

Squawk 'n' Talk

Volume 3, Issue 10

October 2003



Presidential Perch

Monthly Update

Phyllis Cotton

The date of our 2004 annual fair at the Greensfelder Recreation Complex in Queeny Park is August 28th & 29th, a week later than usual, due to 2004 being a leap year. We are already starting to plan this event and welcome input from members and vendors. Please, let us know what you would like to see at the 2004 fair. What aspects of the fair would you like to see changed? You can send your ideas to me or anyone else on the board for consideration.

Jackie Seigal, from Geese Peace St. Louis, gave a very interesting lecture last month on the plight of the geese and other waterfowl in the St Louis area. Thank You, Jackie!

Annual elections will take place at the November meeting. Come prepared to nominate and vote for our new officers and board members.

Next in line would be our annual Holiday party! I would really like to see as many members as possible at the Holiday party this year. Come join the festivities & get to know each other!

Honk If You Like Geese

Trey Shaffer

At our September 21 meeting we listened to Jackie Segal of GeesePeace St. Louis, talk about the state of the Canada goose today. From the top down, the message is; don't round up and kill the geese. This is a problem people have created, and one people can solve with relatively few resources.

Way back when, there was a fear the Canada Goose was in danger. Governments passed legislation protecting them in their migration to allow them to prosper. Well, it worked. 20-30 years later, this protection, along with human behavior that attracts geese to places we really don't want them, has created a situation/problem/crisis (choose one) where killing geese is seen as the solution.

First killing the geese won't solve the problem. As Jackie explained, generations of geese will return to their place of birth for their winter migration. It would take a sustained effort at extermination to eliminate them from a particular area. Though we humans can be heartless and mindless, we are not usually very persistent/consistent, and thus not very effective.

We have unwanted geese because we create ideal environments for them. Jackie had a short list of don't that we have been DOing.

- Don't feed them
- Don't create what they see as safe secure water areas.

By not feeding them, they will not come looking for our food, most of which is as bad for them as it is for us. Our corporate campus landscapes could be changed in subtle ways that would make them much less attractive to geese and encourage them to move on down the road. If we go back and think like the bird it will be obvious. The typical office park lake has neatly trimmed lawns running down to a man-made lake designed to be visible from the entire surrounding area. This puts the goose in an area with maximum warning/protection from its natural predators. Letting the grass near the lake grow to four inches is enough to make the goose scared of snakes approaching. Adding obstructions to sight lines such as rocks, trees and shrubs creates what the goose perceives as concealment for predators like the fox and wolf.

A big part of the solution is educating the people responsible for the environments how to treat them. And where do you

Editor's Note: Following is a letter from Yvonne Patterson, thanking us for help with her recent participation at the Home Show.

Hello Phyllis and GPC members. Phyllis, you helped make this past weekend an ENORMOUS SUCCESS at The Home and Remodeling Show! I just loved Friday by the way...spending it with you and Sharon. This past weekend was so much more relaxing than last year's weekend spent at The Home Show...and it's because of all the wonderful help from GPC members. I think the birds remembered the GPC people, and of course they remembered the birds. What a lovely reunion!

Please let me know where to send the \$300 donation check. I would like to present your club with more money but with the {3rd} knee replacement surgery coming up this year and my missing another three months of work with no pay, it's the best I can do. Money couldn't buy such wonderful bird help as we received. Oh, those cockatoos are soooo happy. In 30 years of keeping cockatoos, I never realized they COULD GET ENOUGH LOVE!

We returned home in Kansas City safely Sunday night (last night) at 10:30 from St. Louis. The birdies are all extremely quiet this Monday morning...not even hungry...just relaxed and happy to be in their own homes again. The entire weekend was an extremely positive experience. Everybody who saw the shows just loved all the birds (and sloth). It was so rewarding to come in to town and have such wonderful support and incredible help from the GPC people. Thank you all for helping and we'll be coming back. We will look forward to seeing you all again! The birds will also be sending you a Thank You note personally.

