

# The Py Press

Spring 2006

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## PYRRHURA BREEDERS ASSOCIATION

### President's Message

We're in the middle of spring, and I hope everyone is having a full-swing breeding season, plus having success in finding new homes for young parrots, as pets and/or breeding pairs.

I appreciate the position entrusted in me as President of this organization, and I urge members to provide input and support into PBA's functioning this year.

**Ongoing legislative issues**—Animal-related and, in many cases, anti-breeding legislation are ongoing issues—in the U.S. and in other countries.

Regarding AWA rules promulgation as a result of the USDA/DDAL settlement, aviculturists are waiting for those, and we hope it is favorable that Dr. Darrel Styles is working on those rules, as he understands aviculture, from small to large operations.

**Focus on Pyrrhura conures**—Our focus in the PBA is to educate and promote best avicultural practices for our Pyrrhura conures, so that others will have the opportunity to acquaint themselves with these unique creatures. We must educate the public and help each other continue to enjoy the relationships we have with our birds and other animals.

**Input needed**—We need feedback on the articles we're presenting in the newsletter, as well as suggestions and assistance for future articles, both in the U.S. and from members in other countries. For the next issue, for Part II on breeding Pyrrhura conures, we would like for a couple of breeders to talk about their experiences and observations. I know that some of you have done so on lists, but if you could give some of your insights (and include pictures), we'll be glad to include in the next issue or issues (depending on how many people volunteer information). *Please contact me with ideas, text, pictures, etc., and I will work with you on an article!*

**PBA member services**—This organization can provide information, and you can just absorb it—but you can also be dynamic in helping PBA be a great resource and networking organization for Pyrrhura breeding aficionados—*it's your choice!* Let's hear from members about constructive ways to improve and expand member services.

—Marcy Covault

## PBA Officers for 2006

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	<a href="mailto:President@pyrrhurabreedersassociation.com">President@pyrrhurabreedersassociation.com</a>
Vice President	Joi West	<a href="mailto:Vicepresident@pyrrhurabreedersassociation.com">Vicepresident@pyrrhurabreedersassociation.com</a>
Treasurer	June Diciocco	<a href="mailto:Treasurer@pyrrhurabreedersassociation.com">Treasurer@pyrrhurabreedersassociation.com</a>
Secretary	Kelli Eager	<a href="mailto:Secretary@pyrrhurabreedersassociation.com">Secretary@pyrrhurabreedersassociation.com</a>
Webmaster/Editor	OPEN [Marcy Covault, interim]	

## Treasurer's Report

We are in transition between Treasurers, but we did not want to hold up the newsletter for the yearly report. The March 31, 2006 balance in the PBA Wells Fargo checking account was \$2,709.22.

## Membership Report

### Kelli Eager

We are 38 members strong from the United States, Canada, Australia, and countries in Europe.

We encourage each member to send along an application for membership with each bird sale.

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 Consortium oversight.

## AFA in Brief, February 2006

### Carol Brasaemle, Editor

#### BE AN EARLY BIRD!

Beginning February 1st, early bird registration for the 2006 AFA Convention in Dallas, TX will be available online at [www.afabirds.org](http://www.afabirds.org). If you would prefer to register by mail, a downloadable registration form is also available. Early bird rates end on June 26th, so get your registration in now! Convention updates will be posted to the website as they become available.

#### AFA COMMUNICATIONS LIST

In an effort to improve communications, the American Federation of Aviculture has instituted an email list. This READ only list will be used to keep the general membership informed of what is happening or has happened within AFA.

Any member in good standing interested in joining this list can complete the

communications form online by going to <http://www.afabirds.org/commlist.shtml> .

Once your membership is verified, you will automatically be added to the list. E-mail

addresses will be added as received and verified.

