ASA
Avicultural e-Bulletin

ASA
A JOURNAL FOR BIRD BREEDING, CONSERVATION, RESTORATION AND EDUCATION
April, May, June 2025

RAINBOW LORIES *John Griffith*

NEXT ISSUE

BALI MYNAHS ***Lou Megens***

ASA BULLETIN

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: Swa*inson's blue mountain lory* (Trichoglossus haematodus) Photo: John Griffith Inside cover: Bali mynah (Leucopsar rothschildi) Photo: Lou Megens © 2012-2025 Avicultural Society of America. All rights reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced without express written permission by ASA. The Avicultural Society of America e-Bulletin is published quarterly online on our website, asabirds.tv

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President's Message Quarter 2, 2025 I recently had the opportunity to travel to Australia and meet with fellow aviculturists who are passionate about birds. It was inspiring to see the enthusiasm and dedication of those I connected with, especially regarding their vibrant bird community and their avicultural organization's efforts. One highlight of my trip was speaking at the annual bird expo in Shepparton, which is an example of the vitality of aviculture down under. Despite Australia's much smaller population compared to California, let alone the entire US, the event was bustling with eager attendees from across the country and a wide array of vendors offering high-quality birds in very professional displays. The atmosphere was energetic and welcoming, underscoring the global dedication to aviculture and the importance of collaboration and knowledge sharing. During my trip to Australia, I had the privilege of visiting parts of the country I had never been to. Part of the goal was to photograph some of its extraordinary and diverse bird life in their natural habitats, a truly inspiring experience. There is always a special joy in observing birds in the wild that we may know through aviculture. Seeing these familiar birds in their natural environment not only deepens our appreciation for their beauty but also enhances our understanding of their behaviors and habitats. Such experiences reinforce the importance of our ongoing efforts in conservation, education, and responsible aviculture. I encourage all members to continue exploring, learning, and sharing our passion for birds, both in captivity and in the wild. Experiences like this reinforce the significance of our Society's mission in bringing together aviculturists, advancing our collective knowledge, and fostering the appreciation of birds both captive and wild. Inspired by this, I look forward to sharing ideas and continuing to promote the avicultural community in the US and abroad.

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RAINBOW LORIES

John Griffith

Rainbow lory (Trichoglossus moluccanus moluccanus)

RAINBOW LORIKEETS *(Trichoglossus haematodus)* Colourful, Adaptable, Successful

In 2019 the Rainbow Lorikeets in Australia were split into three subspecies.

There are two recognised sub species of Rainbow Lorikeets. The most common Rainbow Lorikeet T.m. moluccanus (Gmelin, JF, 1788) is found along the east coast of Australia. It ranges from about Cooktown at the southern part of Cape York Peninsula down to Victoria and then west to Adelaide. Rainbow Lorikeets were abundant around Sydney until the late19th century, but became rare in Sydney between then and the 1960's. It is now highly abundant again across Sydney and other parts of its southern range where it was once considered rare.

Rainbow lorikeets were accidentally released into the southwest of Western Australia near the University of Western Australia in the 1960s. They have established themselves around Perth and have since been classified as a pest. They have a major impact there by competing with indigenous bird species. They dominate food sources because of their aggressive nature and compete for increasingly scarce nesting hollows. Bird species such as the Purple-crowned Lorikeet, the Carnaby's Black Cockatoo, and the Australian Ringneck Parrot (Twenty Eight) are adversely affected or displaced.

Rainbow Lorikeets have also been introduced into the wild in Tasmania, Hong Kong and New Zealand. A feral population was established in New Zealand after a resident of the North Shore, Auckland, illegally released significant numbers of captive-reared birds in the area during the 1990s. They started breeding in the wild. By 1999, a self-sustaining feral population of 150–200 birds had been established in the region, proving that they could survive and adapt to the New Zealand environment.

T. m.septentrionalis, (Robinson, 1900) is found on Cape York Peninsula. It is smaller in size to T.m. moluccanus (Gmelin, JF, 1788).

The other member of the family Trichogloussus found in Australia is the **Red-collard Lorikeet (T. rubritorquis).** It ranges from the Gulf of Carpentaria in Queensland across northern Australia to the Kimberley in Western Australia.

Habitat. The Rainbow Lorikeet is found in a wide range of treed habitats including

Swainson's Blue Mountain lory (Trichoglossus h. moluccanus) Photo: Wayne Suffield

rainforest and woodlands, as well as in well-treed urban areas. There is no doubt that Rainbow Lorikeets have benefited from flowering native trees planted in residential areas in cities and towns along the eastern seaboard.

Feeding and diet. Rainbow Lorikeets have a brush tongue that enables them to collect nectar and pollen as they forage on the flowers of shrubs or trees. They also eat fruits, seeds and some insects. They are nomadic in response to seasonal flowering or fruiting of plants. The Rainbow Lorikeet appears to have benefited from artificial feeding stations and have acclimatised well to urbanisation. They are commonly encountered in well planted suburbs and inner city gardens.

- **Breeding behaviours** The eggs of the Rainbow Lorikeet are laid on chewed, decayed wood, usually in a hollow limb of a eucalypt tree. Both sexes prepare the nest cavity and feed the young, but only the female incubates the eggs.
-

Swainson's Blue Mountain lory (Trichoglossus h. moluccanus) nest box entrance log Photo: John Griffith

- Breeding Season Rainbow Lorikeets can breed at any time of the year when conditions are favourable. In southern parts of Australia breeding occurs mainly from June to January.
- Clutch size: 2 eggs are laid. • Incubation: 23 days.
- Time in nest: 45 days.

Swainson's Blue Mountain lory (Trichoglossus h. moluccanus) tongue Photo: John Griffith

Reasons for the Rainbow Lorikeets Revival Clearing of habitat for either agriculture or housing developments certainly puts pressure on our native species. The species that learn to adapt are the survivors.

