

# ASA

Avicultural Bulletin



Barbara Brady-Smith

# ASA

A JOURNAL FOR BIRD BREEDING, CONSERVATION,  
RESTORATION AND EDUCATION

May-June 2021



**NEXT ISSUE**

**CROP DISORDERS**

**Dr. Scott McDonald**

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: Solomon Island eclectus (*Eclectus roratus*) Photo: Barbara Brady-Smith. Inside cover: Umbrella cockatoo (*Cacatua alba*) Photo: Dr. Scott McDonald. © 2012-2021 Avicultural Society of America. All rights reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced without express written permission by ASA.

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## *President's Message*

Greetings, fellow Aviculturists:

ASA has always been fortunate to have contributions from around the world for the e-Bulletin.

This issue is no different, and includes Jason Sampson's eclectic parrot diet article. This issue also features ASA supporter Levi Fuentes' article about African parrots. This is his first in a series of articles on different orders of birds, so you can expect more to come from Levi!

As many of you know, OPA (Organization of Professional Aviculturists) has been hard at work defending our rights to keep birds. President Steve Duncan provides an update on OPA's activities. Please consider using the link herein to donate towards their incredible work for birds and aviculturists alike.

Enjoy this issue and please give us feedback and suggestions on the type of content you would like to see in the future.

Stay safe and take care,

Carol Stanley,  
President, YOUR Avicultural Society of America

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## ASA Yahoo Email Group

Did you know ASA has an email group? It's easy to join. Email: [asabirds-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:asabirds-subscribe@yahoogroups.com) and you will start getting messages.

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- ASA Bulletin: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/asabulletin/>



Barbara Brady-Smith

Female Solomon Island Eclectus (*Eclectus roratus*) Photo: Barbara Brady-Smith

## Towards Understanding the *Eclectus roratus* Digestive Tract and Diet: *From a botanist's perspective*

*Jason Sampson*

### Introduction

It is common knowledge among companion parrot owners that eclectus parrots (*Eclectus roratus*) have unique dietary needs. For years now, we have been told that due to their longer than usual digestive tracts, they need a generally high-fiber diet, and in particular a higher fiber content in their day to day consumption than other psittacines.

This 'common knowledge' is repeated without question in forums, social media, and even in some husbandry textbooks, but this freely shared information does not answer the important question, "Why would an eclectus parrot require more fiber in its diet just because it has a longer digestive tract?" Other questions that should be addressed: "Do these birds really have a longer digestive tract? And if so, why (other than to digest excess fiber)?"

## Efficient absorbtion

Eclectus parrots are not ground foraging birds. They originate from the tropics and subtropical Solomon Islands, Indonesia, New Guinea, northeastern Australia, and the Moluccas. These native habitats supply an abundance of vegetarian fare such as berries, figs, and other fruit, as well as edible foliage and seeds in the mid-to-upper canopy of the jungle trees where eclectus parrots prefer to spend most of their time.

*In fact, an eclectus parrot's digestive tract is actually so efficient at extracting nutrients from natural foods that it can over-absorb nutrients from highly processed diets.*

In recent years, the exact relative length of the eclectus digestive tract has become controversial amongst avian veterinary specialists. However, one thing we are sure of is that their digestive tract is very efficient in digesting and absorbing

nutrients from plant matter, especially the flowers, buds, foliage, and fruit it consumes in the wild—whatever its length.

In fact, an eclectus parrot's digestive tract is actually so efficient at extracting nutrients from natural foods that it can over-absorb nutrients and other additives from highly processed diets. This is the main reason why they do not do well on diets laden with fortified nutrients, colorants, preservatives, and other synthetic ingredients. E. roratus are prone to developing diet-related conditions, such as the dreaded toe tapping and/or wing flipping syndrome, where involuntary opening and





Above and next page Male Solomon Island Eclectus (*Eclectus roratus*) Photos Jason Sampson

closing movements of the feet and/or wings are seen, as well as behavioral problems such as screaming and feather plucking.

While eclectus parrots clearly require much less coarse fiber than large herbivores such as cows or horses due to their overall size alone, they also require a smaller proportion of their overall diet to contain the type of fiber grazing herbivores consume. These parrots are not true grazing herbivores—rather, they are fruit-loving exotic birds.

### Differentiating between cellulose and pectin

Simply stated, it seems not a matter of eclectus parrots requiring more fiber in their diet in captivity because of their specialized digestive tract. Rather, all the data

from studies of birds in the wild show that this is a frugivorous species that subsists on a large percentage of wild fruit in its natural diet, so it has said specialized digestive tract with which to extract all of the nutrients from food with a high pectin content. It's a subtle difference, but telling.

