



# FEATHERED WORLD

CANARY AND CAGE BIRD FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIA INC.



Race to Save Cape York Golden Shouldered Parrot

Insect Light Trap TOO MUCH CALCIUM

Exhibition Zebra Finch Society of Queensland

Why Are Some Bird Species Successful in Cities

The Surprising Journey of The Domestic Wild Turkey.

Ararahina-Aul. The Spix Macaw: Return From extinction

Summer Heat Hints

Mistletoe. What's it To Birds

CCBFA General Meeting Minutes, 7 September 2022



VOLUME 54 NUMBER 5

OCTOBER—NOVEMBER 2022



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# Canary & Cage Bird Federation of Australia Inc.

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# Canary & Cage Bird Federation of Australia Inc.

## **ZOOM MEETING DATES 2022**

**General Meetings** 2nd November

**AGM** 1st March 2023

*Meeting commences at 8:00 pm*

**NOTE:** Meetings at Anzac Room, Ashfield RSL, Liverpool Road, Ashfield  
Will be confirmed in advance at previous Zoom meeting

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## FEDERATION STATIONERY SALE

(Prices for Affiliated and Insured Clubs)

<b>Show Cage Stickers</b>	<b>\$10 for 600</b>
<b>Entry Forms</b>	<b>\$4 per 50</b>
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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.

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## 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.

Ron Robertson, Secretary, The Canary & Cage Bird Federation of Australia Inc. PO Box 230, Frenchs Forest ,NSW 1640 ; Phone: 02 9452 2396 ;Email: [federationbirdclubs@aapt.net.au](mailto:federationbirdclubs@aapt.net.au)

## 2023 RING ORDERS

Supplementary orders can be arranged for all species during 2023.

Clubs requiring an order form, should contact the Secretary / Ring Officer.  
Clubs requiring an order form, which must be completed, should contact

*Secretary, Ron Robertson, Email: [federationbirdclubs@aapt.net.au](mailto:federationbirdclubs@aapt.net.au)*

*Have you updated your club details?*

*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.*

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## DESPERATE RACE UNDERWAY TO SAVE CAPE YORK'S GOLDEN-SHOULDERED PARROT FROM EXTINCTION

There is a new push to save a rare and beautiful bird on the brink of extinction.

There are believed to be fewer than 1,500 golden-shouldered parrots left in a small parcel of Cape York in far north Queensland — the only place they are found in the world.

Known in traditional language as alwal, the bird is a sacred totem to the Olkola people, who plan to build a fenced sanctuary for the endangered species about 300 kilometres north of Cairns.

Traditional owner and chairman of the Olkola Aboriginal

Corporation Michael Ross said the sanctuary would provide a safe haven for the "funny little birds" that nested deep in termite mounds.

"They are funny little things, very timid, you could walk through their area, and you won't see one," Mr Ross said. "They are very fussy and shy, but they are beautiful, and they mean a lot to my people."

Mr Ross said the sanctuary would involve fencing off an area adjoining the Olkola Cultural Knowledge Centre, which is due for completion later this year.

"We will fence the area to keep out the feral pigs and cats and the cattle," Mr Ross said. "We need to bring the birds home."

The race to save the bird — a little bigger than a budgerigar — began about seven years ago after traditional owners teamed up with conservation group Bush Heritage Australia.

Several Indigenous ranger groups, as well as natural resource management bodies and property owners, are also working to save the species from extinction.



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Mr Ross said counts of nests were regularly undertaken, and remote cameras had been set up in the area to monitor the birds, their chicks and the creatures that hunt them, including feral cats.

Researchers had also been examining whether boosting dingo numbers could be key in helping to protect the species from cats and goannas.

Vision from monitoring cameras had shown that chicks living in a termite mound regularly patrolled by a dingo had successfully fledged.

"The dingo has been able to keep the predators away and protect those blind spots," Mr Ross said.

He said mining was also another threat to the spectacular bird, with several companies holding exploration permits in the region.



*"Sir, look at my Pantaloons"*

*"You to Sir, look at my Pantaloons"*

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## AN INSECT LIGHT TRAP

Today we have numerous types of live food available to feed our birds. Termites, Mealworms, Bush Fly Maggots and Flies and Crickets to name the more popular ones available. For some species even these insects may not fulfil their diverse nutritional requirements.

There is, however, another live food source that is freely available if you have the equipment. They are the numerous moths, beetles and bugs living in our own back yard. They come in numerous shapes and sizes and their diversity will generally provide nutrient value to numerous birds or all sizes.

The unit needed to catch them is rather simple and can be made by any handy man, even me!

Basically, the unit is a UV light, just like what is used in commercial Bug Catchers. The light is the attracter. Behind the light there is a domestic 300mm kitchen exhaust fan, and on the other side of the fan is a fabric bag with a slightly open weave to allow the air to pass through easily but small enough to hold even the smaller insects.



As soon as the insect gets near the light the fan just sucks it into the bag. Those are the 3 main components but making it is a little more involved.

The fan and light are fitted to a melamine board approximately 400mmx 750mm and attached to the board is a base so it will stand on its own.

Near the top a 300mm diameter hole is cut into the board and the fan is fitted. In front of the fan the UV lamp is fitted. I found the circular UV lamp produces better results. Three clips are needed to be fitted to support the lamp.

On the reverse side behind the fan is a waterproof box which is required to house the ballast and starter required to run the lamp. These parts are from a cannibalised 20-watt fluoro light fitting as well as a short extension lead fitted to get power to the terminal box.