Swainson's Blue Mountain lory (Trichoglossus h. moluccanus) in bush
Photo: John Griffith

Rainbow Lorikeets have proved that they can adapt to their changing environment and food sources. There is no doubt that human intervention has helped greatly with their recovery. Be it by planting native flowering gardens, supplying food at bird feeders or erecting nest boxes. Rainbow Lorikeets by their aggressive nature have become a dominate, successful survivor.
References; The Australian Museum, BirdLife Australia, Wikipedia.

About the author Who Am I? My name is John Griffith and I have been interested in birds (particularly Parrots and Finches) all of my life. I started keeping birds as a lad in the late 1960's. During the late 1980's I realized that Aviculture was losing sub-species of our Australian Parrots so in 1990 I started to specialize in keeping and breeding the sub-species of parrots unique to Far North Queensland where I live. I am a carpenter by trade and worked for most of my life on remote communities throughout Cape York Peninsula, the Torres Strait Islands and Western Queensland. In 2012 I met Fulbright Scholar, Christina Zdenek who was doing her honors degree at the time on Palm Cockatoos at Iron Range. That started a working relationship (as a volunteer) with her and other PHD students from the Australian National University that were also studding Palm Cockatoos on Cape York Peninsula. For the last four years I have worked as a volunteer with the RARES unit (under the guidance of Dr Steve Murphy) at the University of Queensland helping with rot recovery and research on Australia's rarest raptor, the Red Goshawk. These days I run a small tour business that specializes in Cape York Peninsula and across the Top End of Australia. I should add that for the last 25 years I have been interested in what birds (in particular parrots) feed on in the wild and how this can relate back to how we care for our captive birds.

First Breeding award designed and laser printed on live edge oak by Sean Fremon from www.logo.me Thanks, Sean!

First captive breeding of Black-headed Tanager *(Tangara cyanoptera)*

Troy (T.J.) Pluid Florida Avian ConservancyFirst captive breeding

As most of us know, aviculture is rampant with emotional highs and lows. Having spent most of my upbringing and all of my adult life involved in working with birds, this certainly isn't news to me. I have had a huge love for all types of birds since about the time I was able to speak and observe, but historically have had a larger focus on the captive husbandry of Galliformes and Anseriformes. Specializing in those families seemed to have brought lots of heartache; most of my life I watched species numbers dwindle and eventually disappear from human care. The only hope seemed to be to pour resources into safeguarding the species that still had a chance at sustainability. Moving from private sector "hobby" aviculture into a full-time bird keeper for an AZA zoo gave me a large shift in focus.

With the AZA work, I moved more into softbills and passerines. For a short period I had ventured into working with a large collection of Turacos in South Florida belonging to The Florida Avian Conservancy. This first taste of softbills was absolutely intoxicating! Once settled in at the zoo, I was having the adventure of a lifetime working with a large array of uncommon species. Some of these birds included South American Passerines, it wasn't long into my zoo career that I was happily breeding Saffron Finches (Sicalis flaveola), Silver-beaked Tanagers (Ramphocelus carbo) and Red-capped Cardinals (Paroaria gularis). The experience of both hand-rearing and parent-rearing the aforementioned species was all it would take to have me convincing the zoo to add more softbills, especially tanagers. In that period of time, I was also adding different tanager species to my home aviaries.

Fast forward to 2025, I've been back with The Florida Avian Conservancy for a while now and my personal birds joined me at the conservancy this time. It's no secret that I'm a fairly nosey person when it comes to population statistics and species holdings. With this quirk ever-present and me already incorporating tanagers into the collection, I jumped at the opportunity to acquire two pairs of Black-headed Tanagers (Tangara cyanoptera). I had two pairs delivered from the import quarantine in 2024, which quickly tied back into the introductory "Highs and Lows". Once settled in the aviaries one pair quickly went to nest, while the other suffered the loss of the male. The nesting season in 2024 was a huge learning curve for myself and the pair of tanagers. Now in the 2025 season I came armed with more resources, knowledge of Tangara habits, and a more seasoned pair. At the time, I

Black-headed Tanager (Stilpnia cyanoptera) Adult pair- parents of chick, wild caught

did not know that the species had not been bred in captivity yet, but as the season went on I researched more and more. Between the global collaboration and research of breeding records, I kept coming up empty with no evidence of any captive breeding having occurred.

Originally imported in 1921 to the Philadelphia Zoo, nine birds are recorded with no breeding noted. The birds were collected out of the wild and brought back by Jean Delacour, which he eventually wrote about in the Avicutural Magazine in 1923. Jean reports that the Black-headed Tanagers were found in abundance in Northern Venezuela, he also sent live specimens back to France during that time. Mr. Delacour goes on to describe them as "Lovely and much admired Tanagers" to which I couldn't agree more. According to these early reports, they did not last long in captivity then. Finally in 2022/2023 the species was once again imported from South America into the United States, this import of wild-caught Tanagers being the source of the founders in my breeding program.

Being stanced for a positive outlook still does not guarantee one, unfortunately. There were two failed clutches in the spring, but one clutch did make it to the point of fledging... so we had some progress! As the saying goes, third time's the charm. This particular female (coinciding with existing

literature) routinely laid a two egg clutch. Each egg within two days of the first. Full disclosure, I had no miraculous break-through in husbandry or anything of the sort to encourage this successful breeding. I stuck to advice hammered into me by several more seasoned aviculturists. I set the birds up appropriately, gave them a proper diet, multiple nest sites and I left them alone.

