U.S. and Canadian governmental agencies. We are also aware of the contributions private aviculturists have made with species such as the scarlet-chested parakeet, the Swinhoe's pheasant, and others.

Sadly, our past also looms forward to haunt us, and from it, such tragedies as the extinction of the Carolina parakeet. This species slipped through the very fingers of aviculturists, for it was bred in captivity on a number of occasions. Apparently they were so plentiful at one time, that no one felt they were in danger until quite abruptly it was too late. Could this type of tragedy occur again? The answer is obviously, of course.

One of the most often heard cries of conservationists when populations of certain types of birds appear to be in a state of decline is—the pet trade, the pet trade. While we must agree that there is indeed much negativity associated with the world-wide pet trade in decimating certain species, we also know that the pet trade is not always the primary culprit! Loss of habitat, uncontrolled use of pesticides such as DDT, and a host of other considerations often play a far more significant role in population declines.

And what do we find ourselves doing in response to such accusations? Virtually nothing. Through our silence and our lack of positive response, we appear totally content to allow the practice of aviculture to be considered right along with ivory poaching as a major form of senseless wildlife exploitation. The fact that we have hidden our heads in the sand and have done nothing to try and change these attitudes or to improve our image seems unbelievable. Surely, dedicated aviculturists are concerned over statistics regarding the numbers of wild-caught specimens which perish for each entry into the United States; surely we have concern for the status of dwindling wild populations; and surely we do not wish to be a factor in species extermination.

Undoubtedly, delicate balances in nature are easily upset, and some of the species which have been imported in large numbers over the last several years may be in a state of decline due to heavy cropping to meet the seemingly insatiable demands of the pet trade. However, this is a major unknown at this time. Again, how unfortunate, that aviculturists have all but totally ignored the need for field studies to determine the stability of certain species habitats and the effects of our constant demands on wild populations. This is a grave omission and an irresponsible attitude on our part. Without this kind of information, we have no insight into what we are really doing and where our avicultural emphasis needs to be placed. If this situation causes us no real concern, we are only giving lip-service to our interest in conservation, and our motives for keeping birds in captivity represents nothing but a selfish greed with no concern for the consequences of our actions.

In our own best interest, I suggest we should begin to establish closer liaisons with conservation groups, and, perhaps, be prepared to provide some funding for projects we feel are important. Field studies for commonly imported species destined for the pet trade should be supported, and even initiated by aviculturists, to see if these pressures are, in fact, taking an undue toll on the wild populations.

The truly dedicated aviculturists today must have a concern for tomorrow. We find ourselves at a pivotal point in writing our own history. On one hand, we stand on the brink of the golden age of aviculture with the promise of a future of significant accomplishments in avian conservation. On the other, we stand also on the brink of disaster, where a careless lack of concern by aviculturists may help contribute to the extinction of more species of birds in a shorter period of time than at any other point in history. The choice is clearly ours.

If we procrastinate today we will regret tomorrow.

AFA Conservation Committee Report

By Committee Chairman
Robert J. Berry

The recently formed conservation committee of the American Federation of Aviculture is in need of funds to initiate a variety of projects which were proposed at the Annual Conference in Washington, D.C., last August. The multi-faceted approach to the organization's over-all conservation endeavors includes projects such as AFA-initiated field studies (the first, currently under way on the Red-headed Amazon, Amazona viridigenalis); public education programs; stipends to existing captive breeding programs for certain endangered species; contributions to field studies initiated by others; and support of proposed land acquisitions for habitat preservation. All of this sounds good! All of these measures are positive! All of these efforts can enhance the total conservation effort on a global scale! The major problem is—one of these proposals can be effectively implemented without adequate funding!

As chairman of the Conservation Committee I am appealing to avicultur-
### Analysis per 3.5 grams (approximately one teaspoon)

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3rd Annual Convention
Guest speakers:
Mickey Ollson & Phyllis Martin
June 4th & 5th, 1983
New Orleans Airport Hilton
901 Airline Hwy., Kenner, LA
For information contact:
Joan Bordelon, (504) 769-0322
S.A.A.: 722 Seyburn Court,
Baton Rouge, LA 70808

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Kansas City, Missouri
Over night arrangements can be made
at Holiday Inn near Blue Ridge Mall,
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Judge—Dr. Al Decoteau, D.V.M.
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Andrea Shaw—(816) 483-5919
P.O. Box 19236,
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Tickets are available for donations of
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Drawing will be held
Sunday, July 10, 1983
Winners need not be present.
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Vacation Village on Mission Bay
San Diego, CA
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AFA conservation committee and donate the wholesale value from the sale of the young from this pair to the conservation fund. Even though we suggest a semi-domesticated species such as cockatiels, lovebirds, canaries, golden pheasants, diamond doves, mandarin ducks, zebra finches or budgies, it makes no difference which species you select to breed, what color or what kind. As an example of the potential impact of such a cooperative project, if one hundred aviculturists each maintained a single pair of normal cockatiels on behalf of the committee, and each of these pairs averaged producing eight young in a year and these were sold at a hypothetical wholesale price of $15.00 each, there would be a total income of $12,000 for our conservation programs. Furthermore, if the participants elected to sell these birds at a higher retail price, they could easily recover their cost of acquiring, keeping and maintaining the birds plus the enjoyment of having them rear young and the additional reward of knowing that they as individuals were in a small way participating in the cause of avian conservation.

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