



ASA
Avicultural Bulletin

ASA

A JOURNAL FOR BIRD BREEDING, CONSERVATION,
RESTORATION AND EDUCATION

July/August 2021



NEXT ISSUE

**Artificial Insemination of the
Spix's Macaw**

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: Umbrella cockatoo (*Cacatua alba*) Photo: Scott McDonald, DVM. Inside cover: Spix's Macaw (*Cyanopsitta spixii*) Photo: Dr. Scott McDonald, DVM. © 2012-2021 Avicultural Society of America. All rights reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced without express written permission by ASA.

CONTENTS

FEATURED.....

- 4 Crop Disorders In Baby Birds
Scott McDonald, DVM
- 13 When Substrates Become a Danger
Carol Stanley
- 16 Passage of Parrots: My Encounters and Observations with Parrots - Amazons
Levi Fuentes
- 10 Waterfowl - *continued*
Jonathan Beilby
- 31 Splay leg solution
Randy Berry



FAVORITES.....

- 30 Birds in Shoes
- 39 Who's Your Daddy
- 42 Who's Your Daddy? Answer
- 43 Events



WHO WE ARE.....

- 3 Officers & Staff
- 44 ASA Affiliations
- 44 New Members
- 45 HONOR ROLL
- 45 SUSTAINING Members





July-August 2021

President's Message

Greetings, fellow Aviculturists:

When will it end?

I think everyone is wondering what the answer to that question is. I believe it will sort itself out and we will adjust to the new normal - whatever that is. I had to mention Covid-19 since it is such a big part of our daily lives. Enough of that crap, let's talk birds!

This issue has contributions from authors/photographers around the globe. And, rightly so. Although ASA originated in the United States, and was briefly published in the United Kingdom before coming back to the U.S. and, our conferences feature an international lineup of expert avicultural speakers and international guests.

Modern communication available world wide via the internet allows us to gather information from our members on the other side of the planet - amazing really. This issue contains contributions from Randy Berry of Italy, Jonathan Beilby of the United Kingdom as well as several of our domestic favorites. Dr. Scott McDonald's article on crop disorders is a keeper you will want to refer to over and over. We are blessed with people willing to share their expertise will all for the betterment of aviculture.

The information contained herein is diverse and, hopefully, you will find information you can use in the husbandry of your flock.

Enjoy the contents and be thankful for the internet. With all its inherent evils, information is easily gleaned from aviculturists around the world because of it.

Lastly, Andy N. Condor, of Tracy Aviary in Utah has agreed to allow us to reprint his comments and photos from Facebook in the e-Bulletin. Thanks, Andy!

Stay safe and take care,,

Carol Stanley, President, YOUR Avicultural Society of America

p.s. I even wrote a brief article - see if you can find it!

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Crop Disorders In Baby Birds

Scott McDonald, DVM

All photos by Scott McDonald



Fig: 1 Healthy, hand-feeding Umbrella Cockatoos

Normal structure and function of the crop

The crop is a dilatation of the esophagus found in many (but not all) species of birds. It is prominent in psittacines. The crop is located just cranial to the thoracic inlet. It is firmly attached to the underlying skin and thus can easily be seen and palpated externally. The crop in parrots is oriented transversely across the neck. Food enters from the right side and exits caudally on the midline. When the proventriculus (stomach) and ventriculus (gizzard) are full, food may be stored in the crop. Stored food undergoes softening and swelling, but no chemical digestion takes place. Food eventually is moved caudally from the crop by powerful smooth muscle contractions of the crop and the esophageal wall. The crop (and proventriculus) is much larger in preweaned psittacines than in

adults to accommodate the large volume of food required for rapid growth. As a bird is weaned, it is not uncommon for it to lose 10-15% of its body weight because of shrinkage of these organs and the change in diet.

CROP STASIS

Causes

Many environmental, dietary, and systemic conditions can lead to crop stasis. Management factors include low ambient temperature, change in formula, change in the consistency, temperature, or amounts of formula being fed, and unsanitary feeding methods. Medical conditions include bacterial or fungal infection, foreign bodies or substrate ingestion, crop burns, and gastro-intestinal shutdown due to obstruction in the GI tract below the crop, or generalized systemic disease (i.e. polyomavirus infection, bacterial sepsis).

Clinical Signs

1. The crop may be enlarged and pendulous and may fail to empty or may do so extremely slowly.
2. Feeding response varies from normal to absent.
3. Vomiting or regurgitation may occur.
4. Initially, birds are alert and active, but depression and listlessness occur as the disease progresses.
5. Dehydration...the skin color changes from a healthy pink to an almost red color, depending on severity. Skin will lose elasticity.
6. There is failure to gain weight or loss of body weight.
7. The number of droppings decreases.
8. There may be brownish discoloration or scab formation in the skin overlying the crop.
9. A hole in the crop will result in leakage of formula (crop burn).

Physical examination

1. Palpate the crop to determine the amount and consistency of its contents, degree of thickness, and muscle tone.
2. Examine the skin over the crop for discoloration and necrosis.
3. Trans-illumination: Examine the mouth for oral lesions, which, if present, often extend into the esophagus the crop may reveal foreign bodies.
4. Examine the mouth for oral lesions, which, if present, often extend into the esophagus and crop. This is often the case with bacterial and yeast infections.

