



Volume 53 Number 5 October/November 2021



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*Feathered
World*

The Official Magazine of The Canary and Cage Bird Federation of Australia Inc.
Published bimonthly.

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Canary & Cage Bird Federation of Australia Inc.

NEXT MEETING DATES 2021

General Meetings 3rd November

*Meetings commence at 8:00 pm EST via ZOOM and subject to notice at
Anzac Room, Ashfield RSL, Liverpool Road, Ashfield*

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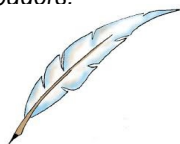


The Canary & Cage Bird Federation of Australia Inc now have a Facebook page!!
The link is: <https://www.facebook.com/CCBFA>
Like our page to stay updated with current avicultural events.

All information printed in Feathered World is believed to be correct at time of printing. If there are any corrections required, please send them through to the editor.

If you have any stories you feel would be of interest to the readers. please send them through to the editor.

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IMPORTANT NOTICES!

NOTICE TO ALL AFFILIATES

For legal and insurance requirements, affiliates are requested to notify the Federation Secretary of changes in office bearers, public officer and delegates, also changes of the club's meeting location, email and postal address.

Notification should be on club's letterhead or if required a hard copy or electronic copy of the *Office Bearer's Information and Privacy Provision Consent Form* is available from the Secretary.

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From: John Walsh—

Phone: (02) 9451 0911 or 0421 011 107 email: ktwsh@optusnet.com.au

WHAT ARE THE BEST SINGING CANARIES?

There are many different varieties of singing Canary and it's highly unlikely that you will ever find yourself in possession of a bird whose song you don't like. Even those birds bred for other factors (shape, colour) will produce a lovely sound. It's still very satisfying to spend some time with the different birds on offer, though, to get an idea of the musical repertoire that lies in store when you bring the bird home.

All male Canaries sing, but it is those bred specifically for song that will deliver the greatest musical performance. The most popular types are the Waterslager, the German Roller, the Russian Singer, the Spanish Timbrado and the American Singer. There are others, such as the Persian Singer, popular in Iran and the Middle East, but these five are the ones that dominate the singing categories in Canary shows across Europe, North America and Australasia.

The Harz Roller (German Roller)

Also known as the Harz Mountain, Hartz, Harzer or German Roller, this breed has been around for 300 years, and is considered by many to be the best singer. This is the Canary that conquered the world's pet bird cages (see the Harz Canaries section, above). Harz Rollers sing quietly, with beaks closed. This unobtrusive approach to song is a key to their success – the birds are musical, but their voices blend into the background rather than shattering the silence. They come in many colour combinations, but most sport a 'swollen' looking throat, rather like the thick neck of a trained opera singer!



The Waterslager

Developed in Belgium from Harz stock, the Waterslager is named after the watery, bubbling or dripping-water tone of its song, likened to a babbling brook. The bird is able to produce higher and lower notes than any other type. In bird competitions, a Waterslager who is unable to produce these aquatic tones is not considered a true Waterslager, regardless of his ancestry. These Canaries usually sing quietly with their beaks closed, but can also open up and let rip. Canary folklore says they are hard of hearing, hence these bursts of sound, but this is unproven. The birds tend to be yellow, although there are plenty of exceptions to the rule. To confuse matters, the Waterslager is also known as the Water Singer, Belgian Waterslager, Belgian Malinois or Malinois Canary.

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The Spanish Timbrado

This is a relative newcomer to the Canary choir, established as a distinct type early in the 20th century. It has the loudest song of all the Canaries, a slightly metallic but pleasingly bell-like warble, consisting of 12 distinct notes. Genetically, the Spanish birds are very close to the wild Canary, and their song is said, by the more imaginative breeder, to contain the music - the 'timbre', hence the name - of Spanish castanets. Hens of this type are able to sing, but not quite so impressively as the cocks.



The American Singer

Another relative newbie, these birds were developed in the USA in the 1930s and 40s, at a time when the popularity of Canaries was rising in that country. It was originally a cross between German Roller and Border Canaries (with a genetic ratio of 3:1), and is now the most commonly kept Canary type in the US. They combine good singing with a sleek body and robust health, making them easy to keep: maximum song, minimum fuss. Reflecting their mixed ancestry, American Singers combine chops and rolls to great effect, giving light and shade to their performance by adjusting the volume up and down.

The Russian Singer

Like the Harz, the Russian Singer has been developed over the past 300 years, the ancestral stock being the same German birds that created the Harz. Russian breeders were particularly taken with the birds' skills in mimicry, and the Canaries were said to learn and perfect the songs of native species such as the closely-related Siskin, and Corn and Reed buntings. This earned them the nickname 'Bunting Tuner'. Breeders used native birds, along with voice-softening training aids such as organs and flutes, to develop the Russian



Singer's voice. The voices encouraged by these teaching methods can't be passed to the next generation, of course, but the usual process of selection and careful breeding has produced a bird open to such training, and with an inherently distinctive voice.



THE DIFFERENT ORIGINS OF THE RED AND ORANGE CANARIES

The Red Canary

The red canary is not a natural canary and no red-colored canaries are found in the wild. This is a bird which has been specially bred to have this unique coloration.

The history of the red canary starts back in the 1920's with a geneticist, Han Duncker, who only theorized you could create a red colored canary by interbreeding a canary with the Venezuelan Black Hooded Red Siskin, a type of finch.

Shortly after his theory was published canary breeders decided to put the theory to the test. They were able to successfully breed the red factor into their breeding canaries, successfully starting a completely new breed.



This successful introduction of red into the canary family began an entire series of new genetic experiments which led to the formation of the Canary Colour Breeders Association. They endeavored to create new exciting colors of canaries and to bring their new breeds onto the show tours with many breeders subsequently mixing ingredients into their bird feed to increase the level of coloration after molting,

The Orange Canary

The orange canary is another of the specially bred varieties of canaries, however, their solid orange color is a colour mutation and was first captured in the early 1600's by monks.

They were very careful to protect their rare birds by only selling the males. Eventually, a group of Italians began breeding the orange canary, which then quickly spread to England and worldwide. The orange canary was a prized bird, often only owned by the most influential people.

Feeding an orange canary is identical to any other canary, and unlike the Red Factor does not require special food to enhance the colour.



SPRINGTIME DANGERS FOR CAGE AND AVIARY BIRDS

All pet birds benefit from weekly exposure to fresh air and sunshine. Many pet bird owners take advantage of the approaching warmer weather of springtime to allow their caged birds to enjoy an outside sunbathe. This is a great idea, as long as the birds in cages are not left unattended. There are many predatory birds in the great outdoors such as currawongs, magpies, crows and goshawks. In the springtime breeding season, these predators are more dangerous than at other times of the year. In common with all wild birds, the predatory birds are raising their chicks and looking for food to sustain their hungry broods.

Smaller pet birds in cages hanging outside on balconies, verandas or patios are like *hors d'oeuvres* for the predators. When a predatory bird swoops on an unattended cage, housing a small bird, there is no protection or shelter for the pet. Terrorised, they flap uncontrollably about the cage to escape the predator. As their wings, feet or head touch the bars; the predator grabs with its beak or talons and pulls at their prey. The birds most at risk from predator attacks are the smaller pets (budgies, canaries, finches, love birds and cockatiels).

I am often presented with birds suffering injuries of varying degrees of severity from these attacks. Some victims suffer nothing more than minor abrasions. Others have eye injuries or are scalped. Many have dislocated or broken legs and wings. Some have wings that are *degloved* (the skin torn from the muscle). In very severe cases, birds have been decapitated or had their wings torn from their bodies. We must remember it is not the predators fault; they are doing what comes naturally i.e. taking advantage of an easy meal for their offspring. It is the pet bird owners responsibility to take steps to protect their pets from predators. That is why I am constantly reminding my clients not to leave their smaller caged birds outside, unattended. Birds in aviaries are less likely to suffer from attacks as there is more room within an aviary to escape from the predators.

Spring and summer are also the times when reptiles are active. Hungry carpet pythons and brown tree snakes pose another danger to caged birds left outside, unattended. Even larger birds such as galahs and cockatoos can be preyed upon by larger carpet pythons. Birds in aviaries are not immune from predation by snakes. It is necessary to make your aviary *snake proof* i.e. blocking up any areas that could enable a snake to enter the aviary.

By all means allow caged birds to enjoy some fresh air and sunshine but take care to protect them from the predators that exist naturally in the wild.

