



ASA
Avicultural Bulletin

A JOURNAL FOR BIRD BREEDING, CONSERVATION, RESTORATION AND EDUCATION
MARCH/APRIL 2016



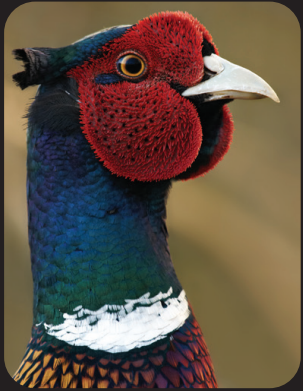
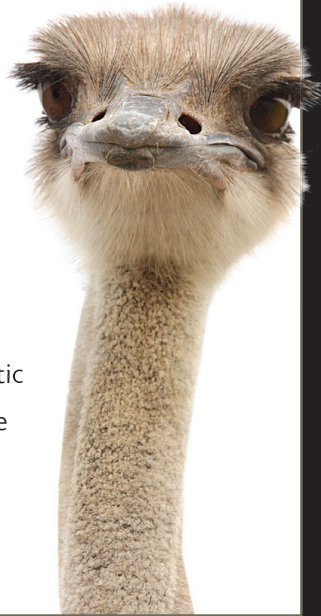
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SPEAKING AT THE
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The purposes of the Society are the study of foreign and native birds to promote their conservation and protection; the dissemination of information on the care, breeding, and feeding 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: Male Harlequin duck Photo: Debbie Schouten

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March/April 2016
President's Message

The conference is coming, the conference is coming!

Our all-volunteer conference coordinators are doing a spectacular job putting together this year's conference. It is being hosted by Debbie and Arnold Schouten in Port Angeles, Washington, April 27 - 30, 2016. ASA conferences are the stuff spectacular memories are made of.

Internationally acclaimed speakers, who are the crème-de-la-crème in their respective avian areas of expertise, share their knowledge with attendees in an intimate group setting.

This year's speakers and topics are wonderfully diverse and, if you leave without learning something, it's because you were sleeping.

From conservation to sea ducks (I'll get to that a little later), cock-of-the-rock husbandry and so much more, the Avicultural Society of America conference is a value-packed event not to be missed.

Okay, I have to name drop: Dave Rimlinger, curator of the San Diego Zoo (I think conference coordinator Laurie Conrad must have had a hand in pulling in Dave), Mike Lubbock of Sylvan Heights bird park, Simon Degenhard, publisher of *Aviary Life* magazine and many more avian stars you and I have yet to meet will be speaking.

Did I mention sea ducks? Yes I did, and the specimens at Dry Creek Waterfowl will be in full breeding plumage. This once-in-a-lifetime tour is made possible by our gracious hosts, Debbie and Arnold Schouten.

Julie Corwin is working with our Vice President Alex Culp on ASA's first bird show and indoor bird display. This should be a fun and educational event that I personally am really looking forward to.

You'll find information throughout this issue on the Avicultural Society of America's 12th Annual Education Conference, but you will have only second-hand memories if you don't join us!

I thank our loyal sponsor, MAZURI, who provides support for our conferences. MAZURI will have a booth at ASA as well as a guest speaker, Liz Koutsos, Ph.D., director of the MAZURI Feed Business Group.

Carol Stanley

President, Avicultural Society of America





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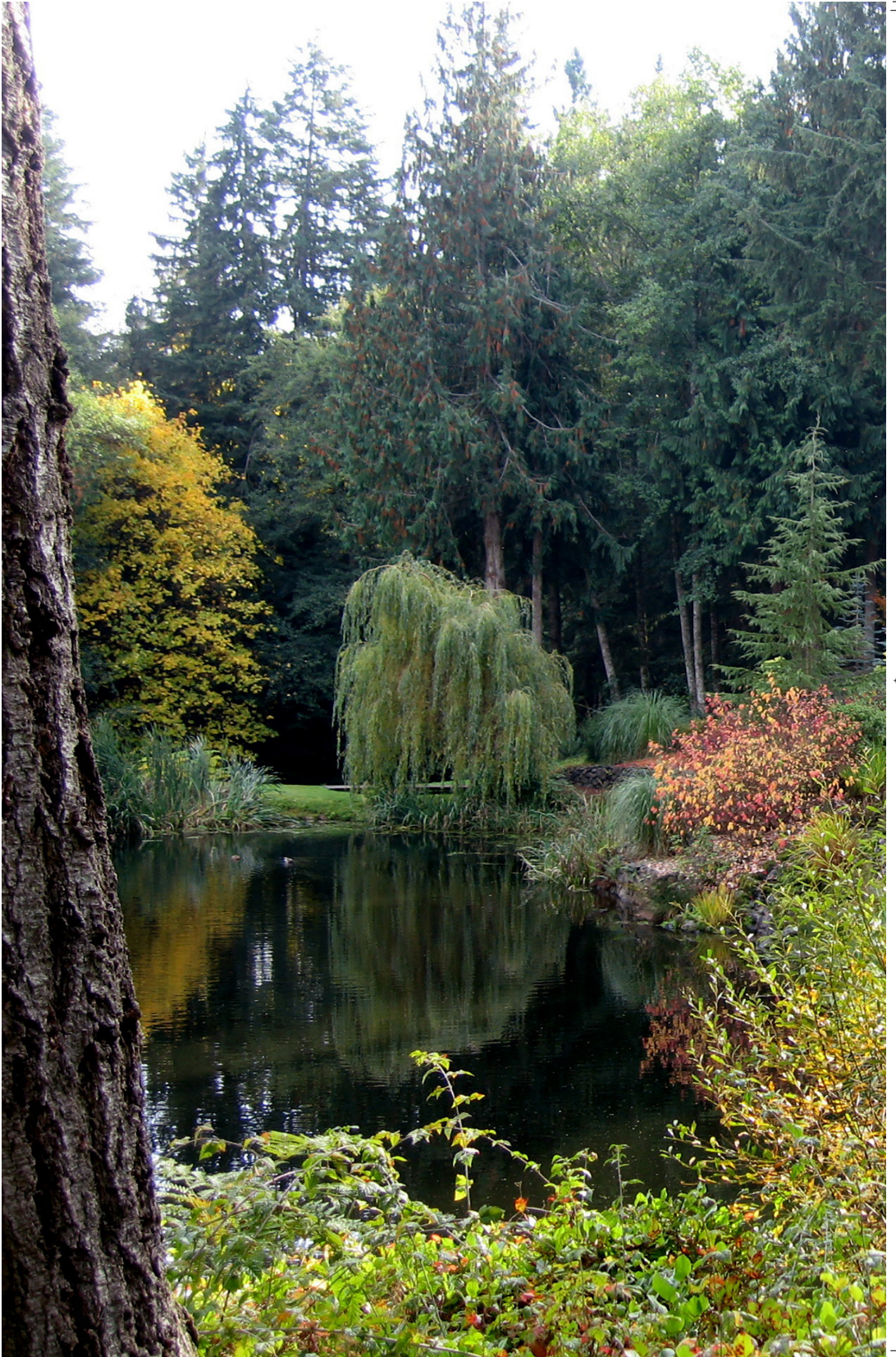
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asabirds-subscribe@yahoogroups.com and you will start getting messages.

