

Cooperative Breeding Can Make a Difference

by Sharon Garsee, Sacramento, CA

"Aviculturists have come to be guardians of a biological treasure, one they hold in trust for the rest of the world..." (Toft, C., et. al., 1995)

The Wild Bird Conservation Act of 1992 essentially removed the United States from international bird trade. We can no longer depend on wild stock for our breeding programs. In the last five years many commonly imported species have become scarce. Our breeding populations are becoming aged. The clock is ticking away for captive propagation of our beloved birds. What can we do to make a difference?

We should begin thinking of the whole population instead of just what we're going as individuals. Private aviculturists have made great strides in the past twenty years. We have developed into real professionals even though the majority practice the profession on a part time basis. All of our knowledge and expertise will be in vain if we have no birds to pass to the next generation. Breeders of domesticated animals have recommended a minimum of 500 individuals would be required for the genetic diversity needed to sustain a species in captivity. Realistically, no individual would be able to accomplish this. However, if each of us directed our efforts toward a particular species, we would soon make substantial pools of that species available. Begin making plans to register the pairs with a studbook or a cooperative breeding program.

Studbooks

Studbooks record valuable tracking information. AZA studbooks record all

living species, deceased individuals, movement of the species and genetic records. They also direct and control breeding within their system. Private avicultural organizations establishing studbooks generally record all individuals of the species, breeding results, genetics, and assist members in locating needed stock. They do not control or direct breeding. No commitment is required of members to hold back stock or track progeny.

Cooperative Breeding Programs

Cooperative breeding programs generally have a founder stock belonging to the consortium, thereby establishing a stable genetic pool that can be counted on for the future of a species. Most projects are set up so that participating breeders split the progeny with the project. When the project involves extremely rare birds, the participants may be required to retain all progeny until large numbers are attained.

All avian species should be considered in danger of extinction in the United States. Some have more immediate threats such as; life span, numbers available, delicacy, difficulty in reproducing, and commercial undesirability. Species that are sought after in the pet trade have the best chance of survival. In other words, those with a commercial value are the least likely to become extinct, however, genetic records will still be valuable. The best way to keep those records is AFA's central registry. When a central registry is well established, records of individual genetics will be available even if the bird is sold into a pet situation and later re-enters a breeding program

Commitment

Begin your commitment in stages; permanently identify your birds, update your records, register your birds, participate in surveys, join or start a studbook, and, ultimately, participate in a cooperative breeding program. Be aware that a cooperative breeding program is a commitment to a long term preservation project and will require some private financing. Programs linked to a non profit organization such as your local club or national club, may entitle you to a tax deduction for any bird donated to the program.

If you can demonstrate you cannot locate enough stock for a program, apply for permission to import through an approved WBCA Cooperative Breeding Program. This is accomplished by appointing an avian oversight organization and completing the application for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Existing Programs

Surveys/Census

1. David Hancock: Hancock Wildlife Research Center, Turacos & Hornbills, 1431 Harris Ave., Blaine WA 98230. 800-938-1114 FAX 800 983-2262 e-mail: david@hancockwildlife.org

2. Society of Parrot Breeders & Exhibitors: Parrot Preservation Project.

3. National Finch & Softbill Society: Finch Save Program

4. The Amazona Society: Amazona Census, c/o Sue Bondelier, 443 East Indiana Ave., Perysburg OH 43551-2212

Studbooks (Private Sector)

1. Pionus Breeders Association (all species): Jennie Bolton, 525 NE Serpentine Place, Shoreline WA 98155: Internet: <http://users.aol.com/apionusIPBAPAGE.HTM>.

2. Festive Amazon (*A. festiva*): Dena Tucker (860) 561-4711

Studbooks (AZA)