Did your club view the videos ("Before You Buy a Bird" and the promo?

video) at the meeting Sunday? I'm anxious to learn of any feedback or suggestions your members might have regarding the "Before You Buy a Bird" video. Bird people here are requesting a video on behaviors but as you know, that's such a deep deep subject, but so important. We all received a lot of questions this past weekend from visitors to The Home and Remodeling Show, on behaviors with their pet bird. Hopefully they will be visiting your club to learn more.

Two weekends ago I spoke to a local Pet Bird Club on 'Birdatudes'. If we compare children to pet birds (aren't they a lot alike?), imagine raising two kids in the same family. These children, even though they were raised by the same parents with the same methods, their personalities and behaviors can be completely different. The same disciplinary actions will not work for both children. Therefore, behavioral modifications for one bird may not work for another's bird with the same behavioral problem. Then we have birds who are raised by different breeders with different methods. Some are sold to pet stores where they are inadvertently teased by the public and sometimes mishandled, and definitely misunderstood by many people. Various handlers mean constant training with various methods and mixed signals. This can lead to

See *Wings*, on Page 4

Editor's Note: This forwarded from: Cliff Patterson at *The Baby Bird Farm*. There is a reference to "The Times" in the first paragraph, but no details on what is presumably a newspaper. There is a link on our home page to an article on the BBC News web site that has photographs of this very attractive bird. It appears to have the green body of an Amazon with a blue crest, bright red on top of the wings and its namesake indigo on its primaries.

<http://www.geocities.com/cjthequakerkid/TheBabyBirdFarm.html>

"Extinct" bird found on Andes volcano

A bird thought to be extinct has been spotted near the summit of the highest volcano in Colombia. An expedition from Bogota University found the flock of 14 indigo-winged parrots in the Andes. The bird has only been sighted once before, near the peak of the same volcano in 1911. The Times says seven of the birds were captured then and their remains are on display in America but notes of their breeding habits were not taken.

The team from Bogota University is now taking notes, photographs and video footage of the birds to help develop a conservation plan for the species and its habitat. Expedition leader Jorge Velasquez says they searched for the birds for months around the densely vegetated volcano that is often covered in fog. Dr. Robert Prys-Jones, head of birds at the Natural History Museum in London, advised the team. He said: "This is remarkable. They have found perhaps the last flock of surviving indigo-winged parrots, making it one of the greatest wildlife discoveries to date. We were concerned that this spectacular parrot was lost for ever."

Geese

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is moving forward with their plan to dump management of resident Canada geese on state wildlife agencies and encourage killing millions of these wild birds. The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) posted a webstory about the latest development on this plan. <http://www.hsus.org/19590>,

USFWS has proposed regulations to implement their plan and these regulations could take effect as soon as early next year. Individuals and organizations had until October 20 to comment on the proposed regulations.

Unweaned Babies

By the way, California's AB 202 legislation, discussed in last month's S&T, was signed into law by Gray Davis. Subtly appropriate, a lame duck protecting young birds.

Amazons

Editor's Note: Following is an email posting urging comment to USFW on proposed changes to regulations covering Blue-front Amazons. Beginning material offers contact and online reference information, followed by a sample letter the author feels appropriate to send to USFW. All information that follows was provided in the posting.

SOURCE OF INFORMATION:
pigeoncampaings@aol.com

Avian Rescue Network article in Sept. 18th USA Today

Nell Knapp & Sybil Erden.,
knapptime@comcast.net

Additional contact info:
<http://policy.fws.gov/library/02fr53962.pdf>

SIGN PETITION:

http://www.petitiononline.com/mod_perl/petition-sign.cgi?ARN_USDA

See Activist on Page 4

Editor's Note: Forgive me, someone forwarded this as an email, but I don't remember the source. Let me know, and I will credit you next month. The link mentioned at the end of the article is also available on our website.