Pectin is a unique soluble fiber found in quantity in fruits and fruit peels, and is very different from the insoluble cellulose that most people think of when the term 'dietary fiber' is used. Pectin differs from cellulose, which one would find in quantity in the cell walls of vegetables and grains. Cellulose is a non-digestible fiber with mostly laxative effects.

The fiber most characteristic of berries and fruit is pectin, protecting a food source rich in vitamins, minerals, fatty acids, essential carbohydrates, plant proteins, and extremely high in antioxidants. Pectin is a prebiotic

*Pectin levels are highest in green or just ripened fruit, and lowest in overripe fruit.*

that is digested by healthy gut bacteria in the intestines.

Pectin levels are highest in green or just ripened fruit, and lowest in overripe fruit. It has long been thought that many wild parrots are specialized to take advantage



of under-ripe fruit so as to lessen competition with other birds and monkeys in habitat, and eclectus parrots are surely no exception.

Pectin has the property of slowing down digestion, and has even been used in anti-diarrhea medicines in the past. It also has the potential to reduce the bio-availability of nutrients such as beta-carotene (the primary dietary precursor to vitamin A), making them harder for the body to absorb. In addition, pectin slows the absorption of



sugars, preventing glycemic spikes! Pectin also seems capable of helping the body regulate 'bad' (i.e. low-density lipoprotein, or LDL) cholesterol levels and seems to have a role in preventing certain cancers of the digestive tract in humans.

### A need for pectin-rich diets

From what we know about eclectus dietary needs and their susceptibility to either deficiencies or hyper-nutrient absorption, it follows that a diet that emphasizes pectin-rich foods could be exactly what the eclectus digestive system is

equipped to process.

Therefore, it is not that eclectus parrots require more fiber in general, it is that their digestive system is fine-tuned to digest, absorb, and metabolize a high-pectin fiber diet.

When one looks at lists of the indigenous plants in the native habitats of this species that grow at mid-to-upper level where they prefer to forage, it is striking how many potential food items are berries, figs, and other fruit. These are the foodstuffs *E. roratus* were originally meant to consume. And this is why one would expect their digestive tract to be efficiently designed to digest and absorb all of the nutrients protected by the pectin of those fruit.

It is not to say that a wild eclectus would not also enjoy the young seeds found inside berries and other fruit, and they no doubt forage the nuts indigenous to their range, such as those of the bottletree and other *Brachychiton* and *Sterculia* species (although they are unlikely to be able to crack open harder macadamia nuts, unlike a palm cockatoo!). They will also consume some amount of young and soft leaves, flowers and other greenery, as well as the insects they would find feeding on said items.

But keeping things in perspective: the efficient digestive tract of an eclectus parrot does not indiscriminately process any form of fiber. It is specifically fine-tuned—

notwithstanding the question of its length—to efficiently process the nutrient-dense, pectin-filled foods found in its natural foraging habitats.

What does this mean for the owner of a companion eclectus?

A captive diet is not a wild diet. The food plants one is feeding a companion bird are human crops plants, often completely unrelated to wild food plants, and bred to human tastes and needs.

In addition, the energy and nutrient needs of a captive bird must logically be very different to a wild bird that must spend energy and time foraging to meet its needs, often flying many kilometres a day. For eclectus, this must be even more complicated by the unique lifestyles of the two sexes, with males being the foragers, and females the nest-protectors.

The fruit that humans enjoy for the most part have been bred over millennia for sugar content (sweetness) and size. The process through which a wild fruit plant is bred and selected for human tastes is known as ennoblement, essentially meaning that they are likely to have higher sugar and pulp levels than wild fruit.

So, while a glance reading of the article so far would make one suppose that a pectin-adapted digestive system would be best served by feeding more fruit to a companion eclectus, this may not



Juvenile Female Solomon Island Eclectus juvenile (*Eclectus roratus*)  
Photo: Carol Stanly

be the case in regards the high energy, sugary fruit humans prefer due to the generally lower energy needs of companion birds.

*Carrots, green peas, green beans, and sweet potato are examples of vegetables known to contain relatively high levels of pectin.*

A partial solution to the dilemma can be found in understanding that fruits vary in pectin levels, and that younger fruit is better to feed than overripe fruit. Including the fruit peels (preferably from organic fruit) in your chop can also introduce a significant source of pectin often lost while preparing food.

