R*

RED-VENTED COCKATOO *R*

BLUE-STREAKED LORY *R*

c/o The Parrot Society, 108b, Fenlake
Road, Bedford MK42 0EU.

R = UK REGIONAL STUDBOOK

I = INTERNATIONAL STUDBOOK

BRAZIL

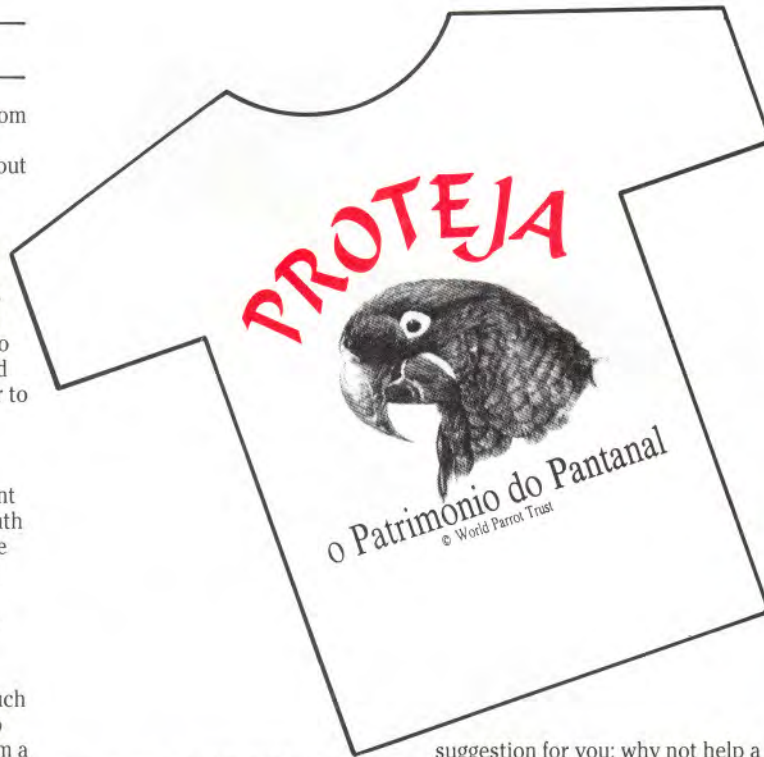
The Trust has just sent \$10,000 from its Hyacinth Fund to support the next phase of work to be carried out in the Pantanal by Dr. Charles A. Munn of Wildlife Conservation International. A full report of this ongoing programme will also be included in the next 'PsittaScene'. This substantial donation has left the Hyacinth Fund at a low ebb, so we would like to ask members and other recipients of this newsletter to think about making donations specifically to this vital fund.

Alternatively, you could purchase a copy of our magnificent limited edition print of the Hyacinth Macaw, painted by leading wildlife artist 'Nicholas'. A mounted print costs £110 plus £8 for post and packing, or US \$175 plus \$10 post and packing. Due to the strengthening dollar against the pound sterling, the US price is much improved, and we are now able to ship the mounted print direct from a stock in the USA.

In addition, we have decided to offer up to 100 unmounted limited edition prints for £75 or \$120 including post and packing. Please take us up on this super offer (remember that print No.1 was sold for \$1,000 at the Tenerife Convention!) and help replenish our

very important HYACINTH FUND.

Also, don't forget our beautiful Hyacinth T-shirts. There are two versions, one in English and one in Portuguese, destined for use in Brazil to encourage everyone to protect the Hyacinth Macaw. They each cost £10 plus £2 p&p, or \$16 plus \$4 p&p. Here's a creative



suggestion for you: why not help a little more by doing "one for you, one for me". The idea is that you pay us for TWO T-shirts, one for yourself and one for the education programme in the Pantanal. If you are kind enough to do this, we'll send you your T-shirt with one of our very rare and collectable World Parrot Trust button badges.

Two Apologies

First, for the late arrival of this 'May' PsittaScene. As ever, we aim to catch up with the next issue, for which we already have most of the (very interesting) contents.

Second, we have made one or two administrative errors recently, such as inviting members to renew when they have already done so. This is due, naturally, to our having installed a new super-efficient computer programme. May we ask members to please advise us of any inaccuracies, so that we can get our records 100% correct. Thank you.

AIMS OF THE WORLD PARROT TRUST

The objective of the trust is to promote the survival of all parrot species and the welfare of individual birds.

- 1 By educating the general public worldwide about the threat to parrot survival, and seeking their interest, concern and support.
- 2 By action to protect and preserve the natural habitats of parrots worldwide.
- 3 By gathering and disseminating information on the status of parrot populations in the wild and in captivity.
- 4 By advocating effective controls on the international trade in wild-caught parrots, and its replacement by captive-bred birds.
- 5 By encouraging co-operation in the breeding of parrots by aviculturists and zoological institutions, and better liaison between the captive breeding community and conservation bodies, with the aim of creating self-sustaining populations of endangered species.
- 6 By promoting high standards in the keeping of parrots as pets.
- 7 By encouraging research projects, i.e.: the veterinary care of parrots, and the preservation of genetic diversity.
- 8 By any other means that may be appropriate.