You can also buy a light fitting that will take two screw in UV lamps plus UV lamps which are available from "Bunnings-type" outlets. This type of fitting doesn't require a Ballast or Starter that a Fluoro light requires. Just fit both lamps in front of the fan (as per picture below).

In conclusion I believe that providing natural and diverse livefood in this way is very much worth the effort and something anyone can do.

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For convenience I have also fitted an electrical switch on the device which allows it to be switched off there as well as at the power point.

On the reverse side you will find the motor and support frame for the fan. It is advisable to fit a metal skirt the same diameter as the fan and extending out approximately 100mm. This allows fitting of a muslin type bag to the collar which must be held in place by an elastic strap. Without a fixing strap the fan will blow the bag off!

You may think this is all a lot of work but once your trap is made you will get years of service out of it and many kilos of a diverse array of insects.



So, you have your unit made, now what? Obviously, it will only work in the dark so just before dark point the light toward some open space, turn it on and walk away. Next morning simply remove the bag and close the top tight before turning the fan off otherwise numerous insects will escape.

Once you have your catch how do you feed them out? After collecting the bag, the easiest way is to just go into your aviary and release the catch, but many will just escape up through the roof. A much better approach is to slow the insects down before providing to the birds. This is easily achieved by putting the bag into a refrigerator for a while and then release. The insect will take a couple of minutes to thaw out before being able to crawl or fly which gives the birds a better chance of catching them. Better still put the whole catch into the freezer for about 30 minutes and then tip into a tray in the aviary. In this case they do not recover and are eaten at leisure. The other advantage of freezing them is that they can be stored in an airtight container and fed out as required. Some nights you may only catch a few insects yet another night you could end up with half a large ice cream container full.

When fed out you will see that different bird species will go for particular types of insects and will also pick a size that they prefer.

In my experience most of my birds attack the trapped moths and other insects with gusto and they are certainly deriving huge behavioural enrichment and nutritional value from them. I have watched my Weavers take a large moth and eat all but the wings and other birds simply walk through the insects, picking and choosing what they want.

*Source: David Holmes, [www.naturallyforbirds.com.au/an-insect-light-](http://www.naturallyforbirds.com.au/an-insect-light-)*

## THE EXHIBITION ZEBRA FINCH SOCIETY OF QUEENSLAND

Founded in early 2022 the club was established to meet the growing need for a specialist Zebra Finch club whose focus is on keeping, breeding, and showing the modern-day Exhibition Type Zebra Finch. Located around the Brisbane – Toowoomba region the club is open to ALL breeders across the state and interstate. Current memberships extend from Sydney, NSW to Rockhampton, Qld and continues to grow month on month.



A club website and Facebook page (see below) have been launched as windows into the club to promote and encourage new members to this wonderful hobby.

In 2008 the Federation of Zebra Finch Societies Australia adopted the new type standard and with this the recognition the Zebra Finch is a truly domesticated species and warrants specialist attention, just like the Canary and Budgerigar fraternity. The past decade and a half as seen a renewed focus on breeding Exhibition Type Zebra Finches and with it an increasing number of specialist breeders.

One of the clubs focus' is promoting the hobby of Zebra Finches, but also bird keeping in general, to the general public. Bird keeping is a declining hobby and all clubs struggle to attract new members to the fancy. Through promotion at local agricultural shows and other public displays we aim to raise the awareness of the Zebra Finch as a specialist exhibition type avian species and attract members of the public to the wonderful hobby of bird keeping.

The clubs first public appearance was the hosting of the clubs Inaugural Annual Show at the Brisbane Royal Agricultural Show (EKKA) in August. With the support of the EKKA Committee and club members 125 Zebra Finches were benched at its first ever showing: not a bad effort. Working alongside the Red Factor & Coloured Canary Club of Qld and the Qld Finch Society the public continued to roll on through over the 4-day duration of the show and with it put the club on the map. The response

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Late August saw many members descend on Kingscliff, NSW, for the Federation of Zebra Finch Societies Australia Annual Teams Show and delegates meeting. Here the club was formally accepted into Federation and already plans are underway on fielding a team at next years event in Bathurst, NSW.

Club 'gatherings' are focused on members catching up to chat about our favourite finch, presentations by experienced members and a table show discussing the finer points of the show standard and exhibiting Zebra Finches. These 'gatherings' are about the bird and learning and socialising with fellow members. The business side of the club is restricted to Zoom meetings conducted by the committee to keep the club running behind the scenes.

Still in its infancy 2022 has been a successful year for the club and with the show season behind us, members are now focused on the all-important breeding season. 2023 promises to be another successful year for the club with some innovative ideas being discussed to further promote the humble Zebra Finch and the bird keeping hobby.

We wish everyone a successful 2022 breeding season and 2023 show season.

Yours in Zebras,

Tim Hartung

Secretary

The Exhibition Zebra Finch Society of Qld

0437 671 215

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1176067899833286>

[The Exhibition Zebra Finch Society of Queensland](http://TheExhibitionZebraFinchSocietyofQueensland.com)  
([zebrafinchqueensland.com](http://zebrafinchqueensland.com))



## **BLOCKS AND FLOCKS: WHY ARE SOME BIRD SPECIES SO SUCCESSFUL IN CITIES?**

Life in the city can be stressful – for birds just as much as people. For humans, cities are expressly designed to put roofs over heads and food within easy reach, but the opposite can be true for many urban birds. They can find food and shelter harder to come by in the concrete jungle – with some notable exceptions.