Laboratory examination

1. Tests can be performed by a veterinarian; however, costs may be a factor.
2. A gram stain and/or culture of the mouth, esophagus, and/ or crop can be performed. Large numbers of gram-negative bacteria and budding yeasts are abnormal.
3. A CBC and serum chemistry profile can be run to rule out systemic disease. Blood tests can also be taken for polyomavirus infection, PBFD infection, and other diseases.
4. Radiographs are of little value in handfed chicks.
5. Necropsy of dead chicks can be important in the management and treatment of disease outbreaks in an aviary.

Treatment

The primary goal of therapy is to alleviate crop stasis which, if not corrected, leads to dehydration, starvation, secondary infections, and eventually, death. Treatment and management in neonates can be extremely labor-intensive and time-consuming. If a veterinarian has initially evaluated and stabilized the patient, it is often best to instruct the client in home treatment. Most clinics simply do not have the personnel, housing, or time to provide 24-hour nursing care.

Initial measures to restore crop motility

1. Add warm water, Pedilayte, or Lactated Ringer's solution to the crop to break down impacted formula. This may stimulate emptying of the crop.
2. If crop motility does not return, empty the crop contents. Insert a large catheter (metal or rubber) into the crop via the mouth and aspirate (or vacuum) the contents with a large syringe. Manual manipulation of the crop with the bird held vertically downward is not recommended. It is stressful to the bird and there is risk of aspiration of crop contents into the trachea.

3. Rinse the crop with several flushes of warm water or Pedialyte solution after emptying contents. This may require two people. One holds the bird and extends the head and neck. The other person passes the lubricated tube into the crop. The end of the tube can be felt in the crop to ensure proper placement before vacuuming. Withdraw contents slowly and stop if any resistance is felt. Be careful the end of the tube is not against the crop wall. Reposition tube toward the center of the crop and continue again.
4. Continue adding water and aspirating until liquid that is withdrawn is clear.
5. On the first day of treatment, administer only oral fluids such as Pedilyte in place of solid food or formula until motility begins to return. Frequent dosing of small amounts is recommended so as not to stretch the crop or cause vomiting.
6. As motility improves, add formula to the oral fluids. Begin with a very dilute solution and gradually increase the concentration until a normal consistency is achieved. This may take several days. If the crop fails to empty adequately during this time, remove the crop contents once daily to prevent putrefaction or souring.
7. If the bird is dehydrated, subcutaneous (SQ) The recommended dose is 25-50ml/kg fluids should be administered until crop motility improves.



Fig 2: Baby Yellow-Naped Amazon Parrot who's crop was just flushed and then refilled with Pedialyte solution.

SOUR CROP

Formula that remains in the crop for prolonged periods of time becomes rancid from fungal and bacterial overgrowth and results in "sour crop". Soured contents are odorous. The souring effect will cause crop slowdown, and if allowed to continue, this leads to crop stasis, dehydration, and ultimately death. Sour crop can also be caused by the continual addition of food to a crop that has not been given a chance to completely empty. However, this is acceptable as long as the bird is digesting normally and if the crop is allowed to empty at least once in a 24 hour period, usually at the early morning feeding.

Therapy for Sour Crop

1. Treatment includes emptying and flushing of the crop and rehydration, both orally and SQ, as mentioned before.
2. Dilute Nolvasan (chlorhexidine) solution (15ml/gallon of water) or Alka-Seltzer (1/2 tablet dissolved in 4 oz warm water, or Baking Soda (1/4 tsp/8oz warm water) have all been used successfully as the final rinse to treat acid buildup in the crop and to promote motility.
3. Administer broad-spectrum antibiotic and antifungal agents to treat (or prevent) secondary infections. As long as some motility remains,

oral antibiotics will suffice. However, if motility has ceased, then injectable antibiotics are indicated.

ORAL ANTIBIOTIC OF CHOICE:

BAYTRIL (enrofloxacin) 2.5% (25mg/ml) solution
Dose: 0.07ml/100g body weight orally, twice daily.
or...

CIPRO (ciprofloxacin) suspension 50mg/ml
Dose: 0.08ml/100g body weight orally, twice daily
Preparation: Crush one tablet between two spoons. Remove enteric coating. Put powder in small vial and add 10ml Water. SHAKE WELL BEFORE EACH USE.

ANTIFUNGALS OF CHOICE:

NYSTATIN SUSPENSION (100,000 Units/ml)
Dose: 0.30ml/100g body weight orally, three times daily. Also swab mouth out after each feeding with nystatin soaked Q-tip. or...

DIFLUCON (fluconazole) suspension 10mg/ml
Give 0.10ml/100g body weight orally, once daily.

Preparation: Crush one tablet (100mg) into powder. Put in small vial and add 10ml water. SHAKE WELL BEFORE EACH USE. SETTLES OUT FAST. Can also get Diflucon suspension from human pharmacy in 35ml bottle, 10mg/ml, good for 14 days.

4. GI Stimulants can also be administered, as long as obstruction is not suspected. These drugs stimulate gastrointestinal motility and are indicated in birds with slow crop emptying.

REGLAN (methoclopramide) syrup (1mg/ml)
Give 0.05ml/100g body weight orally, three times daily.