A quick rundown in their set-up:
Aviary size- 6ftx6ftx6ft Wire- 16 guage 1"x1/2" GAW
Aviary features- Small mulberry tree, rope perches, feeding shelf, roof over , bathing dish on ground, 6 nest sites
Inhabitants- 1.1 Black-headed Tanagers, 1.1 Sulawesi Ground Doves (removed before tanager fledged)

In more detail, the year round diet I provided the Tanagers included daily fresh fruit (apples, banana, grapes and berries) and zupreme fruitblend pellets. In the spring, when the males vocalization changed from a subtle "chip!" to a more excited trilling noise, I began to offer a small portion (10-15 worms) of live mealworms once daily to their diet along with the occasional chopped boiled egg. Mind you, these are outdoor walk-in flights with a mulberry tree inside so some fresh berries and insects were always available for the birds to forage. I offered multiple nest sites and options (open cup nests, baskets, and covered wicker nests) but the pair ultimately decided on a small plastic basket used to sell strawberries in. I provided the pair with dog fur, pine needles, spanish moss and coconut fiber for nesting materials. They mostly preferred coconut fiber with some fur and needles included.

when the males vocalization changed from a subtle "chip!" to a more excited trilling noise, I began to offer a small portion (10-15 worms) of live mealworms

Nest construction with a complete clutch

On May 16th, 2025 the first of two eggs was laid, which the female immediately took to incubating. The next day she finished the clutch with the second egg, the female in Black-headed tanagers does all of the nesting and incubation. When she was sitting, the husbandry remained the same, but I did minimize traffic around that aviary. On May 29th, the first egg hatched, as a result I significantly increased the live food offered. Instead of 10-15 mealworms once a day, I started giving them the same amount per feeding but increased to three times daily. The second egg hatched the next day.

That chick never thrived, and was deceased a few days after hatching. Once the first chick hatched, the female continues to sit on the nest most of the day, and feeds the chick. However, the male also begins to participate in the rearing once offspring are present.

Fast forward to June 11th, the chick has successfully fledged. The male has taken on a major role in keeping this chick fed while the female seems to be recuperating. The offspring is currently still housed with the parents, DNA sexing is pending as I write this. It is a vibrant independent little tanager now,

Stilpnia cyanoptera Chicks less than a week old

with an appearance nearly identical to a female just with muted colors. I'm holding my breath that this first breeding is just the beginning of many as the female is already on another clutch of two eggs. With any luck, this will lead to further collaborations to keep this species breeding between

When she was sitting, the husbandry remained the same, but I did minimize traffic around that aviary.

Stilpnia cyanoptera Captive bred chick after fledging

Stilpnia cyanoptera Captive bred chick after fledging

multiple facilities and one day reach a sustainable captive population.

Accomplishing a first captive breeding has never been a goal of mine in aviculture, I much prefer trying to boost numbers of uncommon or disappearing species. Hopefully we can encourage other aviculturists to focus on creating sustainability among our captive collections so that the species we all love continue. My takeaway from this season has been to keep giving attention to species that are often overlooked. As was said to me about the Black-headed Tanagers, "It's not that they were extremely difficult to produce, it's the fact that you cared about a species others were ignoring."

Editor's Note:
T.J. Pluid was elected to the ASA board last year. The amount of avicultural knowledge T.J. has acquired in his short number of years is readily shared with any aviculturist willing to listen. T.J. will be a speaker at the annual ASA education conference in Shreveport, LA and hosted by Pinola Aviary.

Is Bird Breeding Profitable?

Big Prices = Big Profits... Right?

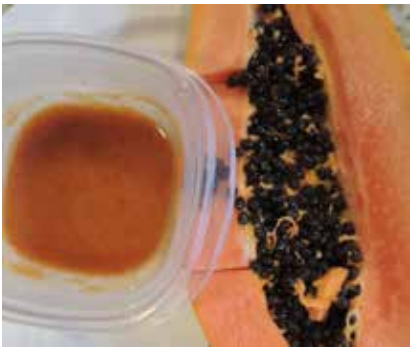
I often encounter the misconception that bird breeders are getting rich or making a living "off the backs" of their birds. I always chuckle to myself a bit thinking of that as I look over the previous years' tax filings. Can you make a lil profit off of it? Sure. Can you get rich and have a bunch of nice cars and a mansion? Nah, not at all. Providing proper vet care, food, enclosures, enrichment, and other needs for the birds costs A LOT. Tools such as incubators and brooders and all the stuff needed to build flights cost money. Without other more secure sources of income, I would not be able to do this at all, at least not to my standards. And either way, I could work less hours and make more money at a minimum wage job. I wouldn't be having half the fun though!

Is Breeding Profitable Brock Stone

Papaya Sauce for Slow Crop Treatment

Tony Silva

Papaya Sauce for slow crop / crop statis in chicks. During the breeding season. The chicks that are hand face issues like crop stasis also known as slow crop. Which can be due to various reasons ranging from improper formula temperature to wrong formula mixing ratio, to wrong brooder temperature, it can also be due to bacterial or fungal infection, impaction due the swallowing nesting material or and due to over feeding. Apple cider vinegar is effective in treating the issue, but papaya sauce if far more effective. It is prepared by blending peeled ripe papaya, papaya seeds (main ingredient) and some water in the blender. The end product should be of creamy consistency. It has to be strained and stored in the fridge. Once it is placed in the fridge it solidifies. But once out it returns to the creamy consistency. Remember it has to be fed warm to the chicks. If the slow crop is not due to bacteria or fungal infection, the chick will digest the papaya cream quickly and one can start mixing formula gradually to the papaya sauce till the crop starts to functioning normally.



The papain in the papaya seeds is what makes it work. Papain is an enzyme found in the white fluid (latex) that occurs in raw papaya fruit. It is a protease, meaning it breaks down proteins. Papain contains substances that might help fight infection and heal wounds.

Avicultural Society of America

20th Annual Education Conference

Shreveport, LA

Hosting facility: World renowned

Pinola Aviary

MORE INFORMATION COMING SOON at asabirds.tv

Avicultural Society of America 20th Annual Education Conference October 29 - November 1, 2025 Shreveport, LA
More information coming soon at asabirds.tv

Remembering Susie Kasielke

Susie Kasielke loved a good play on words, eggspecially if the word was egg, so let's start there...