MORE at [http://www.orgsites.com/ms/centralmsbirdclub/\\_pgg4.php3](http://www.orgsites.com/ms/centralmsbirdclub/_pgg4.php3)

## How Easy or Difficult is Breeding Pyrrhura Conures? Part 1

*I have been asked by aspiring conure breeders how the degree of ease or difficulty in success in breeding the Pyrrhura conures. I've started out with my own comments, and I have asked several experienced breeders this same question. In this and at least the Summer issue (beyond, if there's enough interest), opinions based on personal experiences will be shared. What I think this may illustrate is that there is no pat answer or guarantee as to the ease or difficulty of breeding these little gems, but I hope there will be insights and positive suggestions that will assist with informed decisions and challenges that arise. —Marcy*

### Marcy Covault, Feathered Companions Aviary, TX

#### *Are Pyrrhura conures good "beginner breeder" birds?*

If I had started out breeding with Pyrrhura conures and based on the first green cheek



conure pair I had, I'd say, "probably." But one pair does not make a good statistical sample!

Over the years, I've had excellent production from some pairs, mediocre from others, infertile clutches from

others, and a couple of cases of no eggs (older pairs). I've had mate aggression in two cases where there seemed only strong harmony within the pairs (obviously NOT). I've tried different cage sizes and environments, with increasing success as I enlarged cages and used visual barriers.

All I can say is, I love these little guys, I keep studying them, talking



with others, and learning more and more about what works and what doesn't (for me). In addition, dealing with the rarer species (currently, crimson bellied and roseifrons) is very rewarding to me, as I feel I am helping these birds become better known and appreciated in the U.S.



Will I have a few moochers and non-producers over the years? Undoubtedly. Will I learn from them too? Yes!

So, back to the question, the answer now is "maybe." I'll qualify that by suggesting mentoring and consultation with fellow

breeders, and also by dealing with reputable breeders—and hoping one has "luck of the draw" insofar as breeding pairs.

In conclusion, though, if I'd wanted "easy," I'd have stayed with my first breeding species, cockatiels.

***Pyrrhuras make great long-term pets.***

As pets, for the most part, they are great. Pys make long-term pets that endure as pets more than some of the larger species. I feel that for the most part, to the pet owner, once a Py lover always a Py lover.



***As breeders, Pyrrhuras are unpredictable.***

I am probably going to get zoned for this statement, but here is what I find in my birds and for a lot of my close friends who have Pyrrhuras. I have had a 50/50 success rate with most of my Pys.

Birds don't breed on demand, and there are a lot of reasons why they won't breed in a particular situation.

Some bond and produce, and some don't. Those that don't are usually passed along to another person who wants to breed. There is always a possibility that a move and change of scenery will help the bird kick into breeding mode. There is also a chance that even if a pair settles in and produces for one breeder, with change, they won't breed for a long time, or ever, for a new breeder.

To the breeder, a good producing pair of Pys is like gold and should be treasured. All, of course, is my opinion only.

***There are some strategies to enhance Py breeding success.***

I feel some of the Py species would rather choose their mates by the flocking process rather than have us pair them up. There are

certainly sometimes battles among bonded mates to the death. Why? Who knows?

All breeding stock here is surgically sexed. They are re-sexed if there is a problem, and re-sexed before being sold, just in case a problem has developed and does not show by appearance. Dr. Scott McDonald

Avian Vet does my stock.

I prefer surgical sexing because DNA sexing does not tell the condition of the bird's reproductive system.

However, if they won't produce with me I try re-pairing. If that does not work, I sell the pairs with an honest statement they never produced for me. That does not say they won't produce, but with a reduced price tag, someone may want to take a chance. An unproven pair by the seller, even if the pair produced for its previous owner, should be sold with that being told and possibly a reduction in full price.

This process, by the way, can take years to do. I have purchased unproven pairs that did not produce for the previous breeder and came here



and produced. I have had the exact opposite happen also. I've had one bird in the pair die, and I've had opposite results in sexing, even if the birds were DNA-sexed previously.

***By comparison, Pyrrhuras are more problematic breeders than Aratingas.***

I personally have not had any problems with Aratinga species that I breed. They always seem eager to breed, and I have never had any mate aggression. I hand-reared all that I have as

breeders and all that I sell as pets. All pairs that I have sold produce for the new owner. I have stacks of letters to that effect.



***Breeder integrity is important.***

For proven Py pairs that I have sold that become nonproductive for the new owner, I always offer to re-buy the pairs. The only loss to the owner is time and shipping (if they were shipped).