Source: Article by Peter Wilson, Avian Vet for Parrot Rescue Centre

WILD COCKATOOS OBSERVED USING TOOLS

Goffin's cockatoos on Indonesia's Tanimbar Islands crafted three different types of tools from tree branches as 'cutlery' to extract seeds from sea mangoes

Researchers made the discovery while studying Goffin's cockatoos on the Tanimbar Islands, a remote archipelago in [Indonesia](#).

The team noticed the behaviour in two wild cockatoos, who crafted tools from tree branches and used them to extract seed matter from sea mangoes, a tropical fruit.

The Goffin's cockatoo, also known as the blushing cockatoo and the Tanimbar corella, is endemic to the archipelago but has also been introduced to Puerto Rico and Singapore. The bird is one of six species of corella, a category within the cockatoo family. Three corella species are found in Australia.

Berenika Mioduszezwska of the University of Veterinary Medicine Vienna, one of the study's lead authors, said Goffin's cockatoos were difficult to observe in the wild, because they live in dense canopy and are shy of humans.

Goffin's cockatoo manufacturing a tool from a tree branch. Photograph: Mark O'Hara/University of Veterinary Medicine Vienna

The researchers have been studying the Goffin's cockatoo since 2015, observing wild-caught birds in a field aviary before releasing them back into the forest.

Dr Mark O'Hara, who co-led the study, said the cockatoos showed a high level of dexterity in manufacturing and using the cutlery.

The team provided a flock of cockatoos different tropical fruits that the birds have been observed eating in the wild. "We were blown away that all of a sudden one of them just started using tools [on sea mangoes]," O'Hara said. "It turned out that within the flock of 15 birds, only two individuals did that."



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After observing the behaviour repeatedly and collecting some of the cutlery used by the birds, the team were able to classify the tools into three types.

The birds used sturdy, thick twigs to wedge open a fruit and allow access to its inner portion, fine tools to pierce the layer surrounding a seed like a knife, and medium-sized tools to spoon out the inner seed matter.

The cockatoos made the fine and medium tools by splitting slim wooden fragments from branches, while the sturdy tools were made by severing a branch entirely and removing a portion of the branch stump.

The birds then sculpted and finessed the tools using their beaks. On average, the birds used eight tools per piece of fruit.

Unlike in other birds, such as New Caledonian crows that have also been observed using tools, the behaviour does not appear to be genetically inherited as it is not species-wide, Mioduszezewska said.

“Only very few individuals were using those tools ... that is an indication that it likely developed individually as an innovation.”

“Corellas are smaller than the other cockatoos,” she said. “The smaller bird might have a smaller beak, so they cannot just bite open the fruit and therefore they [might] need some little tricks.”

The research was published in the peer-reviewed journal *Current Biology*. The team plans to investigate how prevalent the behaviour is among Goffin’s cockatoos across the Tanimbar Islands, and how it may have spread socially throughout groups of birds.

Social learning is present in other cockatoo species, such as sulphur-crested cockatoos in Sydney, who have learned from each other how to open rubbish bins in search of food.



THE BLUE-BANDED PITTA HAS ALREADY GOT ITS CHRISTMAS JUMPER ON

Look at this proud little guy. Now there's someone who's ready for the Christmas holidays.

Known as the 'jewel of Borneo', these charismatic birds are shaped like portly gentlemen, their round bodies giving them a rather jolly countenance. Their patterning is truly something special – that bright red is the perfect backdrop for the light blue 'necklace' that sits across its chest.



Pitta birds (family: Pittidae) are found throughout Asia, Australasia, and Africa, and they share the same short, stout bodies, and often have brightly coloured plumage.

A well-known Australian pitta bird is the noisy pitta (*Pitta versicolor*), which is found along the east coast, from up in the Torres Strait Islands and the Cape York Peninsula, to down near the New South Wales/Victoria border.



SCIENTISTS HAVE A NEW WORD FOR BIRDS STEALING ANIMAL HAIR

Some tiny birds take bold risks to gather a beak full of hair for their nests. Titmice have been spotted dive-bombing cats, alighting on dozing predators' backs and plucking strands of hair from people's heads. Now, there's a term for the unusual behavior: kleptotrichy.

Derived from the Greek words for “to steal” and “hair,” kleptotrichy has rarely been described by scientists, but dozens of YouTube videos capture the behavior, researchers report online July 27 in *Ecology*. Titmice — and one chickadee — have been caught on video tugging hair from dogs, cats, humans, raccoons and even a porcupine.



“Citizen scientists, bird watchers and people with dogs knew this behavior much more than the scientists themselves,” says animal behaviorist Mark Hauber of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. “Popular observations precede science rather than the other way around, which is a valid way to do science.”

Witnessing a bird steal hair from a mammal in the wild is what first inspired Hauber's colleague, ecologist Henry Pollock, to dig deeper. While counting birds in an Illinois state park in May 2020, Pollock and colleagues spotted a tufted titmouse pluck fur from a sleeping raccoon. “I was like, ‘Wow, I’ve never seen anything like that,’” says Pollock, also of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

In South America, palm swifts snatch feathers from flying pigeons and parrots — a behavior already known as kleptotily. Searching through the scientific literature, Hauber, Pollock and colleagues found only 11 anecdotes of birds stealing hair from live mammals. While



most published accounts involve titmice in North America, at least five other bird species get in on the action. Researchers have seen an American crow harvest hair from a cow and a red-winged starling in Africa peck a small antelope called a klipspringer. In Australia, three honeyeater bird species steal fur from koalas.



GANG GANG COCKATOO, A THREATENED SPECIES?

The gang-gang cockatoo, the animal emblem of the Australian Capital Territory, could soon be listed as a threatened species after the 2019-20 bushfire disaster reduced already declining population numbers by as much as a fifth.

The threatened species scientific committee has recommended that the small cockatoo be listed as endangered due to the large drop in its population and the growing threat the birds face from the climate crisis and more frequent fires.

The committee also recommended that the east coast populations of the glossy black-cockatoo be listed as vulnerable. Neither of these birds was recognised as a nationally threatened species before the bushfires.

Gang-gangs are small, grey cockatoos found throughout south-eastern Australia. The adult males are known for their distinctive red facial feathers. They are a common sight in Canberra, where they are often found in back yards in the inner suburbs and in nearby bushland reserves.

In its listing advice, which is now out for public consultation, the committee said before the fires gang-gang populations had already declined by between 15% and 69%.

In the year since the fires, their numbers were thought to have declined by a further 21%. That is expected to reach 29% over the next two decades.

The listing assessment says increased heatwaves and fire frequency as a result of the climate emergency were increasing pressure on the species across its range, with bushfires likely to reduce the amount of nesting habitat available to the birds.

Sarah Legge, a scientist who sits on the committee, said the bushfires had affected 36% of the birds' range and about half of that had been burnt by high-severity fire.

"That would have potentially taken out nesting hollows and destroyed a lot of their foraging resources," she said.

She said gang-gangs needed time to recover after such a disaster, something that would be made difficult with more frequent severe bushfire seasons. "Any species that's fire sensitive is going to really struggle," she said.



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The committee has moved to quickly assess wildlife that might qualify for a threatened listing or upgraded threat status after the fire disaster.

Glossy black-cockatoos are also fire sensitive and are dependent on casuarina seeds as their food source.

There were fears for the birds on Kangaroo Island in the aftermath of the fire disaster, and concerns its status might reach critically endangered. The committee's listing assessment for that population recommends its status remain at endangered.

But the south-eastern populations, previously unlisted, have been recommended for a vulnerable listing, in part due to the pressure on foraging habitat.

One assessment cited by the committee suggests that the 2019-20 fires had led to a decline in populations of 15% to 30%.

Samantha Vine, the head of conservation and science at BirdLife Australia, said glossy black-cockatoos and gang-gangs were among many birds that were heavily affected by the fires.

"Sadly they are likely to be the harbingers of things to come as the inter-related climate and biodiversity emergencies escalate," she said.

She said the gang-gang's plight was particularly concerning, having gone from being unlisted straight to a recommendation for an endangered listing – just one step away from critically endangered.

"Now that we've recognised how much trouble these birds are in, we need strong recovery plans that protect their remaining habitat and coordinate recovery efforts," Vine said.



DID YOU KNOW....

