





NEXT ISSUE

NUTHATCHES by Lou Megens

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: Grey-headed Kingfisher *Halcyon leucocephala* Photo John York Inside Cover: European nuthatch *Sitta europea* Photo Lou Megen © 2012-2020 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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March/April 2020

President's Message

Greetings, fellow Aviculturists:

The Avicultural Society of America has lost one of our dedicated members from the International community, Daniel Shearing. Daniel had attended ASA conferences and was a regular fixture for as long as I can remember. Due to his illness, Daniel was unable to attend the last ASA conference in Miami. Rest in peace, Daniel.

It is with great disappointment I inform you that the 2020 Avicultural Society of America 15th Annual Education Conference will be postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The uncertainty during this unprecedented time in history, makes it impossible to safely plan (financial and health-wise) a conference. Watch for announcements as to where and when the next ASA conference will take place and make sure to get to it! Stay well until we meet again.

Yours truly,

Carol Stanley
President, YOUR Avicultural Society of America

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BROWN LEMUR (ON MY HEAD)
EULEMUR FULVUS



Dispatches from the Superior Unit

John York

I have wanted to visit Madagascar since I was a tiny child. The endemism of the island is legendary, featuring birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians and plants seen nowhere else in the world. I got that opportunity last September and October when I was able to join a tour with Cheepers, the hosts of my Vietnam tour the past January. Because they had a tour to Mozambique immediately following Madagascar, I signed up. I was already in the neighborhood. These would turn out to be very different birding experiences.

The Aviculture Part

Whenever I go to Africa, I always have to go through Europe, so I stop in a city I have never seen and visit for a few days. It breaks up the long flights and airport layovers, helps with jet lag and on more than one occasion the extra days have solved problems with canceled flights. This trip I chose Zurich, and the first day I visited the Zurich Zoo. Its main attraction is a huge greenhouse called the Masoala Rainforest, nearly 400 feet long by 300 wide and almost 100 feet high in the center. You go from the mid-70's of the Swiss fall to close to 90 degrees on the floor and well over 100 in the canopy. It was a good warning for how much sweating I would do in Madagascar. It houses lemurs, chameleons and many native birds. I got my best pictures of Madagascar Fody's, the House Finch of Madagascar, here.

The real Masoala would be my last destination in Madagascar.



THIS PARSON'S CHAMELEON *CALUMNA PARSONII* AND THE MADAGASCAR OR RED FODY *FODYIA MADAGASCARIENSIS* WERE INHABITANTS OF THE MASOALA RAINFOREST, ZURICH ZOO





COMOROS

Moroni

MAYOTTE
(FRANCE)

Mozambique
Channel

Mahajanga

Nosy
Chesterfield

JUAN DE NOVA
(FRANCE)

Maintirano

Nosy
Barren

Tsingy de
Bemaraha NP

Antsi

Morondava

Mangoky

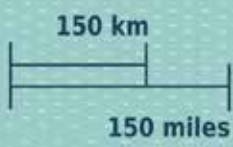
Isalo
NP

Ihoany

Toliara

Anakao

Onilahy





GLORIOSO
(FRANCE)

Antsiranana

Nosy Be &
Nosy Komba

Iharana

Andoany

Antsohiny

Masoala
NP

Mahajamba
Betsiboka

Ile Sainte Marie

Ile aux Nattes

Andilanatoby

Toamasina

Antananarivo

Arabe

Vatomandry

Antanitotsy

Varika

Anarantsoa

Andringitra
NP

Manakara

Indian
Ocean

Tolanaro

Madagascar

Madagascar

The Madagascar tour was based in the capitol Antananarivo (Tana) in the center of the island, and consisted of bus journeys and plane flights to various destinations. Madagascar is about the size of California, but many of the roads are adventures in themselves. One four-hour trip in the dry season between two of the parks in the north can take up to five days after a good rain. We had few issues with mud, but the roads took a long time to traverse.

We first visited Ankarafantsika where the visitor center/restaurant parking lot featured Cuckoo Rollers, Broad-billed Rollers, Sickle-billed Vangas and Coquerel's Sifakas in the trees. The first morning in the dry forest, we were

treated to a Schlegel's Asity working a nest and two different types of Couas on the trail. Ankarafantsika was also the first place where I and others got sick and had to miss some of the trails and night hikes.

I was thrilling to the lizard life as well, as Madagascar is the home of day geckos, a genera I spent some time raising in the past, and of course, chameleons. It was cool to look at a lizard in a foreign country and be able to tell the species, sometimes subspecies, age etc. This endeared me to the herp-centric South African guide, Justin, whom you will hear more about later. Night hikes were the best opportunities for chameleons and frogs, but there were plenty around in the daytime as well.



COQUEREL'S SIFAKA WERE
EASILY SPOTTED IN THE TREES AT
ANKARAFANTSIKA
PROPITHECUS COQUERELI

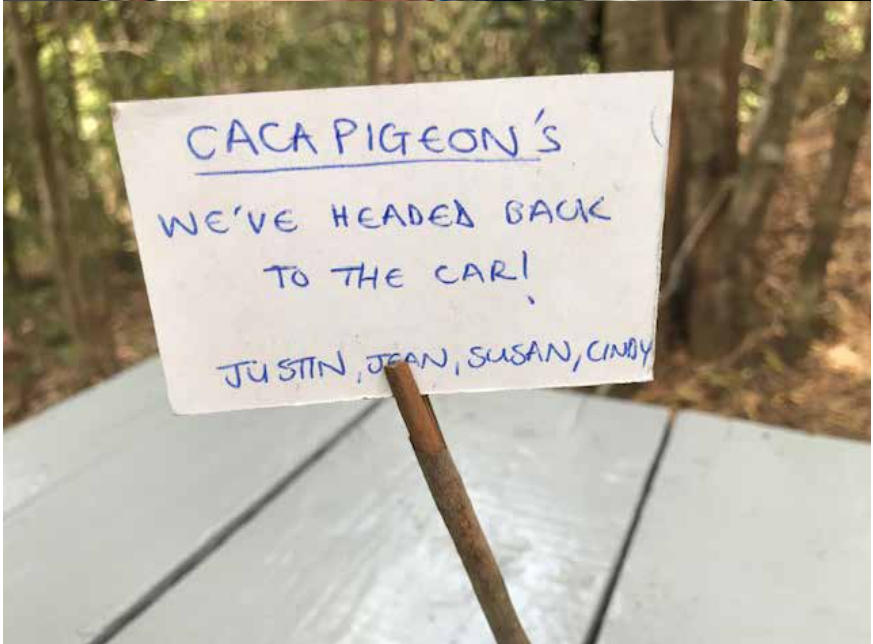
NEXT PAGE, BOTTOM:
BLAESODACTYLUS THIS 11" GECKO WAS
MY ROOMMATE AT ANKARAFANTSIKA
BLAESODACTYLUS SA;KALAVA



**BROAD-BILLED ROLLERS WERE SITTING
ABOVE THE PARKING LOT CATCHING
HUGE MOTHS AND OTHER INSECTS
*EURYSTOMUS GLAUCURUS***



At a gas and pee stop, we found a local snack called Cacapigeons which became a running joke throughout, with Justin referring to the entire group as Cacapigeons. I do not know what Cacapigeons taste like to this day.



The Perinet area, another dry forest as well as our third destination, featured the large and loud Indri, more strange vangas, lemurs and reptiles. We stayed at a beautiful lodge where the restaurant jugged out over a pond, complete with a nesting Crested Drongo on an overhanging branch.



CLICK ON PHOTO TO SEE VIDEO
OF THE INDRI'S SOUNDS. MAY
MAKE DOGS BARK.

ABOVE: THE BIGGEST LEMUR, THE INDRI, IS ALSO THE LOUDEST *INDRI INDRI*

BELOW: THE CRESTED DRONGO IS COMMON THROUGHOUT MADAGASCAR
DICRURUS FORFICATUS



THE SCHLEGEL'S ASITY WAS THE FIRST BIG TARGET BIRD
PHILEPITTA SCHLEGELI







LEMUR ISLAND GREETING PARTY: RED-RUFFED LEMUR *VARECIA RUBRA*
AND DIADEMED SIFAKAS *PROPIITHECUS DIADEMA*

A tourist attraction called Lemur Island was a highlight here. It is a reserve where the lemurs are very tame. They look really friendly in the pictures, but they are just lured by food on a stick that the guide holds near one's head, so the lemur uses the guest as a tree. Lemurs are the coolest! They seem much sweeter tempered than monkeys (not a high bar), are certainly cuter and their jumps are spectacular. Their feet and hands feel like soft child's hands, instead of the calloused tree-grabbing things one would expect. Because of the baiting, this was also the best way to see their waltzing, hand-raised travel on the ground. Unfortunately, they were almost always going away rather than approaching.

THIS FURRY MOTH WAS ATTRACTED TO THE LIT BUG CLOTH AT VAKONA LODGE. HE IS ABOUT AS BIG AS MY THUMB.



