

The Py Press

Spring
2007



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President's Message

I hope everyone is having a good breeding season. In many parts of north America, the weather has been strange—either too wet or too dry. In Texas, it's been almost too wet, but I'll take that over a drought any day. People in some low-lying areas wouldn't agree though!

PBA member services—Joi has almost completed the re-make of the PBA web site so that it will be more user-friendly and professional in appearance, as well as more easily updated. You'll notice the much-improved new logo we're now sporting! We are developing a membership packet, and we are also exploring options of upgrading the newsletter to a color printed edition.

2007 Affiliations—The PBA is now affiliated with the Avicultural Society of America (ASA). Please check out their web site [www.asabirds.org] and the programs they are developing. We must all cooperate to be able to continue our labors of love for the birds in the future, not only to encourage new aviculturists, but also against the continuing assaults on aviculture (and the whole animal industry, for that matter) by anti-breeding AR types.

Ongoing legislative issues—Animal-related and, in many cases, anti-breeding legislation are ongoing issues—in the U.S. and elsewhere. CA AB 1634 is the most visible bill at the moment and is of great concern to dog and cat breeders. We have read that a 2007 PAWS is in the wings, and that HSUS is going to pull no lobbying punches to force it through.

Pyrrhuras rule! I keep getting more and more positive input, with fewer problems than I see for most species, for the small, gutsy, loving Py conures. Some could be because I frequent the Py lists more than some others. Let's keep promoting them.

—Marcy Covault

"Until one has loved an animal a part of one's soul remains unawakened."

—Anatole France

PBA Officers

The PBA Officers are here to serve the needs of the organization. If you have questions, concerns, ideas, or suggestions, please bring them to the list or to us for discussion. We

value every member's expertise and input, and we want to encourage teamwork and networking to further educating about and promoting the feathered jewels that are the Pyrrhura conures.

President	Marcy Covault	President@pyrrhurabreedersassociation.com
Vice President	Joi West	Vicepresident@pyrrhurabreedersassociation.com
Treasurer	June DiCiocco	Treasurer@pyrrhurabreedersassociation.com
Secretary	Chris Kraum	Secretary@pyrrhurabreedersassociation.com
Webmaster/Editor	Joi West	Vicepresident@pyrrhurabreedersassociation.com

Treasurer's Report

June DiCiocco

Beginning balance (January 29, 2007)	\$3,932.87
Revenue: Member dues (less PayPal fees)	+294.68
Bank refund	+3.00
Newsletter printing fees	-51.53
Postage (Newsletter and member communications)	-78.94
ASA Membership Chapter Dues	-125.00
Annual web hosting fee	-59.95
Service charge	<u>-12.00</u>
Balance as of May 25, 2007	<u>\$3,903.13</u>

Membership Report

Chris Kraum

PBA is currently 35 members strong. We encourage each member to send along a sample newsletter and an application for membership with each bird sale.

Your officers are working on the following:

- ★ Developing a membership packet to send out with a membership card.
- ★ Revising the web site to be more professional, more easily and quickly revised, and member-responsive.

- ★ Revamping the newsletter to a color printed version.

We are working to make the PBA an organization that offers value to its members, in the form of education, networking support for breeding issues(including legislative alerts that affect aviculturists), and Pyrrhura studbook breeding support.

We welcome member input and comments, as well as volunteer efforts to help accomplish PBA's mission.

How Easy or Difficult is Breeding Pyrrhura Conures? Part 5

Crimson Bellied Conures in the Family Room

By Marcella Covault

Small breeders who want their Pyrrhura pairs to be part of the family, including hatching and raising chicks, have had mixed success in this. I have, as well, and I truly believe it depends on the pair AND the environment.

Charley and Chloe (C&C) are a 2005 pair of Crimson Bellied Conures that I kept from that year's hatch because of their congenial personalities, and because in the back of my mind, I thought I'd try with them what I've done with my sun conures—co-parenting—or maybe a better term is supportive parenting.

Often a young pair, no matter what species, must be carefully watched because of potential issues with their first clutch: (1) infertility (because the parents haven't "gotten it right" or they are out of sync with each other in reproductive timing); (2) small hatch (which they may be nervous and either not feed or mishandle); (3) normal hatch (which they may feed only the oldest, or not give the youngest enough). I have had all of these scenarios occur, as have most other breeders!

Because C&C were so tame—easily stepped up out of the cage and interacted with me—I was a bit concerned about how they would deal with a clutch, and even though they had a nestbox, I thought they might wait another season because of the hustle and bustle of my family room (with a pair of young, vocal sun conures right next door to them). Not to worry—they

seem unperturbed by the activities. They bred in the privacy of their 24" tall grandfather nestbox (like many Pys do), and Chloe laid 5 eggs, incubated them faithfully, and four hatched. Of course, when other birds were out in the evenings, in typical territorial behavior, Charley, in particular, would ruff up his neck feathers and warn others away.