Dr. Ian Tizard, head of Veterinary Microbiology & Parasitology at Texas A & M University has created an excellent survey for owners of feather destructive parrots. Take the survey on the web, at the address below. If you have a bird of any species (Eclectus, Grey, Macaw, Cockatoo, etc.) that destroys its feathers, please participate in the survey. It is lengthy and will take a bit of time to complete, but to date, we have little insight into this perplexing problem other than the obvious fact that we cannot provide the wide open spaces and the rich and diverse environment that parrots were meant to inhabit. Your participation will be appreciated and the contribution of your information will be helpful to this worthy effort.

If you have more than one feather plucker, please complete a separate survey for each bird. Answer each question as completely as possible. At the end of the survey there is a place for you to write any additional comments that you feel are important.

The survey data will be shared with The Schubot Exotic Bird Health Center at Texas A&M University. The center is starting a research program into feather picking and they are hoping to find some common threads that will answer many of the questions and concerns that we have about our birds. The Schubot Exotic Bird Health Center at Texas A&M University was founded by an endowment from Mr. Richard M. Schubot in 1987. Its mission is to improve the health of wild and exotic birds by promoting research into the causes, diagnosis and prevention of their diseases.

Survey online:

<http://www.geocities.com/pickinparrots/Survey.html>

Free Listing

Trey Shaffer

Just another reminder. Got a business? Want a listing?

It is up to the business to request the listing and provide information in a particular format. The details are on the website with a link labeled, Businesses, on the left side of the home page. A short article, similar to this one, appeared in the August newsletter. To date, I have not received any requests for listing. Please forward the information requested on the website, if you would like your business listed.

I think we also have some breeders out there that are not listed.

Wings from Page 2

confusion within the birds' mind who is desperately trying to learn his/her role in life. SO A BEHAVIOR VIDEO COULD BE INTERESTING. Your club's feedback on the "Before You Buy a Bird" video could provide a new idea or two on our next video.

Again, thank you everybody, for your tremendous love and support to my family of birds and sloth, and to myself. It was AWESOME to see everybody we saw again!

Much Love, Yvonne Patterson
Wings of Love, Kansas City, Mo.

Activist from Page 3

*DISCLAIMER: The information in these letters is verified with the original source. I cannot assume responsibility for the accuracy of the information or for the consequences of its use.

*Kinship Circle cannot guarantee the validity of email addresses. During a campaign, recipients may change or disable their email addresses.

Sample letter follows:

Andrea Gaski,
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Division of Management Authority, 4401 North Fairfax
Drive, Room 700, Arlington, Virginia 22203
Ph: 703-358-2095; fax: 703-358-2298
Email: cites@fws.gov

Dear Ms. Gaski,

Please accept my comments in reference to Federal Register: January 8, 2003 Volume 68, Number 5; pages 1066-1067 in which it is proposed that Blue-Fronted Amazon Parrots (*Amazon aestiva*) be moved from a Sustainable Use Management Plan in Argentina to the Approved List of Non-Captive-Bred Birds Under the Wild Bird Conservation Act of 1992.

The recent shift in FWS policy is alarming. Another proposed rule would grant permits to zoos, circuses, trophy hunters and animal-part manufacturers for the import of endangered species, if such industries can show their investment funds "conservation" in a range country. Now a bill that also enables the traffic in endangered species--and seemingly overlooks the Blue

Front Amazon's Cites II endangered parrot status--is facing congressional ratification.

I firmly oppose the potential importation of Blue-Fronted Amazon Parrots into the already saturated "exotic pet" trade. Amazon parrots are neither domestic animals nor pets. They are wild birds threatened by habitat loss. The accelerated trapping of Blue Front Amazons would further diminish their numbers and override restrictions on the import of wild-caught exotic birds established in the early 1980s.

The ample population of domestic-bred birds in the U.S. already meets the demand for exotic birds as companion animals. In fact there are so many captive parrots; organizations such as Avian Rescue have formed to recover discarded birds that are often unruly, destructive or defiant. Avian sanctuaries and adoption programs take in an inordinate number of Blue-Fronted Amazon Parrots, due to the species' aggressiveness upon sexual maturity. Male Amazons are presently one of the two most overly represented birds in rescue.