NEXT PAGE BOTTOM: COUAS WERE NOT HARD TO SEE, BUT THEY SELDOM STAYED AROUND TO GET PHOTOGRAPHED. THIS IS A RED-CAPPED COUA *COUA RUFICEPS*



THE DIADEMED SIFAKAS ON LEMUR ISLAND PUT ON A SHOW *PROPITHECUS DIADEMA*





THE GRAY BAMBOO LEMUR IS MY VOTE FOR CUTEST LEMUR IN A VERY CROWDED FIELD
HAPALEMUR GRISEUS



BAMBOO LEMUR SHY - JUSTIN SAYS THIS IS WHY BAMBOO LEMURS HAVE FLAT FACES
HAPLEMUR GRISEUS

We visited Isalo area and the Zombitse Forest in the southwestern part of the island. The Ring-tailed Lemurs and Vereaux's Sifakas (photos next page) were the mammal highlights. The Abert's Tetraka (another Vanga) was only discovered in the '90's, but we found it in a few hours without really looking for it.

The famous Spiny Forest near Ifaty was a highlight. I was able to get a picture of the Desert Mesite on a nest and the Long-tailed Ground-Roller before having to head back to the lodge and be very ill for the rest of the stay there. The third morning, on the day we left, I first noticed that I had a gorgeous view from my front deck of the Indian Ocean with local boats, framed by overhanging trees and flowers.

Much of the rest of the trip featured coastal areas, which included a boat trip out into Mahajenga Bay where we saw flamingos, shorebirds, and the endemic Bernier's Teal. There was also a trip out to Nosy Ve, an island, to see nesting Red-tailed Tropicbirds. This started with a ride on a Zebu cart out into the ocean to board the boat. I missed the island excursion as I was back at the lodge close to the necessary facilities.

The last few days were at Masoala, where we were treated to a wet rainforest. There was a book there about building the Masoala Rainforest at the Zurich Zoo, which I promptly showed all my fellow travelers. It turned out the Zurich Zoo is the main conservation



organization in Masoala, with several projects ongoing. The scientists often stay at the lodge



THE LONG-TAILED GROUND ROLLER WAS ONE OF THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SPINY FOREST. *URATELORNIS CHIMAERA*



ABOVE: LARGE TROUPES OF RING-TAILED LEMURS WERE VERY TAME NEAR ISALO.
LEMUR CATT

OPPOSITE PAGE: THE VERREAUX'S SIFAKA WAS THE STAR OF THE ZOMBITSE
FOREST PUTTING ON QUITE A LONG JUMP EXHIBITION
PROPITHECUS VERREAUXI



WE SAW THESE LEAF BUGS ALL OVER MADAGASCAR. WE WOULD SEE A BRANCH COVERED WITH THESE "WHITE FLOWERS" THE LARVAL FORM. AT ISALO, WE HAD THE ORANGE ADULT BUGS AND THE LARVAL FORM ON THE SAME BRANCH.





THE MADAGASCAR PYGMY KINGFISHER IS ANOTHER FOREST SKULKER.
CORYTHORNIS MADAGASCARIENSIS



THE BLACK AND WHITE RUFFED LEMUR
WAS A NOISY CITIZEN OF MASOALA
VARECIA VARIEGATA

THE AFRICAN SACRED IBIS WAS SEEN IN BOTH COUNTRIES. THIS IS THE
MADAGASCAR SPECIES.
THRESKIORNIS BERNIERI (MADAGASCAR)





TOP LEFT: THERE IS A FANTASTIC
LEAF-TAILED GECKO ON THE MIDDLE
BRANCH. CAN YOU MAKE HIM OUT?
UROPLATUS PHANTASTICUS



MIDDLE RIGHT: THERE IS A MOSSY
LEAF-TAILED GECKO ON THIS TREE.
UROPLATUS FIMBRIATUS
THIS IS HIS HEAD (MOSSY)

BELOW: THIS IS HIS HEAD (MOSSY)



when in country, and the owners of the lodge were instrumental in creating the exhibit at the zoo. They had supplied most of the cultural information in the exhibit as well.

Masoala is the home of the Helmet Vanga, our main target bird. The forest birding in all of Madagascar was quite frustrating for me. The trails are narrow, so it is usually single file, and being a larger form of human with tricky knees on steep ground, I was usually near the rear. Thus, I was often blocked when a bird appeared in the front of the group. There were several times when an hour into the jungle, I

would realize I had seen a lot of trail and backsides, but no interesting birds. Justin is a complete barbarian when it comes to locating birds, so he would head off the trail down the hillside, through vines and stickers and god knows what else, to show us one thing or another the guides had found. He was usually in shorts and either flip-flops or barefoot the entire time. We were rewarded on these excursions often by nesting birds, usually Madagascar Paradise Flycatchers, but also with Leaf-tailed Geckos and chameleons. Several hours into one of the last morning hikes, when I had left the camera in the lodge because I just did not

MALAGASY PARADISE FLYCATCHER *TERPSIPHONE MUTATA*





MALAGASY PARADISE FLYCATCHER *TERPSIPHONE MUTATA*

want to bang it around the steep muddy trails, I was exhausted and generally frustrated with lack of birds and comfortable air temperature and humidity. I simply refused to go down a steep hillside where Justin had directed the rest of the group. He convinced me that I really wanted to see this, so over the hill I went. The inner monologue which I think I was actually saying loud enough for anyone to hear was, "This better be a \$%&%%\$% Helmet Vanga on a nest

or I am *^%&%% going to push Justin down the rest of this *&!%@ mountain." It was a Helmet Vanga on a nest. I got pictures, not good ones, with my iPhone.

I saw 131 bird species in Madagascar, 30 less than most of the group, but there were a lot of endemics, so it was worth it. Plus, all those lemurs and lizards.

BIRD'S NEST FERNS LIVE UP TO THEIR NAME IN THE FORESTS OF MADAGASCAR.
THIS IS A COLLARED NIGHTJAR ROOSTING IN ONE. OUR BEST VIEW OF
MADAGASCAR CRESTED IBIS WAS A BIRD NESTING IN ONE OF THESE FERNS
GACTORNIS ENARRATUS (NIGHTJAR) *LOPHOTIBIS CRISTATA* (IBIS)



LINED DAY GECKOS WERE
THE COMMON ONES NEAR
PERINET.
PHELSUMA LINEATA

Mozambique

A flight back to South Africa, a night in Johannesburg and a short flight to Maputo in the south of Mozambique and my Mozambique tour began. The initial Mozambique tour had been canceled because only one couple had signed up, but Cheepers was able to book me on the tour by myself. It was just me and the guides! No more fighting for position to see a bird. The only person who had to see a bird was me. At one of the places we stayed, as the proprietor was handing out keys, one room for me and one room for the two guides, he referred to my cabin as the “superior unit.” I decided this was a good form of address for the rest of the trip, and the good-natured guides occasionally used it. I am now trying to get all my friends and acquaintances to address me as such as well.

At the airport, I was met by Errol, my guide for the first few days, and Tyrone, a guide in training. Justin would meet us a few days later and Errol would go back to South Africa. On our way to Honeypot Camp for the first overnight, we stopped at the Macaneta Wetlands and I took pictures of Yellow-throated and Rosy-throated Longclaws, a sort of African version of the Meadowlark, among the forty or so species there.

*At one of the places
we stayed, as the
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handing out keys,
one room for me and
one room for the two
guides, he referred
to my cabin as the
“superior unit.” I
decided this was a
good form of address
for the rest of the trip,
and the good-natured
guides occasionally
used it.*

Mozambique



ZAMBIA

Lilongwe ★

Cahora Bassa

★ Harare

ZIMBABWE

Gorongosa

SOUTH
AFRICA

Southern
Mozambique

Pretoria ★

Mbabane ★

★ Maputo

Johannesburg ●

● Ponta d'Ouro

ESWATINI



■ Bazaruto Archipelago
■ Vilanculos

■ Tofo Beach
● Inhambane





MACANETA WETLAND YIELDED BOTH ROSY-THROATED
(ABOVE) AND YELLOW-THROATED LONGCLAWS (BELOW)
MACRONYX AMELIAE (ROSY) MACRONYX CROCEUS (YELLOW)
AS WELL AS RUFOUS-WINGED CISTICOLA CISTICOLA
GALACTOTES (OPPOSITE PAGE)







RED-NECKED SPURFOWL WERE OFTEN IN THE ROAD
PTERNISTIS AFER

When we got up in the morning, we took a short walk around the camp. Across the road, we scared up a pair of Shelley's Francolins that we had heard calling. As they came across the path, they were followed by Red-necked Spurfowl – two Francolins simultaneously. I am loving Mozambique already. We also had a group of Peter's Twinspots by the cabins.

The day Justin joined us, I was in birding paradise -- the Panda area, a mixed grassland, a premiere birding spot in Mozambique, with two of the best guides in southern Africa and a trainee that was a superb birder and photographer. We saw more species that one day than

I had the entire Madagascar trip, and we had ridiculous experiences, such as photographing a Black-rumped Buttonquail with iPhones because we were too close for the big cameras.