When C&C went out of the nestbox, I'd slide the door up and check babies. They did not rush back in nervously, but rather, they sat on the perch just outside the nestbox opening and peered in to watch what I was doing. With this first clutch, as is not uncommon, they fed the oldest, most vocal babies first and most. The third baby was adequately fed, but not stuffed like the oldest two, and the youngest (which was actually the 5th laid, so was 4 days behind #3) was marginally fed, so I wound up supplementing a couple of times a day to keep him up with the others. Since I was handfeeding another clutch anyway, it was little extra work.

When I pulled the babies for handfeeding (just under 4 weeks old), they were very used to my handling, and C&C, within a day, went back to stepping up, socializing with me (including cuddling), and flying around the room, as they had done pre-babies. If I hadn't known they'd been parents, I would not have been clued in by their behavior.

What a wonderful experience! This, to me, is part and parcel of why I raise birds in my home.



Py Play

MAYA!

From June Diciocco

Erin A of Woodstock, Ga, purchased a Pineapple hen from me in August 06. She just sent me this fabulous photo and narrative.

"She looks a bit pudgy and I am telling her to cut back on the buttered popcorn a bit.

"She still knows how to ring her bell on command, and recently she learned to flip over her perch on command too!"

"I just love Maya and I'm so grateful to have found her!"



ROSIE!

From Marcy Covault

Sharon M in San Jose, CA, bought a sweet little pineapple girl in January 2007. Rosie is fitting in just fine!

Boy, have I had a busy week-end! Sharon's grandchildren came for the week-end, and I ended up with my own remote controlled car! I love riding it. Cassidy sent it all over the place and I never once offered to get off. It's really cool!



I am afraid of NOTHING! I also rode a T-rex. ... a moving toy tractor, and a school bus. Cassidy loved it when I laid on my back while she rubbed my neck - I LOVE TO BE RUBBED!



Hope all is well in Texas. I'm having great fun in CA.

Check out my fancy flight suit. I wear it sometimes when I'm out for a long time. It's not my favorite, but I'm very good about wearing it, and Sharon likes not having to wipe up poop.



Aviculturists Reveal ... Lessons Learned

Anonymous (so as not to embarrass), the following narrations may serve as “lessons learned” to those who have not made those specific mistakes, knowing that we will all make our own!

Getting to chicks regardless of obstacles...

I parent rear quite a few conures that are not always good incubators. A sun conure pair is fostering one chick. I am keeping a few weight charts on the parent-raised babies. The parents were eating, so I took a big piece of cardboard and blocked the nest box entrance for obvious reasons. I took the chick out, weighed it, and returned it to the nest. Two days later I was checking all the birds (yes, I had been in that aviary several times already) and looked up. There was that same piece of cardboard right where I had put it. All I could think of was my dead chick in the nest and what an idiot I was. I snatched it away as fast as I could. When it was in hand I saw that the part blocking the hole was confetti. Thank goodness for this tough pair of sun conures who wouldn't let a piece of cardboard stand between them and that chick.

In another admission, the consequences were not good, as the barrier to the nestbox opening was a piece of metal.

Lesson? Use only destructible barriers when checking chicks!

Minimum security facilities for birds on the honor system?

Geez, you think I would have remembered the large hole in the cage where there used to be a nestbox! Amazon had found the new open door in the cage—out the hole where nestbox had been before.

Reprise: I did that years ago when I put a toucan temporarily in a parrot cage [which had a nestbox hole in the wire], while I shifted things around. It was temporary all right! Never got the bird back.

Remarked one aviculturist, “I once did that and caught the birds and put them back and STILL

did not see the hole. Some people take 2 or 3 tries to learn.”

Holey nestboxes, Batman!

I gave my first pair of Senegals a plywood cockatiel nest box—close enough to the same size birds, right? Came out one morning to find a pile of shavings under the box and thought they had thrown out the shavings. Added shavings for three days before I found the hole they had scratched in the bottom of the box! Senegals like a much deeper nest box than do cockatiels.

Lesson? Observe more, think less.

Reprise: I was cleaning a Senegal cage and rearranging and in the process moved the nestbox. This was a new pair, and I had checked inside for eggs but there were none. As I moved the box, there was an egg, under the box. Heck, I tried to figure it out for the longest time...how did that egg get outside the box? Where did it come from? I threw some more shavings in. Next day, more shavings on the floor. What the heck is going on here? Looked inside nestbox again and all looked well. Following day again, a small pile of shavings. Take nestbox right off of cage and there was the problem. A hole in bottom of box. Suddenly we knew how an egg was underneath.

Peekaboo—out you come!

I have a barn with stalls with suspended breeder cages. I peaked into the darkened nest box of a pair of Blue Crown Conures and used the end of a small stick to try to peer under the hen to see if she had babies. She didn't move and I could not see her breathing. In a momentary panic, I thought she was dead and opened the peep door wide and out she busted into the horse stall. I think that was just

another instance when the shirt off my back became the catch net. It all ended well but the whole incident left a heart-wrenching memory.

