

Squawk 'n Talk

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April 2007

Greetings from the Presidential Perch!

Spring has sprung! Flowers are blooming, the grass is growing, and wild birds are singing and building nests. It's that time of year where we, here in the St. Louis area, can experience all four seasons in just one week. And, speaking of those blooming flowers, with them come those blooming allergies! Still, the March winds gave way to April showers, and the April showers will bring us May flowers. Of course, everyone knows what May flowers bring - Pilgrims! And, speaking of pilgrims, this is a good time for those GPC members who haven't been to a meeting for a while to make a "pilgrimage" back to our meetings!

Speaking of Spring, those of you without allergies may be opening your doors and windows to let the fresh air in. However, along with this comes the danger of your pet bird "flying the coop". Please be sure that your window screens and screen doors are in place and secure. If you normally have your birds' wings clipped, check to see if they have grown their flight feathers in over the winter. If so, you may want to have them clipped to prevent your birds from flying. A perfect time to do this is at this month's meeting. Jennifer Cira, DVM, of Dr. Kersting's office, will be there to give wing and nail trims. This is a good opportunity to round up your birds and bring them to the meeting for a wing and nail trim (a nominal fee will be charged, but it is well worth it). Please bring your own clean towel to restrain your bird during the trim.

The August Bird Fair is moving right along. Speakers have been lined up and the vendor list is still growing. We are all looking forward another exciting Fair.

I would like to thank Dorene and Mandy for last month's Education Program. I hope everyone found it interesting and informative.

See you at the meeting.

Dave

Tidbits

Trey Shaffer

We had our first meeting at the new location, and a good turn out, so everyone apparently found their way. As a follow-up, once you get to Kirkwood Park: Geyer and Adams is the northwest corner, go south on Geyer to the group of buildings. Enter one of the driveways and find your way around to the back, or west side of the building and enter where the signs say, "Recreation Station." We're on the second floor.

All American Hookbill Fair – This year's Fair, while still under construction, is taking shape. The big news this month is our featured speaker/entertainer, Yvonne Patterson. Yvonne is a long-time associate of the GPC, and we welcome her *Wings of Love* show back to St. Louis; for the first time appearing at our annual event. There is more info, later in the newsletter, taken from her website.

Clip and trim - The April meeting program is geared to the new bird owner, "What to do with a new bird?" Also at the April meeting, we will have our Wing and Nail Trimming Clinic. The \$5 charge for the service benefits the Club, and it's cheaper than a trip to the vet... Please bring a clean towel to help hold your bird.

Library - You'll notice an article this month from Christine Kin-kade, one of our Board Members and our Librarian. By the way, she is also one of our newsletter print/staple/fold/lick and stick team members, along with Dave her husband and our President. Christine promises to give us a monthly listing of some of the library's highlights. Besides the many, about 150, books we also have a library of video resources, mostly in VHS with some in DVD format. We will highlight those in the future.

There is a complete listing of our books on the website. At the moment, it is a featured link on the home page. Look over the list and send Christine an email, or call her, and she will bring the material to the meeting for you to pick up. Sr. Barbara Payne will help me get the material into a friendlier format for the website. Currently it is available as an Excel spreadsheet or a PDF listing category, title and author.

Recipes – For those of you whose birds eat better than your newsletter editor, I hope to be starting a new monthly feature, a recipe for bird food. We all, I hope, feed our birds a balanced diet. I have to admit, my macaw, "Q", subsists primarily on pellets. They

are pretty, multi-colored and smell nice and fruity. But I know there are “chefs” out there making birdie soufflés and such.

Thanks to Dorene for the link to Birds n Ways’ website. There is a lot of good bird info and discussion there. They also have a section, Recipe Xchange, with many recipes for dishes that any bird, and most humans, will find appealing. I have asked permission to print these recipes on a recurring basis. If granted, that will guarantee a supply of recipes for the newsletter. But why wait for them? Send me your favorite recipes and I will include them as well. Or... make one up and bring it to the meeting. As I mentioned, most of the recipes, like this month’s cornbread, will go well on our table as well as the perch-bowls.

Lost Bird – Every bird lover’s worst fear... Here is one more resource, 911 Parrot Alert, *International Database for Lost and Found Fids*. Hopefully we will only use it when we find a bird.

www.911ParrotAlert.com

Bird Cams – Here is a link to a group of wild bird observation cameras. Thanks Dorene. They are hosted by Xcel Energy, a large power generation company based in Minneapolis. Power companies all try to emphasize their “green” side rather than their smokestacks, but don’t be too cynical, check out the birds...