For any species in any habitat, survival is about problem-solving and adapting to the environment. So what street smarts do city birds need? And why do some species, such as lorikeets, crows and ravens, seem to dominate our urban landscapes?



In general, urban birds must be bolder than those that remain in natural habitats, as can be seen by the boldness (or “habituation”) with which some species will forage for food with people nearby. But they also need to be able to avoid or retreat from unfamiliar objects or situations if they seem dangerous.

City birds also need to withstand exposure to a wide range of pathogens. A study of birds in Barbados found that urban birds have enhanced immune systems relative to their country counterparts.

While we have changed the environment in which some birds live, reducing resources in terms of food and shelter and increasing the number of pathogens that may impact their health, some birds have largely benefited from the new way of life.

### **Winners and losers**

Within the urban ecosystem, there are winners and losers in the bird world. The suburban landscape, for example, now provides more nectar from flowers than native vegetation due to the gardens that people have established. This is a big help to nectar-feeding parrots such as Rainbow Lorikeets.

A recent study in Sydney found that the lorikeets benefit from the increased abundance of flowers in urban areas, and their numbers were higher in the leafy suburbs than in bushland.



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Regent Honeyeaters, in contrast, are less adaptable to changed landscapes, because they are migratory and rely on detailed knowledge of existing food sources. If these resources are changed or removed, they may not have enough interconnected patches of habitat to move safely towards new resources – potentially leaving them vulnerable to cats, foxes and aggression from other birds.

Habitat loss can threaten some bird species or even leave them at risk of dying out if they do not locate alternative resources. The ability to find new food sources therefore becomes a valuable survival skill.

### **What's more useful: flexibility or intelligence?**

For some bird species, flexibility in finding food is crucial in making a successful switch to urban environments. One example is the Grey-crowned Babbler, which is endangered in Victoria, but my colleagues. But if urban areas are such a rich source of nectar, why are some nectar-feeding species declining?

The Regent Honeyeater feeds mainly on nectar and other plant sugars. It has been seen in orchards and urban gardens, but is listed as critically endangered by the federal government.



This is partly because widespread clearance of woodland habitat has led to the increase of the aggressive Noisy Miner and Red Wattlebird. These species find it easy to “bully” other birds in open habitats. Noisy Miners have been observed pulling apart Regent Honeyeaters’ nests as they were being built and I have documented it living in a suburban area in Dubbo, New South Wales.

This species usually nests in coniferous woodland and forages in the leaf litter beneath the trees. But in Dubbo, we saw these birds feeding on lawns, in playgrounds and even in leaf litter along a train track at the back of urban housing, sometimes visiting backyards along the way. This suggests that these birds can survive the loss of their woodland habitat by being sufficiently adaptable to life in the suburbs – as long as they can continue to find enough food, disperse between nearby groups and have access to native nesting trees.

For other species, such as crows and ravens, intelligence seems to be the key. These species can survive anywhere in the urban sprawl, including places where trees are scarce but rubbish bins are everywhere. Crows and ravens can literally pull food out of a bin and eat it – clearly a learned behaviour that has resulted from problem-solving.

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These birds are highly opportunistic and social, allowing them to learn new ways of adapting to the almost complete removal of their natural environment.

What we can deduce from these examples is that some birds, like Rainbow Lorikeets and Grey-crowned Babblers, can adapt successfully to the urban sprawl as long as some characteristics of their habitat still remain. Other species, such as crows, have gone a step further and worked out how to survive purely on urban resources – effectively making a living in an environment that is completely unnatural to them.

This suggests that the more we urbanise an area without natural aspects, the less bird diversity we will have – and the more our urban areas will come to be dominated by those few species that are hardy, clever or adaptable enough to thrive.

Luckily, some councils in Australia and cities throughout the world are bringing the natural aspects of the forest back into the concrete jungle, so that a wider range of birds might survive here. More research is needed to work out exactly what each species will need, but planting more native plants is always a good start.



### ***DID YOU KNOW....***

*Zebra Finches are the fastest maturing birds in the world. Oh! This tiny bird has one big record against its name. They are the fastest maturing bird. They are able to breed from the age of only 70 to 80 days. After the breeding season, a baby bird will have grown and is ready to leave the nest in just about two months.*



## THE LONG, SURPRISING JOURNEY OF THE DOMESTIC WILD TURKEY

*Hailing from Mexico, these birds traveled abroad before eventually landing back on North American shores.*

There's a rich and interesting history behind America's favorite holiday bird..

Farmyard turkeys were domesticated from a species called the Wild Turkey, native to the eastern and southwestern states and parts of Mexico.

It's likely that the Mayans of southern Mexico were the first to domesticate turkeys, maybe 2000 years

ago. Early Spanish explorers in the Americas took these domestic birds back with them to Europe, and soon turkeys were gobbling in farm yards over much of the world.

Early European colonists migrating to America's Atlantic seaboard actually brought domestic turkeys along with them, completing the circle back to America.

By the early 20th century, Wild Turkey numbers had plummeted across much of the continent, due to overhunting and loss of habitat.

But fortunately, game managers stepped in, re-introducing wild-caught birds to areas where turkeys had disappeared. And — thanks to this hard work — since the 1940s, Wild Turkeys have been prospering. There are now Wild Turkeys running... well... wild in all of the USA except Alaska and even Hawaii, far beyond their original range.