Our mode of transportation was Justin's "Bucky," that's South African for King Cab with a covered bed. Many of the roads had a lot of character, so seatbelts were a necessity. There were several times when Justin attempted to make me shorter by slamming my head against the roof as we jounced along. He also was of the opinion that roads were just a suggestion and would take off across grasslands in pursuit of bustards or buttonquail.



ERROL SHOT THIS BLACK-RUMPED BUTTONQUAIL *TURNIX NANUS* WITH MY I-PHONE AT ABOUT 18" FROM THE BIRD. TYRONE IS ON THE RIGHT IN THE GRASS. THIS LITTLE GUY WOULD NOT FLUSH AND EVENTUALLY JUST WALKED OFF THROUGH THE BURNT BRUSH.

WE SAW MORE OF THESE LIZARD BUZZARDS THAN ANY OTHER PERCHING HAWK
KAUPIFALCO MONOGRAMMICUS

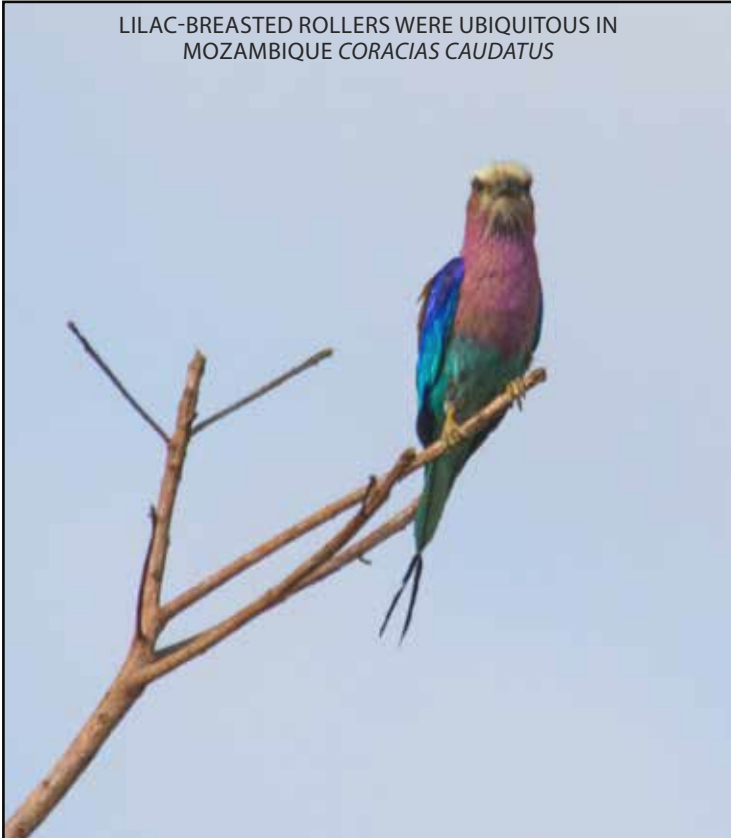




THE MOST COMMON BEE-EATER IN MOZAMBIQUE IS THE LITTLE BEE-EATER *MEROPS PUSILLUS*

One such excursion took us near a lake that had ducks and Darters with Whiskered Terns cruising overhead. Justin decided to go chase some Gallinules we had glimpsed in a bunch of reeds. "I'll go flush them out." (I told you he was a birding barbarian). Nearly chest-high in the reeds, he started a Eurasian Bittern, which proceeded to land on the far side of the lake. This very rare sighting sent both Ty and Justin to the other side of the lake in the high reeds to flush the Bittern back to my side of the lake. It's good to be the Superior Unit!

LILAC-BREASTED ROLLERS WERE UBIQUITOUS IN
MOZAMBIQUE *CORACIAS CAUDATUS*



Each day was a birding day trip, starting early and driving somewhere in the forest or along the coast, grabbing a bag lunch, getting in late, all guided by an expert on the birds and animals of the area. Justin would stop by the side of the road and either stalk something he had heard, or call in something he had staked out. We

were literally birding all the time. Mozambique has lots of beautiful birds; kingfishers, bee-eaters, sunbirds, Gorgeous or Four-colored Bush-Shrike, the cuckoos and Helmet-shrikes, hornbills, rollers . . . there were Lilac-breasted Rollers everywhere, barely commented on because of their ubiquity.

We spent a bit of time on the coast, wasting a morning out on a boat hoping to swim with whale sharks and manta rays. But the big boys decided to take the day off, so we had to be satisfied with some dolphins who split before we could get in the water. We saw a lot of shorebirds and the like on some truly beautiful beaches.

Most of the trip was in the extended Gorongosa National Park. We spent a few nights in the park proper, but there, birding was limited to being in the car. We did take an evening game drive to the lake in the middle of the park – lions, antelope, pelicans, flamingos, gin and tonics at the lake at sundown, and running into a tree to avoid an antelope on the way back. Now I know what that big bar on the front of the vehicle is for!

It rained later that night and into the morning. The rain brought the birds and animals out in the morning and that was our day to see Racquet-tailed Rollers. A large Boomslang eating an inflated frog by the side of the road was another unusual experience.

By nightfall, the bugs were out in force, termite hatches up to large katydids and locusts. The restaurant area had only a few lights on and staff could not uncover any food for more than a few seconds. We ate as large insects landed on the table and on our food and clothes and faces. A large toad hopped across the floor eating only the smallest of the bugs.

Our main base was Mpuengue, a logging camp north of the park proper and south of the Zambesi

GREATER FLAMINGO *PHOENICOPTERUS ROSEUS*



CROWNED HORNBILL *LOPHOCEROS ALBOTERMINATUS*



River, the northern boundary of the southern Africa birding area. I guess northern Mozambique is East Africa. The days included sightings of antelope, dikers, even a bush baby. Birds were everywhere. Scimitarbills crossed our vision several times a day. Trumpeter Hornbills and Purple Turacos flew

across the road or disappeared into the dense trees. Flocks of Helmet-shrikes flew through the trees daring us to try to get pictures. And then there were tons of little weird birds, like Apalis, Camaroptera, Cisticolas, weavers and always the large Pied Crows.



PIED CROWS ARE EVERYWHERE IN MOZAMBIQUE AND COMMON IN MADAGASCAR AS WELL, *CORVUS ALBUS*



LIVINGSTONE'S FLYCATCHERS WERE COMMON FOREST BIRDS
ERYTHROCERCUS LIVINGSTONEI



RETZ'S AND WHITE-CRESTED HELMETSHRIKES WERE EVERYWHERE IN MOZAMBIQUE FORESTS. THEY TRAVELLED IN GROUPS AND MOVED THROUGH AN AREA AT SPEED, THUS MAKING THEM HARD TO PHOTOGRAPH. THIS IS THE MORE RARE CHESTNUT-FRONTED HELMETSHRIKE.
PRIONOPS SCOPIFRONS

THE YELLOW-BILLED KITE IS THE SOUTH AFRICAN AND MADAGASCAR VERSION OF
THE COMMON BLACK KITE *MILVUS AEGYPTUS*





THIS COMMON FOREST TYPE GRAY-HEADED KINGFISHER HAS CAUGHT A MOTH
HALCYON LEUCOCEPHALA





THIS MANGROVE KINGFISHER IS DISPLAYING
HALCYON SENEGALOIDES

THIS SOUTHERN FOAM-NEST FROG WAS SITTING
IN A STONE CROSS IN A COURTYARD IN CENTRAL
MOZAMBIQUE
CHIROMANTIS XERAMPELINA





TOP LEFT: MOZAMBIQUE HAS MANY DIFFERENT SPECIES OF WEAVERS. I WAS ABLE TO CATCH A FOREST WEAVER *FOREST PLOCEUS BICOLOR* BUILDING HIS SOLITARY NEST, BOTTOM LEFT: A VILLAGE WEAVER *VILLAGE PLOCEUS CUCULLATUS* IN A HUGE COLONY TREE AT THE ENTRANCE OF GORONGOZA NATIONAL PARK.



A RED-HEADED WEAVER WORKING ITS
NEST *ANAPLECTES RUBRICEPS*

THE
SP
JUS
TR



SE TWO CURIOUS AFRICAN WILD DOGS
ENT A HALF HOUR APPROACHING US.
TIN'S FEET ARE AT THE BUMPER OF THE
RUCK. I AM AT THE DOOR BESIDE THE
TRUCK.
LYCAON PICTUS



This all was topped off by an incident late in the afternoon a few days before the trip was over. We were going down a dirt road and Justin stopped. Way down the road were two African Wild Dogs. Justin said. "We'll wait. They'll come right down this road." The dogs did indeed come down the road and ended up so close we were using our i-phones again. This is apparently highly unusual (certainly in my life) as Wild Dogs are usually in packs and are a lot more skittish around people. These two were very curious and were so relaxed, they lay down in the road several times.