Certain 'wild' foods can also be harvested from an organic garden: rose hips are high in pectin (although you will need to clean them well and remove the seeds), as are crabapples. In South Africa, I enjoy including the fruit of *Ficus sur*, a wild broom cluster fig, and Kei apple (*Dovyalis caffra*) in my food bowls when they're in season.

Luckily, nature always has exceptions to the rule, so while fruits are best known for containing high levels of pectin, there are cultivated vegetables that have high pectin fiber content too. Carrots, green peas, green beans, and sweet potato are examples of vegetables known to contain relatively high levels of pectin.

## Conclusion

Part of the magic of companion birds is understanding how their wild nature makes them unique, each in their own way. The hypothesis that eclectus need a pectin-rich diet is not new, but it is compelling and it helps to bring into focus their unique dietary needs in captivity.

It is also easy to increase your bird's intake of pectin naturally, and I find my eclectus do very well on a diet rich in pectin, that is as natural as possible and free of artificial supplements.

Eclectus are rainforest birds, and we are blessed to share our homes and lives with them, feeding

them only the best from their perspective should be a focus of any caregiver's efforts, within their means and circumstances.

I find that focusing on pectin as a source of dietary fiber for eclectus parrots makes feeding a more natural diet easier to both understand and implement in our home, and for our flock.

## About the Author

Jason Sampson is a professional botanist and horticulturalist based at the University of Pretoria, South Africa.

Together he and his wife, Nikki Sampson, run a small, private parrot sanctuary specializing in African and eclectus parrots from their home in Pretoria.

They also run a small, boutique parrot food company called ParroTainment, coupled with an educational [ParroTainment Facebook page](#), which aims to educate companion parrot owners in South Africa about all aspects of parrot ownership, from feeding to behavioral enrichment.

Both Nikki and Jason are very involved in the parrot rescue community in South Africa, and work in their private capacity with members of the public, other rescues and sanctuaries, as well as veterinary professionals regarding various aspects of parrot husbandry and welfare issues in the country.

## Waterfowl

Jonathan Beilby

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



World Wetlands Day is in February and aims to educate and promote wetland conservation around the world. At WWT, wetlands and waterfowl go hand in hand so for the entire month of February I'll be posting a photo of a different species of waterfowl every day! Please feel free to tell me to duck off if you get bored...

Day 1: White-headed Duck (*Oxyura leucocephala*)

- native to Spain, North Africa and large portions of central Asia, this species has been affected by both the introduction of the North American Ruddy Duck and loss of its habitat. The males have a gorgeous blue beak when breeding and spend most of the summer displaying to the females, before they moult into a winter plumage and have a bit of down time.



Day 2: New Zealand Brown Teal (*Anas chlorotis*)

As its name suggests, this bird is found only on New Zealand, where it is largely nocturnal - thought to be a defense against the only native predator; the New Zealand Falcon. With no ground dwelling predators, the teal species on Campbell and Auckland Islands even lost the ability to fly!

Introduced rats, cats and ferrets have had huge impacts on populations - but captive breeding and pest extermination have been hugely successful in saving these species from extinction.

On World Wetlands Day - we need to remember that we as humans are more than capable of fixing the damage we have done to the planet, but that this work is far from over. (Photo taken at the WWT London Wetland Centre)



Day 3: Hooded Merganser  
(*Lophodytes cucullatus*)

Every Spring, groups of ducks gather in the local park ready for the breeding season. Many duck populations are skewed slightly towards male, meaning females can be choosy about who they mate with, but what happens if you're not attractive enough? Well, in waterfowl society, at this stage consent flies out of the window.

Ducks are one of the 3% of birds with penises (hideous anticlockwise spiraling penises may I add!) and these are used to force matings with females. The female ducks have evolved an equally twisty vagina, with blind ends to try and stop these forced matings for being successful. An evolutionary arms race, with males and females trying to get an upper hand on the other.

His beak might have evolved for fish eating, but this Hooded Merganser shows it also works well for pulling the hair of his sexual partner!



Day 4: Black Brant (*Branta bernicla nigricans*)

This photo was taken in late April in Port Angeles, Washington. The geese here are on their migration back to the breeding grounds in the high Arctic. Brent and Brant Geese are the most northerly nesting of goose species, and make a nest out on the open tundra.

These geese rely on eel grass during their migration and rarely stray from the coast once out of the breeding grounds. (See the little bit of seaweed here - pretend it's eel grass so this comment looks linked to the post!)