Susie was eggsceptional. An eggsceptional mentor to so many. An eggsceptional friend to many more. An eggceptional teacher to too many to count. Susie was also eggsceptionally private and didn't widely share her cancer diagnosis or the struggle that became her last year. We lost Susie on Monday. She was surrounded by close friends in her final weeks and said often how blessed she was by the many friends who supported her in her worst hour. Susie influenced conservation and aviculture enormously. As a zookeeper at the Los Angeles Zoo she found a passion for neo-natal care, avian oology, and California condors. These things shaped Susie and Susie shaped these things. Susie's "egg class" defined the standard of care for eggs in AZA and beyond. She taught more classes than anyone can keep track of, to more students than we can count, in many countries on at least four continents. Many times, she told us that this class was her legacy, and we will do our best to continue teaching it to her standard. But her legacy is so much more. It's every California condor, it's every student she

Susie retired from the LA Zoo in 2016 and continued to consult with zoos around the world and teach her incubation workshops.

taught, it's every egg of every species for which she coached care, whether it was weight loss math or an assisted hatch that she monitored from across the world using the pixelly pictures and bad videos we sent her. It's all of you who share her love of eggs, aviculture, learning, conservation, conversation, good meals after long days, walking on the beach to watch the birds, careers and workplaces that are meaningful, impactful, and bring you joy - but mostly, friends who are always there for you and always having time for an egg in need. After earning a bachelor of science degree in avian sciences at the University of California Davis, Susie began her career in scientific avian management at the Los Angeles Zoo in 1977. Over the next 20 years, she progressed to the position of curator. In 1998 she accepted the position of Zoological Manager at the soon to open Disney's Animal Kingdom in Florida. She returned to the Los Angeles Zoo in 2001 as the Curator of Birds until 2016. Through her involvement in the California Condor Recovery Program, she worked with the staff at the Los Angeles Zoo and partner facilities to develop and refine propagation, incubation, and rearing methods for California condors and other imperiled species. Her experiences have spanned over 25 years as a

global workshop instructor on avian incubation protocols as well as serving as a guest lecturer at institutions such as UCLA, UC Davis, and Durrell. In 2011, she received the Avian Scientific Advisory Group Plume Award for Exceptional Individual Achievement in Avian Husbandry for her commitment to staff training through her egg incubation workshops. Susie retired from the LA Zoo

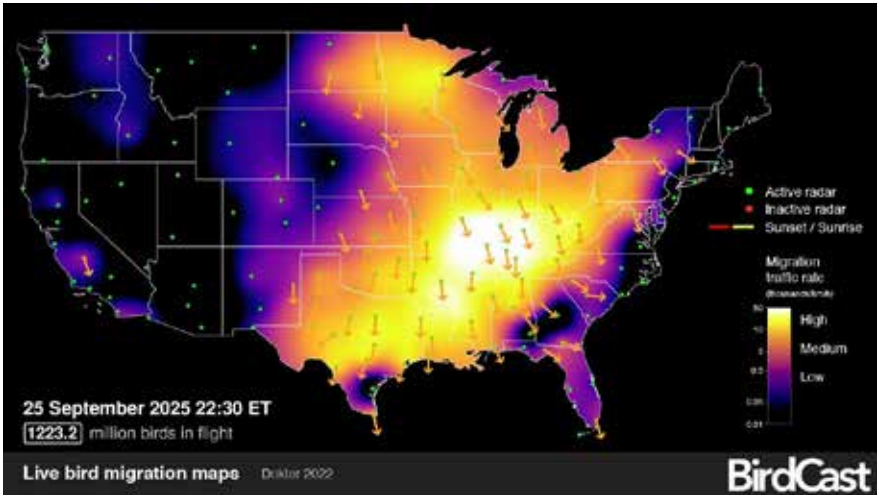
in 2016 and continued to consult with zoos around the world and teach her incubation workshops. In her zeal for teaching and nurturing young zookeepers, she became an instructor at the Teaching Zoo at Moorpark College.

Sheri Humphrey, Frank Todd, Susie Kasielke, Lynn Hall and Jerry Jennings Photo: Carol Stanley

Susie and Avicultural Society of America

Susie spoke many times at ASA conferences and did an eggceptional multi-day incubation workshop in San Diego at Sea World. As an Avicultural Society of America board member, Susie helped with making badges, planning conferences and much more. She will be sorely missed.

INTERNATIONAL CRANE FOUNDATION



This epic night did not stop at a billion: no, it grew beyond that, and beyond 1.1 billion, and even beyond 1.2 billion, becoming the biggest night of migration yet recorded by BirdCast!

The 11th International Parrot Convention is being held from the 14th to the 17th of September 2026 in Puerto de la Cruz, Tenerife!!

The convention is for parrot enthusiasts, experts, breeders, veterinarians, conservationists, and bird lovers!!

Enjoy daily access to Loro Parque, social events, excursions, local culture, and our much-anticipated gala dinner!!

For more information contact Buddy Waskey at (804) 638-8278 or waskeybuddy@gmail.com