<http://birdcam.xcelenergy.com/BirdCam.asp>

Wings of Love



Wings of Love founder, Yvonne Patterson, has created a wonderful opportunity to teach us all about the important connection between the rainforests, our personal survivability, and the preservation of our global natural resources. Using the natural beauty and intelligence of captive-raised rainforest bird species, she presents an entertaining and educational program putting people in touch with the most extraordinary animals sharing our world.

Wings of Love programs mesmerize young and old alike — everyone is entertained by the antics of the birds. The loving patience of their trainer is in itself inspirational. Once in a while, a bird will not perform as it has been trained. Yvonne chuckles and places the bird back on its perch and then picks it up a few minutes later in a loving way. The bird usually responds positively which reminds the audience to treat animals with kindness and we’ll get our just reward (as well as the animal). A Wings of Love program is the perfect family entertainment.

Lemonade from a Willow Tree

Heidi Keifer

When life gives you lemons, make lemonade.



This year’s ice storms left my Corkscrew Willow tree looking like a Halloween haunted castle scene. I mourned the loss for my outside birds...all of them that is, except the wood peckers. Four varieties have enjoyed the raw stubs left by the absence of limbs. We threw out eight large garbage cans of limbs before it occurred to us to make lemonade. We read that willow branches make fine parrot trees. So, we screwed together some branches, inserting the largest into a small Christmas tree stand and added bird toys, and foraging cups and toys. As she gets better, we’ll make it more

difficult for her to get to the food, and sometimes she’ll only find her regular pellets instead of more exciting seeds. We chose the width based on what a newspaper, so we can place one under the tree stand for easy clean up. She was afraid of the “scary broom sticks” from which she normally viciously defends her cage or that

she normally gallantly attacks for my safety. At first she would only explore from the safety of my hand. She'd point to where she wanted to go with her beak, and bob her head for her human elevator to hop to it. I hope it fits through the sun room door and into the house. I don't think we "painted ourselves into a corner." We got a little carried away. Katie made the foraging toys after watching Captive Foraging at the Gateway Parrot Club. Pretty good for a ten year old I thought wasn't paying attention.

Mozart's Foraging Tips

Debby Martin

Mozart and Beta Bird certainly enjoyed the video on Foraging shown the February meeting and learned a lot about how to set up a Foraging Tree. Mozart murmured the metal cups appeared hard to attach, well hard for Beta Bird aka Debby – not for Alpha Bird and Mozart.

Good Bird Magazine from Winter 2005 also talks about a foraging tree and Gay Noeth uses raffia to attach paper cups filled with treats to the tree branches. Mozart thought that sounded easier than metal and thought you might like to try it. We'll give it a try, that is until Alpha Bird can undertake the Foraging Tree Renovation.

Book Picks of the Month

Christine Kinkade

Hi all you book worms out there! I am Christine Kinkade, the person that looks after the library. We have approximately 150 books in the library. Some date back quite a few years, and some very current publications. The books are on all subjects ranging from specific types of parrots and finches to behavior issues, general care, diseases, breeding, and more. I would like to see the library used more as it is a good source of information.

As you know, we no longer able meet at the Humane Society, but we have found a new home at the Kirkwood Community Center. Unfortunately, we are not able to keep any of our GPC equipment, including the library, at our new meeting place. So, our library has found a new home in my basement! However, the library is too

extensive (not to mention heavy) to bring back and forth to our monthly GPC meetings. What I intend to do is feature six books each month from our GPC library and bring them to our meetings. I will list the featured books in the GPC newsletter prior to the meeting, giving a brief outline of each book. If any GPC member would like to check out one or more of these books for a month, they are more than welcome to do so. Also, a complete listing of books by category, title, and author is available on the GPC website. If you have any requests for books that you would like me to bring to the meeting for check out, you can contact me prior to the meeting by phone, (636) 343-8097, or email, Librarian@GatewayParrotClub.org.

Here are this month's picks:

"Conures" - by Tony Silva and Barbara Kotlar.

Informative book with lots of nice, colorful pictures. A good beginner's book about conures.

Finches - by P. M. Soderberg.

A comprehensive book on the keeping of finches. Includes several illustrations and color pictures.