## What has the OPA been Doing?

Since you last heard from the OPA we have been quite busy, even if we haven't been telling you much.

### **The OPA has sued the USFWS three times!**

Organization of Professional Aviculturists, Inc. v. Eric Kershner and USFWS, No. 20-cv-22059 (S.D. Fla. filed May 17, 2020)

Organization of Professional Aviculturists, Inc. v. Clifton Horton and USFWS, No. 20-cv-24039 (S.D. Fla. filed Oct. 2, 2020)

Organization of Professional Aviculturists, Inc. v. Margaret Everson and USFWS, No. 19-cv-20195 (S.D. Fla. filed Jan. 14, 2019)

In our most recent lawsuit, Organization of Professional Aviculturists, Inc. v. Eric Kershner and USFWS, we are continuing our successful lobbying efforts to prevent the addition of avicultural species to be added to the list of species, which are prohibited from ownership under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. The Migratory Bird Treaty Act currently makes it illegal to own 1,093 species, which are deemed native to the United States. The USFWS is attempting to add 47 new species to that list, many of which are established in U.S. aviculture, including the Red-



legged Honeycreeper, the European Robin, the Bananaquit, and the Pink-Footed Goose.

While the OPA's lobbying efforts were successful in removing the European Turtle Dove from the list, the USFWS refused to change their mind on several other species and because of this, the OPA has sued arguing that is improper to list species with only one or two sightings in the United States, which are also established in U.S. aviculture. Currently, the OPA is awaiting a decision on the case by the District Judge, but we are prepared to take this all the way up to the Supreme Court if the need arises.

The OPA has also been involved in supporting new and existing cooperative breeding programs. While we cannot disclose everything at this moment (you never know which AR groups are watching!),

*If the USDA intends  
to follow through  
and publish  
regulations by 2023,  
the voice of breeders  
must be front and  
center.*

we can say that we are currently supporting the creation of a new cooperative breeding program for Lorikeets with unsustainable populations in the United States. The USFWS has given our members a hard time in establishing this consortium and the OPA stands ready to sue if the USFWS fails to approve the consortium.

We have also been contacted by a group of softbill breeders who are interested in importing new species of Turacos to the United States. While we are still in the development stage of this plan, we hope to file with the USFWS this year.

Also of note, the OPA is working to approve the commercial import of captive-bred Cactus Conures from Europe. This is exciting for two reasons, 1) the species does not currently exist in the U.S. and 2) this is a test case that will, if successful, open the doors for further and easier importation of avicultural species. We all know the need to reinvigorate the bloodlines of our species!

Along this line, the OPA has affiliated with the Lineolated Parakeet Society and is jointly working together to open up the importation of pure green Lineolated Parakeets from Europe as part of their, "It's Not Easy Being Green Project." (<https://linniesociety.org/its-not-easy-being-green-project/>) This would be a major boost to the U.S. Linnie population!

Last and definitely not least, the OPA is involved in lobbying the USDA over the new Animal Welfare Act regulations, which are likely to affect every bird breeder in the United States. If the USDA intends to follow through and publish regulations by 2023, the voice of breeders must be front and center. Further, by being directly involved with the creation of the regulation at this stage, the OPA will be in a perfect position to sue the USDA in 2023 if the final rules are not to our liking. At a minimum, the OPA intends to ensure that any new regulations are not retroactively applied to existing breeding facilities!

We hope the membership feels that we are fighting the good fight. However, if there is an issue that we have missed or a project that you would like assistance with please reach out to David Garcia, the OPA's attorney. His direct line is 305 319 1309 or email him at [opacounsel@opabirds.org](mailto:opacounsel@opabirds.org)

If you would like to donate to OPA,, [click here.](#)





**BIAZA - Event July 26, 2021 7AM PDT**

Our co-chair Dr Paul Rose is presenting the first of BIAZA's free summer lunchtime online talks on 26th July 12noon UK time on "why everyone loves a zoo nerd". Why research is the most important output from the modern zoo, supporting its educational and conservation aims. Find out more here: <https://biaza.org.uk/.../detail/biaza-brings-you-dr-paul-rose>



This really sounds like fun! This is one in a series. Click on the logo and go to the events page to see what might interest you. Summer time difference is -7 hours, so, their lunch talks will be served around west coast breakfast time.



# Passage of Parrots: My Encounters and Observations with Parrots

Levi Fuentes



Carol Stanley



Female Congo African Grey (*Psittacus erithacus*)

## Part One: African Parrots

I was randomly reminiscing and thinking back to the years when I was just entering in the avicultural world at age twelve. Over the years, I have seen and even handled a

variety of different parrot species. Some very common, others rarely available on the market, and some you may or may not see anywhere in the United States anymore.