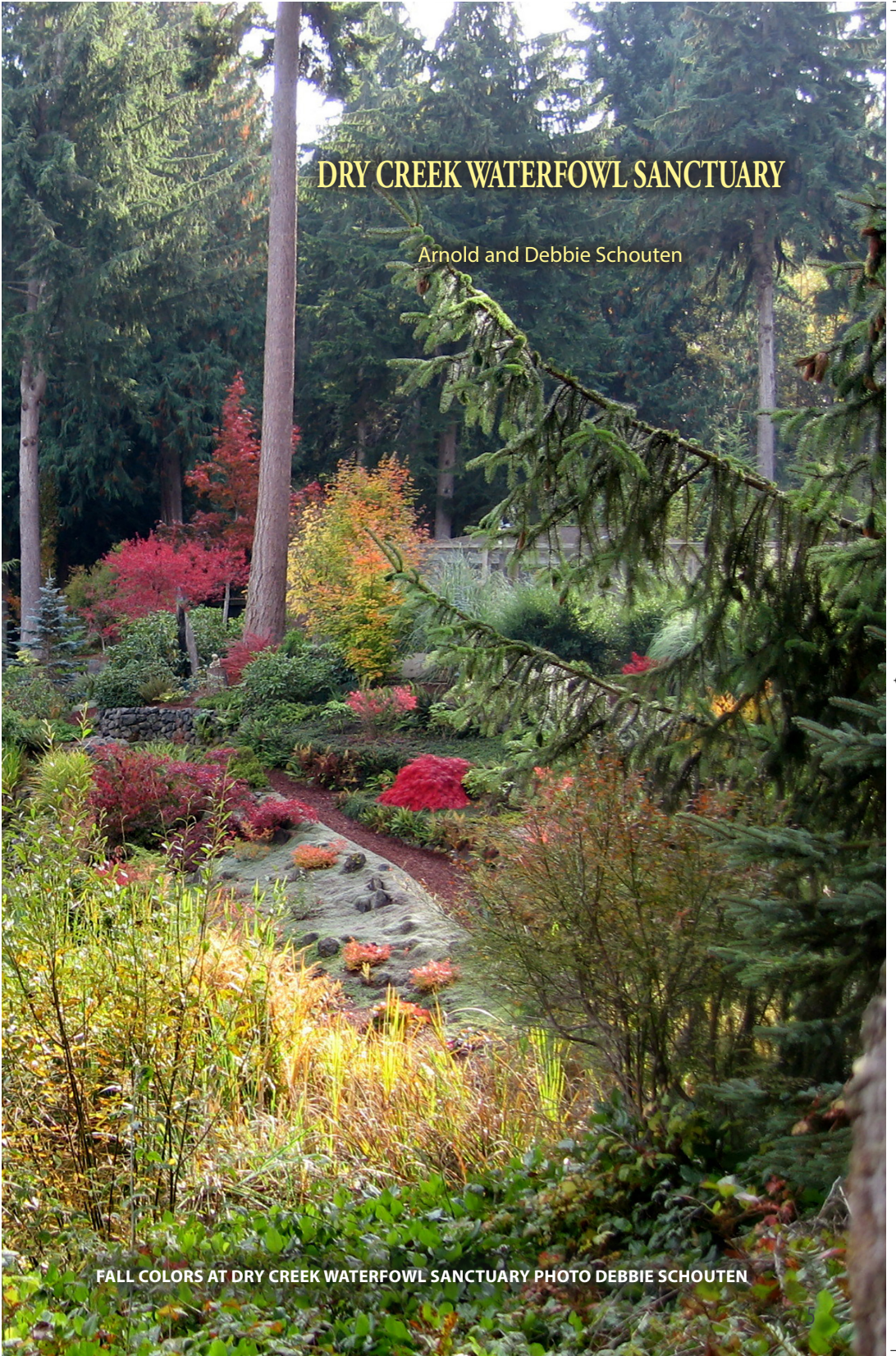
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DRY CREEK WATERFOWL SANCTUARY

Arnold and Debbie Schouten

FALL COLORS AT DRY CREEK WATERFOWL SANCTUARY PHOTO DEBBIE SCHOUTEN





DRY CREEK WATERFOWL SANCTUARY PHOTO DEBBIE SCHOUTEN

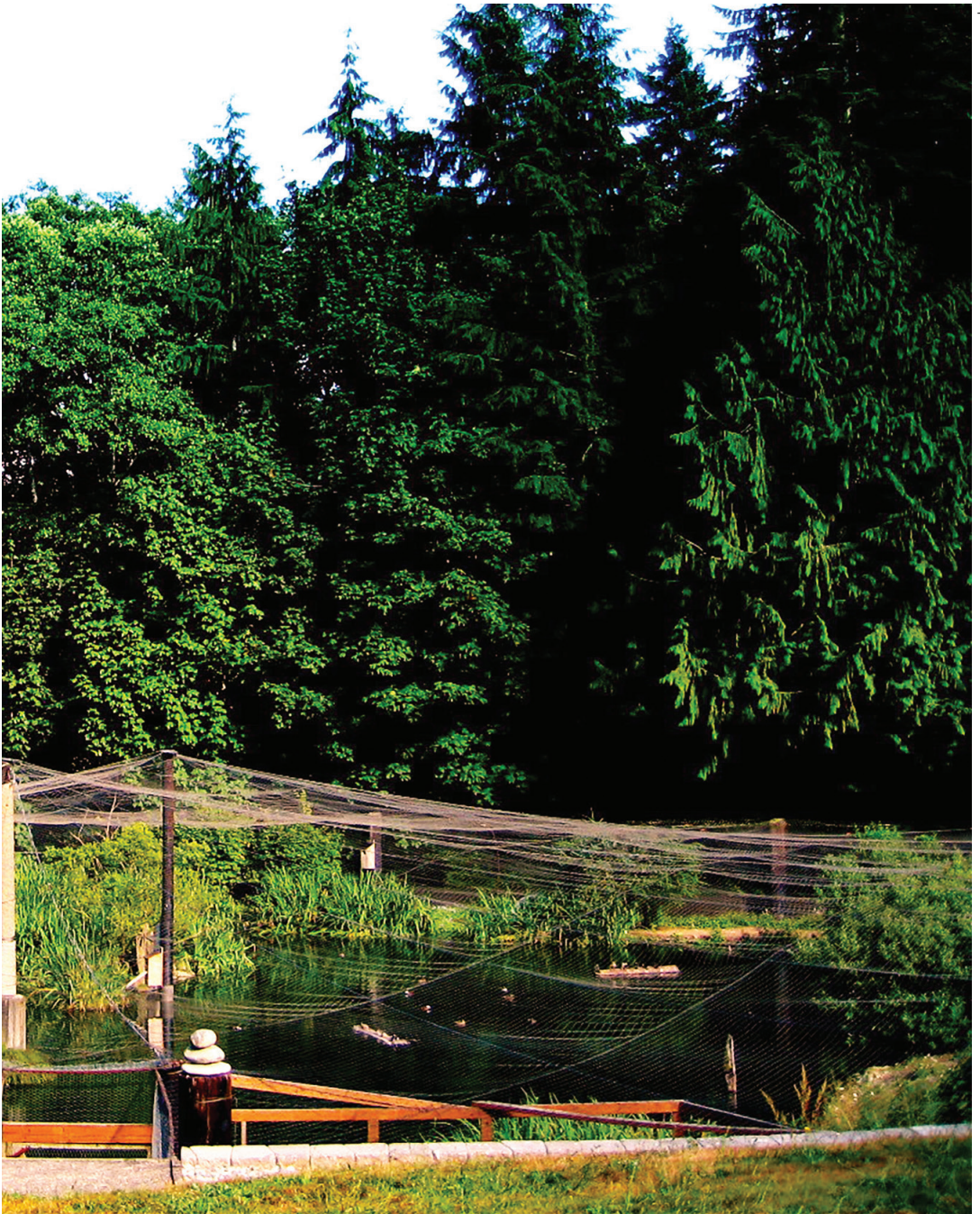
Editor's note:

The picturesque backdrop in the above photo is one of the spectacular sights to be seen during the upcoming Avicultural Society of America 11th Annual Education Conference. Arnold and Debbie Schouten

will be sharing their private Northwestern paradise with conference goers as hosts of the conference April 27 - 30, 2016.

More information may be found throughout this issue. You know you want to go, right? Go to www.asabirds.org for





information on how to register for this conference.

Arnold & Debbie Schouten have been raising waterfowl at Dry Creek Waterfowl Sanctuary in Port Angeles for the past 36 years. They live on a forested

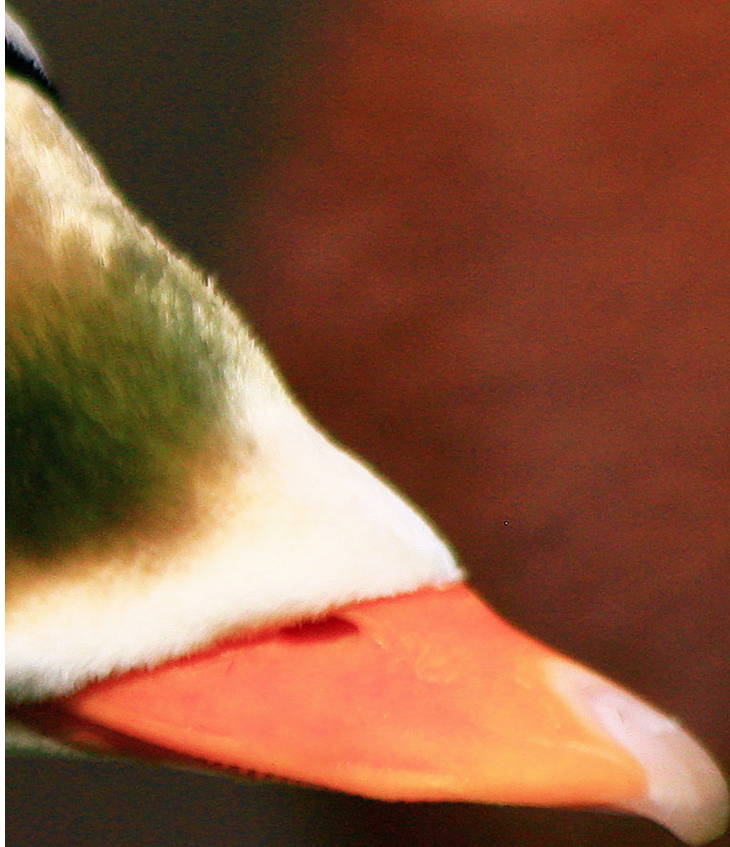
65 acre piece of land with a year-round creek and spring. They have developed numerous ponds, water features, wetlands and waterfowl aviaries. Over the years they have worked with over 40 different waterfowl species at this

