

The PET DEALER



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**MRS. DOROTHY WARRICK, FLYING STUDENT
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A True Aviculturist

*Nestling in the Santa Clara River Valley Just Out of Filmore, California
Is the Charming Home of Francis H. Rudkin With Its Wonderful Collection*

By DR. DAVE SILVERSTONE, Los Angeles, Calif.

WHILE rambling through the country one day last Fall, I saw a Military Macaw circling over the orange grove. This was, indeed, a surprise and as the bird descended to one of the trees I could not resist the temptation to follow. The virtual paradise that greeted my eyes well repaid my insatiable curiosity.

Nestling in the Santa Clara River Valley just out of Filmore, Calif., is this home. The owner is sure an avid aviculturist is the thought and here he comes with the Macaw on his arm. After introducing ourselves we, (like all bird nuts) discover we have several mutual friends. Surrounding the home are pens and pens of birds—small birds and large birds—and they all know their "Keeper of the Birds!" I will try and give you some idea of the different varieties he has. Though as to their breeding and habits I want him to write this story himself some day—and soon.

Mandarin, Wood, Pintails, Formosa, Teal, and Whiting Tree are a few of the ducks. The quail are Valley, Mountain and Bob-white. Of Pheasants there were Golden, Black Neck, Mongolian, Chackalacas and Amherst. Australian Crested, Mourning and several other varieties of Doves, Nyassaland, Half-moon, Red-rumps, Madagascar, Masked, Ring-neck, Parrakeets and Love-birds, and all true pairs. Blue and White Peafowl, European Blue Jays, Shell Parrakeets, both Green and Yellow; Canaries (what Englishman would be without them), Lemon Crested Cockatoos, a pair of Macaws that have, he assured me, already had four nests of eggs but so far have failed to raise any young. Many kinds of small

aviary birds. And this is not a complete list by any means and I haven't said a word about all the young that are flying loose amongst the orange trees.

What joy is encompassed in meeting a man who can so instill confidence in these wild people of the field and forest that they have no prescience of fear and even if liberated never leave but always come back to their haven of safety.

I hereby take great pleasure in introducing to you the man responsible for this, Francis H. Rudkin (give him a hand). Mr. Rudkin was born in Belton, Rutland County, England, some 67 years ago and sixteen years ago he immigrated to this country and has proven himself more than a credit to his community and an inspiration for young and old alike. All those who may come in contact with this venerable soul leave him much happier in being than when they arrived.

How far he has gone in Bird Lore and knowledge since he received his first pair of Buddies as a boy. He gave them away because they would not lay and as he tore down the elaborate log contrivance he had made he discovered they had gone through the ceiling and therein had made their nest, but too late. His father before him was a fancier and as a boy they would travel miles to secure Goldfinch eggs and hatch them under a canary.

Their home is the quintessence of probity and all due credit must be given to Mrs. Rudkin. She is the wife and mother in this home, bringing with her all the traditions of her native heath; she has not foolishly tried to change what was bred in her for the benefit of those that would not appreciate. You are at home and if it be late or early



The Peacock Struts His
Welcome

Francis H. Rudkin and His Pet
Military Macaw

One of the Large
Aviaries

she knows the meaning of true hospitality. Theirs is a home and all that the word implies. I wish that I lived closer to them so that I could see them more often.

Mr. Rudkin has a little Tree duck, that the moment he steps out of the house starts to whistle for him and will keep it up until he answers him. Then to see the common Ground Squirrel take nuts and other delicacies from his hand and never make a move to leave, although at perfect liberty. The Red and Fox Squirrels will do the same. His Peacock will follow him around like a dog. To them there is no knowledge of fear in his approach and they seldom run when others come with him. They seem to know that if he is there nothing can harm them. He who enjoys the companionship of nature, and the confidence of birds and animals always is worthy the confidence of human beings.

Correspondence

By CHARLES T. METZGER, Chicago, Ill.

In a letter from the Marquess of Tavistock he informs me that young Lovebirds will begin to take ordinary seed almost as readily and at as early an age as they will eat spray millet. He seems surprised that spray millet is not sold in the pet shops in America. I herewith quote a part of his letter: "For some strange reason most of the smaller and delicate finches and parrakeets are extraordinarily fond of it and appear unquestionably to derive more benefit from eating it than they do from eating, which is apparently the identical seed out of the seed head. Even the pioneers in aviculture were aware of this."

