



**ASA**

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RESTORATION AND EDUCATION

September/October 2020



HUGH CHITTENDEN



ALBERT FRONEMAN

# NEXT ISSUE



BIRD OF THE YEAR 2020

# SOUTHERN GROUND-HORNBILL

*Bucorvus leadbeateri*

The purposes of the Society are the study of foreign and native birds to promote their conservation and protection; the dissemination of information on the care, breeding, and feeding of birds in captivity; the education of Society members and the public through publications, meetings, and available media; and the promotion and support of programs and institutions devoted to conservation. Front Cover: Eurasian jay (*Garrulus glandarius*) photo Gert Hilbink. Inside Cover: Southern ground hornbill male (*Burcorvis leadbeateri*) photo Hugh Chittenden Bottom: Adult male with juvenile; Alvert Froneman. © 2012-2020 Avicultural Society of America. All rights reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced without express written permission by ASA.

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## President's Message



Greetings, fellow Aviculturists:

I'm hoping there are positive things we can all be grateful for during these trying times.

During the COVID-19 lockdown experience, I have a deep yearning to attend conferences in person, learn, see friends, and explore whatever zoo hosts us. Do you, too? I'm grateful for all the past conferences that were fun and fabulous.

Look closely at the two featured articles in this issue and note how both authors have a passion for aviculture and contribute to it by sharing viewpoints and experiences.

In the first article, by Lou Megens, he shares his childhood memories of that "first" bird, Jan—and a lifelong love of aviculture that ensued.

The second is reflective on the current legal state of aviculture, which is under attack by people that feel birds should not be interacted with, or kept at all. As this is unfolding, Steve Duncan presents his thoughts on the subject in this very well written, eye opening piece.

I truly hope you enjoy the content on these pages and appreciate the people that write to put it here. We could use more like them.

Please let us know what you would like to see in these pages by writing to [editor@asabirds.org](mailto:editor@asabirds.org). I will bug people until we can get what you would like to read about—I don't mind be called a P.I.T.A.

Stay safe and stay well!

Yours truly,

Carol Stanley

President, YOUR Avicultural Society of America

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## Breeding Eurasian Jays

By Lou Megens



Eurasian jay *Garrulus glandarius*  
Photo: Gert Hilbink

### Jan, My First Jewel By Hand

As a child of about six years old in the Netherlands, I walked with my parents in Brabantse Kempen's open forest lanes, looking for pheasant feathers. Previously, I had sometimes found them—and as a nature-loving boy, I was of course very happy with that.

On this particular day, in the still-young oak wood, I suddenly saw a jay sitting at eye level. Clearly a young bird, because he was not really shy yet. The bird flew away when I got closer, but not high or far. I saw

my chance and ran after it, ignoring my parents' calls.

Since the bird, which had probably just fledged, was not fast yet, I was able to catch this jewel by hand. Screeching loudly in terror, the young bird protested against this unwanted captivity. Trembling with excitement, I ran back to my parents. Fearful of the forester whose house we had to pass, I kept the bird under my shirt, walking as fast as I dared, without being noticed too much. I took the shortcut as much as possible, straight through the woods, to avoid prying eyes from hikers.



Eurasian jay *Garrulus glandarius* in aviary  
Photo: Lou Megens

Finally, I was at the car. Only in this shelter did I dare to take a good look at the bird. How beautiful was it? Soft pink on his chest, a bit darker pink on his back. A beautiful perky crest with black and white striped feathers, which could be displayed when excited or amazed. The tail was pitch black with a bright white rump. The bird had a graceful black beard stripe on both cheeks. Its wings were black and white on the underside—and most remarkable of all were the blue-black checkered

wing coverts. These feathers are sometimes seen on hunters' hats.

That was my first encounter with *Garrulus glandarius*, known as the Eurasian jay around the world, or simply the jay for some of us. This jay was incredibly beautiful in hue and texture, with silky soft feathers. I couldn't believe my luck. At home, the bird was put in a cage and with much more luck to compensate for my lack of experience, the bird (meanwhile baptized "Jan") survived. I took good care of Jan and because his name was repeated so often, he started to

imitate it. How proud I was!

### **Eurasian Brains and Beauty, Along With Some Chatter**

The jay is a beautiful bird that can easily compete with many tropical birds in terms of color splendor. Within the Corvidae (crow) family, at least 33 subspecies of Eurasian jays are recognized (with some classifications distinguishing over 40 subspecies). The species has an enormous distribution area—from Scotland to China and southern Siberia to Morocco.