5. Digestive enzymes in various forms (i.e. Prozyme, Instant Ounces, Formula One, or human digestive enzyme capsules) have been advocated as a digestive aid in sick or debilitated birds, including neonates affected by crop disorders. Although efficacy is not determined, the use of these products can be beneficial once crop motility has been re-established.

FOREIGN BODIES

The two most common foreign bodies that occur in hand-fed chicks are plastic or rubber feeding tips and wood shavings that are used as bedding.

Feeding tips are usually 1-2 inches long that are secured onto the end of a syringe. They act a guide to direct the formula to the back of the mouth and down the esophagus. These can become dislodged from the syringe during the feeding process if not properly tightened or if the bird bites at it. Once detached, it may be swallowed, where it lodges in the crop.

Initial treatment would be to attempt to remove the feeding tip manually. With one person supporting the body and extending the head and neck upward, another person can carefully work the tip up the esophagus into the back of the mouth where it can be retrieved with forceps, or in a large bird, with a finger. This is not always as easy as it seems. Retrieval of the object can also be accomplished using endoscopy via the mouth or actual surgery to open the crop. Both of these procedures should be done with the crop as empty as possible.

If retrieval is not accomplished soon enough, the tip can easily pass on into the proventriculus and ventriculus. It rarely will pass out of the bird but rather will sit in the ventriculus for months or even years, causing potential GI upset. Retrieval now requires endoscopic surgery via the crop into the ventriculus which is much more complicated and costly.

From time to time, hand-feeding psittacine birds will inadvertently ingest bedding on which they are housed. Wood shavings are probably the most common

material used for such purposes. If too many chips are ingested, this can lead to crop impaction, which in turn can cause crop stasis.

If the crop is completely packed with substrate, then crop surgery to remove as many pieces as possible may be the only course of action. However, if crop motility is still present, even though emptying is slow, then the use of digestive enzymes can be effective to break down the wood chips into small enough pieces that they can pass on their own.

Digestive enzymes break down carbohydrates, fats, and proteins. Wood chips are primarily made of cellulose. So it is imperative that the digestive enzyme product used has cellulase in them. Such products can be purchased at human health food stores. They usually come as powdered capsules and most are of similar strengths. The dose we have used successfully is 1 capsule mixed into 8 oz of formula. This is allowed to sit for 10 minutes before feeding.

The enzymes are given with each feeding until no chips remain in the crop. This can easily be determined by feeling the crop with your fingers. The length of treatment varies between 2-5 days for most birds, but may be longer. We have not found the use of these products to be detrimental to birds in any way.

It is possible that some chips might remain in the proventriculus while none are in the crop. However, as long as the crop is emptying

normally, then treatment is discontinued. If some degree of delayed emptying remains, then treatment can continue until food movement is back to normal.

CROP BURNS

Crop burns are caused by feeding formula that is too hot (in excess of 110 F) or by contact with a heating pad. Very mild burns cause redness and swelling of the skin. Second degree burns produce blisters. The most severe, full thickness burns cause necrosis of both the crop wall and skin which leads to scab formation and eventually an open fistula from which formula leaks out. They are usually located on the lower, center portion of the crop.

Most burns are not apparent immediately, but will slowly develop over a period of several days to a week or more. Surgery is required to repair full thickness burns, but it is best to wait until the wound edges are clearly demarcated, healthy verses unhealthy. The edges of the open sore are then trimmed (debrided) so that only healthy tissue remains. Then the crop and skin are closed in separate layers.

Post surgery, formula is fed in smaller amounts, more frequently, for a few days to prevent leakage at the surgery site. Antibiotics and antifungals are administered as well.



Fig 3 Full-thickness crop burn in an Umbrella Cockatoo. Scab is being pulled away to reveal large fistula from which formula leaks out.



Fig 4: Umbrella Cockatoo after crop burn repair. Crop and skin are closed in separate layers after unhealthy tissue from wound edges is trimmed away.

PENDULOUS CROP

Overfeeding or prolonged crop stasis in neonates can result in a pendulous, atonic crop. Formula fed consistently too hot (110 F range) can also damage the crop wall and musculature causing atony.

Treatment includes the extended use of a crop "bra" which provides support for the crop and facilitates emptying. The administration of Reglan is also helpful.

PREVENTION OF CROP DISORDERS IN THE NURSERY

1. Provide the correct ambient temperature for chicks in an incubator or brooder.
 - a. 95-98 F Hatchlings, day 1-4
 - b. 94-95 F Neonates, day 5-9
 - c. 90-94 F Chicks, day 10-1
 - d. 85-90 F Chicks with reasonably developed down feathers
 - e. 80-85 F Chicks with regular feathers covering more than half the body
2. Keep chicks in appropriated sized containers (dependent upon age and size of chick)
3. Maintain relative humidity above 50%
4. Keep chicks in appropriated sized containers (dependent upon age and size of chick) with suitable substrate. Clean daily.