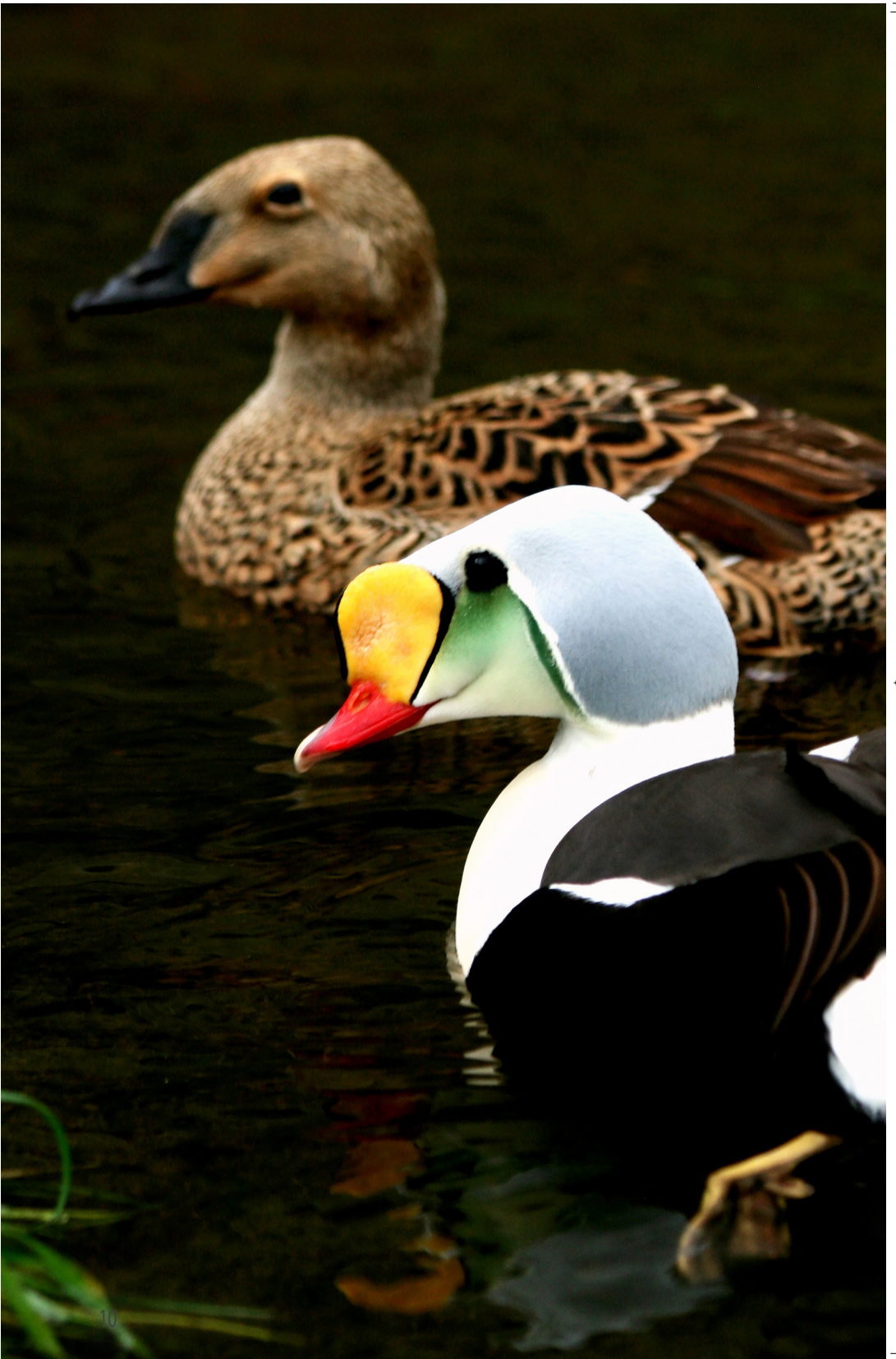






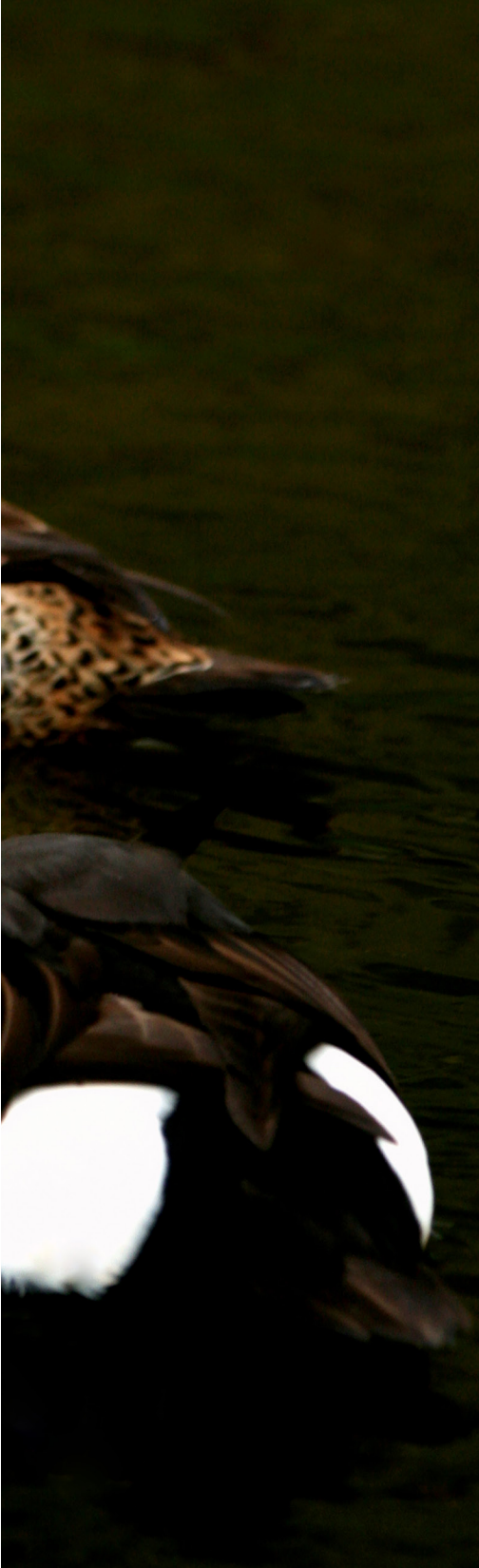
MALE SPECTACLED EIDER *SOMATERIA FISCHERI* PHOTO DEBBIE SCHOUTEN







SCALY-SIDED MERGANSER *MERGUS SQUAMATUS*
PHOTO DEBBIE SCHOUTEN



MALE IN FOREGROUND KING EIDER · *SOMATERIA SPECTABILIS* PHOTO DEBBIE SCHOUTEN

location. Their focus is on top quality, healthy and content birds in nicely landscaped enclosures. Additionally, their goal is to work primarily with sea ducks and maintain a healthy captive breeding population. A population of about 250 ducks representing 15 species, along with 4 species of shore birds, is kept in four different aviaries.

As you meander along pathways and trails, take in the sights and sounds of waterfalls and ponds; view waterfowl from a northwest tea house and admire the rock terraced landscape. This wooded habitat draws you in to explore and enjoy Arnold and Debbie's passion and energy to create a special place for wildlife.

Woodland gardens have a natural setting and the landscape's many native plants create sanctuary for their winged guests, including hummingbirds, swallows, red-winged blackbirds, wild ducks, band-tailed pigeons, ravens, great blue herons, hawks, eagles, bats, butterflies, and bees. Four-legged creatures including turtles, rabbits, raccoons, flying squirrels and deer are also welcomed year-round visitors. Humans find quiet solitude and harmony in this hidden paradise nestled within a secluded forest.



Aviculture Apprentice Program

Kimberly Robertson

Editor's note:

To paraphrase Temple Grandin, "Today's children experience life in theory through their computers and not in reality of a practical world." We feel sparking a young person's desire to learn about, and work with birds and their peers, is a motivating experience that will incorporate people, computers and birds.

We are very excited to be working on the Aviculture Apprentice Program. This program is being developed to expose young people to birds. We hope that by introducing ambassador birds to classrooms and by offering individual mentorship programs to interested applicants we can foster an appreciation for birds and possibly an interest in aviculture. Our goal is to create a network through local bird clubs, schools, and clubs such as 4H and FFA as well as individuals, to make this a very dynamic program. Currently we are researching how best to implement this and hope to announce its inaugural flight soon.

At this time, we would like to introduce two members of our committee who, in effect, have been our models for this program.

Ben Vargas worked with Kimberly Robertson (our newest board member) at Safari West as a Jr. Keeper where he learned quite a bit about incubation and caring for birds, among other things. Ben still works with Kimberly on special



AVICULTURE APPRENTICE BEN VARGAS PHOTO
KIMBERLY ROBERTSON

projects and has gone on to develop his own duck egg business.