The jay's flight looks a bit clumsy, but it can fly through the trees with great skill. Our jays are resident birds, with an estimated breeding population of 45,000 to 60,000 in the Netherlands. But in autumn they will

receive reinforcements from Central European jays. The estimated winter number in the Netherlands is between 150,000 and 250,000 birds. Occasionally, this has the character of an invasion, when many thousands of birds migrate west from the east. We don't have such large invasions very often, but they were more common decades ago. The last major invasions occurred in 1972, 1983, 1996, 2004, and 2010.

The jay's scientific name, *Garrulus glandarius*, can be roughly translated as *chatterer of the acorn*. And indeed, known to be loquacious, the jay's staple food in fall and winter also happens to be acorns. But only European oak acorns, because those of American oaks are too



Distribution, Wikipedia



difficult to open. Jays collect up to ten acorns in their crops and hide them hundreds of meters from the tree source in the forest soil. One individual can hide up to 8,000 acorns in a season! When times get tougher in colder periods, they return to each of these cached acorns with seemingly no difficulty. But how is this done, especially as research has shown that jays can even find those acorns under a thick layer of snow? As it turns out, a bird's hippocampus—an area of the brain that stores spatial orientation—is a kind



Eurasian jay *Garrulus glandarius*  
Photo: Bart Biemans

of GPS that works extremely well for jays.

Curiously, humans have hippocampi too, but ours is relatively unused as we rely on other tools to help us navigate our world. We can talk, write, tweet, email, app, text, and use a real GPS. So jays can

really remember where they've hidden their food! But inevitably, jays also leave some acorns in the forest soil. These sprout in the spring in places where they would normally never germinate, and thus the jay contributes to forestry again!

One of the typical features of the jay is its crest. Those feathers on its head are always in motion and they tellingly reflect its mood. Jays are extremely intelligent—in addition to their stellar GPS system, they can learn to talk, for example—and very cautious. When a group wants to cross a clearing in the forest, there is always a pioneer who will cry out with



Eurasian jay *Garrulus glandarius*  
Photo: Phil Winter

relief when he has actually made it to the other side. And once introduced to a hunter, an alarm is immediately raised if anyone is spotted with a stick! Jays are also known as

*forest police*—a designation earned for their mindfulness and alertness.

In addition to their well-known penetrating, raw cries, jays have a melodious repertoire as well. They often sit still for minutes on end to sing. The birds are also known for their talented imitations. They can perfectly imitate a meowing buzzard, along with the songs of other birds.

### Nesting and Bathing

I once spoke to a nature photographer from SOVON who told me, “I have seen over 100 jay nests in my life, but never

have I found a nest without a few blue threads.” I’ve provided a photo illustrating this photographer’s observation; the blue threads alluded to are from stripped plastic packing rope which the farmers use to bundle straw bales.

Despite the blue threads, the nest of a jay is quite difficult to find. The nest can often be found high in young woodland. And the birds keep quiet when brooding. The half dozen or so eggs are surprisingly small and look a lot like blackbird eggs. The incubation period is about 16 days, with only the female



Eurasian jay (*Garrulus glandarius*) nest with blue threads .

Photo: Theovd Mortel

incubating. The chicks remain in the nest for 20 days. After fledging, they are fed by both parents for about three weeks.

Animal protein is an important requirement for raising healthy chicks. A predilection on the part of the parents for songbird eggs and chicks (which they supplement with insects, earthworms, mice, etc.) has made them



Eurasian jay *Garrulus glandarius* eggs.  
Photo: Lou Megens

unpopular in some circles. Their reputation as predators is not entirely without reason!

Jays like to take ant baths in nature. This begins with a jay sitting close to a red forest ant anthill and spreading its

feathers. The ants get annoyed by this intruder and attack, meanwhile squirting their caustic formic acid. And that's exactly what the jay hopes will happen! The formic acid expels the feather mites and so the jay gets its "wellness treatment." Jays have even been seen to gently hold an



Eurasian jay *Garrulus glandarius* with nest material. Photo: Lou Megens

ant in their beak and rub their feathers with it to achieve this same effect.

### My Breeding Jays

My breeding pair of jays stays together year round in my biotope aviary. They almost never shout, only when others come into the garden or when a cat is seen. On these occasions, when they are suspicious or fearful, they

show it clearly with the display of an upright crest!

They are very used to me and take eat from my hand, even when I am in the aviary. We talk to each other every day. I don't necessarily want to teach them anything, but I do this to strengthen the bond of trust.

Every day I feed them with universal granules and a tray with egg food, pinkies, and mealworms. I also give them something extra, which could be morio worms, split walnuts, acorns, ground meat, a mouse, whatever is available. Bath water is always available, even in the middle of winter.

My pair didn't make any attempt at nest building in their first year. The female was hand-reared and had a (too) strong imprint on humans (me). I decided to pet her less and virtually ignore her completely to see if that improved the pair's nest building interest.