*Source: Michael Stein, BirdNote, Audubon.com*



## ARARINHA-AZUL, THE SPIX'S MACAW – RETURN FROM EXTINCTION

*By Sam Davis*

I feel incredibly privileged to have been a part of the return from extinction of the Spix's Macaw (*Cyanopsitta spixii*). Many thanks to Martin Guth, the head of the Association for the Conservation of Threatened Parrots (ACTP) for the invitation. A group of Australians composed of ACTP supporters Garry Stack, Darryl Weal, Peter Barnes, Simon Degenhard (and his son Harry) and I made the long journey to the remote release area in Brazil to participate in the release of the first eight Spix's Macaws to have flown free in 20 years

My business interests in Australia together with the charity Australian Society for Avian Preservation (ASAP), of which Simon Degenhard and I are Directors, sponsored one of the first eight birds to be released. As many will know Simon has worked with ACTP and in particular

the Spix's project over many recent years. Also of note is the work of young Tyson Chapman from the Bundaberg Bird Breeders club who is currently working onsite at the remote ACTP Brazilian facility. It is pleasing to be able to include Australian interests as contributors both financially and in kind.

The last remaining wild Spix's Macaw disappeared in the early 2000s, so it has been some 20 years since their extinction. And the journey to their release has been decades in the making. Some milestones include:

- the purchase of thousands of acres of significant Caatinga habitat just to the southeast of the town of Curaçá in the northern region of Brazil,
- connecting with the Brazilian government via the Instituto Chico Mendes de Conservação da Biodiversidade (ICMBio) the Brazilian Ministry of the Environment's administrative arm,
- environmental zoning of a large area of habitat surrounding and encompassing the project land,
- acquiring remaining captive birds from dispersed locations and owners globally, and
- learning to breed and maximise genetic diversity with a limited source population, including exclusion of disease and ground-breaking artificial insemination techniques.



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These are just some of the milestones leading up to the 11<sup>th</sup> June 2022 release. All has been achieved via private funding, including aviculturists, all with a passion for parrot conservation. This is truly a world class, world first project, the gold standard, a model for private aviculture working with threatened species. The work of ASAP has been inspired by the efforts of ACTP, and I'm confident it will inspire other projects globally.

The initial release witnessed by the world on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2022 is the beginning of a much longer-term commitment to the species by ACTP and its many sponsors and partners. The ultimate goal is a self-sustaining population - there are many more milestones to overcome.

Spix's Macaw, the star of the Disney Rio movies, is the smallest of the four blue macaws. The others being the well known and much larger Hyacinth Macaw, smaller Lear's Macaw and the extinct Glaucous Macaw. During our trip to Brazil we witnessed Hyacinth, Spix's and Lear's in the wild.

Curaçá is the closest town to the last known wild birds. To the locals the Spix's Macaw is known as Ararinha-azul. The birds are iconic, a flagship species with which the locals identify – somewhat like Australia's Koala or the USA's Bald Eagle. Recognition of Ararinha-azul was widespread throughout all of Brazil. The release was headline news on national television and even projected on the "Christ the Redeemer" statue in Rio de Janeiro. Amazing exposure for the project and in particular for the efforts of the Association for the Conservation of Threatened Parrots (ACTP) and its partners.

The habitat of Ararinha-azul is within the Caatinga region of Brazil. Caatinga means white forest, a low shrubland dry ecosystem. Very different to the rainforests and wet humid regions one normally associates with Brazil. In fact, apart from the cactus, one could be forgiven for thinking they are in one of the many semi-arid areas of Australia. Dry creek beds crisscross the landscape and only fill during the wet season. Sadly, like many areas in Australia, much of the natural vegetation has been hampered by introduced animals. In the case of the Caatinga it appears that goats are one of the main culprits.



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Goats were a common sight throughout the region, very much a part of the local custom with small herds common throughout the area. Unlike feral goats in Australia, these herds are owned by locals and often the lead animal wears a bell to enable the herd to be located by the farmer. I understand there is often little regard for who owns the land with herds free to roam and graze as they please. This presents problems for conservation projects such as the Spix's project. Goats eat young saplings which grow into a food source for the Spix's and ultimately into trees that provide nesting hollows.

ACTP is working with the locals, including education via school programs and other initiatives which are successfully raising awareness and partnering with local people – critical to the long-term success of this de-extinction project. Ownership of the project by locals is critical to habitat restoration and also to protection against poaching, which was likely a significant driver to the species final extinction during the 1900s. Based on discussions and events subsequent to the release, it is clear ACTP, ICMBio and other partners are well regarded by locals in the area.

Just eight Spix's Macaws were released on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2022. Obviously eight birds cannot re-establish the species.



*Spix's Macaws at ACTP (Photographer: Simon Degenhard)*

The release of the first eight birds is essentially a pilot for many future releases to come – another twelve are planned for release in December, so twenty in total during 2022. Preparation for the release of these initial birds has taken years. A dedicated open U-shaped aviary was constructed. The large design enables longer flight paths that include significant turns to build wing muscle mass and endurance. The all-wire construction means the Spix's are living with and seeing wild birds as if in the wild, including any approaches by outside predators from all directions including above. And of course, they are acclimatizing to living and sleeping whilst exposed to differing day-to-day weather conditions.