You may not know Gregory yet, but if you are an avid aviculturist, I am sure you will hear more about this amazing young man. At 12 years of age, he has already written a couple of very fine articles for the Bulletin! Gregory has a nice collection of finches, quail, doves, and a pair of Violaceous Turacos. He also currently has a small flock of Orange Bishop Weavers that were donated to him by ASA through the support of Carol Stanley. Greg was very excited to see the weavers building their globular nests in the tall grass he provided for them in their aviary that he built himself.



AVICULTURE APPRENTICE GREGORY SERCEL (RIGHT) WITH PAST AVICULTURAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA PRESIDENT STEVE DUNCAN (LEFT) AND THEN-CURRENT PRESIDENT IVO LAZZERONI (CENTER) ATTENDING AN ASA CONFERENCE PHOTO CAROL STANLEY

I am sure we will be hearing more about his progress with his birds.

If you know a young person with an interest in birds who might benefit from some support and guidance of experienced aviculturists, let us know by sending an email to info@asabirds.org.

Sometimes, a little support can go a long way toward inspiring another fledgling aviculturist. 

If you would like to contribute to the Aviculture Apprentice program and be a part of its success, you may do so by sending a check payable to Avicultural Society of America, P.O. Box 3161, San Dimas, CA 91773.

Alternatively, you may donate online via the paypal donation button on the bottom of the page at: www.asabirds.org/membership/

ASA is an IRS recognized 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and 100% of your donation will be used for this program and is tax deductible. Consult with your tax advisor for tax deductibility.



Carbon Monoxide – Silent and Fatal!

Susie Christian

When Jake went in to the bird room to give our pair of eclectus their afternoon snack, he found the male dead on the cage bottom and his mate very ill. Our whole family was completely devastated and we had no idea what happened.

After a long and horrible two days of wondering why, we found out what happened to Harvey when my dad brought his Carbon Monoxide detector by. My mother theorized that we had a furnace leak, when she heard Harvey died because the big room the bird's cage is in, has the furnace in the closet. The minute the detector was plugged in the alarm sounded. We were horrified and immediately evacuated the animals and kids out of the house.

We were so lucky for how it all played out with Piper. When Jake found Harvey, Piper was on the floor on the other side of the cage. They have a double cage and she was next to the divider, as close as she could be to Harvey. She kept screaming and when Jake went to pick her up, she bit him super hard. Piper hasn't bitten anyone since she was a baby. He took her upstairs to our room where we have a small cage, so we could keep an eye on her because she was obviously stressed about losing Harvey. A few more minutes and she would have been gone too.

Harvey is our little guardian-angel bird. The boy's room is downstairs, next to the bird's room. If Harvey hadn't died, we wouldn't have known about the Carbon Monoxide leak. The level could possibly have become deadly in the bedroom and maybe even killed the boys. I wish we could turn back time. The furnace repairman said even if we would have had a detector in the house, there is a chance they sometimes don't go off until there is a dangerous CO level to humans. So we probably would still have lost our bird. It still doesn't take away the hurt. Harvey

saved our boys and I'm so grateful for that.

Piper is doing so much better and fully recovered. We thought she was acting weird because she seemed to understand he had died. I feel like an idiot not knowing she was poisoned and about to die.

If Harvey had to die, I'm glad he went being a hero. He loved the kids so much and my son, George, bawled when he found out Harvey was gone. Yeah, you hear about it all the time but you never think it will happen to you. I'm so grateful it didn't get to our kids. I had a mentally handicapped friend, growing up, that got her disabilities from a Carbon Monoxide leak in their home when she was little.

Carbon monoxide, also known as CO, is called the "Invisible Killer" because it's a colorless, odorless, poisonous gas. More than 150 people in the United States die every year from accidental non-fire related CO poisoning associated with consumer products.

WHAT IS CARBON MONOXIDE (CO) AND HOW IS IT PRODUCED?

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a deadly, colorless, odorless, poisonous gas. It is produced by the incomplete burning of various fuels, including coal, wood, charcoal, oil, kerosene, propane, and natural gas. Products and equipment powered by internal combustion engines such as portable generators, cars, lawn mowers, and power washers also produce CO.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF CO POISONING?

Because CO is odorless, colorless, and otherwise undetectable to the human senses, people may not know that they are being exposed. The initial symptoms of low to moderate CO poisoning are similar to the flu (but without the fever). They include:

- Headache
- Fatigue



- Shortness of breath
- Nausea
- Dizziness

High level CO poisoning results in progressively more severe symptoms, including:

- Mental confusion
- Vomiting
- Loss of muscular coordination
- Loss of consciousness
- Ultimately death

Symptom severity is related to both the CO level and the duration of exposure. For slowly developing residential CO problems, occupants and/or physicians can mistake mild to moderate CO poisoning symptoms for the flu, which sometimes results in tragic deaths. For rapidly developing, high level CO exposures (e.g., associated with use of generators in residential spaces), victims can rapidly become mentally confused, and can lose muscle control without having first experienced milder symptoms; they will likely die if not rescued.

ARE CO ALARMS RELIABLE?

CO alarms always have been and still are designed to alarm before potentially life-threatening levels of CO are reached. The safety standards for CO alarms have been continually improved and currently marketed CO alarms are not as susceptible to nuisance alarms as earlier models.

HOW SHOULD I INSTALL A CO ALARM?

CO alarms should be installed according to the manufacturer's instructions. CPSC recommends that one CO alarm be installed in the hallway outside the bedrooms in each separate sleeping area of the home. CO alarms may be installed into a plug-in receptacle or high on the wall. Hard wired or plug-in CO alarms should have battery backup. Avoid locations that are near heating vents or that can be covered by furniture

or draperies. CPSC does not recommend installing CO alarms in kitchens or above fuel-burning appliances.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO WHEN THE CO ALARM SOUNDS?

Never ignore an alarming CO alarm! It is warning you of a potentially deadly hazard.

If the alarm signal sounds do not try to find the source of the CO:

- Immediately move outside to fresh air.
- Call your emergency services, fire department, or 911.
- After calling 911, do a head count to check that all persons are accounted for. DO NOT reenter the premises until the emergency services responders have given you permission. You could lose consciousness and die if you go in the home.
- If the source of the CO is determined to be a malfunctioning appliance, DO NOT operate that appliance until it has been properly serviced by trained personnel.

Carbon Monoxide is slightly lighter than air and it may/can be found with warm, rising air. Detectors should be placed on a wall about 5 feet above the floor. The detector may also be placed on the ceiling. Do not place the detector right next to or over a fireplace or flame-producing appliance. Each floor needs a separate detector.

If you are getting just one Carbon Monoxide detector, place it near your sleeping area. A \$20.00 investment can save your family and pets. Personally, I keep one in my bird room, one in my bedroom and also in the living room. Better safe than sorry.

* CO information credit: <http://www.cpsc.gov/en/Safety-Education/Safety-Education-Centers/Carbon-Monoxide-Information-Center/Carbon-Monoxide-Questions-and-Answers/>



Chinese Hwamei - an Overview

Tammy Hartnet

Of my favorites of the many species of the family Timaliide is the Chinese Hwamei. Often called the Spectacled Jay-thrush or Melodious Laughingthrush the Chinese Hwamei *Leucodioptron canorum* is a rather plain medium-sized laughingthrush.

DESCRIPTION

The plumage is reddish/chestnut brown with dark streaks on head, throat, and nape. Underside is lighter and the belly is gray. The tail is often olive with dark barring. The legs and beak are horn colored and the upper beak is dark in adult birds. The term "hua-mei" translates from Chinese "Painted Eyebrow". Hwamei have a wide white eyering with a long streak. They also have rictal bristles on the face. Young birds are similar with less streaking. Individuals are monomorphic.

The voice of the Hwamei is deep and strong, carrying long distances. Males have a varied song which often includes mimicry. The hen has a monotone call which prompts the male to sing. Pairs perform duets, which help in bonding and territory establishment. Individuals can be sexed by differences in vocalizations.

Adult Hwamei measure 21-24 cm or ~9 inches in length. Male weight 65-75 grams. Female weight 54-75 grams.

TAXONOMY

Two subspecies recognized. (*Leucodioptron canorum*) found in mainland Asia and (*Leucodioptron canorum owstoni*) found on Hainan Island. Previously the Taiwan Hwamei (*Leucodioptron taewanum*) was considered a subspecies of Chinese Hwamei. Differences in plumage, voice and genetics have separated the species. Chinese Hwamei was introduced to Taiwan in great numbers due to its popularity as a cage-bird. The hybridization of the two has

led the Taiwan Hwamei's (*Leucodioptron taewanum*) status to be listed as endangered(E).

DISTRIBUTION AND THREATS

The nominate race is widespread from SE China to central China, E. Laos and Vietnam. *L.c.owstoni* race occurs on Hainan Island.

L.c.canorum has been introduced to Taiwan, Singapore, Japan and Hawaii. Common on Kauai, Hawaii and Maui. It is less common on Oahu and Molokai.

Chinese Hwamei occupy shrublands, open woodland, thickets, scrub and especially bamboo and tall grass. They are found in gardens and vacant lots in urban areas. Common in much their range they are considered a species of Least Concern(LC).