A few days later, we finished up the trip at Rio Suave, a grassland where we were treated to Temminck's Coursers with chicks wandering in the short grass. Hours later I was heading back to South Africa with great memories and lots of mediocre pictures.

Links to youtube videos are on the following page.

VIDEO LINKS

▶ **Singing Indri** – this one will get your dog or flamingo into the room

youtube.com/watch?v=4d3vF15Upic

▶ **Helmet Vanga**

youtube.com/watch?v=Hus3TWHzYAQ

▶ **Helmet Vanga**

youtube.com/watch?v=HqVUsXxqStM

▶ **Sickle-billed Vanga**

youtube.com/watch?v=1uCfqx65NrY

▶ **Vangas**

youtube.com/watch?v=BDiVKyXieA8

▶ **Couas**

youtube.com/watch?v=2Q6awyjkdM

▶ **Lemur Island**

youtube.com/watch?v=6g8m17c9KE8



▶ **Dancing Sifaka**

youtube.com/watch?v=B5ozDXsJufY

▶ **Gorgeous Bush-Shrike**

youtube.com/watch?v=pl6pwQXxvAg

▶ **Racquet-tailed Roller**

youtube.com/watch?v=_YOPwjdXjEo

▶ **Racquet-tailed Roller**

youtube.com/watch?v=1Q3lJysXRL4

▶ **Scimitarbills**

youtube.com/watch?v=AAzi3HqtioU

▶ **Pennant-winged Nightjar**

youtube.com/watch?v=faCl1KbHHHA

EDITOR'S NOTE: John York is an avid birder, traveling the globe to view birds in their natural environment and is very active in the avian community and supports the Avicultural Society of America by attending our annual conference and answering the call for articles when asked. Be like John.



A Method for Correction of Crooked Bird Toes

Donovan Jasper



EAST AFRICAN CROWNED CRANE *BALEARICA REGULORUM*
PHOTO DONOVAN JASPER

Abstract

A splinting method has been devised, tested, and found to be very effective at correcting markedly deformed toes of young birds with large feet. While previous studies have used tape alone as a method to straighten crooked toes and straws to splint bone fractures, this may be the first study to use the combination of tape and straws to more effectively straighten bird toes. This technique, employing

appropriately-sized drinking straws, can improve quality and length of life. Male birds with markedly deformed toes often cannot reproduce as they are unable to properly and securely mount their mates.

Correction of severe deformity is mandatory for the survival of all birds that are to be released into the wild. This splinting technique can lead to greater success among breeding

programs designed to repopulate endangered bird species.

Introduction

It can be devastating when an endangered or rare bird is unable to mount for breeding purposes because of crooked, non-functional toes. Birds with long toes without webs are particularly at risk. This study was undertaken to evaluate both the duration and the efficacy of rigid splinting of malformed toes using plastic drinking straws. Like long bird bones, plastic straws are light in weight and rigid as a result

of their cylindrical shape. The straw can readily be sized and trimmed to provide excellent support to 3 surfaces of the toe.

Materials

East African crowned crane *Balearica regulorum* and African swamphen *Porphyrio madagascariensis* chicks with crooked toes, plastic drinking straws of appropriate diameter, tape, scissors, protractor (inanimate materials in Figure 1).



FIGURE 1. MATERIALS USED FOR SPLINTING

Methods

Only *Balearica regulorum* and *Porphyrio madagascariensis* chicks with severely crooked toes were selected. All normal chicks were excluded. After meticulously measuring and recording toe angles with a protractor (Figure 2), shortened toe tendons were stretched gently by hand until straight. A straw was custom cut along its length for each of the crooked toes. This enabled the

bird's toe to be cradled inside the straw circumference. Tape was first applied somewhat snugly, straightening the proximal interphalangeal joint (Figure 3). Distal taping was then carried out including corrective torsion. When necessary, the tip of the straw was notched to trap the toenail to aid in maintenance of this corrective torsion (Figure 4). The straws were removed on the 7th and 14th



FIGURE 2



FIGURE 3



FIGURE 4

Results (in degrees of Deviation from Straight)

0 degrees = Straight
24 toes on 4 birds
12 Left, 12 Right

Table 1

| Initial (Left) | Initial (Right) | 7 Days (Left) | 7 Days (Right) | 14 Days (Left) | 14 Days (Right) |
|----------------|-----------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 104 | 112 | 12 | 5 | 3 | 0 |
| 132 | 116 | 17 | 9 | 5 | 4 |
| 111 | 122 | 4 | 8 | 2 | 3 |
| 106 | 107 | 5 | 10 | 0 | 3 |
| 98 | 79 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 125 | 114 | 8 | 6 | 3 | 2 |
| 119 | 105 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 1 |
| 124 | 130 | 11 | 12 | 1 | 3 |
| 116 | 113 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 109 | 115 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 2 |
| 136 | 128 | 10 | 9 | 3 | 2 |
| 94 | 55 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 1374 | 1296 | 90 | 74 | 23 | 20 |

Totals:

Average Number of Degrees of Deviation from Straight (Left and Right) (N/12):

Table 2

| | L | R | | L | R | | L | R |
|-----------------|-------|-------|----------------|-----|-----|-----------------|-----|-----|
| Initial: | 114.5 | 108.0 | 7 Days: | 6.6 | 5.6 | 14 Days: | 1.9 | 1.7 |

Overall Average Degrees of Deviation from Straight $\{(L+R)/2\}$:

Table 3

| | | | | | |
|-----------------|-------|----------------|-----|-----------------|-----|
| Initial: | 111.3 | 7 Days: | 6.1 | 14 Days: | 1.8 |
|-----------------|-------|----------------|-----|-----------------|-----|

The data collected represents a 98.4% correction over a 2 week period (Table 1). The toes underwent significant improvement (Tables 2 and 3, Figure 4).



FIGURE 5

Discussion:

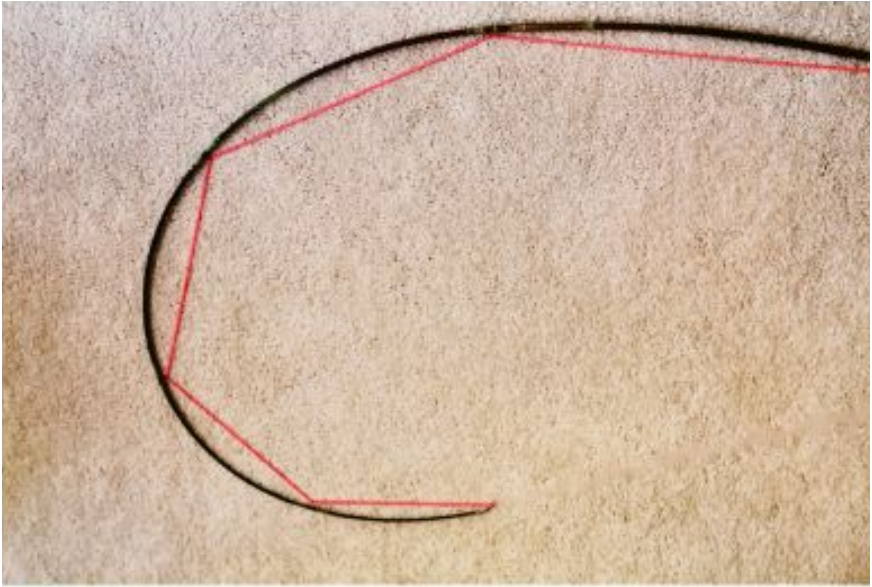
The efficacy of the splinting technique presented is based on maintaining a proper position long enough for the stretched flexor tendon and muscle to elongate, as well as for the collateral ligaments to stretch on the inside and contract on the outside of the deviation to stabilize the joint.

Tendons attach muscles to bones to affect movement. Ligaments attach bone to bone to affect stabilization. Motion in bird feet is achieved by movement of tendons through connective tissue sheaths which function like the string guides on a fishing pole (Figure 6). When toes are significantly displaced, both tendons and ligaments become important contributors to the problem. Flexor tendons employed for perching and grasping are much stronger than extensor tendons. When flexor tendons become shortened and “bowstring” to the

side, they make it impossible for the bird to straighten its own toes.