4. Use a commercial hand-feeding formula or proven home recipe. Do not switch arbitrarily from one formula to another.
5. Feed birds on a regular schedule.
6. Feed amounts appropriate for the size of the bird: do not overfill the crop.
7. Maintain consistent formula viscosity and temperature. Temperature should be approximately 105 F (range 100-110 F)
8. Make fresh formula for each feeding.
9. Disinfect utensils and bowls used for food preparation and delivery after each feeding.
10. Use separate feeding syringes for each bird or each clutch of birds, if housed together.
11. Instruct caretakers to clean hands before handling each bird (or clutch).
12. If there is a history of candidiasis (yeast) in the aviary or for an individual bird, administer nystatin prophylactically until weaning.
13. Correct other predisposing factors for bacterial and fungal infections as previously described.

When Substrates Become a Danger

Carol Stanley

Photos: Carol Stanley except where noted.

No matter how long you have been an aviculturist, you have never seen it all.

This became apparent to me when I agreed to hand feed a Yellow-naped Amazon (*Amazona auropalliata*) that was “star-gazing.”

Star-gazing is a term used to describe the chick’s up and back head placement, almost laying on the back. After consulting Dr. Google, it became apparent there are many possible causes of this condition. They run the gamut of Inner ear problems to vitamin deficiencies



The chick had been incubator hatched and hand fed from day one.

Initially kept on paper towels, as the chick grew, pine shavings were

used as the substrate. I received the chick on pine shavings.

As a matter of personal preference, I use either equine bedding pellets or parrot non-colored pellets.

Shavings have dust and are uncomfortable for my repository system. I had a new tub prepared and transferred the chick



immediately onto an equine bedding pellet which are readily available at Tractor Supply.

The first or second feeding, the chick aspirated a little bit of



formula. After consulting with my vet, Dr. Jeanne Smith, the chick was started on Baytril (antibiotic) and Fluconazole (antifungal). I also

made a neck brace from pipe foam insulation to help position the head and neck in a more normal position.

The next day, there was improvement in the head position! I continued with the neck brace for several more days until the head and neck were continually carried in their normal positions. I



discontinued the neck brace and we had reached the prescribed course of the Baytril and Fluconazole.

Soon thereafter, a dark discoloration, followed by a scab appeared on the neck as if something was embedded under the skin.

As the days progressed, it seemed the object was getting larger.

I contacted Josee Birmingham, Manager at HARI in Canada and told her I thought the chick had a shaving under the skin in the neck area.



Josee suggested using a bentonite clay mask to draw the object out through the skin. I ordered the mask from amazon and began liberally applying it on the chick's neck.

After a few days starting the bentonite clay mask, the object appeared to be exiting the skin.

During this time, the chick went from down to pin feathers, making observation slightly difficult.



I continued applying the bentonite clay mask, like a poultice with no covering, liberally over the scab area.

The object progressively began exiting the skin until it reached a point I felt the thickest part had been extruded.

I then gently tugged on the part outside the skin and easily removed



the rest with little to no discomfort to the chick. The object was pliable and felt like a pine shaving.

The chick healed and developed normally, with no adverse affects from my continual poking and prodding. I love it when there is a happy ending.



Passage of Parrots: My
Encounters and Observations
with Parrots

Levi Fuentes



Red-crowned Amazon (*A. viridigenalis*) Photo: Steve Duncan

Part Two: Amazons

My personal account of some species within the genus Amazona.

I remember reading a very apt description of amazon parrots as having a “New Yorker” temperament. Given that I know more about amazon parrots than New Yorkers, I think this would mean they share resilient, emotionally blunt, feisty, loud, vivacious, and “in your face” dispositions. You’ll either love or hate this group of New World parrots. I think amazons, like wine and oysters, are an acquired taste for people who can appreciate their finer qualities.

Here are the Amazona species that I have seen and/or handled.



Festive Amazon (Amazona festiva bodini)-Tulsa_Zoo- 8aBy Photo: Christopher G from Wikimedia

Festive Amazon (*A.festiva festiva*) and Bodin’s (*A. f.a bodini*) Amazon: I have only recently seen these, and they were breeder birds, so I can’t say I have an opinion of them as far as pet potential. Without a gauge on their personalities, based on their looks I find them unremarkable and plain. Both subspecies are avicultural rarities in the US, but if I’m lucky to come across youngsters, I’d be open to handling and socializing with them.



Vinaceous-breasted Amazon (*Amazona vinacea*) - San Francisco Zoo, California. Photo: Dick Daniels Wikimedia

Vinaceous Amazon (*A. vinacea*): Also known as the vinaceous-breasted amazon, this stunning species has an IUCN conservation status of Endangered. I was pleasantly surprised to have a recent encounter with this species in the US. Vinaceous amazons are among the species that can raise their neck feathers like a

crest, making them even more impressive. The individual I met wasn't mean, but did exhibit the typical amazon bluntness upon losing interest in interacting with me. Despite being another avicultural rarity in the US, I would definitely like to handle and socialize with more of these stunning beauties.



Red-crowned Amazon (*Amazona viridigenalis*) Photo: Steve Duncan



Tucuman Amazon (*Amazona tucumana*)
Photo: Carlos Urdiales

Tucuman Amazon (*A. tucumana*): Yet another rare avicultural species in the US, and that's classified as Vulnerable by IUCN, I first saw several Tucuman amazons years ago. More recently, in 2019, I met one that was quite curious, outgoing, and interested in me watching him. I would be open to further interactions with this species, especially a young individual.