Chinese Hwamei are residents in their ranges. Males are highly territorial.

At present, the Chinese Hwamei population is considered stable but declining. A survey in the late 1990's in China found that trapping contributed to a large decline in the population. Male and chicks were taken for the pet trade while hens were sold in the market for meat

The Chinese Hwamei is an internationally prized cagebird. They remain a species trapped for the bird market. Males are coveted for their song as well as for their fighting abilities.

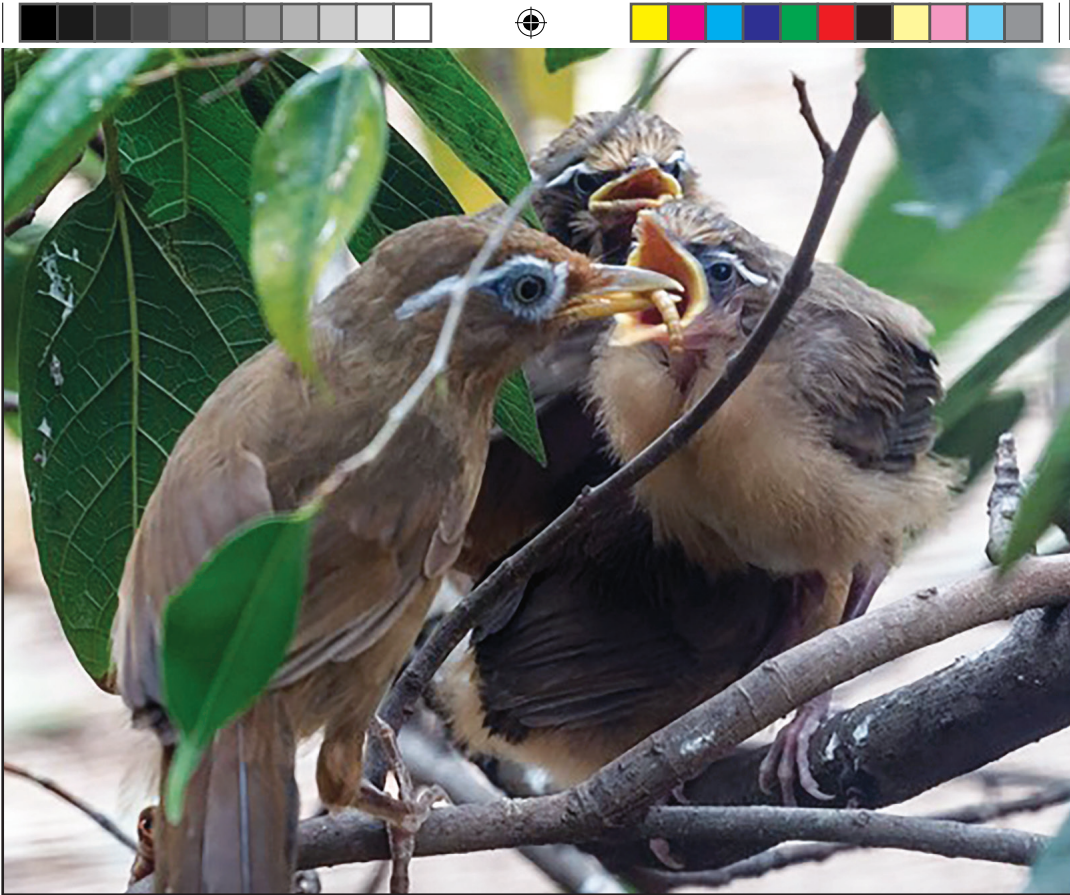
FOOD/FEEDING

Chinese Hwamei are considered omnivores. In their ranges they feed on insects, fruits, seeds and sometimes grains. They are believed to be contributors to the ecosystem due to the spreading of seeds. During chick rearing, young are fed insects almost exclusively.

BREEDING

Breeding occurs from March to September. Multiple clutches in a





CHINESE HWAMEI *GARRULAX CANORUS* OLDER SIBLING FEEDING FLEDGLINGS PHOTO VIC MURAYAMA

season. Nest outwardly, appears to be a large bulky structure. Material used includes leaves, grasses, rootlets and fibers. Inside the nest are tightly woven soft fibers. Nests are typically built in dense foliage, bushes, bamboo, small trees or stumps. Nests can be built as low as on ground level but usually are higher. Incubation is mainly by female, although the male may incubate during the day. Clutch 2-5 eggs, typically 3-4. Eggs are blue, usually bright blue. Incubation is 13-14 days. Fledge period is 12-15 days. Chicks from previous clutches of the same year can become helpers at the nest.

BEHAVIOR

Found in pairs or small groups. Sometimes forages in mixed species flocks. A skulking bird, often difficult to observe. Feeds on ground in leaf litter.

Like others in the Babbler family they bath by quickly jumping in and out of the water multiple times while whirling their wings. Pairs engage in comfort behaviors and spend much time allopreening as well as clumping (sitting tightly together). Pairs roost clumped together as well.

References

- Handbook Birds of the World VOL 12.
- Birdlife international <http://birdlife.org/datazone/speciesfactsheet.php?id=32442>
- <http://www.hawaii-forest.com/chinese-hwamei-leucodiotron-canorum-melodious-laughing-thrush/>
- <https://cites.org/eng/cop/11/prop/35.pdf>
- See the May/June 2016 ASA Bulletin for part two of this article - Chinese Hwamei Captive Husbandry

Steve's Photo Pick

The Yellow-bibbed Lory *Lorius chlorocercus*

– Native to the Solomon Islands, this species is common in the wild there and not considered at risk. Like other members of the Lory family, Yellow-bibbed Lories are specialized for feeding on flower nectar, pollen, and fruit. Their tongues have specialized papillae that have earned this group their nickname, brush-tongued parrots. Like other lories, they should be fed a specialized diet consisting of commercially available nectar, pellets, fruit and vegetables. The Yellow-bibbed Lories in the US are the result of an importation in 1998 under the Solomon Island Parrot Consortium for which ASA acted as the oversight organization. Although still not commonly available, Yellow-bibbed Lories are established in the US thanks to this Consortium, and hopefully, breeders will continue to work with them to maintain this delightful species as an option for our aviaries. They do make excellent pets and are among the most talented of mimics.





Pavo muticus

James Pfarr

In the alluring world of avian lordum the mere mentioning of this bird has the effect of a tuning fork on those who have been placed under its spell. It has history that gives it status equal to that of emperors and kings past and present. This emerald dancer has long been the symbol of the ultimate gift, not to be rivaled by precious metals or stones, for "muticus" are just as magnanimous.

Muticus in all its glory has passed its reign of larger than life mystique. As with all things under our dominion we have ascended into an era of splitting hairs in the name of science for truth, and knowing. The dragon bird is not exempt from our unwavering curiosity, but with such drive for absolute clarity, I hope it will ultimately yield long term existence for its variable clads.

This genus has been a topic that has sparked some of the most fevered and divided stands of any within the world of Phasianini. I ask in all these debates what form of validation was ever presented as vindication for either party. I must state here and now, I am "NOT" any sort of expert on muticus. I do and have kept them in their various forms, whether called *P.m. spicifer*, *P.m. imperator*, or *P.m. muticus*, but always with the longing question of their genomic continuity.

I am fortunate in knowing and being able to call my friends and colleagues some of the most prominent experts, who have relentlessly pursued this genus:



Wolfgang Mennig –
www.pavo-muticus.de



Rienhold Bauer-
www.peafowl-farm.com
Friedrich Esser –
www.pavo-muticus.com ,
www.prani-breeding-center.com/gallery

I will not mention, nor forget those here on this soil, but will forgo to name them in case a tar and feathering commences after this appears, so that they remain immune and unscathed . I fully accept anything anyone may have to offer, but ask that you do so with scientific validation at your side.

Time and time again we hear those saying and stating, "these birds" are JAVA GREENS or MUTICUS MUTICUS. I ask you, HOW DO YOU KNOW, or WHY





MALE LATERAL VIEW PAVO MUTICUS SPICIFER, P.M. IMPERATOR, P.M. MUTICUS PHOTO JAMES PFARR

DO YOU claim this? Is there some minuscule paper trail, or documented expedition unknown to the rest of the aviculture community? Where is it to be had? How many of you have seen muticus forms over a 100 years old, preserved and retrieved from their geographical points of origin, that can give you a clear and resolute interpretation of what you are seeking, professing to breed, and that have not been compromised? Have you been misled, because you purchased birds that someone told you were imported so this makes everything legitimate? How many of you who fancy yourselves more than laymen have truly sat down and researched muticus whole heartedly, unbiased, that are not just advocating a representation because you obtained the birds as such, having #@!* loads of money tied up in them, hoping somehow you will recoup your investment? I ask, "Why did you invest?" Is it to proliferate your passion for what you believe to be "pure," that maybe in doing your small part, they will

not become a "once was," or is it because SO MANY others have amassed small fortunes by stream lining the name game. Let's look at all this from a birds eye view for just a moment.