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Express-News

Hybrid bird found near San Antonio is likely a new species, researchers say

"Grujay" hybrid

ACTP Welcomes Ruling by India's Supreme Court The Supreme Court of India has unequivocally confirmed this week: allegations against Vantara, the Zoological Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre, are wholly baseless. A Special Investigation Team (SIT), comprising independent experts, conducted a comprehensive inquiry and found no violation of law. On the contrary, it confirmed that husbandry and veterinary standards at Vantara exceed national and international benchmarks. Adding to this recognition, Vantara has also been awarded the Global Humane Certified Seal of Approval by the Global Humane Society. For ACTP – the Association for the Conservation of Threatened Parrots – this ruling is highly significant. For years we have worked hand-in-hand

with Vantara to protect and breed endangered species, including the legendary Spix's macaws, and to return them to their natural habitats. Sadly, in recent months, certain media outlets have circulated unfounded accusations, often without proper research and based on speculation. The Supreme Court's ruling is thus both a complete vindication of Vantara and a categorical rejection of sensationalist attacks. Most importantly, the Court declared: Unjustified allegations built on media reports or speculative articles can no longer trigger judicial investigations. Such claims are an abuse of process and drain the resources of authorities and courts. This landmark statement is a warning: hearsay and conjecture are no substitute for facts. We at ACTP reaffirm: • Conservation depends on partnerships, cooperation, and trust. • Baseless allegations only endanger this mission. This ruling strengthens our resolve to continue: for the animals, for biodiversity, and for a future where facts and welfare prevail over sensationalism. We extend heartfelt thanks to everyone who stood by us. Together, we move forward. The ACTP Tea

Visit Eclectus Ark's Etsy page and see all the bird treats and food they offer. Your bird will thank you!

ACTP would like to add some facts to the Spix's macaw release project situation that has been blown out of proportion by authorities in Brazil, to all our followers we would like to answer the propaganda put out on social media and give the actual facts of the situation.

Firstly; for those who don't know, the Spix's macaw went extinct in the wild in the year 2000, with a few specimens surviving the species in captivity. A massive project was launched to breed these birds and save the species, finally in 2020, ACTP sent birds to a purpose-built breeding and release center in the Spix's habitat in Brazil, and in 2022 finally the first release happened and the Spix's started its wild journey again. The project has been marred with political turmoil since the release. In spite of this the 2022 release has been hugely successful, beyond our wildest dreams with regular breeding events in the wild, even though we were never allowed to release birds again due to Brazilian politics. Worse still was the discovery this year of a wild Spix's chick with a virus:

It is true that a Spix's macaw chick leaving the wild nest showed feather coloration changes that were not normal, and had trouble flying, it had lost some flight feathers and under the circumstances was caught and due to a planned release of more Spix's macaws we were preparing to do medical tests, so we performed disease testing on the wild chick as well as the 20 birds in the release enclosure.

To our surprise the wild chick came back positive for circo virus, all other birds in the release aviary were negative for circo-virus (causative agent of Beak and Feather disease PBFD). Due to the results it was decided to retest in case of a false positive as can occur with PBFD. We retested the chick as well as all the birds in the release aviary, the results came back positive for the wild chick and then 6 positives in the release aviary. The release aviary is immersed in habitat and the birds there are in regular contact with the wild Spix's macaws.

The Brazilian authorities took the opportunity the virus test gave them to try push blame, we chose to wait for all the evidence and facts to respond.

The authorities rightfully immediately cancelled the planned release of new birds into the wild until further notice. We immediately quarantined all the positive birds from the release aviary in our quarantine aviaries on site, and added a list of extra biosecurity measures. The authorities demanded all birds in all aviaries be tested, of course we complied and even volunteered to do double sampling to send to 2 independent laboratories.

The results showed that all birds in the breeding center, as well as social magnet enclosures (retired birds keeping the voice of the Spix's in the area to help with site fidelity) and flocking enclosures were negative for the virus. But the release aviary had another 8 positive birds who were moved to the quarantine aviaries. However, one of the birds already in the quarantine aviary that was previously positive, had turned negative While the wild chick had grown back normal flight feathers and flies well, but was still positive at one of the labs. The next tests on the wild chick came back negative.

It is known that Neo tropical parrots generally don't react badly to the circo-virus compared to the old-world parrots in Australasia/Africa/Asia. This is also what all our tests have shown us. As previously positive birds are now becoming negative, showing the immune system of the birds is able to fight the virus. Not a single bird has died of the virus and other than the wild chick losing some feathers and now flying well again, the only other possible indicator seen is some aberrant white feathering scattered over the body of some individuals. The parents of the wild chick, who were the only contact the wild chick had while in the nest, show no symptoms whatsoever. Subsequently 9 of the 11 wild birds have had samples tested and all have come back negative for circo-virus, including all the wild birds with aberrant white feathering.

So, what we know, after sequencing the virus found in the wild chick, the sequence came back with its closest match to a sequence from a Hyacinth macaw in Brazil, effectively suggesting the virus comes from Brazil. With no sequence close to the strains found in Europe.

We also know that circo-virus has been in Brazil for more than 30 years, mostly in captive birds, however recent publications show the virus found in the wild too. Also, having spoken to vets in our closest city approximately 70km as the crow flies, vet clinics have received captive birds with the

virus, but in that city, there are also flocks of feral Indian Ring-neck Parakeets known to be highly susceptible to the virus.

Now, if we put the facts together, considering that:

1. All birds at the Curaçá conservation center had been tested several times, always with negative results, prior to this year's incident.
2. All 41 birds arriving from Germany in January, tested negative to all the diseases, as well.
3. There was no way that the wild chick could have been infected by the new arrivals at the end of January. This is because Circovirus infection takes at least 20-25 days to become apparent, but it takes much longer for plumage changes to occur. So, given that the 41 macaws landed in Brazil after multiple negative disease tests at the end of January and the chick's plumage abnormalities were already noticeable at the beginning of February, there would not have been enough time. Furthermore, the birds were isolated in a quarantine approved by the Brazilian government, in an area controlled by armed agents. There was no way for either the birds or the staff to leave the area. Finally, the distance of almost 100 km between the quarantine and the sick chick would have effectively prevented the spread of the disease in such a short time.
4. Several avian circoviruses, including the one affecting parrots, have been reported in wild birds in Brazil.
5. The first 6, then 14 positive birds, which were negative before being moved into the release aviary, then had contact with wild Spix's macaws.
6. The virus isolated from the wild chick has been sequenced and does not belong to any strain of Circovirus isolated in Europe to date, but is the same virus isolated from a hyacinth macaw in Brazil.
7. 9 of the 11 wild birds have recently been tested and all the results came back negative, a huge win for the species if ICMBio will acknowledge the facts.