The pair needs a hidden place to build their nest. And in general, they do not tolerate disturbance. I tied a reed basket between conifer branches and in the second year, a beautiful coconut fibre nest was made—but every single egg was

immediately eaten. I did not find out who did that then.

In the third year, the first clutch was eaten again, but this time I caught the culprit on film and photo, who turned out to be the female! Fortunately, with a second clutch of four eggs, she actually started to brood! After 16 days, three chicks hatched. I gave plenty of pinkies, mealworms, wax worms, and morios. After a week, I was able to ring the chicks and decided to raise them further by hand so as not to risk losing them. After all, I had been waiting for these chicks for three years! The hand rearing went perfectly and the chicks grew up well.

That same year, the female started laying again, and immediately ate the first egg. Subsequently, I decided to collect the next eggs every day immediately after laying, before she had a chance to eat them. She always laid between 7:45 and 8:00 AM, so as long as I paid close attention, I was able to save four more eggs, which I placed in an incubator. Admittedly, I did so without much hope, but the alternative was to risk having them all eaten. Great was my surprise when three eggs turned out



Breeding hen Eurasian jay *Garrulus glandarius*  
Photo: Lou Megens



Cock jay *Garrulus glandarius*  
Photo: Lou Megens



Jay chicks in nest in aviary *Garrulus glandarius*  
Photo: Lou Megens

to be fertilized. I was able to make a video of the beating heart against the light of a lamp! Unfortunately, all three embryos died after ten days



Jay chicks with Lou *Garrulus glandarius*  
Photo: Lou Megens



Young Jay with Mei *Garrulus glandarius*  
Photo: Lou Megens

of incubation. I still have no idea why! But unbeknownst to me, the female jay had laid another egg. Upon realizing this, I placed an unfertilized egg from the incubator next to it so that it looked a bit like a clutch. Breeding took place again and the one chick hatched neatly. Having become overconfident, I made a video of the chick hatching, during which time I lifted the female a little. That turned out to be too much for her nerves and she ate the young and the other egg again.

Still, I am satisfied with the three young jays, even though I had to wait years for them. All in all, it is certainly a bird that deserves a place in our aviaries! At my home, they are definitely resident birds!

Lou Megens has been caring for, breeding, photographing, and writing about birds since his early youth. Born in the Brabant Valkenswaard, Netherlands, Lou has expertise in European aviculture that he has shared in many publications, including three books written in Dutch: *Europese cultuurvogels in opmars*, *'t Jaar rond*, and *Dappere Dodo*. You can see what Lou is up to on his [Facebook page](#).



Jay chicks with our helping hand  
*Garrulus glandarius*  
Photo: Lou Megens



*G.g. japonicus* Photo: Wikimedia



*G.g. atricapillus* Israel Photo: Wikimedia



*G.g. Kazakhstan* Photo: Vladimir Shefer



*G.g. taivanus* Taiwan Photo: Wikimedia

## Service Launches New Electronic Permitting System to Streamline and Improve Permitting Process

*New electronic system will modernize permit applications, helping the public and wildlife*

October 21, 2020

Contact(s): Christina Meister,  
Christina\_Meister@fws.gov, 703-358-2284

To simplify, expedite and improve the permit application process, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is launching “ePermits,” a new and modern electronic permitting system. Permits enable the public to engage in certain regulated wildlife-related activities. Service permit programs help ensure these activities are carried out in a manner that safeguards wildlife.

The Service issues permits under several domestic and international laws and treaties such as the Endangered Species Act, the Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, the Marine Mammal Protection Act, the Wild Bird Conservation Act and the Lacey Act. These laws protect species that are threatened by overexploitation and other factors.

“I am proud of the Service’s work to create an innovative platform that will help simplify and expedite the permitting process,” said Aurelia Skipwith, Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. “The Trump Administration has prioritized

developing innovative solutions for the American people, and this online tool for permit applications further delivers accountability and transparency.”

“The enhancement of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) of Wild Fauna and Flora electronic permitting procedure, as well as the planned upgrades, will only further benefit our industry by continuing to improve the permitting process,” said Patricia Fuquene, Director of Import/Export, Costa Farms LLC.

Permits are issued for activities such as import and export of live animals, plants, or biomedical samples, rehabilitation of sick or injured migratory birds, scientific research or reintroduction programs for endangered species, and exchange of museum specimens between institutions for protected species. Each year, the Service issues approximately 65,000 permits. Prior to ePermits, applicants had to apply for permits through the mail and pay with paper checks, often resulting in delays that now may be avoided through the digital process.