The Australian pelican has the longest bill of any other bird in the world. Its bill is almost 2 feet, or 0.5 metres, long and the pelican's large beak can hold up to eleven litres of water. The beak will shrink to squeeze out all the water



PARROT TRIES TO ORDER STRAWBERRIES AND WATERMELON FROM AMAZON'S ALEXA

A mischievous parrot was caught ordering strawberries, watermelons and ice-cream after 'falling in love' with Amazon's voice-activated device Alexa.

Rocco, a homeless African grey, keeps using the personal assistant to order his favourite treats, as well kites and light bulbs, and likes to set the mood by playing romantic music.

The clever bird was taken in by the National Animal Welfare Trust's Berkshire centre in the UK earlier this year after he was found as a stray.

But staff member Marion Wischnewski agreed to become his foster parent after he caused a few issues in the Great Shefford office by swearing and throwing his water bowl around.

Ms Wischnewski said fun-loving Rocco enjoys dancing and putting on his favourite tunes.

But thanks to a parental lock on her Amazon account, the attempted purchases have not gone through, *The Times* reported.

Source: www.independent.co.uk/news



DID YOU KNOW....

It is difficult to identify the gender of a peacock upon birth as a peacock's train only develops after three years. Still, they grow up so swiftly that they can walk independently after a week. They learn to fly after a few months.

Also that a group of peafowls is called a 'harem'. However, an all-female group has specific names such as 'bevvie,' 'muster,' or a 'party'.



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RAINBOW LORIKEETS ARE DYING OF PARALYSIS.

A bizarre disease is paralysing rainbow lorikeets, leaving experts in a flap and calling on the public to help them solve the mystery of Lorikeet paralysis syndrome that renders the birds nearly immobile and unable to fly or eat, resulting in many birds dying.

Scientists sounded the alarm because the disease seems to have only started affecting the birds relatively recently..... with thousands now being found dead or severely affected in recent years.

University of Sydney School of Veterinary Science Professor David Phalen said he and his colleagues had ruled out several possibilities for what might be causing the disease,.....



“We ruled out the common things that might cause the symptoms that these birds have – we know it’s not a toxin produced as a result of pollution, it’s not a toxin associated with pesticides or anything like that,” he said. “We also know it’s not an infectious disease.”

that narrowed it down to a plant toxin, which fit the seasonal nature of the disease – the birds were primarily found with the paralysis between October and June..... That suggested the birds were feeding on the flowers or fruit of a plant that caused them to get sick – but researchers did not know which one.

“We’ve worked up a profile, almost like for a human being who’s done a murder,” Professor Phalen said. “We think it’s a plant confined to a portion of the east coast of Australia, specifically north of Grafton in NSW and south of Noosa in Queensland. “..... predominantly in the coastal areas, and most likely not a native plant, it might be an ornamental plant that people are planting in their backyards.”

Professor Phalen said researchers were calling for anyone who saw rainbow lorikeets feeding to take photos for them.

“We’re asking people if they see birds feeding on a plant to take pictures of that plant and then upload them to our research website,” he said. “We can start looking for which plants they are eating in the months the disease isn’t a problem and which ones they are eating when it is a problem.”

The research has been published in the Australian Veterinary Journal.

Source: Public appeal to help identify flower killing lorikeets, Stuart Layt

AUSTRALIA'S "DRUNKEN PARROT SEASON" BEGINS!

October is when the wet season arrives in Australia's Northern Territory and with it comes another, far more interesting and uniquely Australian phenomenon: drunken parrot season! .It's actually a regular event in the Northern Territory, at least: the beginning of the northern wet season also coincides with parrots like the Red-Collared Lorikeet somehow hitting the sauce and staggering into animal shelters to sleep it off.



As Australian Geographic reports, “drunk lorikeet” season is typified by birds falling over, having trouble flying, and colliding with things. Like your average pub drunk, they’re also prone to a parrot version of “I love youse brother”, instead losing their fear of people. Northern Territory blogger Bob Gosford Tweeted to *El Reg* that “I’ve seen them roaring drunk and laughing out loud like Irish backpackers”.

The common explanation is that as the weather becomes warmer and wetter, some of the fruit that the birds favour start fermenting, knocking the parrots for six. And it’s not all fun and games: the wildlife carers say the benders and subsequent hangovers kill about half of the parrots brought into shelters each year.



Check **“Did You Spot It? Noticing Birds Around Australia”** on Facebook for some more great comic observations of Australian Birds by Jason Rodgers

MERE SIGHT OF ILLNESS MAY KICK-START CANARY'S IMMUNE SYSTEM

For canaries, just seeing their feathered friends get sick may be enough to preemptively rev up their immune systems.

Healthy birds housed within view of fellow fowl infected with a common pathogen mounted an immune response, despite not being infected themselves, researchers report in *Biology Letters*.



"It's fascinating that some sort of visual cue could alter immune function," says Ashley Love, a disease ecologist at the University of Connecticut in Storrs. Precisely how much these alterations actually protect the birds remains unclear, she says.

Immune systems are like sentinels, patrolling the body for invaders and calling in the cavalry once a pathogen is detected. Traditionally, pathogens have to actually get into bodies to spur that sort of response.

But some research has previously hinted that perceived threats can whip up immune cells. For example, one experiment in humans found that a mere photo of a sick person increases the activity of inflammation-stimulating chemicals called cytokines. But no one had ever looked to see whether being within eyeshot of an actually sick individual could compel the immune system to preemptive action, Love says.

"A lot of wildlife diseases have these obvious physical symptoms," she says. If wild animals can prepare, immunologically, at the first sign they might become infected, they may be better equipped to fight off the invader once it comes.

To test this idea, Love and her colleagues infected 10 caged canaries (*Serinus canaria domestica*) with *Mycoplasma gallisepticum*, or MG, a common bacterial pathogen that causes conjunctivitis and extreme lethargy. Sick birds look "pretty fluffed out," Love says.

Nine healthy birds were housed in direct view of their sick brethren, but far enough away to avoid infection, which requires direct contact. An identical setup, but with all healthy birds, was located in the same room but on the other side of an opaque divider. Over the course of a month, researchers collected blood samples from the birds, measured various



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aspects of immune activity and tracked how sick the infected birds looked.

"This was a pretty convincing study," says Dana Hawley, a disease ecologist at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg who wasn't involved in the research. Lots of animals avoid infection by social distancing, she says. For instance, lobsters steer clear of dens occupied by sick individuals, and the house finches that Hawley studies avoid individuals who appear ill.

But social distancing has its costs, especially for highly social species.

For species that forage together, or rely on safety in numbers, ramping up an immune response at the mere sight of illness might confer some protection while still allowing the animals to get up close and personal.

"It's great to avoid a pathogen," Hawley says, "but if you can't find food or [you] get taken by a predator, it doesn't really matter."

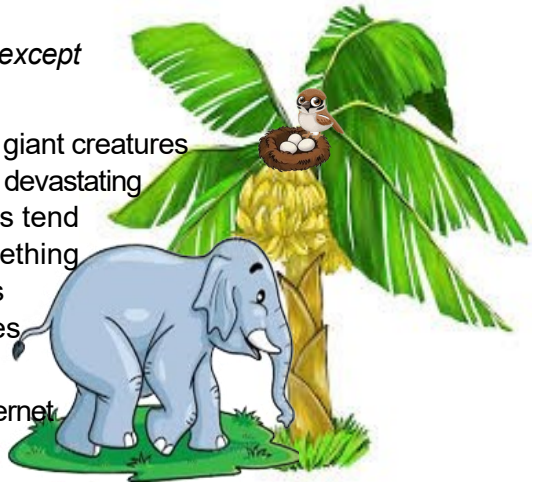
Source: Article by Jonathan Lambert , Science News



STRANGE BUT TRUE...

Elephants destroy all banana trees except the ones with nests.

Elephants are usually referred to as giant creatures as they can rip apart trees and cause devastating destruction at times. But most of us tend to ignore the fact that there is something distinctly human about the species that make them intelligent creatures compared to other animals.



A video has now gone viral on the internet, which shows how a group of wild elephants destroyed banana plantations in a village in Tamil Nadu in India, except the one tree which had a bird's nest on it. In the clip, villagers assessed the destruction caused by the wild elephants, while the bird's nest was left untouched and unharmed.

"This is the reason why elephants are called gentle giants. Destroyed all the banana trees, except the one having nests. God's amazing nature," said the IFS officer who captioned the video.

BACK IN TIME....

Interesting little article from The Herald, Melbourne, Monday 15 November 1943

"DOGS RAID AVIARY, KILL RARE BIRDS"

Dog raided the aviaries of Mr Alan Jaques. at. Baiwyn last night, and destroyed £114 worth of rare Oriental and, Indian pheasants in addition to Javanese green peacocks and water-fowl. which are irreplaceable.