Passage of this legislation would merely facilitate breeders who purchase wild-caught birds for new "blood lines." Captive breeding does not assure "survival of the species." It guarantees that birds that cannot be released back into the wild will "survive" in cramped cages or shackled to perches until they die.

Worldwatch, the Washington D.C. research institution, predicts more than 12% of the world's birds face extinction within the 21st Century. Another scientific evaluation indicates a 90% drop in the wild population of Yellow Nape Amazon over the last 30 years. Rather than reopen the door to importation of wild-caught birds, please adhere to original constraints established to protect exotic birds from exploitation for commercial gain.

I encourage government officials to address habitat destruction, hunting and trapping issues so that "birds in the wild" does not become an obsolete phrase.

Thank you,

Elections Coming
Get Out the Vote

The November meeting is our annual election of Officers and Board Members. This year three Officers will be elected, Secretary, Treasurer, and Membership Secretary. Likewise, half the Board positions, three, will be elected. So come, nominate and vote.

GPC "Stuff" Anyone?

The topic of GPC logo items, mainly shirts came up at the last Board meeting. There was no strong consensus as to a mandate for the merchandise or a particular design. So speak up! Let us know if, and if so, what you would like to see.

Suggestions included the basic Polo type shirt with logo on the left chest area, a traditional design. Other suggestions included T-Shirts with "bird art" and a logo somewhere, perhaps on the back.

Let us know what you would like to see, and buy. Please suggest designs. If you happen to be in the marketing materials industry or have connections for these items, please let us know.

Umbrella Cockatoo Needs Home

I had a call recently from someone looking for a home for an Umbrella Cockatoo, complete with cage, etc. If interested, please contact:

Jack Hamper - (888) 547-4322

Promote the Club

Again from the last Board meeting, we would like to increase our membership and "spread the word." We are looking for ways to let the St. Louis area know about the Club and it's Mission.

We would appreciate any brainstorming you might offer on the topic. We would also like volunteers to compile two lists so we can contact all the veterinarians and pet stores in the St. Louis area.

We would like to establish a connection and maintain a relationship with these businesses, since they seem like the most obvious places a potential/bird owner might look for information about a group like ours.

The tasks are straightforward. We would like a list of all these businesses with current contact information and the person we should contact. It shouldn't be a large task. Start with the phone book and then get contact information. It is an opportunity to be an ambassador for the Club.

After we establish these lists, we will use them to maintain periodic contact and be sure they know how to refer people to us.

If interested, please call our Membership Secretary, Niki Shaffer, at (314) 432-4317, or any Officer/Board member.

Mission Statement

Gateway Parrot Club
A not-for-profit organization
Established in 1988

Dedicated to the following goals:

- To bring people together in a friendly atmosphere in the interest of exchanging information on bird care and breeding.
- To create an interest in bird care and breeding through monthly educational programs and annual bird fairs.
- To educate ourselves, and the general public, on the ever-present danger of extinction in the wild.

Email Addresses

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Secretary	Dorene Olson	(314) 569-1310
Treasurer	Dave Kinkade	(636) 343-8097
Membership	Niki Shaffer	(314) 432-4317
Board Members		
	Christine Kinkade	(636) 343-8097
	Nancy Marron	(314) 984-9524
	Pat Seiler	(636) 462-4732
	Trey Shaffer	(314) 496-8000
	Beverly Smallwood	(636) 343-1104
	Bob Smallwood	(636) 343-1104
Committees		
Education	Dorene Olson	(314) 569-1310
Hospitality	Pat Seiler	(314) 462-4732
Librarian	Christine Kinkade	(636) 343-8097
Ways & Means	Bernie Seiler	(314) 462-4732
Website, Newsletter	Trey Shaffer	(314) 432-4317