- 1. Aracari, Green:** Nanette Bragin, The Phoenix Zoo (602) 273-1341; FAX 273-7078.
 - 2. Bird-of-Paradise, Lesser:** Patti Cooper, Bronx Zoo/Wildlife Conservation Park (718) 220-5100; FAX 220-7114.
 - 3. Cockatoo, Palm:** Mike Taylor, White Oat Conservation Center (904) 225-3314; FAX 225-3395.
 - 4. Mynah, Bali:** Robert Seibels, Riverbanks Zoological Park and Bot. Garden (803) 779-8717; ext. 1109; FAX 253-6381.
 - 5. Parrot, St. Vincent:** Don Bruning, Bronx Zoo/Wildlife Conservation Park (718) 220-5159; FAX 220-7114.
 - 6. Parrot, Thick-Billed:** Susan Healy, Sacramento Zoo (916) 264-5166; FAX 264-5887.
 - 7. Pigeon, Crowned:** David Wetzel, Jackson Zoological Park (601) 352-2590; FAX 352-2594.
 - 8. Hornbill, Great:** Christine Sheppard, Ph. D, Bronx Zoo/Wildlife Conservation Park (718) 220-6882; FAX 733-7300.
 - 9. Bird-of-Paradise, Red:** Kurt Hundgen, Bronx Zoo/Wildlife Conservation Park (718) 220-5100; FAX 220-7114.
 - 10. Bluebird, Fairy:** Victoria Ganss, Toledo Zoological Gardens (419) 385-5721; FAX 385-6935.
 - 11. Cockatoo, Moluccan:** Lucy Jones, Micke Grove Zoo (209) 953-8840; FAX 331-7271.
 - 12. Hyacinth Macaw:** Richard Porter, 6570 Stage Road, #255, Memphis, TN 38134. (901) 371-0533, FAX (901) 371-0537.
 - 13. Cockatoo, Sulphur-Crested (*Cacatua galerita*):** Ed Hansen, Reid Park Zoo (520) 791-3204; FAX 791 - 5378.
 - 14. Macaw, Red-Fronted:** Robert Prather, Fauna Link Foundation (904) 627-9340; FAX 627-2068.
 - 15. Parrot, Hawk-Headed:** Don Rhoades, Riverbanks Zoological Park & Botanical Garden (803) 779-8717; FAX 253-6381.
 - 16. Parrot, Red-Browed Amazon:** Paul Reillo, Rare Species Conservatory Foundation, Loxahatchee, FL.
 - 17. Crane, West African Crowned:** Lisa Tate, Boise Zoo (208) 384-4170; FAX 384-4127.
 - 18. Crane, White-Naped:** Carol Hesch, Memphis Zoo (901) 725-3400; FAX 725-9305.
 - 19. Cuban Amazon:** Rachel Rogers, El Paso Zoo (915) 521-1850; FAX 521-1857.
 - 20. Currasow, Bare-faced:** Brent McRoberts, Houston Zoological Gardens (713) 520-3235; FAX 525-3281.
 - 21. Currasow, Blue-Billed:** William Todd, Houston Zoological Gardens (713) 525-3300; FAX 525-3330.
 - 22. Currasow, Northern Helmeted:** M. Denise Brucchieri, Houston Zoological Gardens, (713) 520-3235; FAX 520-3281.
 - 23. Currasow, Wattled:** Jerry Caraviotis, Houston Zoological Gardens (713) 520-3235; FAX 520-3281.
 - 24. Currasow, Yellow-knobbed:** Brent McRoberts, Houston Zoological Gardens (713) 520-3235, FAX 520-3281.
 - 25. Dove, Black-Naped Fruit:** Ron Morris, North Carolina Zoological Park FAX (910) 879-2891.
 - 26. Dove, Jambu Fruit:** Herb Roberts, Memphis Zoological Garden & Aquarium 901-726-4787, FAX 725-9305.
 - 27. Dove, Marianas Fruit:** Herb Roberts, Memphis Zoological Garden & Aquarium (901) 726-4787, FAX 725-9305.
 - 28. Dove, Temminck's Fruit:** Bruce Bohmke, The Phoenix Zoo (602) 914-4371; FAX 273-7078.
 - 29. Roller, Lilac-breasted:** Timothy Snyder, St. Louis Zoological Park (314) 781-0900; FAX 647-7969.
 - 30. Swan, Trumpeter:** Anita Cramm, Lincoln Park Zoological Gardens (312) 742-7925; FAX: 742-2040.
 - 31. Tanager, Blue-grey, Silver-beaked, Turquoise:** Lucy Greer, Brookfield Zoo (708) 485-0263; FAX 485-3532.
 - Toucan, Toco:** Mary Healy, Discovery Island Zoological Park (407) 824-3784; FAX 824-3467.
 - 33. Turaco, Lady Ross, Violaceous:** Vacant
 - 34. Golden Conure:** Bruce Bohmke, The Phoenix Zoo (602) 914-4371; FAX 273-7078
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Cooperative Breeding Programs

- 1. Red Siskin Project:** AFA, Gail Gatewood-Colwell, Ohio (216) 885-2569.
- 2. Green-checked Amazon:** AFA, Sharon Garsee, Calif (916) 784-1314 FAX 338-5218.
- 3. Halfmoon Conure:** Arizona Seed Crackers Society, Jeff Ridenous (602) 983-6708
- African Finch:** Capitol City Bird Society, Mariana Mejia (916) 452-2037
- 5. Dusky-headed Conure:** Central Florida Bird Breeders, Inc., Don Elmore (407) 676-2445.
- 6. Dusky Conure:** Capitol City Bird Society, Sacramento CA, Bill Duncan (916) 476-3539.
- 7. Bronze-winged Mannikin, Red-headed Finch:** Central Florida Bird Breeders, Inc.