Locked in with Toe Biters—Oh No!

Not too long ago I had a perch knocked down in my big flight for my Greater Vasas. I took off my shoes and went in, didn't pay attention, and closed the door behind me which had a locking latch on it. The Vasas weren't happy (breeding season) and decided my feet were good targets. Took me 15 minutes or so to figure out how to get the latch up. I now have a great respect for Vasa beaks and agility.

Cage and building construction hindsight...

My husband has made it clear that this time the cage construction and building modifications are going to be my project because I don't want any wood construction. (In other words, I want it done my way and he's not going to take directions. LOL) In one case we had a new building where my husband built four full length flights down one side for lovebirds and cockatiels. We had neglected to put a washable surface on the floor and decided linoleum would get the job done quickest. Luckily my husband had built from the ceiling down. There was a tiny gap at floor level and we managed to pull the linoleum in under the flights. I saw a picture of that building a few days ago, and still don't understand how we got it in without any cutting.

Walking the macaw...

City living has its limitations, with space being foremost. During warm weather, I often passed time sitting on the front stoop with my young B&G macaw and a Congo on the side rails. Lady, my Rottie, adored the birds from the onset and they would perch on her back as she walked about the house. Occasionally we'd all take a walk, Lady with the birds on-board her back and I alongside, down a couple blocks to the corner bodega. This was the birds' special outing as they we're sure to be spoiled with gifts of dried fruits or mixed nuts.

I could always trust Lady. She'd sit for hours on the stoop optimistically awaiting the arrival of another grocery-toting passerby. Never did she receive that ham hock of her dreams, yet her resolve never waned. She'd greet each one and follow for a couple houses and then return. I joined her one afternoon, placing the birds on the stoops rails and just as I was returning indoors to retrieve the phone, it rang. I took this call inside and when it was completed I returned to check on Lady. She was gone, nowhere to be found. And then I saw my grey on the rail...alone...where's the macaw? Oh god, I forgot I had the birds out also. In terror of what I may find, or not find, I ran up and down the street calling out for them when I caught a glimpse of Lady. Oh, it was she, almost two blocks away, walking alongside the B&G macaw. As I ran up behind them, I couldn't help but notice that the macaw was leading...it was the macaw...on her way to get some treats in the bodega and Lady, the loyal one...keeping a very slow pace alongside her. To think they crossed a city street to get there too!

I was so rattled, I don't remember if there was anyone else even around. And I didn't give the macaw the treat she expected to find at the end of this long expedition. How else could I 'punish' a bird for walking such distances to get a special treat?

I would not recommend this foraging technique to anyone. Forgetting I left my birds out is something I haven't done (often) since.

Read the label!

My contribution concerns cage building. I have mentioned many times my love of Coroplast - plastic cardboard for all sorts of uses around the aviary. There are a number of different types including UV protected for greenhouse use and the specially made sign variety. This sign material is made (surface etching) so that paint sticks very well on the plastic - obvious, right? I was finishing my hanger cages and ran into some white Coroplast on sale. I covered all of

the cage surfaces with this plastic and moved my 20 birds into their new facility.

Now if you haven't kept hangers you probably are unaware how really messy they are. They can squirt in a full sphere - 360 degrees in all directions. They can hang from the top wire and coat the overhead light fixtures. Their droppings are like stinky glue depending on what they are fed. Within a few days of moving the birds I proceeded to hose down the cages. Guess what? I had purchased sign material. I now had the messiest birds in four uncleanable cages. One day I will have to rebuild the cages, but for now I have to hand scrub the walls. Removing and replacing the plastic is not practical so I will need to start from scratch.

Lesson? Read the label!

Chicks Take the Heat, End Up Girls

By Catriona Purcell, ABC Science Online, 24 November 2004, <http://www.abc.net.au/science/news/stories/s1250633.htm>

Temperature influences the sex of birds, not just reptiles, researchers have shown for the first time.

Australian researchers Dr Ann Göth from Sydney's Macquarie University and Dr David Booth from the University of Queensland studied the unusual habits of the Australian brush or bush turkey (*Alectura lathami*), after a tip-off from an Aboriginal elder.

The researchers found more female brush turkeys hatch at high temperatures and males at lower temperatures, publishing their findings in the Royal Society journal *Biology Letters*.

They say brush turkeys are the first known birds to regulate the sex ratio of their chicks using temperature. But they are thought to do it in a different way to some reptiles.

The brush turkey is unusual as it belongs to a group of 22 bird species known as megapodes that do not sit on their eggs. Instead they use

Happy Ending

I finally thought of one that had a happy ending... A club was purchasing one of my Galah babies for their yearly raffle. I brought the baby to show at one of their meetings. I was up front, the doors were open, people started coming in, and the baby flew out the door. When myself and others were outside, the baby reached a couple stories high in the sky but then came down and landed softly in the bushes. Better believe my heart was pounding. The wings were clipped but obviously not enough. I should have left the bird in the carrier till everyone was in and settled down.