Birds off the Perch - by Larry Lachman, Diane Grindol, & Frank Kocher.

A behavior book to help you deal with the problems of biting and aggression, screaming, bird rivalry, jealousy towards human members of the flock, & feather picking.

Budgerigars - by Howard Richmond.

A short book about the keeping and care of budgerigars.

Wild Parrots of Telegraph Hill - by Mark Bittner

A true story about a man and the interaction he has with a wild flock of cherry-headed conures in San Francisco, CA.

The New Parrot Handbook - by Werner Lantermann.

Another comprehensive book about parrot husbandry, purchasing, housing, care, diet, diseases, breeding, and more.

GPC members can check out any of these featured picks at this month's meeting.

A complete listing of the GPC library is listed on the GPC website, www.GatewayParrotClub.org. If you wish to check out any of

these books, please contact me prior to the next GPC meeting by phone (636) 343-8097, or email,

Librarian@GatewayParrotClub.org, and I will bring them to the next meeting.

All books that are checked out are to be returned at the next GPC meeting. If that is not possible, please return the books by mail to Christine Kinkade, 2412 Angela Dr., High Ridge, MO. 63049-2848.

If mailing, be sure to specify *Media Mail*, to get the lower rate.

Happy reading!

Christine

Please Eat It!

Debby Martin

How many times has Beta Bird found a yummy pretty vegetable and tried to share it with Mozart and Ginger – only to have them stare blankly or turn their backs with a disgusted look.

Bird Talk from April 2004 had several tips for getting your birdies to eat a variety of foods.

Tip 1: Be persistent Beta Bird – don't give up after a couple of days of rejection. Offer the new food every day for months – it may take a year.

Tip 2: Offer them in different ways. For instance, offer carrots raw whole, julienne, grated and sliced. Steam them and microwave them.

Tip 3: The flock that eats together stays together! Take some of the food yourself – make dramatic “yummy” sounds and then offer to share.

Tip 4: Put them as a top layer over existing favorite foods.

Tip 5: Make the food fun. Twine the new food pieces in the cage bars, hang from a skewer or drape on perches. Put food in bowls around the cage and put the new food in the regular bowl.

Bon Appétit!

AAV Article Incubation – Part 2

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Basic Psittacine Incubation and Hatching
Rick Jordan, Dripping Springs, TX

Part II, Egg position, hatching, and assisted hatches.

Gravity will prompt the developing embryo to position itself within the egg during the latter stages of development. The proper position for the baby to be in during hatch is where the head is in the large end of the egg with the air cell. If the eggs are improperly positioned during incubation, some young will sense the gravity and will position themselves in the wrong end of the egg, resulting in less than 50% hatch probability.

Psittacine eggs should be positioned on their side, as in nature. For this reason, it is often better to choose an incubator designed for psittacine eggs rather than for poultry, which have been selectively bred for hatchability from the vertical position.

The hatch process usually begins about 72 hours prior to actual emergence from the shell. The beginning of the hatch process can be observed by candling. Hatching eggs will have an elliptical-shaped air cell where the air appears to be moving downward along the side of the egg. This change occurs when the baby moves and pulls the internal shell membrane away from the shell, allowing light to shine between the shell and the membrane. At this stage, the temperature should be maintained at incubation temperature or 1 degree less. Humidity may be increased to keep the internal membrane moist so it does not adhere to the hatching. Turning is no longer required at this stage. Maintain the necessary heat and humidity and the young should hatch within a few days after the external pip.

It is not wise to assist the hatch of an egg unless a problem is evident. Identifying a problem takes experience. If the baby vocalizes very loudly and seems to be pipping in the same spot instead of properly cutting the shell, it may need help. Often removal of the shell over the air cell and the addition of moisture to the inner membrane is all that is needed. Use clean water to moisten the membrane, being careful not to disrupt an active blood vessel or cause excessive bleeding. Make small assists, placing the egg

back in the incubator between sessions so they can regather strength. Never feed the babies in the egg. Never pull a baby from the eggshell. Allow it to climb out on its own when the blood supplies have dried up and the yolk sac has been drawn back into its body.

Release #3, March, 2007. The Association of Avian Veterinarians welcomes membership from veterinarians with an interest in avian medicine. Annual meetings and a quarterly journal provide a format for the latest in avian medical information. Is your veterinarian a member? Individuals wishing to subscribe to the Journal of Avian Medicine and Surgery may write to: AAV - P.O. Box 811720 Boca Raton, FL. 33481.