8. Senegal Fire Finch & Red-eared Waxbill: Sun Coast Avian Society, Richard Ulrich (813)524-2238.

9. Hoffman's Conure: Dale Thompson, Woodlake CA (209) 564-3456.

10. Parrotlets: Parrotlet Society, Sandee & Robert Molenda, Santa Cruz CA (408) 688-5560.

Note: Most of the programs listed above require membership in the organization.

U.S. Fish & Wild Life Approved WBCA Cooperative Breeding Programs (Excluding Birds of Prey programs)

1. Jerry Jennings, Toucan Preservation Center: Keel-billed Toucan, Red-breasted Toucan, Saffron Toucanet, Chestnut-eared Aracari.

2. Rick Jordan, Hill Country Aviaries: Crimson-bellied Conure (512) 858-7029.

3. Carl McCullough, The Lory and Hanging Parrot Breeding Consortium: Papuan Lory, Fairy Lorikeet, Whiskered Lorikeet, Duyvenbode's Lory, Philippine Hanging Parrot.

4. Jan van Oosten, Solomon Islands Consortium: Cardinal Lory, Yellow-bibbed Lory, Coconut (Massena's) Lorikeet, Palm Lorikeet, Duchess Lorikeet.

5. Susan Boyer: Javan Hill Mynah, Sumatran Hill Mynah, Indian Hill Mynah. (760) 765-14067.

6. David Hancock, Hancock Wildlife Research Center Turaco Cooperative Breeding Program: Great Blue Turaco, Grey Plantain-eater, Ross's Plantain-eater, Violaceous Plantain-eater, Red-crested Turaco, Fischer's Turaco, Hartlaub's Turaco, White-cheeked Turaco, White-crested Turaco, Livingston's Turaco, Green-crested Turaco, Violet-crested Turaco, Schalow's Turaco. (800) 938-1114 FAX (800) 983-2262. ➔



Olde Tymer

Conversations with Gene Hall

*an interview by
Clio Poulykya, Roseland, FL*

Clio Poulykya: When did you begin to have an interest in exotic birds?

Gene Hall: I cannot really remember a time when birds were not a part of my life. My mother always had at least one pair of canaries and when I was seven, I was given my first pair of birds — Jungle Fowl. There has been no time since then when, either as a hobby or as a business, birds have not taken a major part of my attention.

For five years in the 1940s racing pigeons and show pigeons were a major interest. Modenas were — and still are — a special favorite.

A curiosity about hookbills was sparked by the 1947 movie *Bill 'n Coo* whose stars were a pair of Peach-faced Lovebirds with a supporting cast of thousands (of lovebirds and budgies).

Some searching turned up what was probably the most elderly pair of Black-masked Lovebirds that Anaheim, California had to offer.

Not realizing at that time that working with birds could be anything but a hobby, the need to earn a living made non-avicultural pursuits a necessity for the next 18 years. In 1969, a full time job was available at Magnolia Bird Farm in Anaheim, CA. I decided then that working with birds was more important than a management position which had no relationship of aviculture. My family and I were living in a residential area which made keeping any quantity of birds, especially the larger species, impossible.

The next opportunity which appeared was a job opening at the San Diego Zoo's Wild Animal Park in Escondido, California to work with gorillas. After getting that job, work as a backup keeper in the bird depart-

ment was added. I was with the zoo only one year when I decided that it would be possible to turn an avocation into what I had always hoped it would be — a vocation. I began to look for a suitable location for a commercial aviary.

C.P.: Why did you stay in the San Diego/Anaheim area once you could relocate wherever you chose?

G.H.: Well, I'm a member of that rare species — a fellow California born and bred, with local family ties going back several generations. Naturally, I looked in the area I know and finally found an old poultry farm, which was no longer in use. It still had numerous buildings including a 70-year-old barn. This barn became the centerpiece of the office, display and breeding complex named Fortune Glen Aviaries.

Of course, there was much remodeling to be done before the facility could be opened. We — my family and I — moved to the property but for the first year and a half, I still worked at the Magnolia Bird Farm. Without the co-operation and assistance of my family, Fortune Glen would have had great difficulty in coming to life. My daughter, Amy, in her late teens at the time, was particularly involved in the business. The business soon grew to fill all of the buildings that made up the old farm. Plantings were added to create a more suitable background for the varied assortment of birds. Eventually there were softbills, waterfowl, hookbills and pheasants on site. Budgies were raised in quantity, with 2,000 producing pairs.

C.P.: Please tell me about your