Congo African Grey (*Psittacus erithacus*)

These are my personal accounts and opinions on the species I have seen and handle. What may not be an extraordinary species or a species I consider ill-suited and ill-tempered may not be the case for you, for every bird is as individualistic as we are, and even among species, there could be outliers and exceptions to a general rule.

I am by no means an expert; I'm just a passionate avicultural enthusiast that seek new experiences with many species, be it parrot or another family of birds in general.

With that being said...

When I talk about "African parrots", I'm referring to the grey parrots (genus *Psittacus*) and species in the genus *Poicephalus*. Both genera surprisingly fall under the family

Psittacidae, which also include the parrots of the Neotropics (the ecoregion that covers Central and South America, the Caribbean, and both sides of coastal and southern Mexico, but also most of Florida). I categorize the other African species - the vasa parrots of Madagascar, the Comoros, and Seychelles, the African ring-necked parakeet (*Psittacula krameri krameri*), and the lovebirds under Old World parrots

Congo African Grey (*Psittacus erithacus*)



(family *Psittaculidae*), something I'll get to later.

Congo African grey (*Psittacus erithacus*): When I was researching a bird as my companion, fourteen-year-old me wanted a grey to be my first large parrot. To this day, I still have a connection to them, and even a fascination, despite the fact I've seen a lot of them since I started my journey. I've always said that if my personality can be summed up as a parrot, it would be a Congo African grey. Because of the extensive, decades-long research involving this species, this species is touted for its remarkable intelligence, and rightly so. With their intelligence comes probably their most famous quality - being one of the best talkers among parrots and among any bird species, rivaled only by mynas and starlings (family *Sturnidae*), and some corvids (family *Corvidae*) (though they are, at best, cheeky but finicky talkers). However, just because they can talk doesn't mean they will, and it isn't unusual for them to talk after their first birthday (though, again, I've heard exceptions to the rule). Another winning quality is that, for



Congo African Grey (*Psittacus erithacus*)

the most part, they are relatively quiet, and even in listening to both recordings and hearing them in person, their calls aren't particularly offensive but can be quiet pleasing, except for their screams which can be especially grating. I haven't heard them growl yet, but they are known to do that. Aside from their intelligence, greys are remarkably sensitive, and while many aren't the cuddliest birds (fitting of their rather cerebral personalities but there are exceptions to the rule), they do enjoy a nice head scratch and being by their preferred person. Both them and their Timneh counterparts aren't fond of changes in their environment and disruption to their routine. If there are too much changes in their environment or their living situation is volatile, because of that sensitivity, greys are prone to feather-picking (though this can happen if they're extremely bored) and, rarely, screaming. I find them to be rather retiring, reticent birds but they're also quite observant. I'd like to say I have had a healthy amount of interactions with this species but I know there's still more I need to learn from them and those passionate about



Congo African Grey (*Psittacus erithacus*)

them. I have a connection with this species for over a decade, and they continue to fascinate me. I would describe the overall personality of a Congo grey as the following: intelligent, cerebral, observant, quiet, introverted, sensitive, and consistent. I'd like to think those traits are traits I would describe myself and, for the longest time, I veered away from them because I feel like they are my avian equivalent. I should start embracing them and devote more research and further exposure to them.

Timneh African grey (*Psittacus timneh*): Depending on which source material you follow, you either put this species as a subspecies of the Congo African grey as *P. e. timneh* or its own species, this bird shares the same qualities as their Congo counterparts except they're much harder to find and, in personality, they're much more extroverted and willing to meet new people. I feel because they aren't quite as vivacious as their Congo counterparts, fewer people appreciate them despite sharing nearly the same qualities and



Timneh African Grey (*Psittacus timneh*)

intelligence as them. Just like their Congo counterparts, I like this species but I would like to have more exposure to them given the fact you don't see them often enough.

Brown-headed parrot (*Poicephalus cryptoxanthus* ssp.): I've only seen a handful of this species, so I have limited exposure to them. My feeling is again, because of their rather unspectacular appearance that is why you don't see them. From what I've heard, they're one of the sweetest in their genus and are worthy of being considered a companion. A species of interest and one worth further investigating.

Brown-necked (*Poicephalus fuscicollis fuscicollis*) and Grey-headed (*Poicephalus fuscicollis suahelicus*) parrots: I've only seen a literal handful of this species but I haven't developed an eye on which of the two I've seen (and this is a species I just now saw in the past five years). I've heard nothing but excellent things about this species but I can't contribute anything due to very little exposure. A species of interest and one worth further investigating.