Without citing "Pheasants of The World" word for word, Delacour says P.m. muticus inhabits Java, and Malay, up to the isthmus of Kra. If you look at the enclosed map with its scheme of wing covert coloration, you will see Java, Sumatra (a very large land mass) and Malay. Now...From the very northern part of Java to the very southern part of Malay it is roughly 1000 miles!!! There are NO muticus on that very large land mass between the two points known as Sumatra! Why? Were they extirpated? They were not there when Beebe, or Delacour went on expedition and that's close to 100 years, yet we accept that the birds in south Malay and the Java occupants living 1000 miles apart are genomically the same, when there are no intermittent groups. On page 366 of "Pheasants Of The





MALE DORSAL VIEW *PAVO MUTICUS SPICIFER*, *P.M. IMPERATOR*, *P.M. MUTICUS* PHOTO JAMES PFARR

World" under distribution, Delacour says, "Its seems the birds in Java and the birds in Malay are identical , although we lack adequate series to decide with certainty." Where is the proof that Delacour ever made it to Java? However William Beebe did! His exploits and observations are documented in grand detail. It is worth noting even at this time Beebe states, "Muticus are wide spread on Java, but not overly abundant, becoming rarer in Java and before long expect them to become extinct" (page 261 – Pheasants their Lives and Homes 1926)

So, how is it at this time a species already threatened with a foreboding and looming, atmosphere of extinction, somehow has become the modern day poster child for Green Peafowl in everyone's collections when it seemed the inevitable was at hand? I present a question to chew the fat over, or self-digest. Do I think P.m. muticus has ever

left Java? I do. But not documented or ever in large enough numbers to substantiate the upheaval, and revival, that represents the modern claimed number, and most certainly nothing legitimately brought into the E. U. or U.S. from Java.

I ask again how many have seen muticus taken from various countries of origin and their districts, ranging from Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Malay, on to Java? If you have, then you can agree it is a reoccurring event that each region, unanimously exhibits in cock and hen a distinct corresponding wing covert coloration. As you move through one species occupied area on to the next a slight variation takes place WITHIN the "PRIMARY COVERT COLOR" synonymous with each of the three individual nomenclatures. Most of these intermittent or transition clades are just variations! This is no different





than comparing a Chengdu Golden with its conspicuous white throat, to a Golden from Chengsha with its buff throat. They are both Golden, but variants, not new sub specific!

I read and hear theories that these aberrant forms of muticus are sub specific, and may have upwards of 7 within the genus! I do lend a meek ear to this, and the thought is tantalizing, but with anything a potential new representation may have been overlooked as evolution does not stop. With that said, the only way we can eliminate the uncertainties, and continually posed questions, is by genomic continuity test. This will establish the needed markers, divulging the levels of homozygosity within a given clad, allowing us identification of bench marks for each of the known and proposed sub specific.

Until we unify our efforts in the name of conservation and truth, without fear, and realizing that many businesses may have flourished by exploiting vernacular titles, this may very well come to an end when such a test could prove birds in Thailand are the same genomically as those in south Pahang. This in all essence may be logical as there are no permanent thresholds preventing their transition, unlike the previous Java to Malay.

In all this I urge you to think about the effects and process of Phylogenetic contributions before you go on some tirade, cussing me from the rafters or wishing me placed in a straitjacket! I have had the eye opening benefit of at length conversations pertaining to phylogenetic input, aberrations, and natural occurring mutations with one of the leading authorities in this field, Hein



FEMALE LATERAL VIEW *PAVO MUTICUS SPICIFER*, *P.M. IMPERATOR*, *P.M. MUTICUS* PHOTO JAMES PFARR





FEMALE PAVO MUTICUS SPICIFER, P.M. IMPERATOR, P.M. MUTICUS; LEFT:DORSAL VIEW; CENTER: DORSAL

Van Grouw, Curator at "Tring Natural History Museum" UK. You would have a very enlightened view on much of what you see in wild avian phenotypes after reading some of his documented works.

My point in all this is, we do not have legitimate documentation proving ANY bird called muticus muticus in North America, are pure representation with a paper trail traceable to Java! What we do have however, from their points of origin, are skins collected by some of the most notable naturalists who have ever lived. So I ask, why do we not lean on these TRUTHS to establish a unified and definitive phenotype backed by scientific based focus group as we have done with so many others?

You believe you have *P.m.muticus* because the lineage shows they ultimately came from south Malay and Delacour said, aside from Java this is where they reside. He did say that, and I cannot argue with this legend whose endeavors and knowledge of Galliformes far surpasses mine, whom I would never attempt at sharing the same floor with, but I must argue.

As in all things our thinking and understanding have evolved, much

*As in all things
our thinking and
understanding have
evolved, much from the
help of science, so once
more I press on you the
fact that Malay and Java
are 1000 miles apart...*

from the help of science, so once more I press on you the fact that Malay and Java are 1000 miles apart, without






VIEW OF TAILS; RIGHT: VENTRAL PHOTOS JAMES PFARR

any divergent groups between. So how can we continually present these two geographical representations as the same specimen? There is not one Galliforme as a singular species that has a natural occurring range of 1000 miles, and the few species that reside on masses having this area, as with (Borneo/Sumatra) hosting endemic species, have naturally split into sub specific representation(Argus =2, Crestless FB =2, Bronze TI P.P. = 2, Salvadori =2). Others have either been relocated or introduced outside of their native range.

It has already been established globally, and accepted, that the general phenotypes for the three holders of nomenclature in muticus are; P.m. spicifer with its dull, tarnished cast, lacking any prominent coloration; P.m. imperator having incredible variants of Dominant Blue, from cobalt and turquoise, on to complete aqua in the Pahang region; then the most elusive, with only a few "True" representatives, giving tell of Javas jewels , over 80 years ago collected

by Beebe, with its unmistakable guild of "Golden Green" coverts and cast, *P. m. muticus*.

The enclosed pictures are these described truths. Not my opinion, conjuring, or whimsical wishes, but specimens collected by the trail blazers we so adamantly have relied on as a collective society, feeding us the information needed to enhance our understanding for the things we have not seen. One last note, some will argue that the light is deceiving, manipulating the coloration of the wing coverts or general hue. All were photographed under the same light conditions, each subspecies when laid side by side still displayed the recognized, accepted, independent coloration for that represented form, as did the hens "directly" correspond to the cocks. This is food for thought.

This article is not an attempt to change the platform, but to give us something we have not seen presented to the public before, and provide a tangible reference from an uncompromised source with scientific documentation. 



AVICULTURE, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

Laurella Desborough

AVICULTURE

Aviculture is defined as the care, keeping and raising of birds. (It should be noted that it is illegal in the United States for members of the public to possess or keep native species. Exceptions are birds held under state and federal falconer's permits, native species in rehabilitation facilities or non-releasable birds under special education permits. Common pigeons, starlings and English sparrows are non-native birds, introduced from Europe, and may be kept.) People have kept birds as pets for thousands of years. In the mid 1900's budgerigars became popular. After World War II, cockatiels and lovebirds were commonly kept and bred. During the fifties, people ordered 'green parrots' from the Sears catalogue for \$15 and received an Amazon or a Philippine Great-Bill. In the sixties, European travelers to Mid-Eastern markets purchased pairs of Blue and Gold macaws. During the early seventies, as development in third-world countries accelerated, exotic birds became even more accessible to the bird collectors in these countries. This resulted in more birds being imported into the United States and Europe. Softbills and finches, but especially parrots of all types, were imported. As the special charismatic characteristics of parrots became better known, their desirability as pets increased. They were intelligent; they had a fantastic ability to mimic the human voice, they were startlingly beautiful, and some were sweet and affectionate. After the development of the surgical endoscope, surgical sexing became available, and more aviculturists began trying to breed

parrots. As more breeders were successful in breeding and hand rearing parrots, parrots became ever more popular.

IMPORTATION

Prior to 1992, the main regulations regarding importing or owning exotic birds in the U.S. involved United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) requirements that all imported birds go through a thirty-day quarantine to determine whether or not birds in the shipment showed evidence of Exotic Newcastle disease (VVND). This was to protect the poultry industry. United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) had requirements for specific permits for CITES listed birds. Since the passage of the Wild Bird Conservation Act (WBCA) in October 1992, the only birds imported into the U.S. have been birds owned as pets or birds not listed as prohibited by the act, such as some softbills, and a few birds under WBCA cooperative breeding programs. Importation into the U.S. has been drastically reduced. Also, smuggling at this time seems to be primarily of Asian song birds which are greatly desired by the large population of Asians now living in the US. Since tame, domestic raised parrot species are readily available at pet stores, from breeders and from rescues, there is little public interest in purchasing smuggled birds and thus little economic incentive for smugglers to risk arrest.