Lesson? Even a clipped bird may fly away!

environmental heat sources such as composting leaf litter.

Göth said after the female lays the eggs the male tends the composting mound using a temperature sensor in his upper beak to keep the mound between 30 and 37°C.

"Each day during the nesting season from July to February he takes a small amount of soil in his beak and checks the temperature," she said.

"If it is cold he will add more leaf litter and if it is too hot he will open the top of the mound to cool it down."

Extreme temperatures

Göth found equal numbers of male and female chicks hatched at the average mound temperature of 34°C. But more males hatched when the mound was a lower 31°C and more females hatched at a higher 36°C.

Göth said unlike reptiles, brush turkey incubation temperature did not determine the

sex of an egg but rather affected which eggs would survive.

"We know in reptiles temperature determines the sex of an egg after it is laid but the sex of a brush turkey is determined by the time it is laid," she said.

Göth studied nest temperature after an Aboriginal elder in the Atherton tablelands of Far North Queensland told her there were more

female chicks following a hot nesting season and more males after a cold season.

"The Aboriginal people have been aware of a connection between incubation temperature and brush turkey sex for a long time," she said.

Other Australian megapodes include the mallee fowl and orange-footed megapode that use similar incubation methods as the brush turkey.

Parrots of the Pacific



Birding and Bird Fairs

http://scienceblogs.com/grrlscientist/2007/02/birds_in_the_news_69_v2n20.php

Pictured: Uvea Parakeet, *Eunymphicus uvaeensis*, only 750 remain.

A British Birdwatching Fair has raised record amounts towards the conservation of Parrots in the Pacific. The RSPB (BirdLife in the UK), gave a check for £215,000 (421,000 USD) to BirdLife International from the organisers of the British Birdwatching Fair. "It was another record-breaking year for the British Birdwatching Fair." said Tim Appleton, co-organiser of the event.

"The fair continues to be a great day out for anyone with an interest in the countryside and wildlife and by coming along people are contributing to conservation on a global scale. It's a fantastic achievement."

Use of Probiotics in Caged & Aviary Birds

By Dr Colin Walker BSc, BVSc, MRCVS, MACVSc (Avian health)<http://www.auspigeonco.com.au/medications/medications.html>

The bacteria-host relationship

Through evolution, bacteria and warm-blooded animals have closely associated themselves to form a closed system for mutual benefit. By trial and error, over millennia, populations of bacteria have evolved that are indigenous to their animal host. The animal host receives the benefits of aid in the digestive process, manufacture of essential nutrients, protection against

other undesirable bacteria, assistance in control of water in the body and other metabolic advantages. The bacteria in return receive temperatures favourable for their growth, a constant supply of nutrients, and essential substances in the form of the body's secretions. Because of the exact nature of this relationship, there are bacterial populations that are the most favourable for the host animal.

Changes

Each member of this mutually beneficial relationship is profoundly influenced by the other. When certain changes occur in the host, corresponding changes are reflected in bacterial populations in the bowel. Bacterial changes may occur as a result of stress, diet change, antibiotic therapy and other factors. Conversely, as the resident bacterial population changes, there are subsequent changes in the animal's activity. These include alterations in the host's ability to digest its food and its ability to protect itself from bowel disease. The animal host then has the problem of getting back to an ideal relationship with its normal resident population of bacteria. Hopefully it can accomplish such a relationship before subsequent challenges again upset the ideal state.

Where animals are not stressed, have an appropriate diet, are not crowded, are not given drugs, do not contract infection or metabolic diseases and live in a clean environment, an ideal level of intestinal bacterial population may be maintained on a rather steady basis. In fact, no differences are generally reported in numerous trials under these ideal conditions.

Imbalance

The conditions described above, however, do not fit the environment under which many birds are kept. Even in the best aviaries, under the best care, birds are subjected to various stresses. This means that disruption of the normal balance of intestinal bacteria can be a common event. If an ideal state is not maintained, utilization of nutrients is not optimal and resistance to harmful organisms is reduced.

What is a probiotic?

The bacteria that are normally found in the bowel of healthy non-stressed animals can be cultured and prepared as a medication. In this form they are called probiotics. The probiotic concept involves the refeeding or reintroduction of these bacteria to an animal. Many studies in

many countries have shown that, although these bacteria can control and exclude other harmful bacteria, they are in fact the most likely to be disrupted by stress. Most probiotic products consist of naturally occurring living cultures of specific strains of Lactobacilli and enteric Streptococcus (Enterococcus).