Recipe of the Month Anne's Birdie Bread

Posted by: Anne Johnson

2 boxes Jiffy Corn Muffin Mix

4 eggs

1/4 cup milk

3 tbs. oil

1 cup raisins

1 cup diced apple

1 cup grated carrots

1 cup grated zucchini

Pre heat oven to 400 degrees. Mix first 4 ingredients together in large bowl. Add next 4 ingredients and mix well. Grease and flour two bread pans. Bake at 400 for 35 minutes. Variations: You can substitute any fruit or veggie such as: blueberries, cranberries, bananas, broccoli, squash, cauliflower, green beans, raspberries, spinach, nuts, pineapple, etc. You can also use other muffin mixes such as the oatmeal, bran, etc. Be creative and use your imagination. You can freeze any leftover bread or prepare it in advance and freeze for future use. Serve warm.

aaviary@mail.heritage.com - July 14, 1996

Additional recipes are available from the Birds n Ways website at www.BirdsnWays.com. Select the Recipe Xchange link in the middle of the page. You will also find a variety of bird-related information and discussion areas on the site...

JUST TRY AND TOUCH THAT!

A bird's home is her castle – at least that's Ginger's theory. She is very annoyed when Mozart, our other cockatiel tries to sneak in and steal her food! Ginger's little white cage used to belong to Mozart and his theory is what is mine is mine and what is yours is mine also – so that includes the little white cage. But while they will hiss and display to each other over “castle rights”, they have not minded alpha or beta bird cleaning or rearranging things. But according to Dec. 2004 Bird Talk this isn't always the case. Sometimes parrots can be very territorial about their cage. But the article had several useful tips for dealing with this situation. Here they are.

This “nesting site territorial aggression” is a normal reaction. If your parrot previously followed “Step Up and Step Down” commands, then reinforce them with daily lessons in neutral territory - a part of the house out of sight of areas he considers his. Short lessons – 5 to 10 minutes are best. Make it fun, sing, cuddle, play games and make him feel the center of attention.

Try taking your bird out of the cage before cleaning and feeding and move him to a play gym where something yummy waits. Avoid eye contact with a territorial bird as this may be viewed as a sign of aggression.

Teach your bird to step onto a preferred perch when it wants to come out of the cage. Raise the far end of the stick slightly, and he will seek the higher attitude. This keeps him safely out of the biting range of your hand or arm. Make sure that it's steady – don't let it drop at all or he may be frightened. Hold it so it backs up along the inside of your wrist and that makes it steady and as strong as your arm. Perch training is advantageous as you now have an easy way to avoid territorial behaviors in and around the cage.

2007 Meeting Schedule

The year is just starting, and we are looking for topics of interest for our meetings. Dorene Olson is our Education and Program chair. She is looking for our input on suggestions for topics and speakers. Please let Dorene, or any Board member what interests you and what you think will make the meetings more interesting.

Date	Topic
April 15	New bird! What to do... Wing/Nail trimming clinic
May 20	TBA
June 10	Toy making party. Note, this is the <i>Second</i> Sunday
July 15	Feather Distribution Project, Avian folktales
August 25-26	Annual Fair
September 16	Profile on Rescue in Aviculture
October 21	TBA
November 19	TBA – Nominations for offices
December 17	Elections – Holiday party

Contact Information

Officers

We welcome your comments and suggestions...

President	Dave Kinkade	(636) 343-8097
Vice President	Phyllis Cotton	(314) 427-3679
Secretary	Dorene Olson	(314) 956-1310
Treasurer	Nancy Marron	(314) 984-9524
Membership	Jennifer Cira	(636) 527-5889

Board Members

Christine Kinkade	(636) 343-8097
Carole Grommet	(636) 529-0026
Mandy Baumgartner	(314) 842-4191
Trey Shaffer	(314) 432-4317
Janet Draper	(314) 432-3019
Niki Shaffer	(314) 432-4890

Committees

Education/Outreach	Dorene Olson	(314) 956-1310
Hospitality	Pat Seiler	(636) 462-4732
Librarian	Christine Kinkade	(636) 343-8097
Ways & Means	Suzanne Dohack	(636) 734-4527
Website /Newsletter	Trey Shaffer	(314) 432-4317