Mexican Red-headed Parrot / Green-cheeked Amazon/ Red-crowned Amazon / Red-crowned Parrot / (*A. viridigenalis*): Among my favorite amazons, and though classified as Endangered, these are commonly bred and I have seen many. They've all had friendly, gregarious, and laid-back personalities. I don't tire of seeing or handling red-crowned parrots, and I would like to either raise them or have one as a pet.



Lilac-crowned Amazon (*A. finschi*)
Photo: Steve Duncan

Lilac-crowned Amazon (*A. finschi*): Another favorite of mine (and also classified as Endangered on the IUCN list), *A. finschi* have one of the sweeter, friendlier, more even-keeled personalities within this generally feisty genus. Though not very common, this is another species I wouldn't tire of seeing or handling when given the chance.

Red-lored Amazon / Red-lored Parrot (*A. autumnalis autumnalis*) and Salvin's Amazon (*A. a. salvini*): In Costa Rica, I've seen a nominate as someone's pet and a Salvin's amazon at the former Rescate Zoo Ave in Alajuela (now the Rescate Wildlife Rescue Center). I've also seen both subspecies in the US. Visually, I find the Salvin's amazon the more appealing of the two, and though I haven't handled any, they purportedly have similar dispositions to those of *A. viridigenalis* and *A. finschi*. I would be open to handling them if given the opportunity.



Red-lored Amazon / Red-lored Parrot (*A. autumnalis autumnalis*)
Photo: Carlsonbl Wikimedia



Yellow-naped amazon female Sophia (*Amazona auropalliata*) Photo: Audrey Seampairi

Yellow-naped Amazon (*A. auropalliata* ssp.): Of the “hot three” amazons (along with the yellow-headed amazons and blue-fronted amazons), I’ve had the best experiences with this species. The “hot three” have earned this title for their aggressiveness when breeding season comes around, and are known for the damage and injuries they can inflict. The first individual I met was when I just started entering aviculture. I was waiting for my bird’s wings to be trimmed, and a lady came in with a large yellow-naped amazon in its travel cage. I looked at the bird, the bird looked at me, and it started dancing, chatting, and even attempted to sing. The owner said they only do that around people they like. I was honored and giggling at this bird’s having taken a liking to me. When it comes to

amazons, this species is one of the best talkers and singers, rivaling African greys in talking repertoire. Both yellow-naped amazons and yellow-headed amazons are often seen singing opera, show tunes, or classics on TV. They are large, extroverted, unmistakable green birds that grow a yellow collar on the back of the neck (nape) as adults. This is another favorite of mine. I would love to raise and keep them in the future, especially those with the blue mutation.



Double yellow-headed amazon (*Amazona oratrix*) Photo: Steve Duncan

Yellow-headed Amazon (*A. oratrix oratrix*) and Tres Marias Amazon (*A. o. tresmariae*): The nominate subspecies are certainly worthy of being “hot three” members. The Tres Marias subspecies (which is given full species status (*A. tresmariae*) by the International Ornithological Council) is rare in US aviculture, so I may not have the chance to see it—and I may not want to if they are like the nominate species in personality. They are visually different from the nominate in that the yellow not only covers their head, but it can extend down to the

upper breast, and they don't have dark green barring on the chest typical of other amazon species.



Yellow-crowned Amazon (*Amazona ochrocephala ochrocephala*)
Photo: Noop1958 at German Wikipedia, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=15302915>

Yellow-crowned Amazon / Yellow-crowned Parrot (*A. ochrocephala ochrocephala*) and Panama Amazon / Panama yellow-headed Amazon (*A. o. panamensis*): While they share the same vocal and singing prowess as the two previous species, yellow-crowned amazons also share the reputation with regards to personality—so I will likely keep my distance from the nominate subspecies. I've only seen two *A. o. panamensis*, which are rumored to be unusually sweet, even-tempered,

and excellent talkers. My curiosity is piqued, and it is my hope that I can either handle more of these or even breed or keep one as a pet. I'm definitely open to more encounters with them.



Yellow-shouldered amazon (*Amazona barbadensis*) By John Bäckstrand - originally posted to Flickr as IMG_2723 and uploaded to commons as *Amazona_barbadensis_-pet-upper_body-4.jpg*, CC BY 2.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=4611180>

Yellow-shouldered Amazon / Yellow-shouldered Parrot (*A. barbadensis*): Visually one of my favorite amazons, I met several individuals at once and hope to meet more. Two of them wanted nothing to do with me and told me so, but caused no damage. The others couldn't make up their minds regarding whether they wanted to interact with me or not; one was especially flirty while also being indecisive.



Blue-fronted Amazon (*Amazona aestiva aestiva*) juvenile fledgling
Photo: Carol Stanley

Blue-fronted Amazon (*A. aestiva aestiva*) and Chaco Blue-fronted Amazon / Yellow-winged Amazon (*A. a. xanthopteryx*): I can't decide whether I like this last of the "hot three" amazons. I once met a group of youngsters about to be sold to pet stores. They vied for my attention by landing on my shoulders, arms, hands, and even on my head. Though young, their bite was forceful. The adults were aloof and not interested in me. Between the nominate and the Chaco blue-fronted subspecies, the latter is the more eye-catching.