Restoring the balance

Once it was established that the feeding of certain live bacteria to animals has the potential to produce beneficial effects under certain circumstances, i.e. when the normal bacterial balance has been disrupted, the actual delivery of these organisms from the laboratory to the animal became the next hurdle. Pharmaceutical companies have now overcome this. The large Japanese pharmaceutical company Yakult manufactures a human probiotic (Lactobacillus casei) as a milk-based drink in Victoria. This is distributed through the eastern States of Australia. One million bottles are consumed by Australians every week. Fourteen million are consumed in Japan every day! Interestingly, in people, studies have shown that individuals who drink 'Yakult' and are exposed to diseases such as Salmonella are much less likely to become unwell. Probiotic use in people has also been shown to decrease the chance of bowel cancer. As many of the harmful bacteria produce toxins that are carcinogenic, i.e. can induce cancer, their exclusion can decrease the risk of this disease.

In birds, there are gel preparations of probiotics for individual dosing and also water-soluble powders to treat the flock. These provide selected beneficial live bacteria with excellent stability when protected from extreme heat and moisture. Because of the intimate relationship between the host animal and its bacterial population, it is important that the correct organisms are supplied in probiotic preparation for any given species. Probiotic supplements need to be prepared with particular species in mind and the more types of normal bacteria

that can be provided, the better. For use in birds, therefore, multistrain avian-origin probiotic supplements are used.

Recent Studies

At the seventh European Association of Avian Veterinarians conference held in April 2003 at Loro Parque in Tenerife, an interesting paper was presented on probiotic use in cockatiel chicks. This paper described work done at Louisiana State University by a team headed by Dr. Tom Tully. Cockatiel chicks were removed from their parents at 12 days of age and hand rearing commenced. They were divided into several groups, some of which received probiotic supplementation, and some of which did not. During the hand raising, weight gain and the ability to resist disease were monitored.

Results showed that there was no difference in weight gain in healthy chicks on a good diet. The team went on to state "Although not significant in benefiting healthy babies being fed an adequate diet, in all likelihood babies being fed marginal diets by inexperienced feeders, stressed and or diseased birds should benefit from an avian specific probiotic supplement fed on a daily basis".

During hand raising the birds were deliberately infected with disease-causing bacteria (*Pseudomonas* sp, *E. coli*). Testing of the birds after infection with these bacteria showed that the probiotic-supplemented group was less likely to be pathogen positive. Subsequent blood tests showed less of an inflammatory response (lower white blood cell count) and subsequent histopathology showed less infection in the intestines.

At the AU convention in October 2003 in Chicago research work was presented by Star Labs. Star Labs are based in Missouri and manufacture a probiotic preparation called "PrimaLac". Two large trials had been conducted with this product. In one trial involving over 20,000 Bob White quail chicks it was shown that probiotic-supplemented birds, when compared

to non-probiotic-supplemented birds, had improved growth, improved feed conversion, and improved feather quality, and were more likely to survive. They also exhibited an enhanced immune (antibody) response. The second trial involved approximately 15,000 pheasants. These birds were also divided into probiotic-supplemented and non-supplemented groups. Both groups were then deliberately infected with *Salmonella typhimurium* (a disease causing bacteria) and then later Newcastle disease (caused by a paramyxovirus). In both instances approximately 25% more of the non-probiotic-supplemented birds died.

Mode of action – And so how do probiotics work?

Competitive inhibition – The normal bacteria found in the bowel of some birds during health, e.g. *Lactobacillus* sp., produce lactic acid, hydrogen peroxide, antibiotic and other substances that help keep potential pathogens under control. In health the lactic acid produced by the normal bacteria keeps the PH of the contents of the stomach and intestine low i.e. acidic. Loss of these normal bacteria, secondary to stress, leads to an increase in PH. As a general rule, most pathogenic bacteria do not multiply well in an acidic environment and so a rise in PH creates a window of opportunity for disease causing bacteria to invade. As many aviculturalists are aware, likely potential invaders include *E. coli*, *Pseudomonas*, *Candida* (yeast or thrush), *Salmonella* and *Yersinia*. Often these organisms act as opportunists, waiting to cause disease whenever birds become stressed. In addition to weakly acidifying the bowel, probiotics do much more to help the bird, in that they produce protective slime layers that coat the bowel lining and also preferentially occupy receptor sites on the bowel wall, in the process excluding bacteria such as *E. coli*. They can offer an effective natural way of combating the problem without the need for antibiotics. By treating the birds,

we are simply flooding the bowel with beneficial bacteria, which, through their normal activity may re-establish health.

Appetite stimulation - Probiotics appear to have a strong appetite-stimulatory effect. They are known to produce digestive enzymes and B vitamins. These effects help the birds to get the maximum nutrition from their diet.

Immune stimulation – Recent work indicates that probiotics stimulate general immunity.

Interestingly, it appears human probiotic preparations are being developed to target specific bacterial infections. In humans, a bacterium *Bacillus cereus* causes gastroenteritis. This infection is not fatal but is responsible for many lost days of work annually in the population. Rather than being prescribed antibiotics, in the future patients may be prescribed a specific probiotic 'yoghurt' that controls the infection. According to the companies involved, with this technology now in place, more difficult organisms like *E. coli*, which have a large number of strains and mutate more readily, will be tackled. Once available, these preparations will be beneficial and useful to aviculturists as they will mean that such infections can be managed without resorting to antibiotics with their associated risk of side effects.

