### American Federation of Aviculture

Dedicated to conservation of bird wildlife through encouragement of captive breeding programs, scientific research, and education of the general public.

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- **International Dove Society**
- **American Pigeon Fanciers' Council**
- **National Finch & Softbill Society**
- **National Parrot Association**
- **British Columbia Avicultural Society**
- **National Cockatiel Society**
- **International Softbill Society**
- **Southeastern Aviculturists Association**
- **Avicultural Society of America**
- **Society of Parrot Breeders and Exhibitors**

### Member Clubs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Club Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ALABAMA</td>
<td>Bird Club of Greater Birmingham, Central Alabama Aviculture Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARIZONA</td>
<td>Arizona Aviculture Society, Avicultural Society of Tucson Seed Crackers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CALIFORNIA</td>
<td>Aviary Association of Kern Avicultural Association of San Francisco Budgerigar Research Association Butte County Bird Club California Game Breeders Association Capital City Bird Society Central California Cage Bird Club Contra Costa Avian Society Finch Society of San Diego County Foothill Bird Fanciers Fork &amp; Feather Bird Club Golden Gate Avian Society Golden West Game Breeders and Bird Club Great Western Budgerigar Society Hi Desert Bird Club Hookbill Hobbiests of Southern California Inland Game Bird Breeders Association Long Beach Bird Breeders Morro Valley Bird Breeders North County Aviculturists Orange County Bird Breeders San Diego County Bird Breeders Association San Diego County Canary Club San Gabriel Valley Parakeet Association Santa Clara Valley Canary &amp; Exotic Bird Club Sunny Valley Bird Society South Bay Bird Club South Coast Finch Society Valley of Paradise Bird Club West Valley Bird Society Western Bird Breeders Society</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Breeding the Pied Barbet at the North Carolina Zoological Park

By Ron Morris
Curator of Birds

The barbets, *Capitonidae*, are comprised of 81 species of 13 genera, distributed through the African, Asian, and South American tropics. They are related to woodpeckers, toucans, jacanas, and other members of the Order Piciformes.

43 species of seven genera of barbets are found in Africa. One of these is the pied barbet, *Tricolaema leucomeletana*. The pied barbet is primarily black and white as the name suggests. The upper parts and wings are black with yellow flecks in the mantle and wing coverts and yellow edges of the flight feathers. The forehead is red, the underparts white with a black bib. Young birds resemble adults but lack the red forehead. This species is distributed throughout South Africa.

The North Carolina Zoological Park acquired three pied barbets in December, 1985. After a routine quarantine, the birds were introduced into the zoo’s tropical forest exhibit, the R.J. Reynolds Forest Aviary. This exhibit is a 13,000 square foot, glass-enclosed, walk-through with over 2,000 tropical plants that range from ground-covers and bromeliads to 50 foot fig trees. The diverse bird collection includes among its 55 species, another African barbet, the crested (*Trachybphonus vaillantii*) which has inhabited the exhibit since it opened in August, 1982. Several palm logs were supplied for the crested and they have used them well, rearing 34 progeny in five years.

Two of the pied barbets paired off
and, after a few months, began to show interest in nestboxes. They would take up residence in a box, visiting and inspecting it frequently, and often roosting in it during the day, only to abandon it after a few days.

In April of 1986 they began to occupy a new nestbox and eventually produced three eggs. The fresh weight of two of the eggs was 2.8 g each \( \pm 0.1 \) g. The eggs were well attended, but the bare, flat-bottomed nestbox seemed to have made it difficult to cover them properly. The hen sat tight during one nestbox inspection but she had only one egg under her while the other two had rolled to a corner. The eggs were candled on May 14, and all showed signs of early embryonic development, but by May 26 the nestbox was abandoned and all the eggs had disappeared.

In the ensuing months, modifications were made to several palm logs in an attempt to persuade the birds to use a previously altered site. Nest cavities were abandoned and all the eggs had disappeared.

Finally in July, 1987, the male was observed taking food to a previously established nestbox and eventually produced one egg. As before, however, these encouraging signs lasted only a few days before the birds abandoned this site to renew their search.

In the ensuing months, modifications were made to several palm logs in an attempt to persuade the birds to use a previously altered site. Nest cavities were abandoned and all the eggs had disappeared.
TABLE I
Comparison of incubation by male vs. female pied barbet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Incubation no. sessions observed</th>
<th>Range in minutes of inc. sessions</th>
<th>Average no. min. on eggs</th>
<th>Total min. on eggs</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1-30</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>49.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3-15</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>42.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unk.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1-30</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>164</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE II
Comparison of incubation vs. inattentiveness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number Sessions</th>
<th>Range in min.</th>
<th>Average No. mins.</th>
<th>Total minutes</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Either male or female on eggs</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1-30</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither on eggs</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1-28</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

undiscovered nest cavity. The nest had been excavated by the pied barbets in a live sago palm that measured only 42” tall and 10” in diameter. The cavity itself measured 8” deep with a 2-1/8” diameter entrance located just 22” above the ground. The entrance was well-concealed just below the lowest fronds of the palm. The single nestling (distinguishable from the parents only by its lack of a red forehead) was peering out of the nest entrance on August 3, and fledged the following day. The fledgling was removed from the exhibit immedi-
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