The release aviary is located some 700 metres from the main complex and the only human contact is food and aviary maintenance from onsite staff. Visitors are kept well away from the release aviary with a hide constructed to enable observation without undue interference. The preparation for the release is exemplary to ensure the birds have the best possible chance upon release.

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On the morning of 11<sup>th</sup> June 2022, the release date, representatives of the world's press, Brazilian politicians, government officials, major sponsors and a range of world-renowned parrot experts and photographers made the trek to the remote site and assembled in the observation tent just before dawn.

As you can imagine there was quite some anticipation within the assembled contingent. Many had the expectation that upon opening the release hatch the birds would immediately fly free and circle the skies. This was never the intention, rather the aim was for Spix's



to slowly emerge, jumping to the feeder adjacent to the release hatch and remaining close by the aviary. This is precisely what happened. The first Spix's emerged just after 9am with others following soon after. A momentous occasion for the project, for the region and for Brazil more broadly.

There was understandable trepidation over the next 24-48 hour from all present. Would the birds fly off into the distance? Would they find their way back to the release aviary? Would predators sense their insecurity and attack? Etc. A tense time for all involved. In fact, the behaviour of the birds could not have been better. Some exploratory circling of the release aviary with a few venturing as far as the main breeding complex, attracted by the calls of the breeding stock. All birds soon determined how to enter and leave the release aviary as was hoped and planned.

Currently, some ten days after the initial release of the first eight the results could not be more positive. All birds are returning to the release aviary regularly, including sleeping within it on most nights. They are flocking with some wild Illiger's Macaws (*Primolius maracana*) which were trapped to form a flock with the Spix's prior to release. It is hoped the Illiger's will improve both predator awareness and wild food identification and location. This is already beginning to be the case, with the Illigers and with local Cactus Conures (*Eupsittula cactorum*) known locally as Caatinga Parakeets. Reports indicate all birds reacting well to potential birds of prey – vultures at this stage – and some natural foraging is beginning to occur.

The goal for these initial release birds is to breed either within the release aviary or close by – likely just a few pairs. They will continue to have access to feed and water both within and adjoining the aviary and also at strategically

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located feed stations. The first generation, it is planned, will venture further afield and then second generation further again – each generation progressively becoming more self-sufficient until a self-sustaining population is achieved. Given the birds can take up to five years to be sexually mature, ACTP is very much dedicated to a presence in the area for many years to come.

The breeding facility onsite in Brazil houses some fifty birds representing the genetic diversity of the species, with many more remaining as an insurance population at ACTP's major breeding centre just outside of Berlin, Germany. The Brazilian birds will breed onsite with future releases intended to be young one year old birds from the previous year. It is envisaged this process will supply sufficient stock to maximise genetic diversity and grow the wild flock over time as well as enable scope to balance the sexes as required.

May I reiterate the professionalism with which this project operates. The staff are the world's best and the science and technologies utilised are cutting edge.

Particular mention must be made of the amazing work of Dr Cromwell Purchase and his wife Candice. Their expertise and dedication to the project is amazing, impressively they have both devoted much of their lives to the project. I recall arriving at the facility the day prior to the release to deliver an ATV and being struck by the isolation and remoteness of the facility. Power is via a generator and no internet or phone coverage. Cromwell and Candice very recently moved into permanent accommodation, having lived in the kitchen area of the breeding facility up to that time.

**Candice at approach to the main breeding complex**



The day of the release, after being essentially alone, Cromwell and Candice were engulfed by media, visitors and questions. At the main press conference in the town hall at Curaçá on the afternoon following the release, I think all present would agree Cromwell's intelligent answers and explanations to the world's media were a real credit to the project. When we returned the day after the release, Candice guided a group of us through the facility – her priority was the welfare of the birds at all times whilst showing us through and responding to our questions.

Our gratitude to all involved in this amazing project.

*NOTE: World renowned wildlife photographer Tim Flach was the official ACTP photographer. Tim's amazing images of the Spix's and the release event were and continue to be sold via the website <https://www.unextinct.earth/>. Additional photos by Sam Davis and Simon Deenhard.*

## SUMMER HEAT HINTS

With summer on its way there are a few things that you should be aware of and some things to do for the care of your birds during the hot weather.

Many birds are moulting at the moment, add to that the hot weather and you have a recipe for stress.



If you have to catch birds at any time, make it first thing in the morning. Certainly NOT in the middle of the day.

Don't transport birds during the heat of the day, make it first thing in the morning, late in the afternoon or during the evening.

Don't carry birds in the boot of your car, temperatures can be excessive and they will die. If the car is airconditioned that's where the birds should be.

Cover the carry box or cage with light cloth material, this will allow air to circulate and it will prevent the bird from being frightened by seeing sudden movements which can further stress them.

Many birds will not drink water while they are being transported, to reduce their temperature it may be a better idea to dampen the material that covers the carry container with water.

In the aviary make sure that there is always adequate fresh cool drinking water. Dripper systems that provide continuous water are a good idea.

Sprinkler systems can reduce the temperature in the aviary. Sprays will dampen the ground allowing the birds to congregate there to keep cool. If you use a sprinkler and the spray is very fine, make sure that it is only on for periods of up to ten minutes, especially if young birds are on the perches.