The hard-copy option is still available to those who need it, and ePermits offers many advantages for



applicants including a new permit application search feature. The new system also uses [pay.gov](https://www.pay.gov), a secure electronic payment system, to process applicant permit fees. Once an application is submitted, the new system allows applicants to view and track their application's progress.

Enhancements to ePermits and additional functionality are planned on a regular basis through July 2021 to make the application process more efficient and to allow for a more robust ability to analyze data to track business and conservation trends.

Digital permit applications forms are available in ePermits for the Service's Office of Law Enforcement and Ecological Services, Migratory Birds and International Affairs programs. Users can find the permit applications they need through a search function and can get answers to frequently asked questions through easy-to-use "help center" content.

"The Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies is excited about and supports the modernization of the Service's permitting system," said Sara Parker Pauley, President of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. "The move to electronic permitting will assist in the sustainable use and management of wildlife by the state fish and wildlife agencies. The association appreciated the Service seeking the input of the state fish and wildlife agencies on the development of this system. This cooperation reflects the strong relationship that

the state fish and wildlife agencies and the association have with the Service." "The Louisiana alligator industry is very excited about the modernization of the Service's permitting system," said Stephen Sagraera, President of the Louisiana Alligator Farmers and Ranchers Association. "The faster permitting time of the new electronic system will help U.S. producers of sustainable wildlife products to better compete in fast-paced global markets."

"Permits from the Service are integral to the work of many ornithologists, so we are excited about the new ePermits system," said Laura Bies, Executive Director of The Ornithological Council. "This new system has the potential to reduce the paperwork burden for researchers and scientists, and the Ornithological Council looks forward to its implementation."

By applying for permits, the public helps conserve and protect imperiled species throughout the world. Additionally, some permits promote conservation efforts by authorizing scientific research, generating data, or allowing wildlife management and rehabilitation activities to go forward. To apply for permits through the Service's new platform or to obtain more information regarding the permitting process, visit: [fws.gov/epermits](https://fws.gov/epermits).

## USDA Seeking Input on Bird Regulations

The Animal Welfare Act (AWA) was established in 1966 to ensure the humane treatment of research animals and prevent the use of stolen pets in research. At that time, the AWA covered dogs, cats, monkeys, guinea pigs, hamsters and rabbits. In 1970, the AWA was expanded to cover all warm-blooded animals, but only a year later, the USDA decided to exclude birds, rats and mice for enforcement purposes, meaning they would be too difficult to regulate due to the numbers of those animals in research and the pet trade. The USDA continued to exempt birds from regulation until 2000 after agreeing to a settlement in a lawsuit from Animal Rights groups to include them.

Shortly after the lawsuit settlement in 2000, The USDA informed various bird-keeping organizations of the need for input in drafting the regulations since they had no prior experience with regulating birds. To facilitate a coordinated effort, AFA president, Dr. Benny Gallaway, invited representatives from various avicultural organizations to a meeting in Houston in May, 2003 to establish a group to respond to the USDA's request. As a result, the National Avian Welfare Alliance (NAWA) was formed with representatives from a broad cross-section of bird specialty groups including, bird trainers and avian veterinarians, as well as

organizations for keepers of racing pigeons, waterfowl and pheasants, finches, softbills, and parrots. NAWA submitted a draft set of regulations to the USDA but also argued that regulation of bird facilities would be costly and damaging to aviculture and the birds themselves. A copy of NAWA's submission can be seen here: <http://nawabirds.org/nawa-proposal/>

The comment period ended on November 1, 2004, and since that time, the USDA has not completed and implemented regulations for birds. The USDA was sued over this inaction in 2013 by PETA and again in 2019 by the Anti-Vivisection Society and the Avian Welfare Coalition. In 2020, the court agreed with the plaintiffs that USDA must develop regulations for birds. The court ordered that the USDA must provide progress updates every 90 days, must have proposed regulations published by February 24, 2022, and must finalize the regulations by February 24, 2023.

The USDA held 3 virtual listening sessions in September and October of 2020 to gather verbal input from the public about 5 specific questions – **1) how can standards of care be applied to birds, 2) how can we avoid interfering with birds that are sensitive to disturbances such as inspections and regular care, 3) which bird owners and handlers should be**

**exempt, 4) what criteria should be used to exempt those with small numbers of birds, 5) which bird species should be exempt.**

The USDA is accepting written comments until October 29, 2020 at <https://beta.regulations.gov/document/APHIS-2020-0068-0001>

**1. Are there appropriate performance-based standards we could establish across a wide variety of species of birds? Can we use classes of birds to set performance-based standards appropriate for the class? If so, what might these classes look like?**

Performance Standards are based upon the apparent health and well-being of the animals under regulation. They contain language such as, “the enclosure size should allow for the bird(s) to perform normal freedom of movement to maintain good body condition – stand, turn around, flap wings etc. without having to touch the sides of the cage.” The evidence that a facility is meeting performance standards is the condition of the animals in their care and whether any problems encountered are the result of not meeting minimum requirements.