His loss includes Indo-Chinese Edwards pheasants. Siamese firebricks, Reeves. Lady Amherst, Swinhoe and Mandarin North Carolina wood-ducks, rarities of 30 years' collecting as Australia's foremost fancier.



Some time ago Mr Jaques had a similar severe loss, when two English setters destroyed his valuable wild peacocks.

Raiding dogs have also ravaged pheasant aviaries in Caulfield and Essendon and they killed nearly every bird in the famous aviaries of the late Mr Ben Nathan at Ripponlea.

There is no redress for loss of this kind as the Dog Act has a clause requiring "scienter" before damage can be claimed from the owner of the dog. This means that the owner must be proved not only to know that his dog previously destroyed stock but it must be stock of the same kind as that destroyed



**Scienter :the fact of an act having been done knowingly, especially as grounds for civil damages.*

DID YOU KNOW....

Contrary to popular belief, ostriches do not bury their heads in the sand: the myth probably originates from the bird's defensive behaviour of lying low at the approach of trouble and pressing their long necks to the ground in an attempt to become less visible. Their plumage blends well with sandy soil and, from a distance, gives the appearance that they have buried their heads in the sand.



VALE GEORGE HISCOCKS [1937- 2021]

It is with regret that we inform you of the passing of George Hiscocks, a well-respected and highly gifted aviculturist, past Federation president, and a good friend to many.

George was President of both CCBFA and specialist canary societies for many years, chairing meetings with aplomb. As MC he was renowned for his decorative satin waistcoat when he stood before the lectern at each annual Federation dinner event. George with his late wife Anne, were also frequent guest speakers at bird club meetings.



He was a multitalented panel judge for all varieties of the canary fancy and bred many champions over his years of exhibiting birds. His bird room and aviaries were buoyant with Glosters, Borders, Yorkshires, Norwich, Lizards and finches. George travelled widely, volunteering to judge at country and interstate shows and attended most National Shows. He also skilfully crafted bird show cages as a hobby.

George and his late wife Anne often hosted bird club meetings at their home offering BBQ meals with a cheery and warm welcome.

We celebrate George's long term and notable contribution to Federation, and his record of participation will be remembered with gratitude by all aviculturists.

George and Anne will never be forgotten by their many bird fancier friends and so we all convey our sincere sympathy to their four daughters and their families.



THE INTERNET SWOONS OVER THIS "HOT PIGEON"

Step aside, “sexy koala” and “hunky kangaroo,” the Internet has got a new animal crush (and no, we’re not talking about the recent Lola Bunny incident). Twitter has recently been swooning over “hot pigeon”. Unlike the feral gray city pigeons you might see pecking at a stray pizza slice on the sidewalk, this handsome fella is tinged with pastel hues of pink, orange, green, and yellow.

"Have u ever seen such a beautiful pigeon?," the original tweeter asked.

"Now, THAT's a fine pidgeon," one person commented.

"That is...the most fabulous pigeon I've ever seen," someone else remarked, gobsmacked by the beast's beauty.

"Is this what's underneath all the dirt from the city?" asked another.

Rest assured, the “magical rainbow pigeon” is real, naturally-occurring, and very easy on the eyes.

The bird is a *pink-necked green-pigeon* (*Treron vernans*), a species of the pigeon and dove family *Columbida*, commonly found in the mangroves, coastal forests, and parks of Southeast Asia.

While the females of the species are typically olive green, the male is very well dressed in grey and green with a pinkish neck, an orange breast, and green-yellow wings. The species is shy yet very social and is often seen flying around in a flock. Compared to other pigeons and doves, they are not hugely vocal. They do, however, sometimes let out a strange, alien-sounding coo.



Some fans of the “hot pigeon” have also highlighted that there are many other sexy species of pigeon, from the pink-headed fruit dove to the Victoria crowned pigeon. Even the humble feral pigeon has its charm in certain lights, often sporting a purple-green coloration around their neck.

But of course, if we’re doing pigeon beauty contents, it must be said that the pink-necked green-pigeon is clearly the pick of the basket.

But of course, if we’re doing pigeon beauty contents, it must be said that the pink-necked green-pigeon is clearly the pick of the basket.

Source: www.iflscience.com

WELCOME TO A NEW CLUB

With all the upheavals and problems of recent times it is great news to see the establishment of a new club, the **Brisbane Canary Association Inc...**

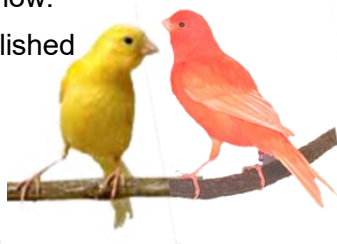
The new club is already well on the way to success with over 60 members already and its own club house that can cater for 5-600 canaries. The club has also purchased its own staging for at least 500 canaries.

A show program has been arranged for 2022 which with three shows planned and a judging panel established. The three shows scheduled are: Garden Show, Young Bird Show and Annual Show.

In addition 3 Levels of Judging have been established as follows:

- a. Level One - New Judge
- b. Level Two - Type or Coloured Canaries
- c. Level Three - Type and Coloured Canaries

Contact details are **Peter Ball** , 07 3901 0261 or Email at **ballp@yahoo.com**



*Send in reports on your club's activities and news.
Feathered World is your magazine, so contributions are welcome.*



Please send in any club detail changes, including changes of position to the secretary asap. Thank you.

Have you updated your club details?

THE CANARY & CAGE BIRD FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIA INC

Minutes of the ZOOM GENERAL MEETING Wednesday 1st September 2021.

The President opened the meeting at 8:06 pm, thanking the delegates for their attendance.

ATTENDANCE:

There were 16 delegates in attendance including, S. Davis, R. Robertson, C. Gruntar, J. Forrest, B. Goleby, T. Keogh, M. Gallagher, J. Tadgell, M. MacPherson, B. Whiting, G. Fitt, T. Hartung, M. Reynolds, B. Lloyd, I. Cindric, M. Cameron.

APOLOGIES:

Apologies were received from I. Ward, J. Palmano, G. Brandon, D. Renshaw – moved M. Reynolds and seconded J. Forrest apologies be accepted - Carried.

MINUTES: All minutes published in *Feathered World* and on our web, ccbfa.org.au/journals
The minutes for the 7th July General Meeting of Federation had been distributed via the Web. It was moved B. Goleby and seconded J. Forrest that the minutes be adopted as a true record of the July General meeting – Carried

Matters arising out of the minutes: None other than matters that can be held over for Reports and General Business.

In-coming correspondence as follows:

- Affiliated clubs. Notification of office bearers and delegate
- Affiliated clubs requesting assistance with matters regarding the insurance.
- Affiliate clubs ordering supplementary rings for 2021.
- Coditech confirmation of ring orders and arrangement of means of shipment.
- Affiliated clubs payments for ring orders from various affiliates.
- Clubs requesting details of affiliation and insurance.
- Clubs ordering 2022 rings, required for distribution by the 1st January 2022
- Panorama House. Refund dinner deposit \$600.00
- President / Govt Liaison Officer. Sam Davis- ongoing communication, received in response to communication with Federal Government and States Govt. Departments.

Newsletters / Journals – Received from various clubs, with notification of club events for insurance:

- PET Industry News. Newsletters July, August 2021
- Central Coast Avicultural Society. Newsletter July'21
- Far North Queensland Bird Breeders June July 2021
- Hunter Valley Finch Club Inc. Hunter Finch Fancier Aug' & Sept'21
- Gold Coast Aviary Birds News Sept Oct'21
- Coral Coast Bird Club Inc. Newsletter Chatterings # 272 July'21 & 273 Aug'21
- The Avicultural Society of NSW Inc July – August'21
- Queensland Bird Breeders Club Inc. Issue #4 July'21
- FSA The Finch Breeders REVIEW July-Aug'21
- Yorkshire Canary Club of Victoria, July 2021
- UK National Council for Aviculture (NCA) Promotional Leaflet

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Out-going correspondence as follows:

- Change of Office Bearers and Privacy forms sent to various clubs.
- Details of affiliation and insurance provided to clubs requesting information.
- Various affiliates dispatch of ring orders on receipt of payment.
- Coditech, placement of supplementary ring orders.
- Clubs invoiced and dispatch of rings on receipt of payment.
- Ring Secretaries of clubs emailing interim notice for placement of rings for 2022.
- State Budgeterigar Councils, requesting review and notification if 2022 insurance is not required for some branches and associated clubs.
- President / Govt Liaison Officer. Sam Davis- ongoing communication with Federal Government States Govt. Departments

As there were no matters arising out of correspondence, it was moved by B. Whiting and seconded by B. Lloyd that the correspondence be received and the secretary's action endorsed - Carried

TREASURERS REPORT

The accounts were submitted for endorsement It was moved by G. Fitt and seconded by M. MacPherson that the payments and the Treasurers actions be endorsed - Carried

REPORTS: President Sam Davis presented reported on:

Victoria Review by the Conservation Regulator - Native Animal Licensing

A further consultation has been commenced by the Victorian Conservation Regulator who manages native bird compliance and enforcement. Crazy given reviews of the larger Wildlife Act 1975 and animal legislation are both well underway and these are the Acts that underpin all activities of the Conservation Regulator.