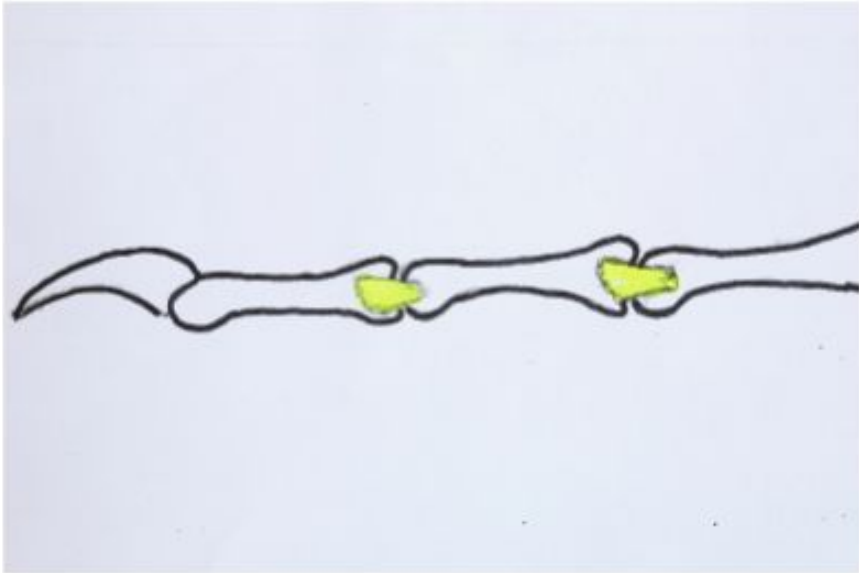
The collateral ligaments (Figure 7) that should stabilize the joint from side to side contract on one side of the joint and stretch out on the other allowing the joint to move sideways.

The contracted ligament on one side maintains the deformity and the stretched ligament on the opposite side allows the displacement that it would normally prevent. Stretching of the shortened flexor tendon and contracted collateral ligament becomes progressively more difficult as a bird ages and tissues become less supple. In the mature bird, straightening the deformed toe becomes a practical impossibility. When the treated bird is very young, surprisingly excellent and long-lasting results are obtained with this approach.



(Shortened Tendon Keeps Toe Crooked)

FIGURE 6



(Collateral Ligaments in Yellow)

FIGURE 7

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About the Author



Donovan Jasper has been a bird whisperer from a very early age. He is now a 17-year-old rising senior at Jesuit High School in Carmichael, California. As this article demonstrates, he has a highly exceptional grasp of science for his age. He cofounded Echelon Catapult where he is the CEO and a highly reviewed peer mentor. It will be of great interest to see what echelons he will reach after college and beyond. He has the clear makings of a future avicultural leader.



ASA Tribute to

Daniel Paul Shearing

13 March 1951 – 24 March 2020



**Sharon Duncan
Letter to Daniel Shearing**

Dear Daniel, I am so very sorry I didn't pick up the phone the last time you called. Yes, I heard it ring, but dear God man, it was 3:30 in the morning, and well, time zones are a real thing. I fully intended to call you back in the morning, but then life got in the way, and one thing led to another. It was just a couple weeks later that I got the news that you had left us to dance eternity away with Janice. Life lessons taught, ALWAYS call dear friends back. Perspective.

Janice's gain is our loss, but it makes me smile to think of you two together again. Though I never had the pleasure of meeting her in person, the way you voiced and wrote about your love for her warmed the heart of many. Beyond that though, it revealed who you were at your core. A dedicated family man, who had endured painful losses, but was very comfortable expressing his love for his wife, daughters and grandchildren. Being in the presence of someone who valued and was able to talk as openly about devotion and love as you did, is a gift. Thank you for showing me the beauty and strength that comes with being vulnerable.

Dedication comes in many shapes and sizes, and sometimes we find connections in places we least expect. As the "other half" of an avid aviculturist, I have attended many ASA events over the years. I believe I remember Steven telling me, when I would ask "is Daniel coming," that you had attended pretty much every conference, except the last one due to health

reasons. I know that ASA is grateful for your dedication and support to the organizations, but I am thankful for your dedication to ASA, because without it, I would not have had the chance to see you at least once a year.

It was hard for me to tell my kids you had left us. They both have such fond memories of you, showing us around London, talking to you at bird conferences, and speaking in puns. While they both pride themselves on their "punmanship", they admittedly acquiesced the title to you the "Punmaster." It is impossible for me not to think of you whenever I come across a good pun or joke, and I am sure I am not alone in that. To think that you will waltz through the minds of your friends and family as they encounter humor throughout their lives, means your memory is always accompanied by a brain-tickling smile (and perhaps an occasional eye-roll for good measure). That alone is a pretty powerful legacy.

Finally a last thank you for the gifts. You really knew how to woo someone. Living in Cheddar England made your gift list abroad obvious, but the perfumes? A houseguest that shows up with perfume you would never splurge on for yourself, and a most precious and hard to get cheese, is a special one indeed. Hearing what it took to get that cheese here (for those not in the know, it's akin to navigating export laws over rare objects), made it all the more special. Our guest room will miss you, cheddar will be respected forever, and I will always think of you when I wear Chanel N 5.

until we are able to see each other again (where I know you will proudly introduce me to Janice), I say goodbye to you, Great Punmaster, Smuggler of Cheese, Rock-n-roll Junkie, Tilted-Kilt fan, Farrell's Ice Cream Parlor Inductee (a night I will never forget), Aviculturist, Supplier of Perfume, Devoted family man, and World-Traveler who shared yourself and made friends on so many different coasts. Daniel, I miss you, but I am going to focus on the smile I know must be on your face as you hold the dear ones you spoke so often about in your arms. Thank you for being part of my family's life.





GAIL WORTH

It is with a broken heart that I must let the many friends of Daniel Shearing of Cheddar, England know that he left this earthly plane today, March 24, 2020, Daniel was involved in aviculture from the time he could first remember as his father was the head keeper of birds for the British aviculturist, Alfred Ezra: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alfred_Ezra.

Daniel was the editor for the publications of the British Foreign Bird League and the Avicultural Society of Britain. He was a great friend of North American aviculture, having attended many avicultural conferences in the US. He always had a smile and an English quip and often concealed a bottle of good Scotch under his coat during banquets!

He was a man devoted to his family, especially his two beloved daughters and his grandchildren. He will be sorely missed by his many friends on several continents. Daniel was one of a kind, a true gentleman, and irreplaceable in my heart!





DANIEL SHEARING





*We will
miss you at
ASA conferences
Daniel!*

GREEN-CHEEKED CONURES NOMINATE AND
MUTATIONS *PYRRHURA MOLINAE*
PHOTO STEVE DUNCAN





Thoughts from Steve Duncan

I wanted to start a new thread of discussion. I was asked about an important topic – “Do you think it is a vicious cycle where because birds are hand raised they make poor parents, or do you think parrots are just naturally poor parents in captivity? I’m thinking of the grass parakeets I deal with tend to be pretty awesome parents but are rarely hand raised. This is your opportunity to discuss this topic and educate someone who does not know.” I would also like to address the notion of bird ranching or mass production.

I don’t think birds that are hand-raised make poor parents in general. There are exceptions to that rule though. In those specific cases, it would be important to provide opportunities to produce parent-reared offspring, but I would never assume or make a blanket assertion that hand-rearing is ruining the ability of birds to raise their own offspring. I base my understanding upon many species I’ve personally worked with over multiple generations. I also don’t think parrots are generally poor parents in captivity, and there are exceptions to that rule as well. I agree with Roland that the cause is likely to be that we have not provided something the birds need to be successful. Understand that there are problematic pairs of species that otherwise are good parents. Like Chris Touchton mentioned, I find that most of the

hand-reared birds I deal with are better parents than parent-reared birds most likely because they are calmer and less stressed by the daily human intrusion into their lives. I believe the difference we see has less to do with whether or not a bird was hand-reared and more to do with how it was kept from the time it was weaned to the time it reaches sexual maturity.

Regarding bird ranching or mass-producing birds – There are a number of species that are produced in what I would call commercial quantities. Green-cheeked Conures were mentioned. I would say that ringneck pheasants, bobwhites, ringneck doves, button quail, coturnix quail, Indian ringneck parakeets, cockatiels, lovebirds, canaries, zebra finches and possibly Gouldian finches fit that category as well. We might throw in Lineolated Parakeets, Parrotlets, Sun Conures, Bourkes Parakeets, and Red-rumps too. I’m sure I’ve left out a few. Since Green-cheeks were mentioned and I raise a lot of them, I’ll stick to that species. I do openly call myself a commercial breeder. I suppose I’m a bird rancher or mass-producer in that case. I have no problem with that. Some may find that notion distasteful. What I find distasteful is people who think commercial breeders “dump their birds on the market without a care for how they’re treated” and are therefore evil, greedy people.

Regarding dumping my birds on the market – The price I get for my normal Green-cheeks has tripled in the past decade or so. Why? Because fewer and fewer people are breeding birds. There is a demand for Green-cheeks in the pet trade. That demand is huge, and I fill a tiny percentage of it. If that market became flooded with too much production, or if demand fell off, the market value of the birds will drop, and I would severely cut my production. That's how it works. I also spend countless hours educating people on the proper care of pet birds as well as breeder birds, because I do care very much about the well-being of the birds I raise and about the responsibility of the pet industry and avicultural community to provide good information to consumers. It should also be understood that the Green-cheek conures I raise fund the care for my hornbills, turacos, cranes and other birds that are not commercially viable species. My Green-cheeks are directly contributing to the preservation of much rarer birds in aviculture.