## MISTLETOE: WHAT'S IT TO THE BIRDS?

*Next time you steal a kiss under the mistletoe, make sure to thank the berry lovers (and their poop).* You can stop right there, Justin Bieber; we all know what's coming next. Kissing under the mistletoe has been a holiday tradition ever since the English got it trending back in the 1800s (the plant first popped up as a symbol of love centuries ago in ancient Norse mythology). But mistletoe isn't just for carrying out romantic ploys. From a bird's perspective, the plant isn't holiday decor—it's a cafeteria, a nursery, a place to shack up . . . basically, it's a means for survival.



Here's a closer look at mistletoe, and what it means to birds.

### ***Spreading holiday cheer, all year round***

There are about 1,300 species of mistletoe out there, though only 70 are native to Australia. Fossil records show that they've existed for millions of years. Out in the wild these evergreen plants are hardy, probably because they're parasites: They grow on other trees and shrubs, stabbing their roots into the host plant to suck out its water and nutrients (heartwarming, I know).

### ***The not-so-cute meaning behind "mistletoe"***

Here's a fun etymology lesson: In Old English, "mistletoe" translates to "dung on a twig." It used to be known as *mistel-tan* ("mistel" meaning dung and "tan" meaning twig). Apparently, the old Germanic tribes noticed that the plant sprouts out of bird droppings, and decided to label it as such. Yeah, you can't make this s\*\*t up.

### ***Mistletoebirds (not something made up for this article)***

Yes, it's all one word. These red-breasted cherubs live in Australia and the outskirts of Indonesia, where they spend their days dining on mistletoe berries (hence the name). The berries have seeds that are hard to digest, though—and unfortunately, Mistletoebirds lack a unique organ most birds do have, a **gizzard**, which stores and breaks down hard-to-digest bits and meals. Because the Mistletoebird lacks this tiny **grindhouse**, the seeds pass through its gut whole. This actually works out for the plant, since the seeds come out in perfect shape for germinating. They're also sticky, and are usually strung together like a garland—ready to decorate any branch they're pooped out on.

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### **The plant that keeps on giving**

Mistletoe (especially the dwarf variety) is a real favorite with many birds. Raptors like Owls and hawks like to nest in it, while migratory songbirds gorge on its berries. Other species hide in the thick “witches’ brooms” to dupe predators. But the biggest mistletoe fan is the Phainopepla in North America, a desert bird that uses the plant as its main food source in winter. In the Sonoran Desert, where the parasite grows on acacia and mesquite trees, Phainopeplas spend a lot of time gulping down mistletoe berries. It’s a self-sustaining cycle: The mistletoe uses the bird as its seed mule, so the more fruit the Phainopepla eats, the more desert the plant can cover.

### **What lies beneath**

Even the ghost of mistletoe is better than no mistletoe. A new *PLOS One* study by David Watson, an ecologist from Charles Sturt University in Australia, shows that the plant can help diversity—after it’s all dried up and dead. In eucalyptus woods where decomposing mistletoe littered the floor, Watson counted 37 percent more insect-eating birds than in mistletoe-free zones. The reason behind this, Watson thinks, is that dead mistletoe is great for insects and spiders, so species like Grey Shrike-thrushes and White-winged Choughs can dig through it and find all the crunchy crawlers they want and deserve. Now



## THE CANARY & CAGE BIRD FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIA INC.

Minutes of the ZOOM GENERAL MEETING Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2022.

The President opened the meeting at 8:10 pm, thanking the delegates for their attendance, and advised the meeting that David Holmes had passed away, and asked if those present who were close with David to recall some happy memories.

### ATTENDANCE:

There were 18 delegates in attendance including, S. Davis, R. Robertson, C. Gruntar, B. Barnes, J. Forrest, J. Tadjell, B. Whiting, M. Cameron, M. Godwell, M. Surace, B. Golby, B. Lloyd, N. Love, D. Reynolds, M. MacPherson, W. Robinson, T. Hartung, R. Slade.

### APOLOGIES:

Apologies were received from W. Wilson, I Ward, J. Norriss, D. Renshaw, L. Dall'est, M. Reynolds – moved, B. Barnes and seconded, J. Tadjell apologies be accepted - Carried.

**MINUTES: All minutes published in *Feathered World* and on our web, [ccbfa.org.au/journals](http://ccbfa.org.au/journals)**

The minutes for the 6<sup>th</sup> July General Meeting of Federation had been distributed and read by the delegates. It was moved M. Surace and seconded J. Forrest that the minutes be adopted as a true record of the May General meeting – Carried.

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

### CORRESPONDENCE:

- Affiliated clubs, notification of office bearers and delegate
- Affiliated clubs, requesting assistance with matters regarding the insurance.
- Affiliated clubs, supplementary ring orders for 2022 and new orders for 2023.
- Affiliated clubs, notification of 2023 updates of show, sale and auction dates.
- Clubs requesting details of affiliation and insurance.
- The Exhibition Zebra Finch Society of Queensland. Request for affiliation and insurance, together with payment of invoice. Delegates Tim Hartung and Matt Wood.
- East Coast Long Distance Racing Combine Inc. Request for affiliation and insurance, together with payment of invoice.
- President / Govt Liaison Officer. Sam Davis- ongoing communication, received in response to communication with Federal Government and States Govt. Departments.