White-fronted amazon (*Amazona albifrons*) Photo: Steve Duncan

White-fronted Amazon / White-fronted Parrot / Spectacled Amazon Parrot (*A. albifrons* ssp.): I've only seen one, which I didn't interact with and which didn't leave much of an impact on me other than its size. Named for the white patch of feathers on their foreheads, these are the smallest species in this genus, and include three subspecies.



Yellow-lored amazon (*Amazona xantholora*) Photo: Andreas Mueller Pfgst - Self-photographed, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=3285625>



Cuban Amazon (*Amazona leucocephala*) Photo: Carol Stanley

Yellow-lored Amazon / Yucatan Amazon / Yellow-lored Parrot / Yucatan Parrot (*A. xantholora*): In 2019, I met my first *A. xantholora*, an aviary bird that was very nervous and stayed at the far end of the flight. These are not commonly bred in US aviculture.

Cuban Amazon / Cuban Parrot / Rose-throated Parrot (*A. leucocephala* ssp.): A medium-sized amazon with a lot of personality to match those vivid colors. There were four individuals the first time I saw them in person. The same general comments I made about the yellow-shouldered amazons apply here. I am ambivalent about Cuban amazons, though I do find them visually appealing.



By TJ Lin - originally posted to Flickr as DSCN0712, CC BY-SA 2.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=5996476>

Hispaniolan Amazon / Hispaniolan Parrot / Cuca (*A. ventralis*): Smaller than I would have thought, I first met some of these in 2019. I didn't spend much time watching or interacting with them, but I hope to change that in the future. These are rare in aviculture, and classified by IUCN as Vulnerable.



Mealy amazon (*Amazona farinosa guatemalae*) Photo: D. Gordon E. Robertson - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=19076250>

Mealy Amazon or, Blue-crowned Amazon / Guatemalan Amazon (*A. farinosa guatemalae*): This is one of two subspecies of the northern mealy amazon (the other being *A. f. virenticeps*), and I find these guys to be huge, lovable, feathered potatoes. I haven't met one with a mean streak under those feathers. I've found them to be rather sedentary and chill, despite being amazons. I would love to see either subspecies in the future though, unfortunately, that may not be possible as they're another avicultural rarity.



Orange-winged amazon (*Amazona amazonica*) Photo: Steve Duncan

Orange-winged Amazon / Orange-winged Parrot / Loro Guaro (*A. amazonica*): I've only seen three or four of these, and have not had enough experience to form an opinion of them one way or the other—though I'd be willing to get to know them some more given the opportunity. From what I've read, and from speaking with a teacher, I've learned that they are most famous for their clownish, extremely playful personalities.

Please remember these are my own accounts and experiences, and they are not to be taken as gospel. I don't claim to be an expert on this genus and my greatest interest in them lies in the particular species that I have noted for liking. I know there are those that find them irresistible, and if a feisty, feathered, loud, talking companion pet sounds attractive, an amazon may be right for you.

About the Author

Levi Fuentes is a lifelong bird admirer who enjoys researching and learning about the avian world. He first became a bird owner at the age of 12.

Waterfowl

Jonathan Beilby

Jonathan Beilby has been posting his avian photos of families and regions of birds on facebook and lets us share them here. This series is from his February 2021 posts celebrating World Wetlands Day. Enjoy! You may see all Jonathan's post on his facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/JonathanDBeilby>. Enjoy! Continued from May/June 2021



Day 5: Pacific Eider (*Somateria mollissima v-nigra*)

The eider is the second largest duck in the Northern hemisphere, beaten only by the Muscovy, and the Pacific subspecies here is the largest. Common Eiders are the only duck to be exclusively marine, even nesting out at sea. The females make a nest of their down feathers, which have been used by humans for centuries as 'eiderdown'.

Eiders on the Farne Islands, from the nominate subspecies, were one of the first protected bird populations, established by St Cuthbert in 676!



Day 6: Cotton Pygmy Goose (*Nettapus coromandelianus*)

Running short of time for a proper description today so lets just appreciate quite how beautiful this little bird is.

Native to Asia and Australia, the Sri Lankan name of 'flower teal' is probably owing to its colours and possibly the habitat of lily-covered ponds!

Taken at the Prague Zoo, the only place it can be seen publicly in Europe. This species has a good population in American Zoos!



Day 7: Southern Pochard (*Netta erythrophthalma brunnea*)

This species has quite a fragmented population, living in both South America (ssp. *erythrophthalma*) and Africa (ssp. *brunnea*), where flocks of up to 5000 have been recorded. Quite rare in captivity, the Southern Pochard isn't considered the most attractive species, but look at that eye?! Most captive birds are of the African subspecies...

Day 8: Thick-billed Bean Goose (*Anser fabalis serrirostris*)

There are currently four recognised subspecies of bean goose, split into two groups - 'tundra bean' and 'taiga bean' geese.

The thick billed bean goose is one of the 'tundra bean' geese, and has the thickest bill of all subspecies, which actually makes sense?! who said ornithologists always come up with stupid names...!

Bean geese are the rarest of the genus *Anser* in captivity, but they are not currently endangered in the wild.