To add an additional thought to this discussion, I will add that people are often critical of things like Green-cheeked Conures taking over aviary space while things like Fiery-shoulder, Maroon-belly or Pearly Conures are disappearing. The criticism usually includes that people are chasing the dollar or a fad instead of preserving different species. While there is a small amount of truth to that because economics is a big factor in the decision of what to raise commercially, the reality is that those other species are not as prolific

and are not as suited to commercial production. They sell for about the same price or higher. If they bred as well as Green-cheeks, you can be sure that they would be produced in much larger quantities than they are. As mentioned above, it is my Green-cheeks that provide the funding to rear other, less commercially viable birds. Most importantly, none of this in any way harms the birds I raise.

*The price I get for
my normal Green-
cheeks has tripled in
the past decade or so.*

*Why? Because fewer
and fewer people are
breeding birds.*

Controversy

Lou Megens

NATURAL HABITAT AVIARY PHOTO LOU MEGENS



My Facebook “friends” consist of a mix of people I know personally and with whom I also maintain contact. But by far the largest part of people I have never seen or met and probably never will. Not least because of the global distribution. But that does not mean that we cannot have and share the same interests. I am a nature lover, more specifically a bird lover, who also puts (a lot of) time and effort into trying to breed with bird species. These are often European insectivorous birds.

I write down these breeding experiences in breeding reports, articles and columns and have also written a few books about it. I also give lectures on birds. The latter applies to traditional bird associations, but also to bird shelters, IVN's (Insitute for Nature Educations and durability) and nature and bird organizations, even once to 125 pupils at a primary school between the ages of 6 and 9 years. A special experience.... All this with great pleasure.

So I love birds, I was born with “feathers”, as we say. And because birds in nature are so beautiful to me, I also have many nature photographers and bird lovers of birds in nature among my Facebook friends. But because I also try to breed birds, there are many like-minded people within the same group who also try to breed birds. And there the shoe pinches. A bird lover who breeds birds is almost always also a nature lover. But a nature lover usually doesn't want

to know anything about birds in aviculture (captivity) And there we have our controversy!

I recently posted on my Facebook timeline with a picture of my bee-eaters in the aviary. The first reactions were from bird breeders, who responded with interest. But there was also a French nature lover who asked questions (in English) why these birds were kept in captivity.

Before I could answer, a bird breeder reacted rather sneeringly in Dutch. Whereupon the French nature lover angrily wondered why he was attacked, when he only asked a question! Well, everyone was answered by me, but this discussion clearly exposes the controversy between bird lovers (breeders) on one side and nature lovers on the other! How did that happen? Why can one love birds in nature as well as in captivity and the other is so fundamentally opposed to aviculture?

A controversy is a difference of opinion, but even more an ideological struggle (Dutch encyclopedia). The word controversy dates from 1824 and comes from Old French (controverisie) and Latin (controversia = opposite direction). So it is more than looking at the same thing in different ways. It is an opposite direction, an ideological battle! And therefore insoluble! The aviculturist argues that his birds are well fed, well cared for, balanced food and water, are not in danger



NATURAL HABITAT AVIARY PHOTO LOU MEGENS

of predation and live in beautiful biotope aviaries and that their well-being is reflected in the fact that they even breed and raise young, which they really wouldn't do if they weren't in great top condition and feel safe! The nature lover has only one answer: "but birds do not belong in captivity"! And this one-liner will kill any further discussion. This discussion cannot be won. If there is no willingness to empathy, there will be no acceptance.

Should we give up hope? No! Because we will have to continue to invest in education and information, to be open and to continuously send out our positive message. All to protect our beautiful hobby. So that we don't have to give up what

we have built up, because that danger does indeed exist! The large crowd, who really do not know the difference between a blackbird and a song thrush, automatically (ignorant as they are) move to the side of the nature lover. They do not want to delve into aviculture, but prefer to resist it.

After all, it is much more fashionable to torment with the crowd and to follow the ever louder voice of the nature organizations. It also makes sense that "a bird does not belong in captivity". Under the same guise, the cats are therefore released at night, because "Felix really does not belong inside". After all, the damage that is done there does not occur directly under their eyes... ..

BLUETHROAT *LUSCINIA SVECICA* IN NATURE
PHOTO PAUL COOLS



Let's continue to propagate our hobby positively. Write breeding reports or other stories that show your love for everything that lives. Improve the shows. Be open and transparent. Maybe we can reach some kind of truce, but we'll never win this controversy!

EUROPEAN WHEATEAR *OENANTHE OENANTHE*, AT
BIRDSHOW PHOTO LOU MEGEN





WOODLARK CHICKS, *LULLULA ARBOREA* IN AVIARY PHOTO LOU



NEST OF YELLOW WAGTAIL, *MOTACYLLA FLAVA* IN AVIARY PHOTO LOU
MEGENS





RED-BACKED SHRIKE CHICKS, *LANIUS COLLURIO*, IN AVIARY PHOTO LOU MEGENS

EGGS AND CHICK OF LITTLE RINGED PLOVER *CHARADRIUS DUBIUS* IN AVIARY PHOTO LOU MEGENS



LITTLE RINGED PLOVER *CHARADRIUS DUBIUS* AT
BIRDSHOW PHOTO LOU MEGENS



EURASIAN JAY *GARRULAX GLANDARIUS*
PHOTO BART BIEMANS



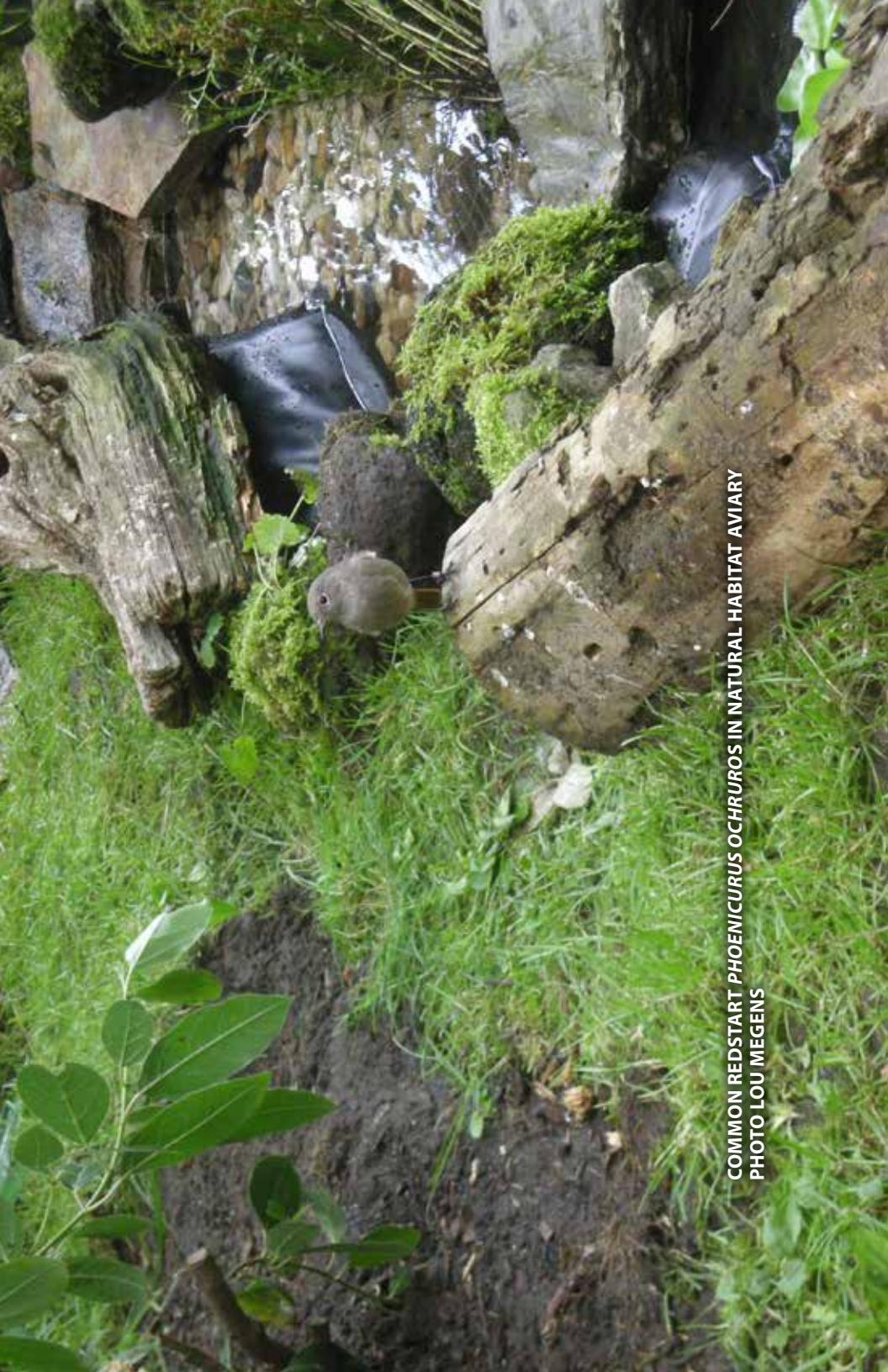
EUROPEAN STONECHAT *SAXICOLA RUBICOLA* AT BIRDSHOW
PHOTO LOU MEGENS





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COMMON REDSTART *PHOENICURUS OCHRUROS* IN NATURAL HABITAT AVIARY
PHOTO LOU MEGENS

EUROPEAN NIGHTINGALE *LUSCINIA MEGHARHYNCHOS* IN NATURAL HABITAT AVIARY
PHOTO LOU MEGENS







Not Steve's Photo Pick

Crested coua *Coua cristata* is endemic to Madagascar. This bird has rather plain feather coloring but stands out with its beautiful opthalmic skin patch colored in bright blue and morphing into lavender around the eye. In the US these birds are general found only in zoos. In the wild, the are considered "least concern" by IUCN.