In contrast, Engineering Standards specify minimum enclosure measurements for each species. There are over 10,000 species of birds, compared to about 6500 mammals. Looking at existing AWA regulations for mammals, the vast majority are regulated under performance standards. Only a

relative few, mostly domesticated mammals and marine mammals that have specific needs, are regulated under engineering standards. Considering the diversity of birds and the fact that the AWA already uses performance standards for the majority of species it regulates, performance standards are the most logical standards to follow for birds. Further, considering that the needs of many birds are also influenced by age, geographical location, seasonal changes in condition, etc., specifying exact standards of care may not allow sufficient flexibility to address these highly variable factors.

**2. How do bird breeders avoid interfering with nesting and breeding or other biological activities of birds? How can we ensure that housing, feeding, or inspection requirements do not interfere with these activities?**

Birds kept in breeding facilities are accustomed to the daily routine and people who care for them. Their stress levels will remain low if the people and routine are consistent. Events or people outside of this routine result in stress and anxiety in some birds. By its nature, random or annual inspections will bring unfamiliar people and unfamiliar actions in contact with the birds which can cause stress and associated displacement behavior among some birds causing the injury or death of eggs, chicks, or mates. The level of tolerance for

unexpected occurrences varies dramatically from species to species and within individuals of the same species. Aviculturists are aware of this phenomenon and work hard to reduce stress by reducing random occurrences around breeding operations. Inspections may not be feasible or safe sometimes depending on the species of bird or the breeding cycle the birds may be in at the time.

**3. Should we revise or add exemptions for certain dealers, exhibitors, operators of auction sales, and carriers and intermediate handlers of birds not bred for use in research? If so, what should those exemptions be? Please provide supporting data if possible.**

The AWA already has exemptions for retail sales of most pets including birds. This retail exemption for all birds should remain in place. Exemptions for wholesale trade and exhibition should include de minimis criteria but should also include birds bred for conservation or for sale/transfer to other breeding programs. Birds are sometimes kept, bred, and transferred between breeding programs and never enter the pet trade. Such activities should be exempt from AWA regulation since it is outside the original purpose of the AWA.

**4. Are there thresholds beyond which an entity should not be required to be licensed. For**

**examples, we are aware that there are many entities who breed small numbers of birds; if we should exempt those entities, what exemption criteria should we use?**

All retail sales of birds should be exempt since animal control and zoning regulations cover this at the local level. De minimis exemptions should include numbers of birds and annual sales volume at wholesale only, but the levels that should be considered de minimis are difficult to determine for birds. A single small garden aviary may contain many dozens of Zebra Finches, for example, but may generate a very small total dollars in sales that does not cover the cost of keeping them. Many people keep these birds simply as a hobby to enjoy them in a garden aviary and sell the extras to local pet stores to maintain their aviary population at an acceptable level. This is certainly below the level that the USDA should spend resources on regulating. Although there may be many birds in the aviary, the total sales may only be \$100 or less per year. In contrast, some people may keep a single pair of Hyacinth Macaws, for example, that may produce a single chick per year that sells for \$10,000. One pair of birds producing a single chick per year is also below the level that USDA should spend resources on regulating even though the dollar amount is above what is typically considered de minimis. Existing exemptions for dogs reference EITHER a minimum

number of dogs, or a minimum amount of sales. For birds, perhaps a combination of BOTH numbers of birds sold and total wholesale sales should be considered.

In developing exemptions, the USDA must also be practical with its resources. What can the USDA afford to inspect? How much additional workload can be taken on? How will this additional workload affect inspecting and regulating existing licensees? What affect will inspections and licensing have on bird facilities and the birds housed therein? How will this affect the overall effectiveness of the AWA? Are there likely to be benefits gained from regulating birds, and are those benefits worth the overall impact on AWA administration and on bird facilities? Considering these factors and the shortfall of USDA resources already, it is most prudent to narrow as much as possible the number bird facilities to be inspected to avoid larger negative outcomes.

### **5. Are there certain species which should be exempt?**

All ESA listed species should be exempt from AWA regulation. These species are generally part of conservation breeding programs and may already be regulated by the ESA and Lacey Act to prevent interstate sales that already makes managing their populations in this country more difficult. They should not have to be subject to additional regulation under the AWA which would only discourage

these breeding programs further thus harming efforts to increase the numbers of these rare birds. It should be noted that if a USDA inspection of a breeding facility housing ESA listed birds results in the destruction or merely the harm of eggs, chicks or adults, this would be considered a “take” or violation under the ESA.