WBCA

The Wild Bird Conservation Act was intended to conserve birds in the wild and encourage captive breeding. At the present time, there remains a question





as to whether either of these goals is being met or can be met in the future. The USFWS officials envisioned that the WBCA would encourage foreign governments to conduct surveys of wild populations, to establish wildlife management programs, and perhaps to set up captive breeding programs for their native species. In addition, they anticipated that these processes would encourage conservation of native species. In terms of encouraging captive breeding in the U.S., it has not been clearly demonstrated exactly how the WBCA can, has, or will encourage captive breeding in the US. It is clear that officials at USFWS have the final word on all applications for cooperative breeding programs. To date, there have been very few cooperative breeding programs submitted to or approved by USFWS.

COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN

For the most part, exotic birds imported into the U.S. come from third-world countries. The countries which export birds earn significant income from the export of wildlife, along with timber or minerals. In fact, wildlife may be one of the major sources of income from exported goods. The people in these countries live at a level much different than that of the industrialized countries. In these countries there are few programs for the management of the health of the people, much less management programs for wildlife. The situation of large and continually expanding human populations in Asia, Indonesia, Africa, and Central and South America has a growing impact on wildlife. In some of these countries, programs are being established to limit or control population growth through family planning education and incentives for reducing the number of children in the family. It is difficult to

make these programs successful due to the people's religious beliefs, such as Muslim or Catholic. These countries are not progressive in providing education for women or information on birth control. Concern about the expanding population and its potential devastating effects on the lives of the people has not been addressed, much less the effects on wildlife.

DEVELOPING NATURAL RESOURCES

In addition to the problem of increasing human populations and overcrowding, the need for income in third-world countries adversely affects wildlife. The officials in many countries need operating funds and will often sell timber or minerals to produce income. When these sales of natural resources are made, the development of the resource is not necessarily accomplished in such a manner as to preserve wildlife. The results of over-harvesting timber and uncontrolled mineral development can leave a barren and devastated environment. Wildlife suffers from habitat degradation and so do humans. For example, in the Philippines where large stands of timber were harvested from hillsides, heavy rains caused massive mudslides which destroyed local villages. Land is developed or exploited for profit. To a lesser degree, it is cleared to make room for expanding human populations. In the process, little thought is given as to the resulting consequences for wildlife. With these insights into the problems faced by third world countries, it is hard to imagine that these countries of origin are going to initiate wildlife management plans or conduct population surveys in the near future. Unfortunately, when management programs are put in place, it doesn't necessarily mean that management is occurring. For example, in a national





refuge in Indonesia, there were inadequate numbers of wildlife officers patrolling the area and large scale timber removal has occurred in areas which were officially protected areas.

FERAL CATS

In addition to the habitat degradation and loss suffered by wildlife around the world due to the activities of man, a widespread and insidious threat has been introduced: the domestic cat *Felis catus*. While it is commonly understood that habitat loss is the main cause of reduction in the numbers of avian species worldwide, it is little understood that the domestic cat, free roaming pets, and feral cats, are destroying birds and animals at an alarming rate. (This destruction is both from depredation and from the spread of toxoplasmosis, even to marine animals off the West Coast of the US.) Whether in England, Europe, the United States or Australia, the daily depredations by domestic and feral cats are reducing wildlife populations to dangerously low levels, and placing some on the brink of extinction. Australian studies state: "Evidence from recent surveys indicates that being well fed does not stop domestic cats from hunting. The best way to stop them from hunting is to stop them from roaming."

This man-made catastrophe is receiving only slight attention from conservation organizations or humane organizations. The animal rights groups are actively working to promote and establish managed 'feral cat colonies'. This movement began in Europe in the late 1970s, and the crusade in the U.S. has been escalating in recent years. They believe that feral and subsidized, semi-wild cats have a value to people and the environment and deserve humane management and protection. However,

If you ask the average person about aviculture, he hears instead the word "agriculture"

wildlife biologists in California state that "colonies of feral cats adversely affect local populations of mammals, migratory and non-migratory birds, reptiles, and amphibians of wildlife habitats in or near urban areas.

Many cat colonies are in parks, open spaces, riparian areas, coastal wetlands, and nesting areas of endangered birds. Well-fed cats kill, injure, or harass vulnerable local wildlife. Cat density in colonies exceeds that of natural predators, and regular feeding of cats attracts skunks, raccoons, etc., creating disease risks to wild animals and a public nuisance." Even the Humane Society of the United States believes that feral cats should not be set up in managed colonies, but rather removed from the environment. "Knowingly subjecting wildlife to excessively heavy predation and to cat-borne wildlife diseases should become part of the discussion of humaneness. Damage to wildlife by cats is intensified when people feed stray or feral individuals, concentrating them in areas where intensive predation and disease spread occurs." When will the general public recognize that feral cats and free-ranging domestic cats are a serious





threat to wildlife around the world? Saving avian species involves more than banning importation of exotic birds and setting up management plans in countries of origin, it also involves control of the domestic cat.

CONSERVATION ACTIVISTS

Both in the U.S. and other countries there are organizations which are working to conserve wildlife. Legitimate and respected organizations, such as the Nature Conservancy, the International Union of Conservation of Nature, and the World Wildlife Fund, sponsor conservation projects in the field and follow known scientific protocols for research projects. Most of the people involved in this work have scientific degrees and have demonstrated competency. Many members of these authentic conservation groups believe that it is wrong to import birds for any reason; that it is better if all wild animals remain in their environment and that the environment is protected. This is a wonderful idea,; however, it is based on the premise that native peoples will not utilize all of their wetlands and jungles and will preserve their wildlife. However, as long as the human population continues to expand at an uncontrolled rate, one can foresee that these expanding populations will turn jungles into farms and timber into cleared hillsides, with the resulting disappearance of most wildlife.

PSEUDO-CONSERVATION ACTIVISTS

Many organizations have taken up the conservation banner, and new organizations or splinter organizations have been created to work in this area. Although some organizations have people with college credentials, they are usually not advanced degrees in the area of the biological sciences. (It can be difficult for the average person

to differentiate between respected conservation organizations and the others when making donations.) These conservation wanna-bes skim the surface of conservation issues and come up with shallow answers to the complex problems existing in third world countries. And some of these organizations generate income by repeatedly petitioning USFWS to put species on the ESA and then sue the USFWS if the service does not respond in a timely manner. These court cases generate income for entities such as the Center for Biological Diversity, where the members of the Board of Directors are primarily lawyers. Other such entities are In Defense of Animals, Defenders of Wildlife, Born Free, and the list goes on and on.

BANNING IMPORTATION

One of the shallow answers is that 'if we ban the importation of exotic birds (focusing mainly on parrots), the species will be conserved in the wild.' These people were very active in promoting the passage of the WBCA. Now that it has become law, they continue to be active in putting forward petitions to the USFWS to ban importation from specific countries. For example, the Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA) has submitted petitions to ban all imports from Indonesia. (The EIA is a private organization, not a government agency.)

The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) brought suit against the USFWS under the WBCA to cause specific species listed on CITES III in one country to automatically be placed on CITES III in all countries. The HSUS won that lawsuit. Attempts by animal rights groups in Africa, Australia and Europe are being made to impose further restrictions on the possession, sale and





transport of exotic species. It is apparent that one can expect these efforts to be continued, not stopped. In many towns and cities in the U.S. extremely restrictive laws are being proposed. For example, laws against owning any exotics, laws allowing only two pets, laws prohibiting breeding of animals, and laws requiring excessive fees (\$100. per bird per year proposed in Florida), along with inspection by local animal control officers, including permission to confiscate animals they believe are not being humanely handled. Consider that most animal control officers or humane society officials are not knowledgeable about the appropriate care for birds or other species, except for dogs and cats. Often these local laws are the result of complaints received by individuals who believe no one should own an exotic animal or bird. Why is this occurring?

THE IMAGE OF AVICULTURE

If you ask the average person about aviculture, he hears instead the word "agriculture". Although there are a lot of people who own birds as pets and quite a few people breeding birds, the general public knows very little about exotic birds and aviculture. Actually, what they know is slanted toward the direction of the illegal. The nationwide broadcast of the Nova film, *The Great Wildlife Heist*, or the more recent video, *Parrots Confidential*, and similar films, will probably exacerbate our problems. People hear the following: birds are smuggled into the U.S. from Mexico; exotic birds are expensive; people make a lot of money on birds; people shouldn't own exotics, they belong in zoos.

People have little concept of what it means to raise baby psittacines from hatching to weaning. Aviculturists have not done very much to educate

the general public because they are generally too busy just raising the birds to get involved. However, this vacuum has been filled by the negative messages and powerful 'wild birds should fly free' images put forward by the animal rights groups. Aviculturists have not defined themselves to the public; people with a special agenda have established a negative image which is being promulgated on television, via the internet and in print.

THE ANIMAL RIGHTS AGENDA: NO MORE BIRDS!

It is time to face facts. The animal rights groups' final solution is **NO CONTACT BETWEEN MAN AND ANIMALS**. Research into the various animal rights groups by the Capital Research Center in Washington, DC, has provided detailed information regarding the goals, the means, the income, the membership numbers, etc. for the most high highest profile animal rights groups.