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

- Animal Care Australia ACE September'22
- PET Industry News. Aug./ Sept./ Oct & Newsletters July Aug. & Sept'22
- Central Coast Avicultural Society. Newsletter July & August'22
- Newcastle Budgerigar Club Inc. August'22
- Shoalhaven Avicultural Society Inc. Bird Tales June, July & August'22
- Gloster Fancy Canary Club of NSW Inc. Aug Sept'22
- Fleurieu Peninsula Cage Bird Society Inc. July'22 Newsletter.
- Hunter Valley Finch Club Inc. Hunter Finch Fancier Aug'22
- Bundaberg Canary & Caged Bird Society Inc. Newsletter July, Aug.Sept'22
- Coral Coast Bird Club Inc. Newsletter Chatterings # 283 Aug'22
- Native Cockatiel Society of Australia Inc Sept – Oct.'22 NCSA News.
- The Avicultural Society of NSW Inc July Aug'22
- FSA The Finch Breeders REVIEW May – June & July – Aug'22
- Australian Fife Fancy Canary Club of NSW Inc. July'22 Gazette
- Thuringowa Bird Club Inc. Newsletter Wings September'22.
- Fleurieu Peninsula Cage Bird Society Inc. Sept'22 Newsletter

**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 invoicing and dispatch of ring orders on receipt of payment.
- Details of affiliation and insurance provided to clubs requesting information.
- The Exhibition Zebra Finch Society of Queensland. Invoice for affiliation and insurance followed by the insurance CoC and covering letter, after payment.
- East Coast Long Distance Racing Combine Inc. Invoice for affiliation and insurance followed by the insurance CoC and covering letter, after payment.
- President / Govt Liaison Officer. Sam Davis- ongoing communication with Federal Government States Govt. Departments

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

It was moved by B. Barnes and seconded by J. Forrest that the correspondence be received and the secretary's action endorsed - Carried

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## **TREASURERS REPORT:**

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

## **REPORTS:**

President Sam Davis presented the following detailed reports.

### **Release of a more detailed Plan for Victoria's new animal care and protection laws**

The URL for submissions is here:-

<https://engage.vic.gov.au/new-animal-welfare-act-victoria>

It is critical all clubs are clear that this process is concerned with the welfare of birds, nothing to do with licensing of native birds. The reverse is also true, the licensing of native birds is not about animal welfare.

There is a quite separate review of the Victorian *Wildlife Act 1975* which deals with native bird licensing.

Animal welfare in Victoria is currently regulated via the current Victorian *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986* and the sale of birds under the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*.

Many will recall the issue preventing bird sales in Victoria some years ago which was resolved by CCBFA with support of a range of Victorian clubs including the VAC and BCV. The solution was the negotiated introduction of Section 58T and 58U of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* which introduces Declared bird clubs and their ability to run sales so long as they simply notify the department. This totally avoids the problem derived from the problematic Section 96 and the red tape ridden animal sale permit system required to sell other types of animals in Victoria.

I have spoken to the reform team a number of times over the past few years, and they are open to our input. CCBFA past submissions to the current review of animal welfare legislation in Victoria are as follows...

- 13/12/2020 - CCBFA submission to the direction paper -  
<https://www.ccbfa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/CCBFA-Vic-Directions-Paper-Submission.pdf>
- 20/4/2020 – Meeting synopsis with senior Victorian bureaucrats -  
<https://www.ccbfa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Vic-Animal-Welfare-200420-Meeting-Synopsis.pdf>

Minister responsible is the Minister for Agriculture - currently the Hon Gayle Tierney MP.

There are a number of issues with the proposed detailed plan that need to be addressed by aviculture. Feedback from clubs on the detailed plan is welcomed as we prepare our submission.

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Video conferences will be held by the reform team at the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR) on Friday 16 September 10 – 11am and again on Monday 3 October 2 – 3pm. I understand the VAC and BCV have received their own invites. I will attend one session on behalf of CCBFA and happy to provide details to others who may have an interest in the issue.

BCV, VAC and MPAS representatives present indicated they were not aware of receiving an invite to the above video conference. President to forward contact details with a view to these groups attending in their own right or as part of the CCBFA invite.

I recommend those attending the meetings together with any other interested club delegate meet via Zoom after the video conferences to formulate a cooperative way forward. Victoria is the centre of animal rights activism in Australia. All of aviculture must work together to ensure we all push in the same direction.

### **Thoughts on revision timetable for current general codes of practice both in Victoria and NSW (and perhaps elsewhere) to pre-empt legislative reforms.**

In general, CCBFA supports a push for education over regulation. We support codes of practice developed by our groups and ratified by the government.

These codes (or standards and guidelines) should not be enforceable, rather they should be used to educate bird keepers and be available as a defence against a charge.

I would like to see CCBFA begin the process of reviewing the current codes of practice in NSW and Victoria. Perhaps developed as a single supported code?

- The current Victorian code is here - <https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/livestock-and-animals/animal-welfare-victoria/domestic-animals-act/codes-of-practice/code-of-practice-for-the-housing-of-caged-birds>
- Current NSW code - <https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/animals-and-livestock/animal-welfare/animal-care-and-welfare/other/companion-animal-files/nsw-code-of-practice-no-4-keeping-and-trading-of-birds>

General support for the idea of developing a code that draws from all states, in particular from the current Victorian and NSW codes given that they are likely to come under review shortly. Further discussion on this matter at the November 2022 CCBFA meeting.

### **Update on NSW licensing reforms V2 progress.**

A draft Risk-based Tool (RBT) has been circulated to all members of the “Species List Advisory Committee” (SLAC). The initial RBT looks very positive.

The process to move a species off licence, on license, etc. is as follows..