This consultation was brought to CCBFA attention recently, and might I say indirectly. I apologise for not widely consulting with all Victorian clubs, but time was of the essence. In addition, the points CCBFA has made are essentially the same as were made in the main Wildlife Act 175 review submission and that submission is included in this submission.

The main points in our submission are as follows.

- A. The current licensing regime for native birds is outdated and is no longer fit for purpose. Risk-based licensing is, in general supported. There is no longer any incentive to take from the wild for the large majority of our aviary species, therefore trivial risk, which should be reflected in the licensing regime.
- B. Aviculturists keep a mix of both native and exotic species; therefore, animal welfare regulation of aviary birds should not be the remit of the Conservation Regulator.
- C. We applaud the intent of the Conservation Regulator to "Inform and educate", "understand how to comply", "Collaborate by working with", etc. described on p7. CCBFA welcomes direct communication from, and looks forward to working with the Conservation Regulator – this has not occurred to date. The consultative committee (see recommendation 4 that follows) should be supported by the Conservation Regulator.
- D. Native animal keeping is a known precursor to conservation awareness, empathy and involvement. Encouraging and supporting native animal keeping should be a central role of the Conservation Regulator.

Our full submission is on our website at the following link.

<https://www.ccbfa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/ccbfa-vic-conservation-regulator-submission-300821.pdf>

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NSW Native Animal Licensing

On the afternoon of 30/6/21 I received a reply from Atticus Fleming who is the Deputy Secretary of NSW NPWS (he is in charge of NPWS). Atticus indicated a brief would be on his desk by the end of the week and with the Minister shortly after.

No further correspondence received as at 1/9/21.

ACA appealed and has been granted a review of its Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (GIPA) request. The results of the initial GIPA request did not include documents we know exist. We await these further results, or lack thereof, before moving forward.

NSW Bird Sale CoP - Update

A list of species permitted to be sold in wire cages and not permitted to be sold in wire cages is essentially finalised. This list will be on the CCBFA website and accessible via QR code. A footnote to S4.7 will direct users to this list.

A media release has been prepared (thanks to Jayson Forest) and A3 posters are being designed.

CCBFA will shortly contact all clubs to determine the number of copies of the code each requires, then print and distribute.

Parrot Exports

The Federal Wildlife Trade Office (WTO) within the Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment contracted consultants "ThinkPlace" to consider "Options for a National Registration Scheme for Native and Exotic Live Birds".

I have spoken to the head of wildlife trade about our CCBFA proposal outlined below on numerous occasions. I (and others) have also been interviewed by ThinkPlace consultants as have Dr Simon Griffith (Macquarie University) and Dr David Groth (Curtin University) on my recommendation. Both scientists confirm the viability of DNA parentage testing which is at the centre of the CCBFA proposal.

To reiterate, the main points in CCBFA's proposal are as follows.

1. CCBFA is strongly opposed to the introduction of a "National Registration Scheme for Native and Exotic Live Birds".
 - a. This will not prevent smuggling or poaching and will likely enable laundering of illegal birds into the system.
 - b. Registering all CITES listed birds is unrealistic

The previous National Exotic Bird Registration Scheme (NEBRs) failed. It is also common knowledge that NEBRs enabled smuggled birds to be legalised.
2. Stopping poaching and smuggling is the main aim. For this to occur an accessible yet robust system to ensure birds are captive bred is required.
 - a. Australia's CITES obligations require a captive bred assurance from the Management Authority of the State of export (CITES Article VII (5)). No further CITES permits are required when birds are shown to be captive bred.
 - b. CCBFA acknowledges there are deficiencies in the current system of proving birds intended for export are captive bred.

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- c. CCBFA supports the introduction of economical DNA parentage tests using blood spots from the captive parents and from the birds to be exported. DNA testing proves parentage which proves that the birds are captive bred.
 - d. A simple addition to the EPBC Act 1999 is required to implement the above and CCBFA offers to assist.
3. Captive bred exports should NOT be restricted to “display establishments” aka zoos. Exports should be able to go to anyone, cost effectively with some welfare assurances. This must be the case to minimise smuggling and poaching.

Public consultation, including an online survey, is open until 17th September 2021. Clubs are encouraged to make the above points clear as they complete the survey.

Consultation website is here...

<https://haveyoursay.awe.gov.au/registration-scheme-for-native-and-exotic-live-birds>

The survey itself is here...

https://haveyoursay.awe.gov.au/registration-scheme-for-native-and-exotic-live-birds/survey_tools/registration-scheme-for-native-and-exotic-live-birds

ACA update

ACA is working on a range of matters, including:

1. Pets in strata – the new regulations are now law. Essentially Owners Corporations can no longer include by-laws preventing the keeping of pets in strata. Current by-laws to that effect are now null and void. Much of the detail is a direct result of ACA recommendations.
2. Dog and Cats breeding code – a revised code has just been released. This code resolves a number of problem areas uncovered during the recent RSPCA compliance audits. A new code and new right of access laws for those tasked with compliance will be included in the new NSW animal welfare legislation.

A discussion paper is now out with regard to animal welfare law in NSW. This paper has resulted in much discussion/argument between all parties, including all political parties. In my role as VP of ACA we have met with the Minister Adam Marshall's office, the Shadow Minister Mick Veitch MP, Emma Hurst MP of the Animal Justice Party and meet tomorrow with Mark Banasiak of the Shooters, Fishers, Farmers Party. We've also met with the senior DPI staff who are engaged in writing the new Act.

Moved G. Fitt and seconded by B. Golby that the Reports be accepted, and Reporters thanked – Carried

GENERAL BUSINESS:

- **Public & Products Liability Insurance for 2022** - It is important to note that all affiliates have a requirement to give advanced notice if they do not require the insurance for 2022. All affiliates are requested to advise the Secretary by the 30th September 2021 should you not require cover for the ensuing year. Failure to do so will necessitate being charged.

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- **Ring Orders 2022.** Clubs (Finches, Budgerigar, other species) requiring rings for distribution by the 1st January 2021 are requested to submit orders by the 30th September 2021 to be included in first 2022 consolidation. Canary clubs may also place their orders to be included in the initial shipment. Another consolidated orders for **2022 canary rings** [if required for distribution at the specialist Annual shows at the end of May] should be finalised by the 1st March 2022. Clubs requiring an order form which must be completed, should contact the Secretary, Ron Robertson.
- **Show and Sale dates for 2022** – Clubs are requested to email the Secretary the dates for their 2022 shows, sales and auctions, including phone number of the contact person and venue details. It is understood that confirmation of the venue may be in abeyance / pending, however we request the tentative / projected dates be advised. Email birdclubs@aapt.net.au
- **Feathered World publication, redesign of the cover.** It was moved R. Robertson and seconded J. Taddell that we accept the green feathered cover as shown to the meeting with the boxed highlights of the content – carried.
- **RAS** has confirmed the show dates for the Cage Bird show at the 2022 Royal Easter Show will be Tuesday 12th and Wednesday 13th April 2022. Benching will be either Monday 11th from 6pm or prior to 8am on Tuesday 12th.

The President thanked the delegates for attending, as there was no further business the meeting closed at 9:25p.m.

Notice of the General Meeting

Wednesday 3rd November 2021
at 8:00 pm

Ring Specification

Colour Sequence & Code

Change the Pastel Green to Pantone Green and Orange to Pantone Dark Brown, coming into effect in 2020 and 2022.