Our biggest concern is how ICMBio the government agency is reacting to the virus:

1. Telling us to test every 15 days and after 2 positive results, the birds must be euthanased! This is ridiculous as 15 days does not give the birds time to mount an immune response, of which we have seen the birds mounting successfully on their own. The general scientific consensus is to test every 3 months.

2. Ordering us to catch all the wild Spix's macaws, effectively making them extinct in the wild again! Just as crazy, the virus is in the wild and likely transmitted to the Spix's from a wild source, making the Spix's extinct again will not change anything. The birds have been living free for 3 years now, the psychological implications for the birds to be put into small cages and exposed to battery testing would be detrimental to them and to the Spix's macaw species. Especially when non-invasive regular testing in the wild can be and has already been done, and all samples found negative to date. It also doesn't make sense removing only the Spix's, what about all the other parrot species that share the habitat, especially the Illiger macaws (maracana) that spend social and competitive time with the Spix's macaws on a daily basis. Removing the Spix's does not solve any possible issue, and certainly does not remove the virus from the wild.

Removing the Spix's macaw from the wild as an extinction event also seriously jeopardizes any future effort to reestablish the species in the wild again. All the unprecedented conservation gains for the species over the past 10 years would be lost, for no justifiable or scientifically supported reason. The goals related to doing this can only be politically motivated. Not to mention the destruction of locals trust and support in the project. Something that takes decades to build and days to destroy, especially in sociological settings like the Caatinga, future cooperation with the local community will only get harder and harder to gain after incidents like this. Understandably, Brazilian government agency officials have acted and proposed an action plan that ACTP considers unworkable, as well as nonsensical, and which, if implemented, would spell the end of the Spix's macaw species. However, the latest news is very encouraging: all samples taken from wild Spix's macaws have tested negative. This cements the fact that catching all the wild Spix's would be pointless, unethical, and irresponsible of anyone pushing that agenda and the blame of the "second extinction of the species in the wild" would be solely on the shoulders of those

individuals and would haunt the Brazilian Environmental agencies and their affiliates for decades to come. Killing the parrots that we have so carefully reintroduced would undoubtedly mean the definitive end of the reintroduction program and, most likely, the end of a species, namely the definitive disappearance of the Spix's macaw. We thank you all for reading this and getting a better understanding of the current situation. We at ACTP have and are continuing to fight as hard as we can for the Spix's macaw, against all the odds. The Spix's macaws deserve a chance to just live free and not suffer from the results of egos and political agendas...

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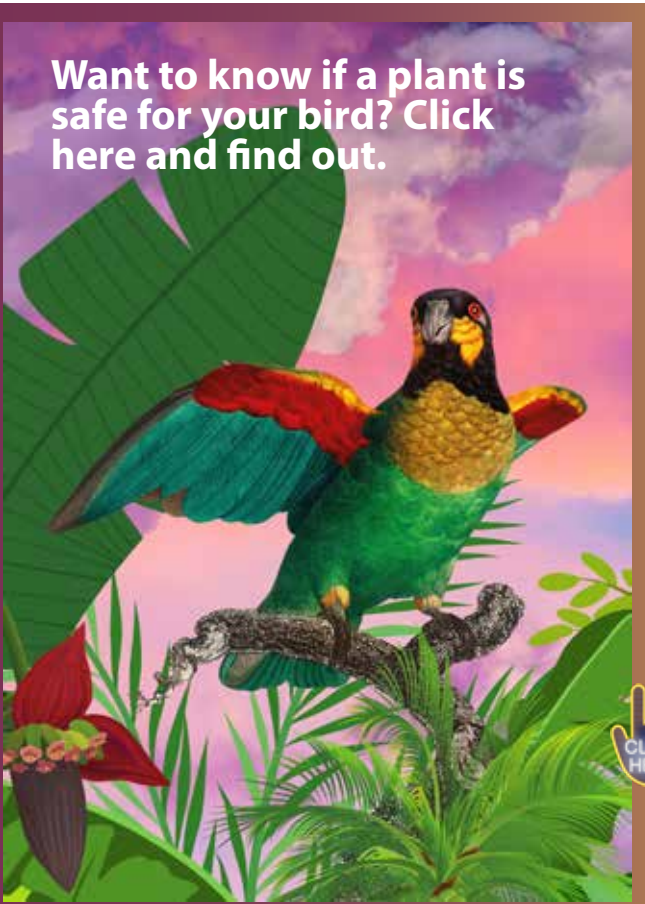

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Bordetella avium Significance in Adult Psittacines
Link Flanagan

Disclaimer I am not an avian veterinarian, just a hobbyist trying to help spread knowledge. Information presented has been compiled from various sources, as stated in the reference section. Information about B. avium infections in non-cockatiel psittacines is minimal.

"Case Study" – Hobbyist Observation The flock consists of six psittacines housed in an outdoor aviary with a solid roof and wire mesh to exclude predators and wild animals. The structure is elevated approximately three feet above the ground. Birds are divided by species into separate flights within the same aviary: two Aratinga jandaya (jenday conures), two Aratinga solstitialis (sun conures), and two Pyrrhura molinae (green-cheeked conures). The flock is maintained on a balanced diet and receives ample exercise. Crows (Corvus brachyrhynchos) and mourning doves (Zenaida macroura) are frequently observed in the surrounding area.

Mild clinical signs were first noted as sneezing and slight pharyngeal discharge. Diagnostic testing was performed on the male Aratinga jandaya, including choanal and cloacal cultures. Results indicated heavy growth of Staphylococcus aureus along with Bordetella avium. Treatment was initiated with enrofloxacin (Baytril® 100 mg/mL; 1 mL per 480 mL of drinking water) administered for 30 days. Nebulization therapy with gentamicin was attempted but could not be successfully applied due to limitations of the aviary setup. Birds could not be relocated indoors, as they posed a potential risk to other companion birds within the household.