I feel if some of these guidelines were followed, breeders would not have such a bad rap.

## Indoor/Outdoor Home Aviary

**Marcy Covault** (pictures from "FCA Outdoor Aviary Setup")

In addition to indoor cages, I have an enclosed "bird porch" on the back of my house. There are several indoor/outdoor (connected by portal) flights, some of which house *Pyrrhura conure* breeding pairs, and larger ones which house Indian Ringnecks. I can service cages totally indoors, without having to go out in the weather, and the birds have their choice of being indoors or outside in the weather. I have enclosed the entire outside aviary area to keep out large predators. This also allows me to go outside and enjoy the fresh air with flighted pet birds.



**(Above)** Suspended flights connected via portals under eaves to indoor cages



**(Above)** Suspended indoor cages with bumpouts for food and water, with nestboxes hanging over bumpouts



**(Left)** Outer aviary enclosure and suspended flights

# Jazzy, the Crimson Bellied Conure

**Joi West**

My first glimpse of a crimson bellied conure was a picture I saw on-line. I instantly fell in love with these beautiful and captivating Pyrrhura conures. Their colors were unbelievable and their eyes so full of expression.

I then began my research and found some breeders. I was going to have to save up for a baby. When a baby became available from a friend of mine and after quite a few emails back and forth, we figured out a time and place where we could meet for me to pick up Jazzy.

My husband and I drove 6 ½ hours each way. The second we met the breeder and Jazzy, I knew how much love and care Jazzy had received and how incredible this bird was. Jazzy was raised to be a pet, rather than a future breeder due to her having a slightly splayed leg as a baby. She had



been played with, loved and well socialized.

Because of her wonderful upbringing, she is the most snugly bird!

She doesn't play like the more common green cheeks of which I have had and bred for the last 18 years. She tends to prefer climbing about her cage and standing on her favorite perch or on top of her tent to chew on her toys and play with the bells. Her favorite toys have straw

(like a tiny straw hat or strips of woven straw, like shredders), cotton fabric or rope, soft wood and pony beads. She's not a really big chewer of wood. She tends to nibble at it. She doesn't swing around on toys like the green cheeks and she doesn't roughhouse like green cheeks. Instead of hanging



upside-down and playing, she will stand on top of a toy and chew on the one next to her. She will occasionally sit on her swing. She naps on top of her tent and inside as well. I have noticed an unusual way she will play with a toy that hangs next to her cement perch. She will sit rather low on the perch and put the toy on her back and either nibble at the toy or preen herself, leaving the toy on her back. She will even nap this way. I have never seen a Pyrrhura do this before. She rarely jumps around her cage while playing or even going





from one place to another. I've seen my baby green cheeks do a lot of that. She does play what I call "the head game" where she will jerk her head back and forth waiting for you to do the same. My green cheeks also do that, as do the Painteds. It's very endearing and I wonder if most all Pyrrhura conures play that game.

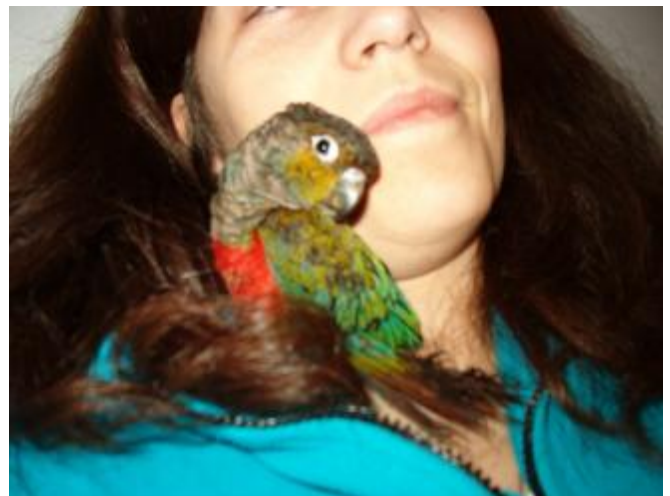
When Jazzy wants attention, she will climb to the side of her cage closest to where anyone is and beep like the microwave. She doesn't talk much, mostly very garbled muttering, some of which we can only guess what she's trying to communicate. Only recently has she been able to say a couple words clear enough for us to understand.