Colour	Pantone Code	RAL	Year	Year
Red	1797 U	3002	2018	2024
Black	Black 2U2X	8005	2019	2025
Pantone Green	3292U	6026	2020	2026
Violet	249 U	4008	2021	2027
Pantone Dark Brown	1535U	8003	2022	2028
Dark Blue	301 U	5019	2023	2029



16/9/2021

Opposition to a National Registration Scheme for Native and Exotic Live Birds

CCBFA and its affiliated clubs nationally totally and adamantly oppose even the notion of a National Registration Scheme for Native and Exotic Live Birds. On this we are unanimous in our resolve and willingness to fight.

We do not understand how this proposition for a National Registration Scheme for Native and Exotic Live Birds has expanded from the following KPMG Review Recommendation 8.

8. Establish a registration scheme to prove lineage of specimens to be exported, including a consideration of DNA testing requirement.¹

This recommendation clearly states “specimens to be exported” NOT all birds as is implied by the survey title. The survey has caused untold concern from our affiliate clubs and their numerous members. Clubs recall the disastrous failed NEBRs scheme and are astonished such a notion has resurfaced. It is a widely held view that such schemes only benefit one (or maybe a few) large commercial interests and the smugglers.

Recommendation 8 specifically requires “consideration of DNA testing requirement” This is not addressed as part of the survey. I am personally confident this part of the recommendation is due to discussions I had with the KPMG consultants regarding DNA parentage testing protocols for birds intended for export. DNA parentage testing is now viable and should form the scientific backbone of ensuring only captive bred birds are traded across our borders.

Our recent document titled “Proposal for a DNA Parentage-based Export Protocol²” provided to ThinkPlace and DAWE details our recommended DNA Parentage protocol and is to be considered as the core of this submission and is included as Appendix A.

CCBFA current stance on export (and import) of birds supported by all clubs remains as follows. It is this stance that underpins all CCBFA action and recommendations regarding this matter.

CCBFA supports and encourages a simplified export system for birds known to be aviary bred. Essentially captive bred birds, whether native or exotic, should be treated in the same manner as dogs, cats, and other routinely exported (and imported) species (except for threatened species within captive breeding programs). This is THE way to deter smuggling, as there is not and will not ever be sufficient sustainable funding to enforce border controls. The only proviso is to include safeguards to ensure captive numbers within Australia for each exported species remain sustainable.

¹ KPMG Independent Review, Regulation of the export of native and exotic birds for the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment: <https://www.environment.gov.au/system/files/pages/f0e28291-cffd-4dbf-87f6-12cd76fea3a6/files/kpmg-native-and-exotic-bird-export.pdf>

² CCBFA Proposal for a DNA Parentage-based Export Protocol: <https://www.ccbfa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/ccbfa-DNA-parentage-protocol.pdf>

CCBFA is of the view surveys such as the one on the “Have your say”³ site are difficult to construct without bias. In this case the survey presumes a national registration scheme to be a reasonable option to consider. In essence it suggests a national registration scheme as the only possible solution to the export problem and therefore does not encourage alternative solutions. Responses are limited to support or lack of support for such a scheme, in particular questions 6-9.

6. *What issues or opportunities could a national registration scheme address, with respect to how the export of native and exotic birds works currently?*
7. *What effects, positive or negative, might a national registration scheme for the export of native and exotic live birds have?*
8. *How could a national registration scheme for the export of native and exotic live birds work in a practical sense?*
9. *What technologies can most viably underpin a national registration scheme for the export of native and exotic live birds?*

It is for this reason that CCBFA has chosen not to answer the survey and instead makes this submission. We have, for simplicity, recommended our clubs and their members respond to the survey questions by simply and clearly stating their opposition to any national registration scheme.

CCBFA looks forward to and welcomes further consultation.

Regards



Sam Davis
President - CCBFA

³ Have your say survey https://haveyoursay.awe.gov.au/registration-scheme-for-native-and-exotic-live-birds/survey_tools/registration-scheme-for-native-and-exotic-live-birds

CCBFA Submission

The remainder of this submission summarises, under five broad themes, CCBFA opposition to a National Registration Scheme for Native and Exotic Live Birds whilst promoting our stance on export (and import) and reinforcing our recommended “Proposal for a DNA Parentage-based Export Protocol”⁴.

Please be clear that our “Proposal for a DNA Parentage-based Export Protocol” remains central to this submission – for clarity it is reproduced as Appendix A.

I. Conservation and Biodiversity

Aviculture has changed significantly over the past 50 years. It is no longer acceptable (or legal) to take from the wild except for specific approved conservation or research projects. Aviculture is strongly opposed to poaching and smuggling, particularly of threatened species. The vast majority of aviculturists in Australia and internationally are conservation focussed.

Superficially, respondents to the online survey may conclude that registering all birds nationally, particularly those species listed on one of the CITES appendices, may be advantageous in terms of conservation of biodiversity. In fact, the opposite is true. Compliance with such registration systems cannot and will not ever be enforced to a level even remotely close to where they will achieve any protection. Perhaps more significantly, such registration systems enable smuggled and poached birds to be legitimised via registration. This occurs with the current EBRs system and was a major problem with the old NEBRs system as explained in the Background Notes within Appendix A.

What about registration restricted to threatened species, or even a subset such as only endangered and critically endangered species? Again, superficially this appears to have some merit and no doubt some respondents will argue in favour, however in reality many threatened species are common in aviculture, for example, Swift Parrots, Princess Parrots, Scarlet-chested Parrot, Gouldian Finch, Black-throated Finch, and many more native species. Similarly for numerous common in aviculture exotic species. A system that requires such species to be registered is a major disincentive to hobbyists, and hence they avoid these species resulting in a reduced captive population. When the captive population is low then genetic variability suffers and the conservation benefits of a sustainable captive population are lost. We have seen this occur with state government licencing for a number of species. In addition, such schemes can create a sinusoidal market where prices rise as species numbers become critically low, leading to those seeking a quick profit entering, numbers rise rapidly exceeding demand and so they plummet once more and so it continues – definitely not a desirable outcome for the species.

Supporting the maintenance of large sustainable captive populations preserves the species in the long term and minimises all incentive to poach from the wild.

The observations and husbandry skills of aviculture are critical to numerous threatened species and related research projects domestically and internationally. This avicultural knowledge has been refined over numerous decades, in some cases centuries. There are numerous texts, journals and more recently web-based resources produced by aviculturists that are invaluable to threatened species efforts both for in-situ and ex-situ conservation efforts.

⁴ CCBFA Proposal for a DNA Parentage-based Export Protocol: <https://www.ccbfa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/ccbfa-DNA-parentage-protocol.pdf>

We recommend our “Proposal for a DNA Parentage-based Export Protocol” is implemented. Under Australia’s CITES obligations we must ensure exports are restricted to captive bred birds. A national registration scheme cannot do this, in fact any such scheme will enable precisely the opposite.

II. Economics – viability

What is the size of the flock and how many bird keepers?

The size of the flock of captive birds in Australia is difficult to determine with any precision, however it certainly exceeds 1 million. The number of bird keepers again is difficult to quantify. CCBFA has approximately 230-240 affiliated clubs. We do not know the number of members each club has, however some have many hundreds of members, whilst others have less than 50. Guessing, and it is a guess, at an average of say 80 members per club results in the number of club members totalling approximately 20,000. We often use a rule of thumb that around 10% of aviculturists are club members, so an estimate of approximately 200,000 aviculturists is a reasonable estimate. This number excludes those with a pet budgerigar or canary, these are people with multiple birds or an aviary who would consider aviculture to be a hobby.

How would you identify and contact the estimated 200,000 bird keepers nationally?

Avicultural clubs can communicate with their members, so the first 10% is relatively easy to inform. The remaining 90% will be extremely difficult (expensive) to identify let alone contact. This was one of the major early failure indicators on the NEBRS. Minutes of the very first meeting of the Exotic Birds Committee on 10-11 February 1997 make it clear registrations were lower than expected, and it is clear they never improved significantly during the life of the scheme. People simply were unaware the scheme existed or did not engage sufficiently to register. There were insufficient financial resources applied to marketing the scheme and few financial resources directed at improving compliance levels. Economically this would most certainly be the case today for any national registration scheme.

So what are the ongoing costs?

Imagine it is possible to identify all these people and the scheme is operational. So 200,000 people are registered along with the more than 1 million birds they keep. To manage such a scheme would require a team of staff at the Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment along with all the allied resources. Clearly such a scheme will require many millions of dollars annually to administer once it is operational.