Day 9: Harlequin Duck (*Histrionicus histrionicus*)

This amazingly beautiful duck is a simple mix of white, blue, black and red in a truly unique pattern. Here there is a female on the left, a second year male in the middle and a first year male on the right. Part of a group of waterfowl called the seaducks, the Harlequin duck winters out at sea where it feeds on mollusks and crustaceans. The pair off at the start of the breeding season (April-May), and fly inland. These ducks favour fast-flowing water, and often migrate over the course of a river.

This photo was taken in the wild in Port Angeles, WA, U.S.A



Day 10: Common Scoter (*Melanitta nigra*)

Another seaduck today, despite its name the Common scoter is the rarest species of waterfowl to breed in the U.K. They nest in the highlands of Scotland where the population is thought to be around 35 breeding pairs.

The scientific name comes from the Greek 'Melas' - black, and 'netta' - duck. Makes sense doesn't it?

Photo taken at WWT Arundel Wetland Centre



Day 11: Spectacled Eider
(*Somateria fischeri*)

It wasn't until 1995 when the wintering population of this species were discovered in the Bering Sea with the use of telemetry!



Day 12: Whistling Swan (*Cygnus columbianus columbianus*)

This species is the smaller of the two species of swan native to North America - the other being the trumpeter swan. These guys weigh between 6-7kg on average, which is much smaller than the Trumpeter Swan which has been recorded at up to 17.2kg!!!

The Whistling Swan is closely related to the Bewick's Swan, which is a wintering species to the U.K and can be seen at several of the WWT centres.

Jim Sorensen, Birds in shoes.
[Click here](#) to go to Jim's web site where you may see all his designs.
About I enjoy nature and adding something out of the ordinary. All my drawings are available online [here](#).

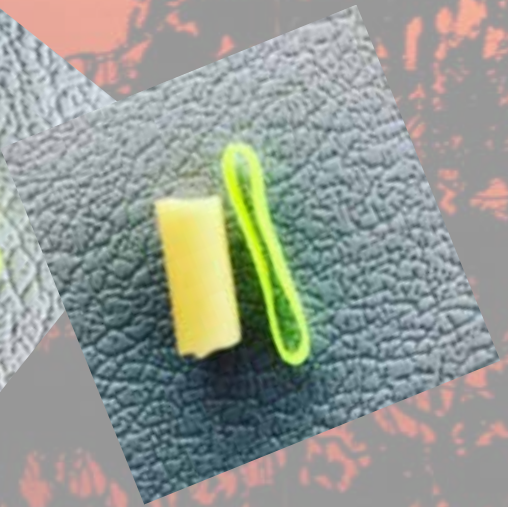
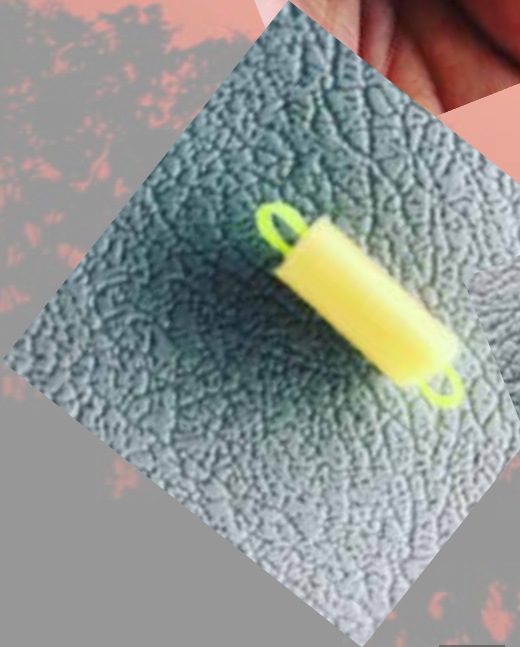


My newest drawing; Galah in Doc Martens. This is a special request from Katelyn Brew. His name is SEJ after the three vets who saved his life. SEJ is a rescue. He lost his right wing in 2009 and his right foot in 2019. Given his tendency to bite everyone except Katelyn, his nickname became Satan.

This will join my other bird drawings at www.jimsorensen.com for prints and stuff from Redbubble and will be posted in Instagram under birdsnshoes

Splay leg solution - Randy Berry

Mitered conure (*Psittacara mitrata*) chick. Fixing splayed leg with a simple solution using a piece of latex tube and a rubber band. #splayedlegs #parrotchick #parrot #pappagalli #parrothelp #aviculture #aviary #parrotsoninstagram #zoo #breedingbirds #breedingparrot #loveparrots #zoo ***Don't forget to follow me on Instagram for updates, aviary ideas and hacks***. #rbparrot



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additional offerings and one-of-a-kind
items to benefit the Mabula Ground
Hornbill Project.



More bird from the Internet Just click on the
birdie

Unusual Bird's Nest



A Pike jumped out of the water likely chasing prey and got stuck in a branch and died. Now, a bird has made a nest in its mouth.



A serious face for a serious share. Vultures are in peril the world over, lots of people still don't understand how valuable and critical we are. We can save the vulture but we need to change our culture to do so, or at least how vultures are perceived. When humans call someone a "vulture" they use our name as an insult but... when you think about it, vultures are smart, social, clean birds, we are excellent parents, we mate for life, we don't hurt other living creatures, and we are protectors of the health of the environments we live in. Hmmmm, being called a "vulture" sounds more like it should be considered a compliment, don't you think? The world would be a MUCH better place if ALL humans could say they lived up to that set of attributes!