Jardine's parrots (*Poicephalus guielmi* ssp.): Despite the rather large following they have, I had one

frankly bad experience with one from what I started; that individual was rather nippy and out for blood. Maybe he/she needed proper socialization. As time progresses, they are becoming harder and harder to find. I'm open to have more exposure to them.

Meyer's parrots (*Poicephalus meyeri* ssp.): A species I've grown to like. Though I haven't seen many, the few I have had the chance to handle and socialize were sweet, amicable birds and I enjoyed all the interactions I've had with them. Being in the family that I have come to call the "perfect parrots", I don't doubt their popularity as the second most popular species in their genus. I definitely would like more exposure to them and possibly even to raise. The only dismaying thing about them is that with six subspecies, it's hard to know which ones we have in the United States. We need to do a better job not only paying attention and figuring out which ones we have but also keeping the integrity of said subspecies pure.

Red-bellied parrots (*Poicephalus rufiventris*): A rare treat; this is a species that's sexually dimorphic - males are the ones with the red bellies while the females do not have it. Unfortunately, this is a species I've had little exposure to. The three I have met were feisty bundles of feathers. Sure they "mouthed" me but they weren't nippy or ill-tempered as I've heard

them have the potential to be, or as I would call any species that behaved that way “little dinosaurs”. Visually stunning and one of my favorites due to their dimorphism. Would like to become more familiar with this species and even to raise them.

Rüppell’s parrots (*Poicephalus rueppellii*): A rarity in the U.S., I feel this is a heavily guarded gem in aviculture. I’ve only recently met this species but they were breeders. However, even with that in mind, they were AWESOME! Most members in the genus are nervous and flighty but these birds, even as breeders, were calm, curious, engaging, and observant, traits that instantly won me over. Another species that’s sexually dimorphic but this time the males are drab and the females sport brilliant blue rumps. Because of their personalities and their looks, they instantly shot to my top overall favorites. This is a species I’ll want to focus on, raising individuals to help their numbers but I may keep a female as a companion.

Senegal parrots (*Poicephalus senegalus* ssp.): A brief keeping of this species was all that needed to be done to fall in love with the genus. They deserve to have the title of “perfect parrots” and deserving of being the most popular of their genus. This species is quiet, playful, engaging, affectionate, and intelligent. Although the connection I had

with this individual wasn’t mutual (I wasn’t fully invested in it), she left an impression on me. Because of her, I wanted to read up and familiarize myself with more on the *Poicephalus* genus, and over time, I’ve decided that this genus will be my second “focus group” for when the time comes for me to have birds back into my life. From books and conversations with others, I’ve heard stories of them becoming either extremely phobic or vicious little dinosaurs, but I will write that up as either personality and/or poor socialization. I will gladly give Senegal parrots another try, but this time I would personally like to raise them. Fortunately for this species, the subspecies are easy to distinguish: the nominate species – *P. s. senegalus* – are probably the most common subspecies, sporting the lemon-yellow breasts; the second subspecies – *P. s. versteri* – otherwise called the “Orange-bellied Senegal” for good reason.

### About the Author

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

# Brooder Hack

Jan Nichols

Here's a frugal do-it-yourself brooder that works great!

I use it in an old hospital box  
Large 1 gallon Ball canning jar with plastic lid.

Drill a hole in the lid and silicone a 150wt aqua heater into the middle.

I drill a tiny hole in the cap to release heat

Put about 1 teaspoon of Novasan in with the water and that's it.

It sits in a tub that's lined with a non scented cat litter bag and a mat or paper towels and rolled Barley

For less than \$50  
Use large storage boxes from Walmart if no hospital boxes, which are no longer made

Cut a section in the lid and zip tie cloth wire over the hole.  
Alternatively, you can drill 3/4" diameter holes in the lid with a paddle bit.

If it's real young babies  
Maybe a Sunbeam heating pad on low under one part of the box

I saw one of these in the 1990s and adapted this.







It's pretty heavy so I don't worry about it tipping over, but one could put a bungee around it. I hope it'll help out those like me on a budget.

Plus it's super easy to clean. I just wipe it down and then wipe again with Novasan and leave it and use again asap.



Springtime Pests - Part 1



The links to podcasts on this page and the next, by Dean Sharp at KFI AM640 on iHeart Media, are each about 1/2 hour and provide useful information on how to deal with pests. Everything from mice to rattlesnakes is covered.