A New Way of Hand Rearing Chilean Flamingos
*Tiago Nabiço, Manager Operations of Wisbroek Research & Develop
Center (tnabico@wisbroek.com)*





The amazing Chilean flamingo (*Phoenicopterus chilensis*) is such a fantastic bird. Being more pink than the slightly larger Greater Flamingo, it's however more pale than the Caribbean Flamingo. They are distributed in temperate South America, inhabiting alkaline or brackish shallow lakes. Standing from 120 to 150 cm high, Chilean flamingos are large birds that can weigh from 5 to 7 Kg. Gregarious, social birds, they live in flocks of up to several thousand individuals, breeding, feeding, and flying all together. They use the size of the group as a strategic defense against predators and weather variations. Flamingos can live for up to 50 years in the wild and in captivity they can reach even more. The actual record of a Greater flamingo that died in captivity was, in estimation, 83 years old!

At Wisbroek we keep a group of 80 individuals in a big mixed aviary. They inhabit together with Scarlet Ibis (*Eudocimus ruber*), Roseate Spoonbills (*Platalea ajaja*) and Inca terns (*Larosterna inca*). The breeding results are always very good. Many eggs are laid each season, however because of the constant climate change it's difficult to predict if the weather will be favorable for the chicks. Due to this factor we always take them all to hand rear.

For the ones that did it already it's a fact that hand rear a flamingo is quite a handful! Most of them need to be hand fed with a probe for more than 2 months. And if the procedure is not well made, it can

result in a total dependency from the bird to be fed by a probe much more time than it was supposed to. Wisbroek's philosophy is always research in a top nutrition that can fulfill all the needs from the birds, but at the same time develop ways to facilitate the feeding processes. As an example the fact that Wisbroek Ibis-Flamingo floating can be fed dry with greater efficiency. Also as we design a food that can be used all year around instead of having a breeder and a maintenance. Flamingos don't change the feeding strategy in the wild in the breeding season. They eat the same all the time! So why change their diet before breeding? It's all about the correct amount of fat and protein and most importantly, the source of that fat and that protein! That way they will reach breeding time in perfect shape, and being opportunistic breeders by nature, they will breed if they feel safe and with the right conditions. So if this is what happens in the wild, why not mimic the same in captivity right? That's the way I like to think.

Going back to the main subject, we wanted to create a pellet that could be fed to the young birds in a very thin age. What triggered this idea was the fact that we saw the babies with just some days old already with the beak in water and do some filtering behavior, despite the fact they are still not anatomically ready for that. Nevertheless we thought since they appear to drink some water so soon, why not add





something that they can also eat and maybe wean them faster!?

A floating pellet was created with 2-3mm in size and a big test was made. This year was perfect for a big trial as we had more than 60 youngsters. The Wisbroek Ibis-Flamingo floating was taken into a base start. A few more ingredients were added in order to increase a bit the protein level and a few more adjustments were made.

The procedure was the same for all. We started the first 5 days with a hand rearing formula we design that it's basically 40% boiled eggs, 40% yolks of boiled eggs and 20% of Wisbroek Ibis-Flamingo floating, everything blended with bottled water or previously boiled if from the tap. From the 2nd day we immediately offered a small dish with no more than 1 cm of water with some of this new floating pellets. Now we just needed to wait for them to try to eat them. We noticed that some of them started immediately, others not so much. This could be an issue because our goal was to do something standard but we all know that when we talk about birds nothing can really be defined as standard...

So we decided to concentrate less in the day that they should eat by themselves and more in ways to stimulate them to do it as fast as possible, what factors could influence, and in what ways we could help. This was very interesting and lead us to good results. The most important thing is make sure that from the day that they stand (normally the 2nd day), water is available with some small pellets

floating. If they eat them, perfect. Keep controlling the weight and if it increases we stop completely with hand feeding. If they do not start immediately,



it's crucial just to change the water and the pellets 2-3 times per day. We saw that it helps the stimulation if the pellets can be floating and roaming a bit on the dish. If too



much soaked and too concentrated they will not eat, because they can't also not drink! Makes sense right? Together with this it also helps a lot that other flamingos can see each other eating. They will mimic the behavior quite fast. Now here is really sensitive because the chicks can be aggressive to each other in the first 2 months and we want to avoid those interactions. However

we also saw that in the first 10 days this aggressive behavior is nonexistent. That gave us a really nice timeline to combine flamingos that ate by themselves with the ones that didn't in order to teach them. This method proved to be very efficient.



To the most difficult ones we had a more close approach, touching the water, picking the pellets with our hands and eventually they learned. But we are talking about less than 6% of all the population, the remaining ones learned very quickly. According to my experience, when you hand rear so many birds, you will always find a

few that are not like the majority. We always have to keep in mind that when we artificially incubate and hand rear birds, a percentage of them would probably never hatch if it was done by the parents. Or if they do, most of them will likely die in a tin age. When we help this process we try to save them





all and sometimes that results in challenges that will lead us to find different strategies to reach the same goal. With this I mean that it's never possible to say that the same strategy will result in 100% of the population. But when we have a population of 76 and we adopted a different method with only less than 6%, I risk to say that it was a success!

Weights were collected from all of them and we could compare this with others from previous years. I was particularly interested in the growing rate as we knew that the old formula worked really well. The results were great. We noticed a stable growing when they were on these new pellets. Every day they increased between 8 – 12% of weight. Not regularly which lead us also to a really curious discovery: They already were starting to eat according to their daily appetite. Well for the ones that don't know, one of our goals with our feeds is trying as much as possible through the composition of our feeds, that

the birds eat what they need and never have the risk of overfeeding. This was happening already with the baby flamingos.

Of course, at the same time with the support of our veterinary, we made regular health checks to be sure that they were healthy. Of course that with so many babies we had some cases with bacteria or fungus present, the treatment and modus operandi are not the focus of this article, but the conclusion here was that when we compare with previous years we had a dramatic decrease of these cases due to this new diet! It obviously makes sense because when you have to make a pap for hand feeding with different ingredients and that needs to be fresh all the time, the source of contaminations is immense. With extruded pellets this risk is much less when combined with a perfect hygiene.

Again when you have so much offspring, it's also normal to have some that are born with some problem, or reveal it during their



growth. Therefore some deaths occurred. From the 6 that died we did a necropsy. The causes again are not the focus but for me the important aspect was to find out if it could be related with their nutrition, and it wasn't. They were absolutely perfect inside, and the causes of death was some genetic abnormality.

So at the end we believe that these results helped us prove that we could create a pellet suitable for baby flamingos! The results speak for themselves. I would like to insist that the method is crucial to make sure that this food works properly, but again, even with hand feeding many mistakes can be done. In an article it's not possible to share an experience of a season, so my idea was to leave some guidelines in how to do it the best way, show

that it's possible and it works! So, if you that are reading this article have some questions or further doubts, feel free to contact me. To finalize I want to thank my team of Keepers, António, Fábio, Mariana and Laila, because without their work and dedication this would never possible to achieve.













Wedge-tailed eagle takes down drone flying over
West Australian wheat farm



India detains pigeon on suspicion of spying for Pakistan



Josef Harold Lindholm III This painting is dated in the 1620's, and is in the Hermitage in St. Petersburg.





Jak Wonderly

I'm honored to have been awarded First Place in the prestigious BigPicture Natural World Photography Competition (Human/Nature). I'm humbled by the other photographers that were recognized this year. Thank you to the California Academy of Sciences

and the esteemed judges for recognizing my photograph.

This image is a composition of more than 200 animals that were attacked by domestic cats and brought to WildCare (San Rafael, CA) and did not survive their



Thank you to WildCare: Melanie Piazza (Director of Animal Care) and Alison Hermance (Director of Communications and Marketing) were the driving force behind this project.

It was a challenge to envision something somber, dignified, truthful, and not causing revulsion. I also wanted to honor the difficult work of wildlife rescue and WildCare's hospital staff.

Conservation starts in our own backyard with the choices we make about our pets, fences, plants, and feeders. I hope this photograph will encourage dialog about how our choices impact the animals around us.

Please visit www.discoverwildcare.org/wildlife-resources/cats-and-cattios/ to learn more.

<https://www.bigpicturecompetition.org/2020-winners>

WildCare

injuries. The bodies were collected and preserved for one calendar year.