It is important to note that "animal rights" does not mean the same as "animal welfare"! Animal welfare groups are interested in assuring that all birds and animals are treated in a humane manner. Animal rights groups want no interaction between humans and animals; no zoo animals, no research animals and no pets, not even management programs for wildlife and no animal agriculture either. Some want to prohibit the raising of farm animals. It is hard for those who love animals and want to promote their best interest to understand that the animal rights membership say they want the same thing. Unfortunately, what the membership wants is not the same as the animal rights leadership's goals.

It is important for everyone who has anything to do with animals or their care to study and understand what





these groups represent. Realize that the most visible and vocal of the groups have been responsible for providing slanted information, via films and written reports from their “think tanks,” to the general public and to the legislators and governmental agencies such as the USFWS. Their methods with films involve the use of photographic shots that are real, however, the voice-over narrative presents ideas or beliefs which have little or nothing to do with what is actually occurring in the film. These are examples of misinformation and disinformation, provided by sources which claim to have the interest of the birds at heart, but are actually expressions of their hidden agenda.

COMBATING DISINFORMATION

It is most probably useless to engage these people in a discussion about the information they present. They have no interest in the truth. Their only interest is to accomplish their goal of NO BIRDS IN CAGES/NO PET BIRDS. We might be able to convince some of the ordinary membership to at least look at some other information and facts; however, with regard to the leadership, there is no reasoning with them. It is likely that the greatest success in combating these groups is to improve the practice of aviculture and thereby professionalize it by the following: keep records, identify individual birds, quarantine new birds, follow the latest concepts in the care and keeping of exotic bird, both babies and adults, join together in organizations which advance the practice of aviculture, support scientifically-directed conservation projects, and educate legislators and councils about aviculture and exotic birds. Most importantly, closely monitor local and state proposed regulations and laws. It is best to take action before

laws are put in place, not afterwards. Take the time to attend city council and county commission meetings. Get to know your local officials and inform them of your interests and concerns. Personal contact is critical.

PROFESSIONALISM IN AVICULTURE
Why is it important that aviculturists become more professional? At this

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point in time, everyone feels that he has a stake in the wildlife of the world. The general public perceives wildlife as ‘belonging to the people’, or ‘belonging to future generations’ and not just belonging in your aviary. The average person believes that the local zoo has more ability to breed exotic birds than you do. They are unaware that





serious aviculturists routinely attend conferences, seminars and symposiums in order to keep up with the new information on exotic bird husbandry. Many aviculturists become specialists in the study of one or two species. In the process of learning new and better ways to care for birds, it seems that aviculturists also need to show the world that they have achieved a significant level of competence.

KEYS TO PROFESSIONALISM

Behaving in an ethical manner, employing record keeping, marking individual birds, using safety systems, providing proper nutrition, providing proper housing, quarantining new arrivals, attending conferences, belonging to professional organizations, supporting the industry and supporting conservation: all these comprise the attributes of an aviculturist behaving in a professional manner.

THE LACK OF PROFESSIONALISM

Recently, professionalism, or rather the lack of it, has become a problem for aviculture. Because much of the information about exotic birds has focused on the great amounts of money involved, some people have decided to get into bird breeding. Unfortunately, they have not reviewed bird farm balance sheets. So often the focus is on making dollars, not raising healthy and happy birds. The results are observable in bird marts and fairs: the selling of unweaned babies to inexperienced buyers; the crowding of small birds into cages; the offer for sale of sickly and stunted birds; and the failure to keep records. These four failures of ethics provide the reasons which animal rights persons use in their fight against ownership of pet birds. It is up to aviculturists who care about birds to do something about these four

problems. If aviculture fails to address these problems, other organizations will address them with state and local regulations to "legislate appropriate care for exotic birds." The USDA has already been sued and agreed to regulate bird breeding facilities. This will occur in the next few years.

AVICULTURE AND CONSERVATION

Beyond meeting standards of good husbandry and recordkeeping, aviculturists in the private sector today are expected to actively promote conservation, or they are deemed to be only interested in birds as 'commodities' or 'only a hobby'. The words 'commercial' or 'commodity' are used by members of conservation organizations, by animal rights groups, and by representatives of governments. When these words are used, it is in a derogatory manner, i.e., 'you are treating birds as commodities'

*Will aviculturists
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opposite sex?*





or 'you sell your birds, well then, you are commercial'. The expectation seems to be that aviculturists should be raising birds, but never sell them. A realistic response to these comments is: aviaries are not being supported by government grants, or by foundation grants, or by zoo entrance fees. Aviculturists in the private sector must sell some birds to be able to provide food, housing and veterinary care for the collection. It is only when aviculturists are actively promoting conservation, either by supporting a particular project or by routinely donating to a particular organization, that aviculturists are believed to be concerned about birds in the wild. They are perceived as being selfish, greedy users or consumers of exotic birds, not as propagators and preservers of species.

AVICULTURE SUPPORTING CONSERVATION

Most aviculturists who have a deep love for birds are also concerned about birds in the wild. Most also contribute to conservation organizations and some have actively participated in fundraising for special conservation projects. Others participate in special breeding programs for unusual or rare species, keep good records, and exchange breeding stock. These activities are important for future conservation of species which may be decimated in the wild. Some of these species may continue to exist only in our collections.

This does leave aviculturists with a tremendous responsibility. At present, the conservation and zoo communities are watching to see how private sector aviculturists handle this responsibility. Will we manage to hybridize and lose species? Will aviculturists inadvertently mix subspecies when pairing? Will aviculturists lose birds through

inadequate quarantine practices with new arrivals? Will aviculturists lose birds because they are not provided with adequate nutrition or housing? Will aviculturists selfishly hold on to single rare birds instead of placing them with other breeders holding a single bird of the opposite sex? All of these questions remain to be answered by what we choose to do with our birds.

AVICULTURE TOMORROW

Aviculture, the care, keeping and breeding of birds in captivity, is practiced by many aviculturists in the private sector. Aviculture is also practiced by bird curators in the zoo community and by wildlife biologists with their captive breeding projects in countries of origin. These three avicultural communities share a great responsibility for the future of many species. The following challenges must be met: the responsibility for preserving viable gene pools of many species, (including the ability to import or transfer livestock as needed to maintain the gene pools), the problem of developing successful wildlife management programs, the problems posed by the shallow solutions supported by animal rights groups, the problems facing the conservation community, the regulations proposed by governments, the need for a positive image for aviculture in the private sector, the need for professionalism and certification of standards in the private sector, the need for a means to move intact collections of species to future generations, and the need for all three communities to support conservation projects. If there is to be a tomorrow for aviculture, these three communities must work together today to successfully meet these challenges.





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Finch Society of San Diego County

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John Del Rio, Del Rio Aviaries,
Shingletown, CA

Richard Dickinson, Sun City, AZ

Bob Ervin, Alta Loma, CA

Lauri Grigg, Houston, TX

Gene Hall, San Diego, CA

Sherilyn Hanna, Exotic Endeavors, Moorpark,
CA

Richard Heebner, Worcester, PA

Sally Huntington, San Diego, CA

Tiffany Latino, Roseville, CA

Linda & Bill Nichelmann, Citrus Heights, CA

Wade Plouvier, Jacksonville, NC

Arnold & Debbie Schouten, Port Angeles, WA

Carol Stanley, Vacaville, CA

2016 EVENTS

April 27-30, 2016 AVICULTURAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA CONFERENCE, Port
Angles, WA. www.asabirds.org/conference/

August 3-6, 2016 AMERICAN FEDERATION OF AVICULTURE convention -
Hartford Connecticut - www.afabirds.org

October 2, 2016 - AVICULTURAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA Annual Auction at
Frank Miser's - www.asabirds.org





KING EIDER *SOMATERIA SPECTABILIS* PHOTO JOHN DEL RIO

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Conference Schedule

- **Wednesday**
Afternoon, Check-in & Open Bird
Photography Slide Show
Evening – Cocktail Ice-breaker party
- **Thursday**
Full day of Aviculture Talks
- **Friday**
Special Tour and BBQ
- **Saturday**
Full day of Aviculture Talks,
Evening – Banquet and Keynote
Presentation



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www.asabirds.org/conference/

S P E A K E R S

KEYNOTE

Mike Lubbock - Sylvan Heights Bird Park

Maynard Axelson

Migration Dedication

Clayton Botkin

Avian Influenza

Simon Degenhard

Australian Aviary Life

Steve Duncan

Parrot Wars

Brad Hazelton

Flamingos

Leslie Howell

Toucans

Jerry Jennings

Toucans

Liz Koutsos - Mazuri

Nutrition

Keith Lovett

Waterfowl

Chris Maynard

Feathers Form and

Function : what feathers

are, how birds use them,

and the meaning they

have for us.

James Pfarr

Pheasants

Dave Rimlinger

Cocks of the Rock

Arnold Schouten

Sea ducks

Dr. Sandra Smith

Diseases and Parasites in

Waterfowl

Frank Todd

Waterfowl

The ASA Conference raffle and auction are highlights of the conference. If you would like to donate items, please contact Dick Dickenson, raffle coordinator, at:

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