Use of probiotics—Although probiotic preparations have been available for several years, there still seems to be some uncertainty about their use. As always when new products become available, it is easy for misinformation to be spread. The situation is complicated by the fact that not all birds have the same or even similar populations of bowel bacteria. Birds with caeca, such as chickens, carry large numbers of what are called gram-negative bacteria, which are capable of causing disease in other species. In birds such as parrots with no caeca, the number of gram-negative bacteria is very low, but large numbers of gram-positive bacteria are normal. In lorikeets, virtually no bacteria are found, while in many passerines such as canaries

and Australian finches, no permanent population of bowel bacteria exists, with the bacteria found in droppings being regarded as transients.

Although not a miracle cure, it does seem that probiotics can be beneficial in certain situations to help maintain the health of our birds.

So when can the aviculturist use probiotics to his advantage?

After any stress - Stress predictably disrupts the population of bacteria found in the bowel with the beneficial bacteria being the first ones to be lost. Once these beneficial bacteria are removed, an opening is created for an overgrowth of disease causing bacteria or yeasts. This can result in diarrhoea, decreased appetite and a vulnerability to disease. Probiotics restore the balance of beneficial to non-beneficial bacteria. They are best given as soon as possible after the stress or just before the time of the stress. By doing so, disease problems may be avoided.

During breeding and moulting – Often, despite the best of care, breeding or moulting birds can become "run down". Probiotic use is likely to protect the parents and, during breeding, the babies from disease.

Following purchase and transport – Catching and confinement can be extremely stressful particularly in naturally nervous species. Interrupted feeding and drinking patterns provide further physiological stress.

Following antibiotic use – Many antibiotics not only target disease-causing bacteria, but also kill the beneficial bacteria of the bowel. When antibiotic treatment ceases, the bowel can re-populate with bacteria from the birds' immediate environment. Probiotics can help protect the birds from disease during this time.

After fledging – Less disease can be expected after weaning if birds are probiotic-supplemented until they are feeding properly and have established themselves in the aviary.

Note on Probiotic Use

In some metropolitan areas, the addition of fluoride or chlorine to drinking water may interfere with the action of probiotics. In metropolitan areas, treatment plants are situated throughout the water-distribution network. According to Australian authorities, the concentration of fluoride and chlorine throughout most of the network is too low to exert an effect. However, the concentration in the water of aviculturalists close to a treatment plant may be high enough to kill the probiotic organisms. These substances will, however,

evaporate from treated water if it is allowed to stand for 24 hours. Aviculturalists in any doubt are best to set aside water to be medicated with probiotics for 24 hours before use. Simply standing the required volume of water in several buckets awaiting use is adequate. Alternatively, rainwater or distilled water could be used. Most water-soluble probiotic preparations can be added to the feed. Indeed, with some preparations, this ensures a more immediate and effective delivery of the probiotics to the digestive tract.

Insights into “Animal Rights” Thinking

A discussion group question, asking if the “animal rights” crowd doesn’t understand how important our animals are to us, brought the following response and web site references.

“They “get it” alright. It is WE [animal owners] who are not getting it.... It is NOT about adopting the pets out.....It is about converting everyone to Veganism, which accomplishes the objective of no animal use. The more pets at shelters (even if they have to bring them from Mexico and elsewhere), the more publicity and the more people will go to the dinners and affairs and donate the needed \$\$\$ to further the agenda.

If you read enough of this stuff, you find your emotions rising too—mixed emotions though. You don’t want to be seen as heartless and insensitive to other living creatures, but something in the back of your mind says that much of this is just TOO MUCH to accept as truth.”

Start with this list of interviews: <http://www.satyamag.com/interviews.html>. A few salient excerpts with comments are extracted below.

“Humane” Eating – Vegan Style

Satya interviews with Kim Sturla.

Kim Sturla is cofounder of Animal Place Sanctuary and Education Center in Vacaville, California, www.animalplace.org. She runs an animal sanctuary, mostly farm, but has been bringing in dogs from Mexico which those reporting are led to believe are living on old produce (vegan style)! While adding to “rescue”/shelter populations!

*Sturla discusses the real agenda, *abolition*, and how animal welfare is used to promote Veganism.*

<http://www.satyamag.com/oct06/sturla.html>

“We realize that the transition from eating meat, or even being vegetarian, to going vegan

is not always an easy one. Some people get it right away, and others take much more time.

“Yes, abolition is the ideal, but animal welfare is a positive step, too. Even the legislative efforts like the recent ban of live field coursing in our county and the ban on foie gras in California help raise awareness that animals deserve compassion and respect.”