YES

I WANT TO BE A PARROT CONSERVATIONIST

Helping the **SURVIVAL** of all parrot species, and the **WELFARE** of every individual parrot.

Name Mr/Mrs/Ms _____
 Address _____
 Postcode _____

SUBSCRIPTION RATES (please tick)

- Single £10 Family £17.00 Fellow £100
 Overseas \$25 US (or equivalent) Additional donation £ _____

If you can afford to give more than the basic subscription rate your money will help us fight harder to save the parrots.

I enclose cheque/P.O. for £ _____ payable to The World Parrot Trust
 OR Please charge my Access/Visa Ac/No.

Card expiry date _____ Amount £ _____ Date _____

Signature _____
 OR better still, please sign this Banker's Order

BANKERS ORDER

To: The Manager _____ Bank
 Address _____

Postcode _____ Sortcode _____

Please pay The World Parrot Trust, the sum of £ _____
 every month/year, starting on _____ (date), and
 debit my account no. _____

Signed _____

Pay to The World Parrot Trust, A/C No. 91144022
 Midland Bank plc, Exmouth, Devon EX8 1HF.

Please send to The World Parrot Trust, **NOT** to your bank.

The World Parrot Trust, Glanmor House, Hayle, Cornwall TR27 4HY, U.K.

WORLD PARROT TRUST A Brief Progress Report

This charity was launched in October 1989 to work for the survival and welfare of the world's 320 species of parrot, of which 100 species are endangered. It is the only international organisation devoted exclusively to the parrot family. In its first 18 months it has raised over £80,000, and supported the following important parrot-related projects around the world.:

Australia: Red-tailed Black Cockatoo. Research to assist the survival of an endangered population of this spectacular Cockatoo in Victoria. A four year programme to which we contribute £8,000.

Brazil: Spix's Macaw. Helping with the cost of an expedition to investigate the population status of this most endangered of all macaws. Only one remains in the wild. Our contribution: £2,000.



Brazil: Hyacinth Macaw. Field research into the breeding biology of this species, carried out by Dr. Charles Munn. A contribution of £6,000. Also a donation of £600 towards work carried out by a team of Danish biologists.

Caribbean: St. Lucia Parrot. Providing posters and badges for an educational campaign designed to reach every child on St. Lucia: £2,500. Followed by our largest project so far, the purchase and conversion of a 'conservation bus', the Jacquot Express. This has been delivered to St. Lucia and is being very successful in promoting the preservation of the remaining forest where the endangered St. Lucia parrot lives. Cost to the World Parrot Trust: £14,000.

Central America: Endangered Macaws. We supported the 1991 Honduras Workshop on Macaw Conservation and Management with a donation of £600.

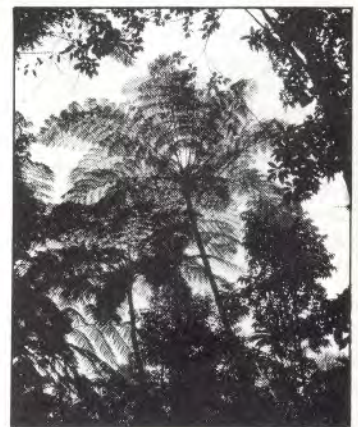
Indonesia: Endangered Cockatoos. We made a small contribution towards a British expedition to study and report on the Moluccan Cockatoo and other species, declining rapidly due to deforestation and trapping for the pet trade. \$500.

Mauritius: Echo Parakeet. Undoubtedly the world's rarest parrot. Only about 12 or 15 birds left in the wild. Captive breeding and other conservation measures being pursued by Carl Jones, known for his success with the Mauritius Kestrel and Pink Pigeon. The trust has provided general financial support, plus the cost of a four-wheel-drive vehicle (approx. £12,000, of which £2,500 was kindly donated by The Parrot Society). Total contributed to date: £20,000.

Mexico: Maroon-fronted Parrot. This is Mexico's most endangered parrot: perhaps no more than 600 still exist in a small part of the Sierra Madre. The Trust recently visited this area to assess the situation, and conservation measures are planned. Cost of this visit was approx. £1,000, but these expenses will be met by our Hon. Director, not the Trust's funds.

We hope you will agree that the above summary indicates a charity that is active and full of initiative and concern for its objectives. We urgently need the support of everybody who keeps parrots as pets or in aviaries, or who simply cares about their survival and well-being.

Michael Reynolds



The World Parrot Trust
 Glanmor House, Hayle
 Cornwall TR27 4HY, U.K.

Psitta scene