1. Proponent completes the questions that form the RBT along with supporting evidence.
2. SLAC members are informed and are given the opportunity to comment

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3. Comment that disagrees with the proponent must be supported by evidence.
4. SLAC recommendation provided to NPWS who makes the final decision.

I have been asked to complete (as proponent on behalf of CCBFA) two sample RBTs for a finch and parrot. These will be used by the SLAC members to assess the viability of the system. If the RBT is approved in its current form, I would anticipate the process recommending most common finches and parrots will come off licence.

However, there are two possible/likely issues...

1. RSPCA NSW has a policy that has fed down from RSPCA Australia which is against any new species being kept as pets. In addition, the RSPCA NSW SLAC member stated "NSW receives over 100 complaints per year specifically about native birds and reptiles". This was quite a shock to both the bird, reptile and ACA representative on the SLAC. I subsequently made an informal request under the NSW *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (GIPAA) for further details of the complaints. This request was formally rejected RSPCA NSW. I then met with RSPCA NSW legal staff with the outcome that CCBFA will need to lodge a formal GIPAA application. We intend to do so.
2. WIRES was an issue (perhaps the issue) during the previous failed process. Members of their board made it clear they were opposed to the keeping of any native birds in captivity. Recent communication from WIRES shows this policy remains current. I have expressed to NPWS our total opposition to WIRES having a member on the SLAC given their policy. I am assured by NPWS staff the WIRES representative must provide convincing evidence to refute any claims made by proponents on their RBT applications. I'm yet to be convinced.

Despite the above, I retain confidence in the appointed team at NPWS at this time and the process is currently on track to deliver a sensible outcome, that is, most common finch and parrot species moving off licence together with a system for further movements long term.

Note we are expecting commencement in earnest of the Victorian review of licensing to commence shortly.

### **General directions to recommend to all councils**

Animal Care Australia (ACA) is preparing general recommendations to be used by all councils nationally regarding largely neighbourhood amenity issues. CCBFA as the lead bird representative would like to ensure our recommendations are included.

Note our most recent Gold Coast Council submission - <https://www.ccbfa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/ccbfa-Gold-Coast-280822.pdf>

Comments on best practice nationally are welcomed.

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### **Update on import/export progress.**

Thanks to ABK and those clubs that printed my article titled “Impot and Export – Setting the record straight”. It is important clubs and members have a true understanding of the realities as there are competing commercial interests that do not align with the best interests of hobbyists.

Wildlife trade officers in Canberra continue to support CCBFA and will ensure we are at the table as consultation with the new federal Minister for the Environment, Tanya Plibersek MP considers the issues.

### **ABA issues**

CCBFA has been advised by clubs that the ABA intends to run a bird sale.

CCBFA note that the ABA’s claimed nationally endorsed code is neither national nor is it endorsed by any clubs of which we are aware. The claim “This Code of Practice covers all poultry, pigeon and cage bird sales and auctions unless otherwise specified in advertising promoting the sale or auction.” is false.

It was moved by M. MacPherson and seconded by B. Lloyd and carried unanimously that

#### *Motion 1*

*The general assembly of the CCBFA is of the view it is inappropriate for a representative organisation such as the Associated Birdkeepers of Australia Inc. (ABA) to run events including bird sales that compete with club events.- carried unanimously*

It was further moved by M. Surace and seconded by B. Barnes and unanimously carried that

#### *Motion 2*

*In reference to the ASSOCIATED BIRDKEEPERS OF AUSTRALIA, ENDORSED NATIONAL CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE CONDUCT OF BIRD SALES AND AUCTIONS (ABA Code), a copy of which is published at the following URL... <http://www.birdkeepers.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/ABA-CoP-+-Ap-.pdf>*

*The general assembly of the CCBFA:*

- A. refutes the claim made by the Associated Birdkeepers of Australia Inc. (ABA) that the ABA Code is in any way a national code.*
- B. notes that the ABA Code is not endorsed by any bird clubs in Australia of which the CCBFA or its affiliate members are aware*
- C. requests the ABA publicly retracts the ABA Code including removal from its website forthwith.*

President to write to the ABA informing them of the above motions. President to forward copy of correspondence to ABA to all clubs and make available publicly via our website and social media.

Moved B. Golby and seconded by M. Surace that the Reports be accepted, and the President thanked – Carried

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## **GENERAL BUSINESS:**

**2023 Ring Orders** supplementary orders can be arranged for all species during 2023. The 2nd consolidation for **2023 rings** by the 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023. Clubs requiring an order form to be completed, should contact the Secretary.

The President thanked the delegates for attending, as there was no further business the meeting closed at 9:45 p.m.

### **Notice of the next General Meeting**

Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2022

Meeting commence DST at 8:00 pm via ZOOM and subject to notice

Ashfield R.S.L. Liverpool Rd. Ashfield



### ***DID YOU KNOW....***

*Male zebra finches learn their song by imitating conspecifics. To stand out in the crowd, each male develops its own unique song. Because of this individual-specific song, it was long assumed that dialects do not exist in zebra finches. However, with the help of an artificial intelligence technique, researchers at the Max Planck Institute for Ornithology (Biological Intelligence, in foundation), have now been able to show that the songs of four different zebra finch populations differ systematically. They also discovered that these "cryptic dialects" are decisive for the females' choice of mate. Thus, female zebra finches pay more attention to a cultural trait than to male appearance.*





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