During treatment, many of the symptoms decreased in severity; however, on day 29, the one-year-old female Aratinga jandaya showed a sharp decline. Upon physical examination, she was found to be emaciated and lethargic, with persistent weakness, closed eyes, and severe respiratory distress. Given her poor prognosis and suffering, the decision was made to humanely euthanize her.

During the same period, local wild crows (Corvus brachyrhynchos) were observed exhibiting respiratory signs, including sneezing, lethargy, and tail-bobbing. Given their frequent presence near the aviary and the known ability of Bordetella avium to persist

in wild bird populations, it is suspected that these crows may have served as the source of infection for the flock. Ultimately, the long-term solution identified was to place the remaining birds into individual indoor pet homes, where continued treatment and follow-up testing could be carried out. To reduce the risk of further spread, only homes without other avian species were considered appropriate placements.

Notes & Limitations:
This account is presented as a hobbyist "case study" rather than a formal clinical report. Observations are anecdotal, limited to a small flock, and influenced by environmental factors. No confirmatory testing was performed on the wild birds observed. Treatment protocols were adapted for practical aviary management and may not reflect ideal clinical practice.

Overview and Relevance to Parrots
Bordetella avium is a gram-negative, aerobic bacterium that causes bordetellosis, a highly contagious upper respiratory tract disease in birds. While it is highly pathogenic in cockatiel chicks, leading to a rapid onset of severe clinical signs and high mortality, it appears that adult psittacines often remain largely asymptomatic carriers. In such birds, minor signs may include occasional sneezing or mild nasal discharge, with little to no apparent systemic illness. However, these carriers can transmit B. avium to susceptible young chicks, making detection and management crucial (Harrison & Lightfoot, 2006, p. 959; Mason & Mason, n.d.).

Transmission and Carrier State
Aerosol transmission is uncommon, as healthy birds in adjacent cages rarely become infected. Carrier parents can transmit the bacterium to chicks shortly after hatching, with clinical signs developing within 3 days. While adult birds may show minimal signs, such as occasional sneezing, they can harbor and shed the pathogen, serving as a reservoir for outbreaks in chicks or more susceptible species. B. avium is primarily transmitted through direct contact with infected birds and contaminated food or water sources. (Harper & Skinner, 2008, p. 75; Mason & Mason, n.d.)

Continued on page 54

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Birds in Shoes Jim Sorensen

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Thank you, Jim Sorensen for allowing ASA to share your beautifully creative images!

Who's Your Daddy?

Stumped? See answer on page 49

Photo: Lou Megens

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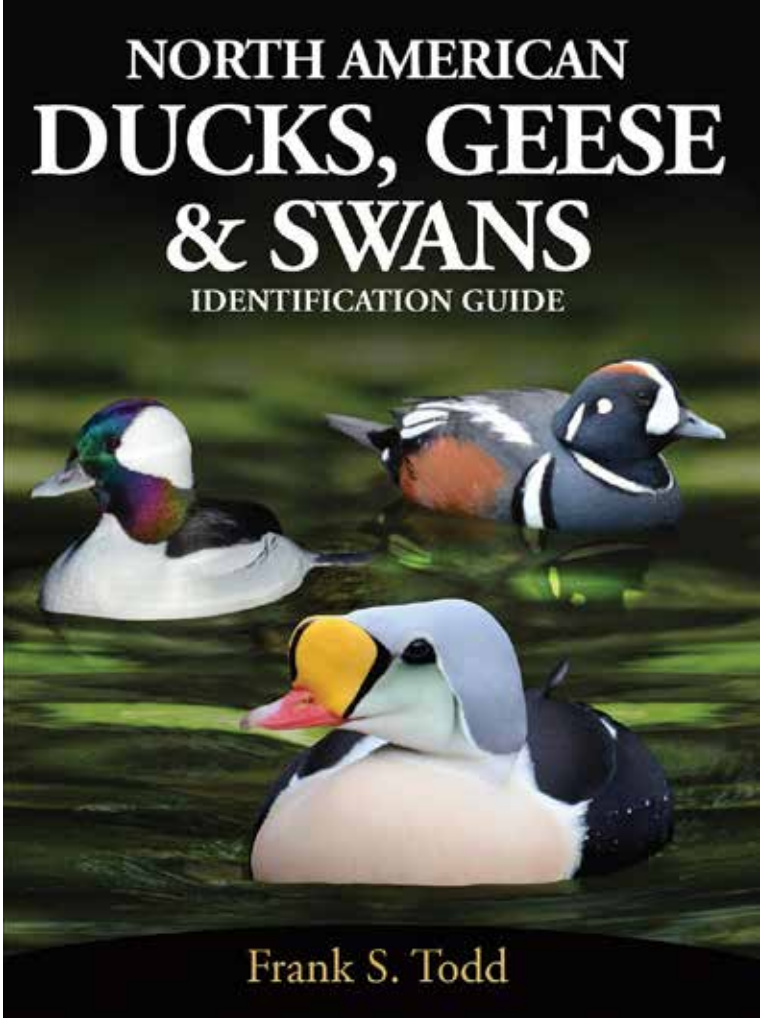

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Bali Myna (Leucopsar rothschildi) Photo: Bernard Gagnon https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/User:Bgag

Who's Your Daddy?

From page 48, Answer: Bali Myna (Leucopsar rothschildi)

The Bali myna (Leucopsar rothschildi), also known as Rothschild's mynah, Bali starling, or Bali mynah, locally known as jalak Bali, is a medium-sized (up to 25 cm (9.8 in) long), stocky myna, almost wholly white with a long, drooping crest, and black tips on the wings and tail. The bird has blue bare skin around the eyes, greyish legs and a brown and yellow bill. Both sexes are similar. It is **critically endangered** and in 2020, fewer than 50 adults were assumed to exist in the wild.