“Rather than promoting so-called “humane meat” or even cage-free eggs, I prefer to encourage people to give up meat or animal products one day a week. If they do, that will have a more lasting impact on them and the animals, and show how easy it is to enjoy a plant-based diet.”

Sturla discusses HSUS events going Vegan and SPCA's being brought into the Vegan Fold:
<http://www.satyamag.com/nov04/sturla.html>

"Food for Thought, is probably dearest to my heart. It is a campaign to encourage SPCAs and humane societies to become consistent in their compassion toward all species and adopt an animal friendly menu. Specifically, we are asking all animal welfare organizations to adopt a vegetarian or vegan policy for their events. The response has been less than warm, which we knew would be the case.

"The good news, and what is really going to help immensely, is the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) just passed their vegan policy. They are seen as the mothering organization for the SPCAs, shelters and animal control agencies. And the fact that they have adopted a vegan policy may just be the major breakthrough to bring others along. All HSUS expos, trainings, conferences will be vegan. It is huge.

"Another part of this campaign is targeting the environmental community. They have the same responsibility to adopt a vegan policy as shelters do, just different reasoning. An animal protection organization shouldn't be serving dead animals at their events. An environmental agency shouldn't be endorsing the desecration of our earth. It is just a huge hypocrisy. They don't even have to announce it is a vegetarian function—serve pasta!"

Compassion Conquering World Farming

Satya Interview with Joyce D'Silva

<http://www.satyamag.com/jun05/d%27silva.html>

"I understand CIWF [Compassion in World Farming] set targets for western governments and global food and farming bodies of at least a 15 percent reduction in meat consumption by 2020."

"I think it's important to get stuff into schools as well, so that the younger generation will hear the message."

"I think groups like Compassion Over Killing are really successful, and other people realize that they can do it too. Now with Wayne Pacelle at the head of HSUS, I think there is real hope and he's got Miyun Park and Paul Shapiro to work with him."

A Chief Executive of CIWF, Joyce D'Silva is a Vegan and has dedicated her life to being a voice for farm animals.

Evolution From Within? New Directions for the Humane Society

Satya Interview with Wayne Pacelle

<http://www.satyamag.com/jun05/pacelle.html>

"With regard to Humane USA, the Political Action Committee you started, you've been quoted as saying your ambition was to create "a National Rifle Association of the animal rights movement." What do you mean by this and how has it done so far?"

"The way things work in Washington and in state capitols across the country is that logic and humane sensibilities can only go so far. You need them in order to be effective and the merits of an argument do mean something in this culture, but you also need to amass political power and that comes from working the political system in a way that achieves results. There's no substitute for being able to deliver votes and having an informed constituency. The key goal for us is to help organize the universe of passionate animal advocates across the country who understand the political process and can plug into that process to achieve public policy goals." ...

"You've had an impressive track record with getting state ballot initiatives passed. Can you give a brief overview of some of the initiatives you've worked on?"

"It has certainly been a major team effort, especially benefiting from the involvement of Mike Markarian, former President of the Fund for Animals and now Executive Vice President for external affairs at HSUS. We've been able to engage and activate tens of thousands of

people to qualify ballot measures and to work to pass them." ...

"I recognized that we have to amass political power and apply that power in the broadest sense in order to save animals' lives." ...

"Do we want to see an end to the fur industry? I think HSUS offers the best potential to get us there, if we come together."

A read of this entire interview with Wayne Pacelle gives possibly the most clear understanding of HSUS' corporate mentality, motivation, and strategy, as presented by its CEO and President—a 'true believer' and committed to transforming the world's social systems in regards to animal use—according to his view of what the world should be!

Animal Rights "Welfarists": An Oxymoron

By Joan Dunayer

<http://www.satyamag.com/mar05/dunayer.html>

"We should persistently advocate nonhuman rights—that is, emancipation. "Welfarists" who call themselves "animal rights" activists undermine the concept of nonhuman rights. They confuse the public into thinking that imprisonment, slaughter, and other speciesist abuse can be consistent with nonhuman rights. "Welfarists" replace nonhumans' right to life with a "right" to be murdered in less terror and pain. They shrink nonhumans' right to liberty down to a "right" to be unjustly imprisoned in more space. In reality someone who lacks the most basic rights—to life and liberty—has no rights at all.

Joan Dunayer is the author of 'Animal Equality: Language and Liberation' (2001) and 'Speciesism' (2005).

Apocalypse Now

By Kevin Jonas

<http://www.satyamag.com/mar05/jonas.html>

"By 2050 it is estimated the human population will stand at over ten billion. In 15 years the demand for meat will double. ...

"Those in the conservative wing of this cause argue for moderation in the process of social change. That we must be "patient," "it takes a long time," and as much as it pains us (and literally the animals), "we have to make incremental progress towards liberation." To this end, the "Republican Party" of our political cause, groups like the Humane Society of the U.S., seek to homogenize the entire animal rights movement by eradicating any tinge of radicalism. They would limit our demands to bigger cages, better treatment, and quicker killings."