His Lordship also doubts the theory that the Fishers Lovebird is a wild Nyassa and Peach-face hybrid as he states he finds no Peachface element about it apart from its size. I am not familiar enough with the Fishers to express any opinion and my comment was intended only as a news item as gained from a number of letters to me and was not intended to be final.

For years I have urged local dealers to offer spray millet to their customers, and have myself imported it for my own use, but they (the dealers) assured me they could not sell it. If our importers would quote this on their monthly lists I believe they would soon be surprised at the results.

Tom Barry, of Los Angeles, writes that he has a couple of pairs of Blue-headed Waxbills. This is a new species in America and I think in England and Europe as well. I can find no record of it anywhere, excepting a brief notice in "The Avicultural Magazine" of June, 1927, page 146, as follows: Mr. Chapman's Tanganyika consignment contained a few other birds, two of which were new to Aviculture, namely the Blue-headed Waxbill (*Uroeginthus cyanocephalus*), which may be described as a Corden Bleu with a red bill and the blue extending over most of the head.—Mr. Barry is to be complimented and congratulated for his constant search and acquisition of species that are very seldom met with in the American Bird-market. It is my hope that Mr. Barry will keep us posted as to his success with this rare species.

There is one show place in Chicago that I never fail to take my out-of-town visitors to see—E. C. Vahle's Bird store, located just outside of the loop. It is the largest importing house inland. Here one finds everything to interest the fancier and aviculturist.

William Vahle and his son as well as Mr. Morris and all the other attendants welcome visitors, and are always glad to answer questions whether you are a customer or not. They can tell you exactly what you want to know

and the stock carried is so large and varied that it is an exceptional case, where a visitor does not find what he is looking for.

William Vahle personally supervises all out of town shipments and guarantees there is never any substitution. If the birds ordered are not in stock or unfit to stand the journey your money is refunded without any argument.

This is in no sense an advertisement, but merely the opinion of one member of The Avicultural Society of America.

Quite accidentally I came across our old friend J. L. Buck of Camden, N. J. Pa Buck as he prefers to be called and is known to every person who handles or deals in wild animals, just returned from East Africa with a large collection of animals.

I regret to say that Mr. Buck very seldom brings back any birds, for with his experience and care they should be in perfect condition after arriving.

Avicultural Notes

The popularity of the Australian Shell Parrakeet (so-called love-bird of the trade) is growing by leaps and bounds. Hardly a day passes we do not receive letters from all over the country asking for information about breeding them, size of cages, what kind of food required when nesting, kind of nest, and a dozen other questions. Why doesn't some of our members write down their own experience and let others profit thereby.

A bird that is becoming more and more frequently seen even in the smaller pet shops is the Bengalese or Society-finch. Large numbers of these have been brought over from Japan lately and this may account for its increasing popularity in a way. With the experienced aviculturist this bird has always been a favorite, owing to the fact that it makes such an admirable foster parent for other small finches who through accident or otherwise have lost their parents.

Lately some one suggested giving Gin and Glycerine (a tea-spoonful of each in a teacup of water) in place of the ordinary drinking water, to prevent eggbinding. His Lordship the Marquess of Tavistock informs us in our sister publication that he has tried this and found it unailing. But where are WE going to get the Gin. Canary papers please copy.

Those people who have outside aviaries and live in our middle and northern states, should now prepare to remove the more delicate ones to warmer quarters, or at least give them some protection from the damp and cold nights we may soon expect. Feed plenty of heat producing foods, and don't be afraid the birds will become too fat. A bird's digestive organs work rapidly and require an enormous amount of food to keep its body temperature normal and insure good health. Soft-bills should be given plenty of meal-worms and other insects. You will find scalded ants-eggs a great help at this time.

Cuthroat and Zebra finches are always ready to breed if you will give them half a chance, but when a dealer sells you a pair of either one or the other and with them a small ornamental cage and tells you all you will need is an ordinary Canary nest to breed them he is either very ignorant or is deliberately lying. It is a waste of time to attempt to breed these birds in a cage smaller than 42 inches long, 18 inches deep and 22 inches high.