The AWA grew out of a desire to protect pets and make sure minimum standards of care are provided for animals in the trade and to make sure pet animals are not diverted to research facilities. There are many birds in aviculture that are not involved in the pet trade nor are ever used in research. Aviculture goes far beyond the common budgerigar, cockatiel, zebra finch, and canary that are typically found in the pet trade and are raised at what would be considered commercial levels. Birds such as turacos, hornbills, pheasants, and rollers are insignificant to the pet trade and are largely kept by individuals working to preserve their numbers since most cannot be imported any longer. There has been no demonstrable need to regulate such facilities. Sadly, many of these already rare bird species are experiencing declines in their population in this country, in part due to increasing difficulty aviculturists are encountering with local and state regulations as well as challenges in shipping birds to other aviculturists to manage the very limited blood lines. The regulatory environment is slowly

strangling the ability of private individuals to pursue the endeavor of preserving these rare and often endangered birds. AWA regulation should not add to this burden. Considering the available USDA resources, the spirit of the AWA, the potential negative impact of inspections on rare birds, and the limited numbers of bird species that are reared for commercial purposes, it is advisable that USDA provide very broad exemptions based upon species of birds. In other words, if birds must be regulated under the AWA, it seems very clear that only limited numbers of bird species that are raised at commercial levels should be considered for regulation.

### **Steve Duncan Listening Session Transcript**

The lawsuits that are now forcing the USDA to regulate birds under the Animal Welfare Act were brought by organizations that openly oppose keeping birds in captivity. These groups claim to care about the welfare of birds but bringing birds under regulation will not affect the majority of those who keep birds in inadequate conditions, namely people who hoard and neglect birds instead of selling them or placing them in better homes. The USDA and the Animal Welfare Act are being abused to make it more difficult for aviculturists and to make our information public so we can be targeted further by these groups. This is not the spirit nor the intent of the Animal Welfare Act. The USDA must take this into account now that it is

being legally forced by these groups to develop regulations.

It is impossible to create engineering standards appropriate for avian diversity and the many unique avian behaviors. For example, hornbills seal themselves inside very small nesting cavities for months with very little room to move about. This is completely natural. Meeting minimum standards of care should not be determined by specifics such as enclosure dimensions but should be evidenced purely by performance standards – the presence of healthy birds at a facility.

Birds are notoriously sensitive to unusual occurrences and unfamiliar people entering their environment. Aviculturists are very careful to maintain routine activity around their aviaries. Inspections may not be feasible or safe in many cases. To ignore this fact would be to put birds at risk of death or injury which is counter to the goals of the AWA.

Retail sales of birds should remain exempt, but exemptions must go beyond that. Most aviculturists pursue the craft as a hobby. These hobbyists often sell offspring to dealers which is considered wholesale trade. For inexpensive birds, the numbers sold would often surpass existing de minimis levels even though the total dollars would be minimal. Likewise, some hobby breeders of expensive birds may sell 1 offspring for more than

\$10,000 thus far exceeding the de minimis dollar amount with just one sale. The USDA should not be in the business of inspecting every garden aviary or hobbyist. This would unnecessarily divert USDA resources from the responsibility it already has to currently licensed facilities.

The AWA is intended establish minimum standards of care for animals in the pet trade, in exhibition, and transportation. Aviculture goes far beyond the pet trade. Birds such as raptors, turacos, hornbills, pheasants, and waterfowl are largely kept by individuals working to preserve their numbers since most cannot be imported and some also have dwindling populations in the wild. There has been no demonstrable need to regulate such facilities. Sadly, many of these already rare bird species are experiencing population

declines in the US due to the increasingly difficult regulatory environment at local and state levels as well as challenges in shipping birds to other aviculturists to manage limited bloodlines. AWA regulation should not add to the burden already strangling the efforts of private aviculturists to preserve these rare and often endangered birds.

I'm involved with ASA, OPA, AFA, NAWA and with over 4 decades of experience in aviculture as well as teaching aviculture at the college level as an adjunct professor, I will also be submitting more detailed written comments. I'm happy to offer assistance in refining regulations.

Thank you,  
Steve Duncan

From Roland Cristo

This is a notification of information for people working with red-legged honey creepers *Cyanerpes cyaneus* and Bananaquits *Coereba flaveola*:

Come on, folks! This is the first time aviculturists have had a lawyer working on behalf of avicultural interests! If you keep or have ever kept these species, please contact David Garcia at [dgarcia@pradaurizar.com](mailto:dgarcia@pradaurizar.com). Aviculturists have to work "together" if they expect to continue working with birds!