Kevin Jonas is a campaign coordinator for Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty (SHAC) USA

New Year's Resolutions to Help Animals

By Monica Engebretson

<http://www.satyamag.com/dec06/engebretson.html>

Shun Pet Shops: Only Support Stores That Do Not Sell Live Animals

"You may not realize that by shopping at a store selling animals you may be supporting cruelty. Animals are living, feeling beings who should not be treated like mere merchandise. The fact is, in a retail environment animals must be treated like commodities in order for the store to realize a profit. This means that, in order to cut costs, animals are too often kept in inadequate conditions and denied veterinary care. The cost of providing veterinary care for an animal kept in a pet shop can easily exceed the animal's commercial value—meaning that animals may be left to suffer or even die from untreated illnesses or injuries.

"Captive birds frequently suffer from captivity-related stress, leading to behavioral and physical problems. ...Pet shops that sell animals also contribute to the already overwhelming burden of pet overpopulation shouldered by shelters and rescue groups. ..."

Go Vegan: Wade in or Dive

"If you haven't done it already, make 2007 the year you go vegan. If you are already vegan, make a commitment to help someone else take this life-saving step. In the U.S. alone, more than ten billion land animals are slaughtered annually and billions more fish are raised and killed in fish "farms" or are taken from oceans, rivers, and lakes.

"Like all animals, farmed animals have the ability to experience pleasure and pain. Unfortunately, farmed animals endure a tremendous amount of pain and suffering for unnecessary human use and consumption. Eggs and dairy products are no exception. Eggs, regardless of whether they are labeled "cage-free" or "free-range" require the disposal of billions of male chicks who obviously do not lay eggs and are of the wrong breed to be raised for meat..."

Monica Engebretson is Project Director with the Animal Protection Institute and is working very hard to eliminate animal use in California.

From Wikipedia...

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Animal_rights

"Animal rights, also known as animal liberation, is the movement to protect non-human animals from being used or regarded as property by humans. ... The claim is that animals should no longer be regarded legally or morally as property, or treated as resources for human purposes, but should instead be regarded as legal persons."

Living Among Meateaters

An Interview with Carol Adams

<http://www.satyamag.com/dec95/adams.html>

"Sometimes what meateaters do is so blatantly open to analysis that it leaves me dumbstruck. So I guess what I've done is I've taken that ongoing maddening frustration and anger and I've finally moved that so it doesn't paralyze or immobilize me and I continue to see this whole thing as a process. After all, I used to be a meateater; I'm living among people who haven't completed the process that vegetarians go through. ..."

"I always say that vegetarians should not engage the issue of vegetarianism if there is a dead animal present and being eaten. Because there's just too much tension. The meateater is going to further need to justify what they're doing; even if they're not conscious of it. Because they're consuming at the moment. ..."

"People who eat animals are benefiting from a dominant/subordinate relationship, but our culture encourages invisibility of the structures enabling this, and invisibility of the animals hurt by this. Indeed, the animals are seen as unified masses. There is a complete denial of their individuality, so that it is not seen as subordination."

Carol Adams is a vegetarian and working in animal advocacy for over 20 years.

T. Rex Related to Chickens?

By Jeanna Bryner, LiveScience Staff Writer, posted: 12 April 2007

Complete article at http://www.livescience.com/animals/070412_dino_tissues.html

An adolescent female Tyrannosaurus rex died 68 million years ago, but its bones still contain intact soft tissue, including the oldest preserved proteins ever found, scientists say.

And a comparison of the protein's chemical structure to a slew of other species showed an evolutionary link between T. rex and chickens,

bolstering the idea that birds evolved from dinosaurs. ...

A comparison by Asara's team of the amino-acid sequence from the T. rex collagen to a database of existing sequences from modern species showed it shared a remarkable similarity to that of chickens. ..."

PBA: Preserving Birds through Aviculture

PBA Mission Statement

1. To bring together people interested in the keeping and breeding of Pyrrhura Conures.
2. To enhance those interests, through mutual education.
3. To provide a background in keeping of all the species and sub-species.
4. To encourage the domestic breeding of all species and sub-species.
5. To provide a networking studbook on the uncommon and rarer species.

In addition, according to PBA Bylaws, the organization's purpose is to

- ✓ create a cooperative spirit and feeling among the various bird owners and breeders and to enhance our common bond;
- ✓ educate the public, pet owners, and breeders in good avicultural practices;
- ✓ promote better caged bird care and husbandry;
- ✓ promote the conservation and preservation of Pyrrhura Conures through captive breeding of common, uncommon, rare, or endangered species and sub-species;
- ✓ assist each member in solving of any problems that may arise in the pursuit of aviculture; and
- ✓ keep the members informed of local, state, and national legislation which impacts aviculture.



c/o Chris Kraum, Secretary
14707 Wood Drive
Magalia, CA 95954

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