Clearly any scheme that attempts to register birds nationally will cost tens of millions of dollars to setup and many millions annually to administer, and even then, it is doomed to failure. Success without DNA parentage tests will enable not prevent smuggling and poaching.

Note our DNA parentage system (Appendix A) in comparison has trivial associated costs with the significant proportion recouped as charges to exporters.

III. Biosecurity

Border controls to ensure pathogens do not enter Australia or leave Australia are possible when there are high levels of compliance with import and export protocols, and enforcement is sufficient to minimise illegal smuggling activity. Currently this is not the case and will not be the case should a national registration scheme for birds be implemented.

Under the previous NEBRS system and even currently under the voluntary EBRS regime, there is smuggling and as discussed above and within Appendix A any national registration scheme is

doomed to the same fate. Smuggled birds are obviously not subject to biosecurity controls and hence pathogens can and no doubt do enter the country along with illegal birds.

CCBFA's DNA parentage system (Appendix A) will minimise biosecurity concerns. It minimises smuggling and therefore ensures birds leaving and entering the country pass through appropriate biosecurity controls.

IV. Compliance outcome

The logistics of successfully enforcing compliance for a flock of over 1 million birds and perhaps 200,000 bird keepers is clearly daunting. As discussed above, it has been tried before with failure the result. Furthermore, there is no incentive for illegal operators to register with a national scheme and plenty of disincentives.

Currently state-based native licensing schemes have or are in the process of transitioning to risk-based systems where the majority of native bird keepers will no longer require a keeper licence. The high rates of non-compliance are a significant reason for this transition, but not the only reason. The state schemes were no longer fit for purpose, the same applies to a national registration scheme.

CCBFA's DNA parentage system (Appendix A) will minimise smuggling so enforcement needs reduce in parallel. Our recommended system includes only those bird keepers directly involved in export, therefore managing compliance is realistic and achievable.

V. Animal Welfare

A national registration scheme would, we presume, require all birds, millions of birds, to be permanently identified. This has ramifications in terms of animal welfare. The most common means of permanent identification is closed metal rings with implanted microchips being used for some large high value parrots.

CCBFA provides closed rings to its network of affiliate showing clubs nationally who distribute and record all ring numbers distributed to each of their members– a complex and significant undertaking. We do not distribute microchips and there is no national registry in place for bird microchips, some dog and cat registries are able to include birds, however to our knowledge use of such registries is rare.

Closed rings are applied to birds whilst young and still in the nest. Once a ring is applied the birds leg grows in size such that the closed ring is unable to be removed and more importantly the closed ring cannot be placed on a bird once fully grown. The precise size of the ring is critical to avoiding welfare issues.

Generally closed rings are used for show birds and some high value parrots. Show birds are selectively bred to a standard so generally single pairs are housed alone, and the nest or nest box is designed to enable close monitoring and access to chicks for welfare checks and to apply closed rings at the appropriate age. The appropriate age being when the leg is still small enough to receive the ring, any sooner and it will fall off, any later and the leg will be too large.

Applying closed rings to show birds has few welfare implications when done correctly. Aviculturists engaged in the show side of the hobby are instructed on the correct ring size, timing and technique very early – it is one of the first skills learnt and clubs routinely provide training. However, instructing and skilling the general bird keeping public on the technique and timing for hundreds of different species is another matter entirely. There are significant animal welfare consequences for rings applied inappropriately, including:

- Oversize rings can result in legs getting caught on branches, wire and other items within the bird's environment. Larger rings can also rise above the knee and then cause circulation issues. They are also liable to fall off, negating their purpose.
- Rings that are undersize will damage the bird's leg. It is not unknown for such rings to cut circulation completely resulting in loss of the leg completely.
- Many species, particularly when bred in aviaries, will desert nests if interfered with. The chicks then die of starvation or cold.
- Some species (and individual birds) will reject chicks sometime after rings are applied. Careful observation is always required to ensure parents have accepted and continue to accept rung birds.
- Even for the domesticated show Budgerigar there have been issues with particular coloured rings. The international Confédération Ornithologique Mondiale (COM) defines the precise colour of rings to be used each year on a six-year rotating cycle. CCBFA complies with this colour rotation. Much work has gone into selecting and modifying these six colours to minimise welfare issues.

Microchips are only suitable for larger birds and should be applied by a veterinarian or other qualified professional. The microchip itself is relatively inexpensive, however the cost to apply is significant both economically and in terms of inconvenience. Permitting unqualified people to install microchips is not recommended – a thorough knowledge of bird anatomy and sterile equipment usage, along with technique training is required to prevent animal welfare issues.

Blood sampling for DNA-based identification is somewhat invasive as it also requires the bird to be caught and blood sampled, usually from a toenail or blood vessel under the wing. Bird clubs routinely educate their members on appropriate techniques as DNA sexing is now a standard process for numerous species in aviculture. There are of course welfare concerns associated with such a process when done without appropriate training.

If blood sampling became a requirement under a national registration scheme, then an extensive national training program would be required to train bird keepers who are not members of clubs.

During export (or import) birds are transported in darkened boxes of a size that restricts movement. Sufficient food and water (or moisture in some other form) is provided. The requirements for specific species varies considerably and there is much to consider – too much to detail in this submission. For some species each bird should be transported alone and even out of sight of other birds, for others the opposite, namely a number of birds per transport box is appropriate. Expertise on each species' specific needs is required if animal welfare issues are to be managed and minimised.

Current International Air Transport Association (IATA) requirements are rudimentary at best. Should international imports and exports become more common then CCBFA would be keen to assist in the development of more robust guidelines for transport.

In terms of animal welfare, a system such as our recommended "Proposal for a DNA Parentage-based Export Protocol" ensures only birds intended for export and their parents are subjected to any procedures that have potential animal welfare consequences. A national registration system subjects all birds to such concerns.



8/9/2021

Proposal for a DNA Parentage-based Export Protocol

CCBFA and its clubs nationally wish to work with government to stamp out the illegal bird trade. DNA parentage testing is now viable and should form the scientific backbone of ensuring only captive bred birds are traded across our borders.

Changes to the *Environmental Protection and Biosecurity Act 1999* (EPBC Act)¹ as detailed in Supplement B are recommended to implement this proposal and to meet Australia's obligations as a signatory to the *Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora* (CITES)².

CCBFA current stance supported by all clubs is as follows.

CCBFA supports and encourages a simplified export system for birds known to be aviary bred. Essentially captive bred birds, whether native or exotic, should be treated in the same manner as dogs, cats, and other routinely exported (and imported) species (except for threatened species within captive breeding programs). This is THE way to deter smuggling, as there is not and will not ever be sufficient sustainable funding to enforce border controls. The only proviso is to include safeguards to ensure captive numbers within Australia for each exported species remain sustainable.

Aim

1. To ensure all CITES listed birds (see Supplement A – CITES listed avian species in Australia) exported from Australia are captive bred as required for Australia to meet its obligations as a signatory to CITES, in particular CITES Article VII(5)³.
2. To remove incentives for smuggling and poaching of all Australian native and exotic avian species held in aviculture through the design of a robust, accessible, and economically viable export (and import) system for captive bred birds.

Background Notes

1. The compulsory *National Exotic Bird Registration Scheme* (NEBRS) closed in 2002 and was replaced with a voluntary scheme known as the *Exotic Bird Record-Keeping Scheme* (EBRS)⁴ or EBRKS in some references. Both the mandatory NEBRS scheme and the current EBRS scheme utilises Movement Transaction Records (MTRs) in an attempt to prove parentage back to legally

¹ Environmental Protection and Biosecurity Act 1999
http://classic.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_act/epabca1999588

² CITES <https://cites.org/eng/disc/text.php>

³ CITES Article VII <https://cites.org/eng/disc/text.php#VII>

⁴ Compliance and record keeping guide for ownership of exotic birds in Australia
<https://www.environment.gov.au/system/files/resources/7b158178-166e-4d39-8630-26af806a9ddd/files/compliance-record-keeping-guide-ownership-exotic-birds-australia.pdf>

sourced birds. Neither scheme used or uses DNA to either prove parentage or as unique identifiers.