Roland

There's a ruling being made that makes keeping red- legged honeycreepers and bananaquits illegal in the US because of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, although the OPA is fighting it. OPA has an attorney, David Garcia, filing a lawsuit on the matter. He's trying to get affidavits from at least three people keeping them for his case, but doesn't have enough so far. If you'd be willing to help, please give Mr. Garcia a call (305-319-1309) or send him an email at [dgarcia@pradaurizar.com](mailto:dgarcia@pradaurizar.com).



### *Not Steve's Photo Pick*

Solomon Island Eclectus *Eclectus roratus solomonensis*

This fledging female Solomon Island Eclectus exemplifies the beauty of the species. Although the blue eye ring is not fully developed at this age, it will be a striking circle of feathers surrounding the eye.

The male of this species is a green bird with light orange beak.

One of the smaller of Eclectus species, they are very popular as pets and do have some talking ability.

The rare blue mutation is beautiful and distinctive in its coloration which is different for male and female.

Carol Stanley





Fledging female Solomon island eclectus *Eclectus roratus solomonensis*  
Photo: Carol Stanley



Jim Sorenson, Birds in shoes cover for upcoming calendar, clock and other items. Reach out to Jim for information on ordering a calendar at <https://www.facebook.com/jim.sorensen777>

### **About**

I enjoy nature and adding something out of the ordinary. All my drawings are available at [https://www.redbubble.com/shop/?query=jim%20sorensen%20birds%20in%20shoes%20series&ref=search\\_box](https://www.redbubble.com/shop/?query=jim%20sorensen%20birds%20in%20shoes%20series&ref=search_box)

FLASH! FLASH! FLASH!  
The incredibly talented Jim Sorenson has agreed to let ASA publish his artwork in every issue!

Thanks, Jim!



## Crows Are Capable of Conscious Thought, Scientists Demonstrate For The First Time



(sandra standbridge/Moment/Getty Images)

## Crows Are Self-Aware and 'Know What They Know,' Just Like Humans



## Parrots moved after swearing at customers at wildlife park



## No leg to stand on for Australia's flamingos





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**STUDY OF FOREIGN AND  
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**DISSEMINATION OF BIRD  
CARE INFORMATION  
AMONG BOTH MEMBERS  
AND THE PUBLIC**



**BREEDING AND FEEDING OF  
BIRDS IN CAPTIVITY**



**PERPETUATION OF SPECIES  
THAT ARE THREATENED  
WITH EXTINCTION**



**PUBLICATION OF MATTERS  
PERTAINING TO  
AVICULTURE**

## Observe Your Birds - Tony Silva



The first known dinosaur feather inspired decades of dispute.  
Here's why.





It is with great excitement that we share the story of <http://www.purejoywaterfowl.co.za/>.

After 53 days of incubation, of a larger than usual Emu egg, Hilko shared the news that he had hatched twin birds from the same egg. A normal emu egg is 13 cm length and 7cm in diameter. This larger egg was 17cm in length and 10cm in diameter. Both chicks hatched at the same size/weight as a normal chick would. This is extremely rare and a very special moment in the bird world.





Masked grass finch chicks day by day growth in the nest from hatching to fledging. Full video link bellow  
<https://youtu.be/aG6QrS8bydo>

VIDEO: A paragliding instructor showcases his pioneered “parahawking” activity, soaring in tandem with a trained vulture who “guides” the paragliders toward thermal columns for longer, more birdlike trips, according to the instructor.



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# Who's Your Daddy?



Photo: Scott Golden

**Stumped? See answer on page 38**



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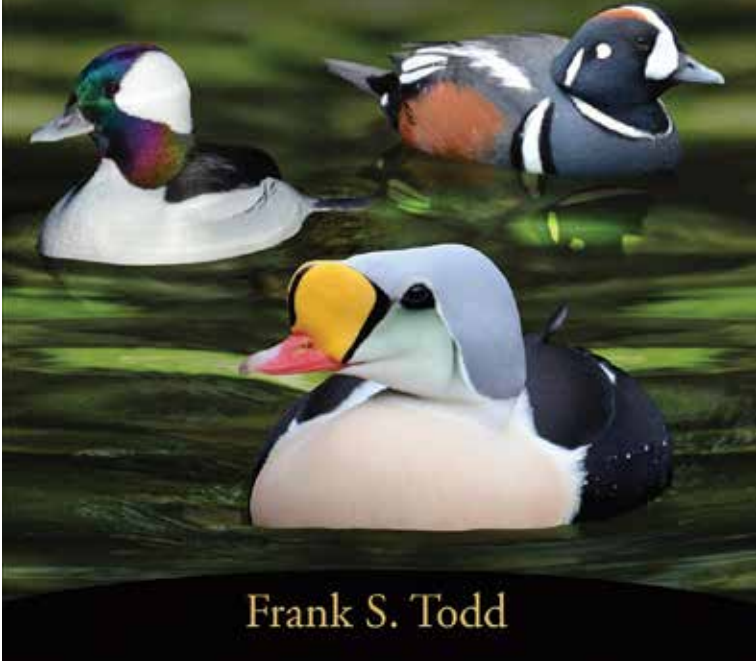
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**<http://www.homesforanimalheroes.org/>**