**KFI**  
AM 640  
PRESENTS

# HOME

with DEAN SHARP

**THE HOUSE WHISPERER**



iHeartMEDIA

The graphic is a promotional poster for a radio segment. It features a black background with a white border. At the top, the text 'KFI AM 640 PRESENTS' is displayed in white. Below this, the word 'HOME' is written in large, bold, orange letters. Underneath 'HOME', the text 'with DEAN SHARP' is in white, followed by 'THE HOUSE WHISPERER' in white and orange. A photograph of Dean Sharp, a man with short dark hair and a beard, is positioned on the right side of the graphic. He is wearing a dark blue t-shirt and has his arms crossed, resting his chin on his hand. At the bottom of the graphic, the iHeartMedia logo is visible.



Applying Negative Reinforcement for Calm Behavior (and what the past has taught us about challenging animal training science)



Meet Walnut, the crane who fell in love with her zookeeper





Chilean flamingo flying over the Pariacaca glacier, Junín, Peru Photo: Alan Chamorro

The Harpy, the largest eagle in the world, proudly Amazonian, needs the insect symbiosis to survive

Click below and select English or Portuguese on the top right of the page.



## From 22 Birds To 347, How This Man Saved Maharashtra's Vultures From Extinction



## Discussion about diets with Tony Silva and Jaden Toste of Florida Parrot





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

Jim Sorensen, Birds in shoes. [Click here](#) to go to Jim's web site where you may see all his designs.

**About**

I enjoy nature and adding something out of the ordinary. All my drawings are available online [here](#).



Flaminglet in Mary Janes sneakers. Newly-hatched chicks (flaminglets, by the way not every source agrees to call them this) have gray or white down feathers, a straight red or pink bill, and plump red or pink legs. Chicks gather in large groups called creches (French for “crib”). Parents are able to locate their own chicks in the creche at feeding time by

sight and vocalizations. They will feed no other chick. Parents keep a close, protective watch on their chick as it explores its habitat. This will join my other birds at [www.jimsorensen.com](http://www.jimsorensen.com) for prints and stuff from Redbubble. Also on Instagram under jimrendra and my Facebook group Birds in shoes.



## More bird from the Internet

Just click on the birdie

He Wasn't a Bird Person. Then a Hawk Built a Nest on His Fire Escape.

*Life, death, renewal and social media ensued.*



## NEW STUDY DEMONSTRATES THAT ANIMALS CAN LEARN TO COMMUNICATE USING A TABLET



## Experts search for answers to mysterious disease affecting wild birds





*Photo by Tran Triet*



Joshua Ketelsen is at St. Louis Zoo.

Me: There's a penguin over there wearing shoes.

Zookeeper (deadpan): Yep.

\*awkward silence\*

Me: Um... why?

Explanation: He's an extremely old penguin. Far older than would naturally survive in the wild. As a result, he has developed the penguin equivalent of arthritis in his feet. The zoo has a very effective pain relieving cream they can put on, but it washes off when he goes into the water. So they sewed him tiny shoes made of wetsuit fabric to keep the cream on. No more pain and he can even swim with them on.

And now you know why the St Louis Zoo has a penguin wearing shoes.



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

Homes for Animal Heroes is the first and largest nationwide network for rehoming research dogs that supports biomedical progress and all of the heroes who make it possible. It's time for transparency and time for us to share our love for animals and people...with the world. Thank you for supporting our vision of truth!

# WARNING



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

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# Who's Your Daddy?