2. The NEBRS and EBRS schemes are flawed and there was and is widespread concern of significant fraudulent activity.
 - a. Both NEBRS and the current EBRS schemes attempted to manage the issues using the technologies available at the time. DNA testing techniques are now far more refined and reliable including in a legal sense.
 - b. During the creation of the NEBRS, many species were added to the *Inventory of Exotic (non-native) Bird Species*⁵ known to be in Australia that were not actually in the country. Many of these species are now present in Australia. In effect NEBRS enabled these species to be laundered into Australian aviculture.
 - c. The data entered on Movement Transaction Records (MTRs) relies on the honesty of the individual completing the MTR. If the birds, often as eggs, have been smuggled into the country or poached from the wild and the MTR claims they have been captive bred in Australia neither the NEBRS or EBRS was or is able to detect the deception.
 - d. EBRS is a voluntary scheme and is not well supported. There is widespread, albeit hearsay, that a good number of MTRs are fraudulent being used to legitimise illegally (both smuggled and poached) obtained birds and improve their marketability.
3. Restrictions on exports (and imports) to “zoos” and for other non-commercial purposes as legislated in EPBC Act *Division 5--Concepts relating to permit criteria* will continue to encourage smuggling and poaching. A robust, accessible and economically viable export (and import) system is required – this is THE way to deter smuggling and poaching of birds.

DNA Parentage Protocol

DNA parentage testing utilises a suite of markers which can provide a high probability that a bird is the offspring of two parents. It can quantify differences in the DNA of purported parents and their purported offspring. A marker not present in either parent’s DNA that is present in the offspring DNA proves conclusively that the bird is NOT the offspring of either parent.

All birds (parents and offspring) sampled as part of this export protocol require a visual or microchip identifier. This could be a ring, a missing toenail or some other feature that generally allows an individual bird to be distinguished efficiently from other birds. These identifiers are to simplify matching DNA samples to individual birds. These identifiers can be copied or cloned so are not reliable unique identifiers in their own right.

1. DNA sampling as part of the export application process
 - a. DNA sampling takes place in the exporter’s aviaries where the birds intended for export (export birds) are normally housed.
 - b. A trusted observer (approved by Government) must be present during DNA sampling.

⁵ 2007 Inventory of Exotic (non-native) Bird Species known to be in Australia
<http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/wildlife-trade/publications/2007-inventory-exotic-non-native-bird-species-known-in-australia>

- c. DNA sampling is based on small blood samples which can be simply taken with no risk to the bird.
- d. Two blood samples are taken from the parent of each export bird.
- e. Two blood samples are taken from each export bird.
- f. The visual (or microchip) identifier of each bird is recorded with every blood sample.
- g. The trusted observer verifies they witnessed the blood sampling of all birds and that all blood samples are recorded with the correct visual (or microchip) identifier.
- h. The trusted observer to be a Justice of the Peace, or some other trusted person or notary whose identity and honesty is beyond reproach. Conditions required to be a trusted observer pre-approved by the Department.
- i. The trusted observer role is required to ensure all birds from which blood samples are collected are indeed located within the exporter's aviaries. This ensures blood samples from birds in the wild are not collected.
- j. It is acknowledged that both parents and offspring may have been taken from the wild (or smuggled into the country). The signed export application form to include a declaration that all parent birds have been obtained legally and all offspring have been bred in captivity.
- k. Note that other strategies for verifying captive bred F2, F3 and beyond generations are cumbersome and provide no more surety than the declaration described here.
- l. CITES does not require F2, F3 captive bred assurance when the species "has been demonstrated to be capable of reliably producing second-generation offspring in a controlled environment"⁶ which is precisely the reason parrots and passerines in aviculture are in aviculture.

2. Verification of DNA parentage

- a. DNA parentage tests are performed using one set of DNA blood samples by a laboratory contracted to perform the tests by the Wildlife Trade Office of the federal government Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment.
- b. DNA parentage tests are charged to exporters on a user pays cost recovery basis.
- c. Trusted observer credentials are verified.
- d. Good and proper type background checks of exporter performed.
- e. If all is positive then a certificate to comply with CITES Article VII(5) is issued stating Australia is satisfied the birds are captive bred.
- f. Export permit issued under Australian Law.

⁶ CITES 2 b) ii) C. 2. <https://cites.org/eng/res/10/10-16C15.php>

3. At the border

- a. Export birds are presented to border control staff who take, or witness the taking of, two DNA blood samples from each bird.
- b. The visual (or microchip) identifier is clearly noted alongside each DNA blood sample.
- c. Shipment leaves Australia.
- d. During the next week or so the border collected DNA samples are tested against the DNA samples collected at the exporter's aviaries (1 above) to ensure the birds exported are the exact individuals on the application.
- e. Prosecution of non-matching DNA to be severe.

Many thanks to all who contributed to the compilation of this document.

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Supplement A – CITES listed avian species in Australia

1. All parrots (apart from the 4 very common captive species below), are listed on CITES Appendix I or CITES Appendix II⁷.
 - a. Budgerigar *Melopsittacus undulatus*, Cockatiel *Nymphicus hollandicus*, Peach-faced Lovebird *Agapornis roseicollis* and Indian Ringneck *Psittacula krameri* are the only parrots NOT listed on any of the CITES appendices. All are extremely common aviary and pet birds globally.
2. There are four species of passerines common in Australian aviculture that are listed on CITES.
 - a. The Red Siskin *Carduelis cucullata* is a passerine on Appendix I. Australia is actively involved in the recovery of this species led by the Smithsonian⁸. The expertise of Australian aviculturists is keenly sought to refine husbandry as part of the project⁹.
 - b. The southern or white-rumped subspecies of the Black-throated Finch *Poephila cincta cincta* is a native species listed on Appendix II. In aviculture this subspecies is known as the Parson Finch and is very common and well established in aviculture globally including Australia. Aviculture is involved in the recovery of this threatened species via a range of initiatives, most recently the “Help find the Black-throated finch in NSW and surrounds” project¹⁰.
 - c. The Java Sparrow *Lonchura oryzivora* listed on Appendix II is a free breeding and very common aviary bird globally including within Australia.
 - d. The European Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis* was recently listed on Appendix III by the Ukraine. Goldfinches are common in aviculture and there is a large and secure feral population in Australia.
 - e. The Green Strawberry *Amandava formosa* is on Appendix II. There are still some in Australia.
3. Some other CITES listed species are present in small numbers within private collections, and within zoological and wildlife parks.
4. Requiring registration of all CITES listed birds nationally will not work to the positive benefit of wild populations of listed species. It will be a huge disincentive leading to less people keeping these birds and there will almost certainly be massive non-compliance. Both these outcomes are at cross purposes to the intent of CITES and our EPBC Act.

⁷ CITES Appendices <https://cites.org/eng/app/appendices.php>

⁸ Red Siskin Initiative <https://www.redsiskin.org/>

⁹ Red Siskin husbandry video during a Smithsonian visit to Australia <https://youtu.be/ktRf4liHw2w>

¹⁰ Help find the Black-throated finch in NSW and surrounds <https://www.facebook.com/blackthroatedfinchproject>

Supplement B - Changes to the Environmental Protection and Biosecurity Act 1999 (EPBC Act)¹¹.

1. Changes to the EPBC Act are needed to implement Australia's obligations under CITES with regard to captive bred birds.
2. CCBFA supports simplifying regulated international trade in captive bred birds, particularly to deter smuggling. There are anomalies in our EPBC Act that do not reflect CITES and that are currently incentivising smuggling.
3. CITES Article VII¹² (4) states captive bred Appendix I species for commercial export are to be treated as Appendix II species, therefore Article IV applies. Article IV regulates trade in Appendix II species, it requires captive proof from the exporter, however there are no import requirements (from CITES).
4. CITES Article VII (5). This clause makes it clear that captive bred animals require no CITES documentation apart from a captive bred assurance from the Management Authority of the State of export.
5. Resolution Conf. 10.16 (Rev.) further expands on this notion.
<https://www.cites.org/eng/res/10/10-16C15.php>
6. Australia has not implemented Article VII (4) or (5) so far as we can tell. We believe as a signatory, we are obliged to do so. We suggest a subsection, say "303FKA Import of captive bred CITES listed species" to correct this omission and if accepted solve the problem.
7. CCBFA offers its expertise to assist drafting a proposed subsection 303FKA to resolve the issue.
8. Note the above advice has been provided to government as part of the recent EPBC Act review and directly to Hon Sussan Ley MP, Minister for the Environment as recently as 23/2/2021. A copy of the letter to the Minister is here - <https://www.ccbfa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/ccbfa-minister-letter-230221.pdf>

¹¹ Environmental Protection and Biosecurity Act 1999
http://classic.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_act/epabca1999588

¹² CITES Article VII <https://cites.org/eng/disc/text.php#VII>



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