Editor note: Andy N. Condor lives at [Tracy Aviary](http://www.tracyaviary.org) in Utah. www.tracyaviary.org FLASH: Andy N. Condor has agreed to share updates periodically for the ASA e-Bulletin. Watch for his conservation insights and antics. Follow him on facebook: [Andy N. Condor](#)

African Grey Parrots in Traditional Medicine



Man Rescued Orphaned Pelican And Now They Have The Most Incredible Bond



Owl doing Marilyn Monroe Impersonation



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WARNING



This plant is killing songbirds across North America! If you have one or see one with berries, cut off the berries and compost them. *Nandina domestica* (heavenly bamboo) is from China and so our birds mistake it for a food source. The seeds contain a ton of cyanide and cause a swift and extremely painful death. I cut the berries off my neighbours yesterday, but he said he has already found a few dead birds. Such a simple thing could save hundreds of lives. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3005831/>

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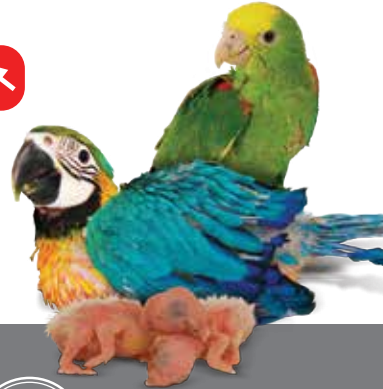
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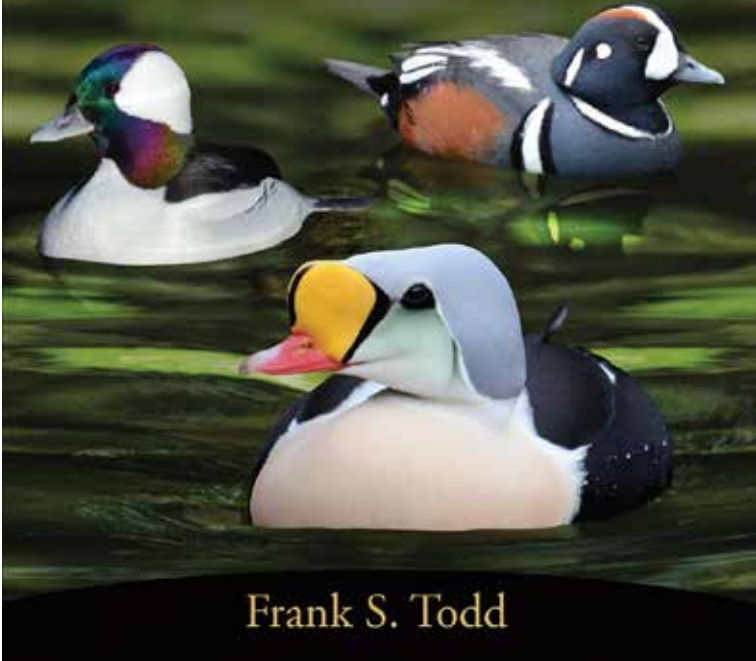
Who's Your Daddy?

Stumped? See answer on page 42



Photo: Carol Stanley

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. You can purchase *Ducks, Geese & Swans of North America: Identification Guide* at: <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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Queen of Bavaria, Golden Conure (*Guaruba guarouba*) Photo: Carol Stanley

Who's Your Daddy?

From page 39, Answer:

Queen of Bavaria, Golden Conure (*Guaruba guarouba*)

The Golden Conure (*guaruba guarouba*) is a small parrot indigenous to Northern Brazil.

Its colorful plumage is a beautiful golden yellow accented with green wing primaries and secondary feathers. The large head, compared to body size is similar to that of a macaw.

With behavior characteristics similar to a macaw, the Golden Conure is popular as a pet. Although, the occasional high pitched vocalizations may put some off but, their personalities more than make up for a little noise!

Until recently, this bird was on the Endangered Species Act list which prevented transporting birds across state lines. Thankfully, the American Federation of Aviculture and Pacific Legal Foundation took on the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to reclassify the Golden Conure.

News: As of May 26, 2020, the Golden Conure has been down listed under the U.S. Endangered Species Act. As of May 26, 2020, the Golden conure will be listed as "threatened" and the USFWS has determined that, in order to enhance the conservation of the species, they will be evoking the 4(d) Rule essentially suspending the requirement for federal permits to sell the species across State lines.

Read more at: the [AFA website](#)

Editor's note: Thank you American Federation of Aviculture and Pacific Legal Foundation for this break-through change to a draconian law.

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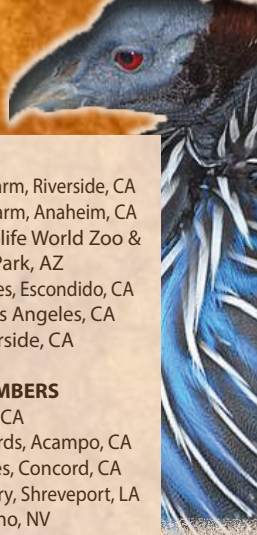
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