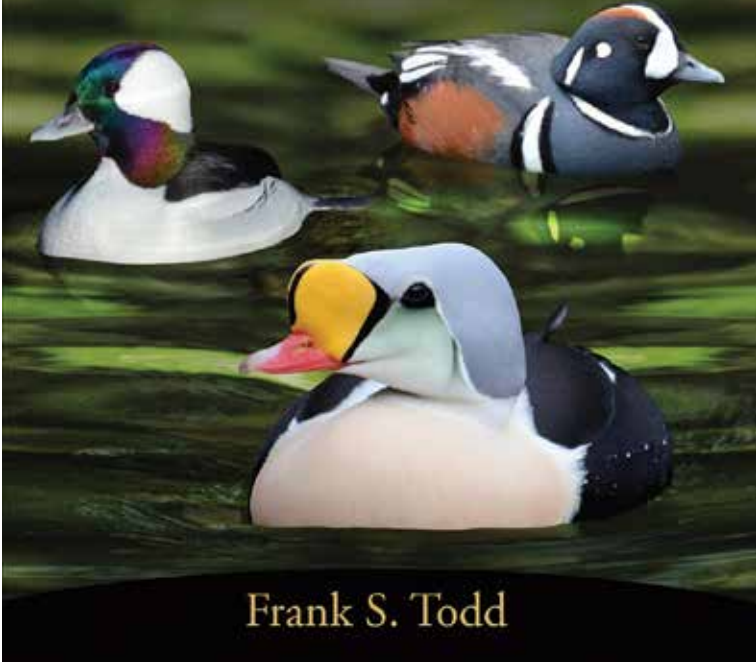
Stumped? See answer on page 42



*For Evermore*  
PET PHOTOGRAPHY

Photo: Misty Oneil Epstein, For Evermore Pet Photography

# NORTH AMERICAN DUCKS, GEESE & SWANS IDENTIFICATION GUIDE



Frank S. Todd

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

You can purchase Ducks, Geese & Swans of North America: Identification Guide at: <https://www.hancockhouse.com/collections/ducks-waterfowl/products/north-american-ducks-geese-swans>

## PLEASE DONATE NOW

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

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



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"Photo: Casey Klebba, CC BY-SA 4.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons"

## Who's Your Daddy?

From page 39, Answer:

Sulawesi mynah (*Basilornis celebensis*)

The American coot measures 34–43 cm (13–17 in) in length with a wingspan of 58 to 71 cm (23 to 28 in). Adults have a short, thick, white bill and white frontal shield, which usually has a reddish-brown spot near the top of the bill between the eyes. Males and females look alike, but females are smaller. Body mass in females ranges from 427 to 628 g (0.941 to 1.385 lb) and in males from 576 to 848 g (1.270 to 1.870 lb).[13][14] [15] Juvenile birds have olive-brown crowns and a gray body. They become adult-colored around 4 months of age.

[13] CRC Handbook of Avian Body Masses by John B. Dunning Jr. (Editor). CRC Press (1992), ISBN 978-0-8493-4258-5.

[14] "American Coot". Arkive. Archived from the original on 2013-11-19. Retrieved 11 July 2013.

[15] American Coot – *Fulica americana*. oiseau-birds.com



"From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia"

[5] Hoyo, Josep del (1996). Handbook of the Birds of the World. Lynx Edicions. ISBN 978-8487334207.

# EVENTS

## 2021 EVENTS



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



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

### **Coming September 25th and 26th, 2021!**

The 8th annual national fundraiser and event, Seattle Parrot Expo! Benefiting Flight Club Foundation, a 501 c(3) parrot networking organization helping parrots and people too.

**"Return to the Wild" 2021**, a Hybrid Expo, a combined ONLINE and LIVE experience!

REGISTRATION required for all.

FREE admission to live expo areas for shopping and parrot experiences.

REGISTER SOON TO SEE online or LIVE:

Dr. Cromwell Purchase of ACTP - Return of the Spix Macaw from Extinction in the wild!

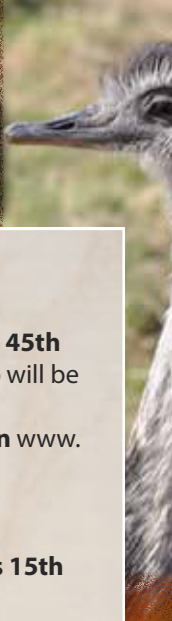
Parrot Ambassadors parrot performances and More speakers announced soon!

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www.ccasbirds.com

Long Beach Bird Breeders  
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Long Beach, CA 90815  
longbeachbirdbreeders@gmail.com

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

Orange County Bird Breeders  
www.ocbirdbreeders.org

Acadiana Bird Club  
480 Almonaster Dr Youngsville, LA 70592  
acadianabirdinc@hotmail.com

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P.O. Box 1712 Keller, TX 76244  
fwbc@fortworthbirdclub.com

Arizona Seedcracker Society Inc  
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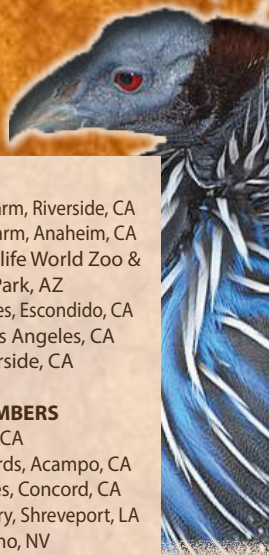
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