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# NORTH AMERICAN DUCKS, GEESE & SWANS

## IDENTIFICATION GUIDE



Frank S. Todd

In honour of our friend, colleague, and author, Frank Todd, Hancock House is pleased to commit a percentage of all revenues of books sold through our website to the Frank Todd Memorial Foundation to continue to promote the work Frank spent much of his life striving towards- wildlife conservation and education.

Link: <https://www.hancockhouse.com/collections/ducks-waterfowl/products/north-american-ducks-geese-swans>

## PLEASE DONATE NOW

Help us keep Frank S. Todd's memory alive by continuing the tradition he started with the first Avicultural Society of America Educational Conference. Frank developed the conference and, for many years, arranged for speakers from around the world to attend and make presentations.

Your donation will allow ASA to continue the tradition and help with travel expenses for our conference speakers. <http://asabirds.org/frank-s-todd-memorial-fund/>



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Blue crowned hanging parrot *Loriculus galgulus* Photo: Scott Golden

## Who's Your Daddy?

From page 33, Answer:

Blue-crowned hanging parrot (*Loriculus galgulus*)

Blue-crowned hanging parrot (*Loriculus galgulus*) is a small (length: 13 cm (5.1 in)) mainly green parrot found in forested lowlands in southern Burma and Thailand, Malaya, Singapore, and Indonesia (Sumatra, Java, Borneo).

Blue-crowned hanging parrots nest in tree cavities. There are usually three eggs in a clutch. The female incubates the eggs for 20 days and the chicks leave the nest about 33 days from hatching.


### Feeding

Its diet usually includes flowers, buds, fruits, nuts, and seeds. They eat Southeast Asian fruit such as papaya and rambutan in the wild.

### Call

It has a variety of different calls, such as the one often uttered in flight. The Blue Crowned Hanging Parrot is also excellent at imitating noises. They can produce very loud and shrill sounds.

### Other

It is the only species of bird that sleeps inverted. As its plumage is mostly green in colour, it also reduces the risk of predators detecting them. 

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

# EVENTS

## 2021 EVENTS

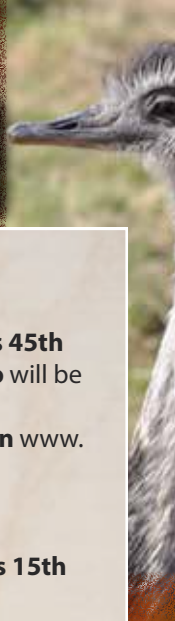


**AMERICAN FEDERATION OF AVICULTURE - AFA's 45th Annual Educational Conference and Avian Expo** will be held **August 12-14, 2021**  
**Hilton Minneapolis-St. Paul Airport** More info on [www.afabirds.org](http://www.afabirds.org)



**AVICULTURAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA - ASA's 15th Annual Education Conference** Fall 2021  
[www.asabirds.org](http://www.asabirds.org)

Let us know of your avicultural event to be posted on our Events page at:  
[info@asabirds.org](mailto:info@asabirds.org)



## ASA MEMBER CLUBS

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www.ccasbirds.com

Long Beach Bird Breeders  
6444 Spring St # 132  
Long Beach, CA 90815  
longbeachbirdbreeders@gmail.com

Contra Costa Avian Society  
P.O. Box 23115 Pleasant Hill, CA 94523  
www.contracostaaviansociety.org

Orange County Bird Breeders  
www.ocbirdbreeders.org

Acadiana Bird Club  
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acadianabirdinc@hotmail.com

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fwbc@fortworthbirdclub.com

Arizona Seedcracker Society Inc  
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National Animal Interest Alliance  
National Finch and Softbill Society  
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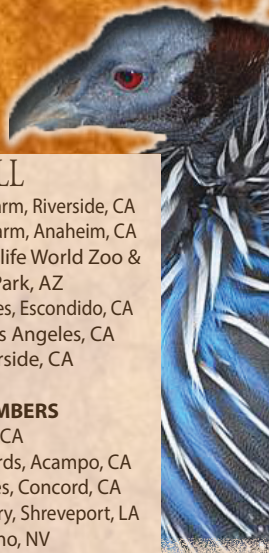
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