Each year house cats kill more than 2 *billion* birds in the United States alone, in addition to mammals, reptiles, and other animals.



30 Extraordinarily Beautiful Birds You Might Not Have Heard About



ACT Wildlife

Yesterday at 8:00 AM -

Recently ACT Wildlife rescued a trapped parrot. How the bird got stuck down the manhole we don't know, but his mate looked after him while he was in a pickle and with the help of Access Canberra and ICON the manhole was lifted...and the parrot flew safely to his mate. A lovely story of a member of the public calling in a problem, ACT Wildlife investigating, and several parties organising a rescue. Wildlife and humans getting together and saving the day!



<http://actwildlife.net/sponsor-a-species.html>

Wild and captive Blue-throated Macaws are genetically distinct

<https://www.birdguides.com/articles/conservation/wild-and-captive-blue-throated-macaws-are-genetically-distinct/?fbclid=IwAR1r3j6NsoJ-1uTQYpP-i2zhvlzFNXghB4JTY8LSzaYjnxdH02x8eSldVd4#>

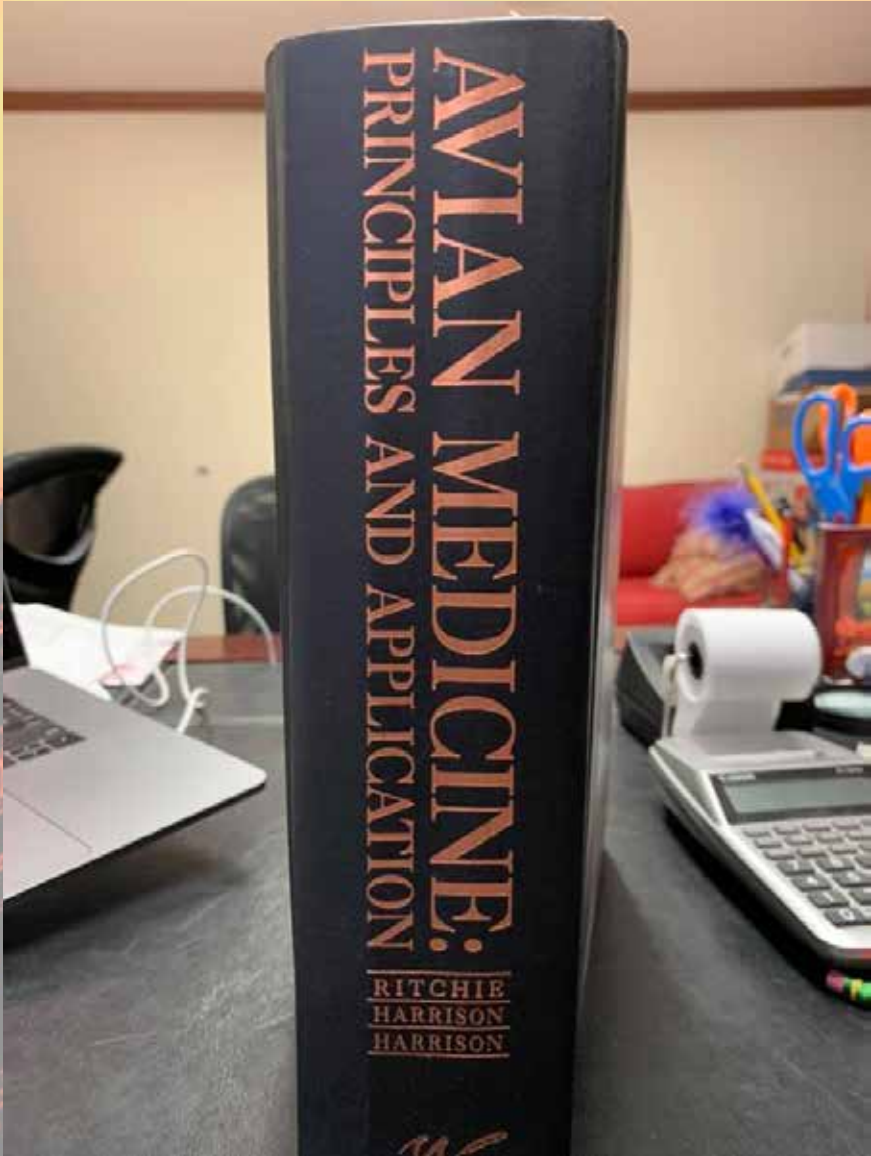
Epic 7,500-mile cuckoo migration wows scientists



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*Scanning electron microscopic study of the tongue
in the rainbow lorikeet (*Trichoglossus haematodus*)*

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One Earth Conservation Annual Report 2019



Wedge-tailed eagle takes down drone flying over
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MODERN PHEASANT. CREDIT: J. MROCEK GETTY IMAGES

Antimicrobial Effects of Virgin Coconut Oil and Its Medium-Chain Fatty Acids on *Clostridium Difficile*



How birds evolved big brains
Brain evolution traced from tyrannosaurs to modern crows





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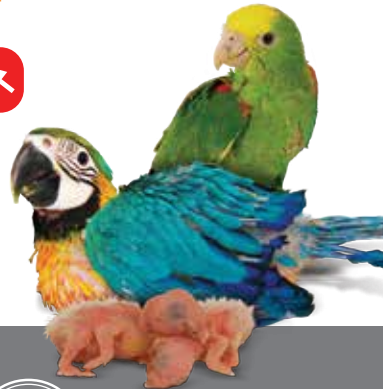
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Who's Your Daddy?



PHOTO LOU MEGENS

Stumped? See answer on page 124



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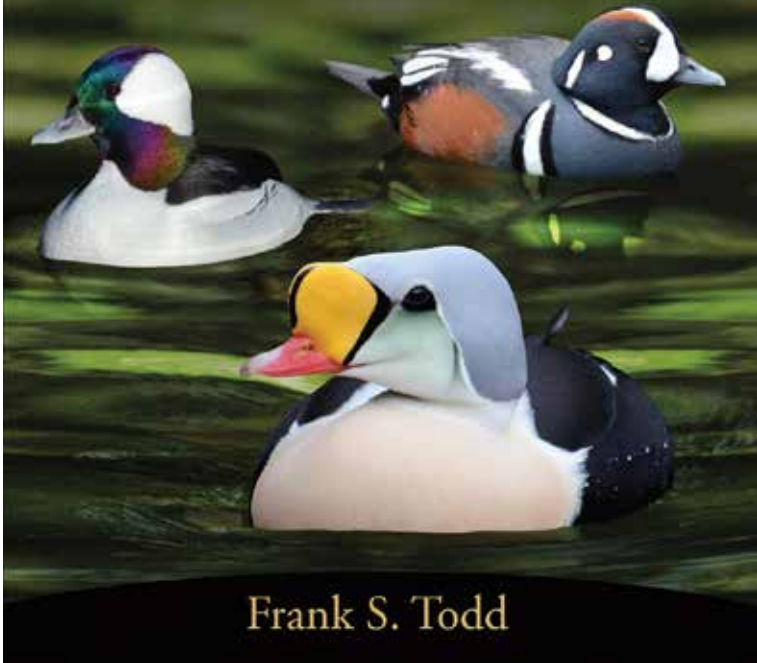
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<http://www.homesforanimalheroes.org/>

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!

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.

Link: <https://www.hancockhouse.com/collections/ducks-waterfowl/products/north-american-ducks-geese-swans>

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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.

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EURASIAN JAY *GARRULUS GLANDARIUS* PHOTO LOU MEGENS

Who's Your Daddy?

From page 123, Answer:

Eurasian Jay Garrulus glandarius

The Eurasian jay (*Garrulus glandarius*) is a species of bird occurring over a vast region from Western Europe and north-west Africa to the Indian Subcontinent and further to the eastern seaboard of Asia and down into south-east Asia. Across its vast range, several very distinct racial forms have evolved to look very different from each other, especially when forms at the extremes of its range are compared.

The bird is called jay, without any epithets, by English speakers in Great Britain and Ireland. 

Editor's Note:
Don't miss Lou's article, "Controversy" earlier in this in this issue on page 74.
Watch for Lou Megen's Nuthatch article in the

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

EVENTS

2021 EVENTS



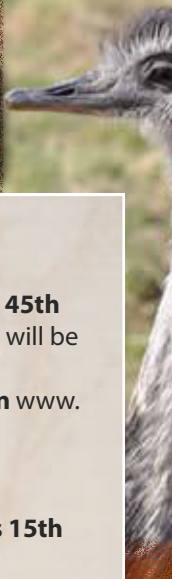
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF AVICULTURE - AFA's 45th Annual Educational Conference and Avian Expo will be held **August 12-14, 2021**
Hilton Minneapolis-St. Paul Airport More info on www.afabirds.org



AVICULTURAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA - ASA's 15th Annual Education Conference Fall 2020

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Let us know of your avicultural event to be posted on our Events page at:
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longbeachbirdbreeders@gmail.com

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