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Pathophysiology and Potential Effects
In birds showing minor symptoms, B. avium primarily colonizes the ciliated epithelium of the upper respiratory tract, especially the trachea. Even in largely asymptomatic psittacines:

- Minor tracheitis may occur, occasionally extending to air sacculitis or mild conjunctivitis (Samour, 2016, p. 126).
- Mucosal irritation may lead to occasional sneezing, nasal discharge, or mild coughing.
- The bacterium produces tracheal cytotoxin, which can compromise ciliary function and predispose birds to secondary infections by opportunistic bacteria (Mason & Mason, n.d.; da Silva et al., 2022). Even without overt clinical signs, subclinical inflammation of the nasal mucosa, infraorbital sinuses, or tracheal epithelium may be present, detectable only via histopathology. This may lead to subtle reductions in respiratory clearance and mild irritation.
- In young or immunocompromised birds, infection may progress to sinusitis, mild bronchitis, or bronchopneumonia, though such severe pathology is rare in adult psittacines (Harper & Skinner, 2008, pp. 75–82).
- Chronic low-level infection may persist asymptomatically in adult carriers, potentially serving as a source of infection to naive chicks, especially in breeding aviaries (Mason & Mason, n.d.).
- Minor clinical signs, such as occasional sneezing or watery ocular discharge, may be exacerbated by environmental stressors, concurrent viral infections, or poor husbandry, although mortality is extremely rare in adult psittacines.
- Long-term subclinical infection may cause mild tracheal cartilage softening or ciliary loss, which is unlikely to produce clinical disease but may reduce mucociliary clearance efficiency (Harrison & Lightfoot, 2006, p. 959).

While severe manifestations like temporomandibular rigidity ("lockjaw"), myositis of mandibular muscles, or bronchopneumonia are well documented in cockatiel chicks, these are unlikely in adult psittacines. However, as shown in the present case, death and sharp decline can still occur in adults under stress, with concurrent infections, or with strain variability (Clubb, Homer, Pisani, & Head, 1994; Schmidt, Struthers, & Phalen, 2015, pp. 99–101).

Diagnostic Considerations Asymptomatic or mildly affected birds may not exhibit obvious clinical signs, but carrier status can be confirmed through:

- Choanal and cloacal swabs cultured on MacConkey agar
- Serologic testing or PCR for B. avium detection in the flock

It is important to recognize that mixed infections with opportunistic bacteria or yeast may obscure B. avium colonies, leading to false negatives (Clubb, Homer, & Pisani, 1994; Mason & Mason, n.d.)

Treatment in Asymptomatic or Mildly Symptomatic Parrots
For largely asymptomatic or mildly affected parrots (e.g., minor sneezing), treatment focuses on **eliminating carrier status,** preventing transmission to chicks, and reducing the risk of clinical disease. Supportive care and management are likely the key to eliminating symptoms.

Current regimen:
Baytril (Enrofloxacin 100 mg/ml, 1 ml per 480ml water) for 30 days

- **Other antibiotics reported as susceptible for B. avium in psittacines: •** Amikacin, Gentamicin, Augmentin (Amoxicillin/Clavulanate), Cefotaxime, Cefpodoxime, Ceftazidime, Piperacillin, Ciprofloxacin, Marbofloxacin, Enrofloxacin (Baytril), Tetracycline, Chloramphenicol, Tylosin, Oxytetracycline

Additional considerations for treatment success:
- Oral administration alone may not reach the nasal and sinus epithelium effectively; aerosolized or vaporized antibiotic treatment (e.g., Gentamicin sulfate vaporization) is often recommended to target the upper respiratory tract.
- Supportive antifungal therapy (e.g., Mycolex–7®) can prevent opportunistic yeast infections during antibiotic therapy.
- Environmental sanitation is critical: regular disinfection of cages, aviary surfaces, food/water sources, and nesting materials reduces reinfection risk.

Notes:
- Strain variability of B. avium can lead to differences in toxin production, adhesion, and antibiotic susceptibility; results may vary.
- Treating the entire flock, rather than testing and culling individual carriers, is the most reliable method for eradication (Mason & Mason, n.d.).
- Monitor birds throughout treatment for signs of gastrointestinal upset or secondary infections, adjusting therapy if needed.

Environmental and Preventive Measures
- B. avium can survive weeks to months in damp bedding, feces, or water under low temperature, low humidity, and neutral pH. High temperatures (>40°C) reduce survival, and the bacterium is generally susceptible to standard disinfectants. (Mason & Mason, n.d.; Samanta & Bandyopadhyay, 2017, p. 54).

Summary
Bordetella avium can be a significant, though under-recognized, pathogen in psittacines. In cockatiel chicks, it is highly pathogenic and fatal, producing clinical syndromes such as “lockjaw,” tracheitis, and rapid mortality. In contrast, adult psittacines can serve as subclinical carriers. While symptoms are typically limited to mild sneezing and occasional nasal discharge, colonization of the upper respiratory tract can compromise mucociliary clearance and predispose birds to opportunistic infections. The “case study” above demonstrates that death and clinical decline can still occur in adult birds, often worsened by stress, strain variability, and concurrent pathogens like Staphylococcus aureus.

Treatment in adult psittacines focuses on flock-level management with antibiotics to reduce shedding and carrier status, though results vary depending on strain differences and treatment access to the respiratory mucosa. Supportive antifungal therapy and environmental disinfection improve outcomes.

For aviculturists and clinicians, the key points are:
- Adult psittacines can be subclinical carriers, but clinical illness and mortality remain possible.
- Juvenile birds, especially cockatiel chicks, remain highly susceptible with severe outcomes.
- Sanitation and preventive measures are critical for limiting environmental persistence and reinfection.
- Whole-flock treatment strategies are more effective than treating individuals in isolation.
- Strain variability and secondary infections complicate both diagnosis and treatment success.

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