When I hold Jazzy, she loves to ride on the very front of my shirt, holding on to the neckline, much like a little brightly colored hood ornament. She does play with jewelry, but has learned that she is not allowed. Sometimes she will test to see if I have changed my mind about that rule. It takes only a gentle reminder for her that the rule still stands. She loves to play with pen caps, and small items, throwing them on the floor me to retrieve for her. Seems she has taught me well to play fetch. Her favorite thing to do with me is to sit all snuggled down in to my cupped hand. She will lean on my hand and fall asleep and just stay there for the longest

time. It's just so cute! When I'm on the computer, she will do that, but it makes typing rather difficult, so she usually plays on me crawling and rolling all over. She has even let go quite a few times and I have to be quick enough to catch her before she falls off and onto the floor!

She does tend to have the typical Pyrrhura moments of nipping a little when she gets overly excited. Never hard enough to even break the skin though. She nips and lets go, unlike some of the baby green cheeks when they are on overload. She has been a little hormonal in the last year or so, being particularly sensitive when petted down her upper back and neck. She seems more easily excited in that way than the green cheeks I'm used to.

I have found Jazzy to be an endearing companion and outstanding family member. She loves everyone as well as visitors. I feel as if I can trust her to be generally very gentle toward friends that come and visit us and want to hold her. She will sometimes get a little scared of them, but is never aggressive in any way. She may be exceptional in that she doesn't bite, but in my experience with Jazzy, she's an incredibly gentle soul and a very valued family member that will be with us a very long time.



# Custom Seed Mix

Darlene Johnson

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Little Darlings Aviary, Canada, <http://www.mylittledarlings.com>, [littledarlings@netscape.ca](mailto:littledarlings@netscape.ca)

*I have made up my own seed mix for over a decade now, and I freeze what I don't use in a couple of weeks time to keep it fresh (in solid, appropriately-sized plastic containers). I use it 3 or 4 times a week, with it being about 15% to 20% of the birds' diet that day. If using on a daily basis, it would be 10% of their daily diet. Combine just 1/8 cup, 1/4 cup, 1/2 cup, or 1 cup of each of the following, using dry measurements—it all adds up when you get it in a bowl and mix it up!! —Darlene*

## Ingredients:

Almonds, pine nuts, dry roasted peanuts and walnuts (human grade - 1/4 cup together, not of each)

Barley (1/4 cup)

Buckwheat (1/2 cup)

White & red millet (1/4 cup together, not of each)

Coconut flakes (1/8 cup)

Hemp (1/8 cup)

Cracked or whole corn (1/8 cup) or make raw popcorn from it and add it to the mix

Different shapes of colored raw pasta (1 cup because it is bulky)

Dried chili peppers (1/8 cup)

Dried fruit bits (no sulfur - apples, bananas, blueberries, cherries, cranberries, currants, kiwi, lemons, mango, oranges, papaya, peaches, pineapple, raspberries, etc. - 1/2 cup together, not of each)

Dried vegetable and herb flakes - broccoli, carrots, collard greens, dandelion, garlic, squash, swiss chard, mustard greens, etc. (1/2 cup together, not of each)

Flax (1/8 cup)

Groats or oats (1/4 cup)

Pellets: Mazuri & Living World Lifetime Parrot or Cockatiel Granules (1 cup together, not of each - can substitute Roudybush, TOPS, Foundation Formula or Harrisons)

Quinoa (1/4 cup)

Safflower (1/8 cup)

Sesame seeds (1/8 cup)

Pumpkin seeds (raw in-shell or shelled) (1/8 cup)

Sunflower (grey stripe - 1/4 cup)

Whole wheat (1/4 cup)

Wild, brown, red and black rice (1/2 cup)

**Seeds and Amounts**—I sometimes use other seeds ... with that list it really adds up. It lasts forever! I will increase the sunflower to 1/2 cup when I add more ingredients to the group.

**Fruits and Vegetables**—With the dried fruits and vegetables, I have a convection wall oven that dries it naturally at 140°F from 4 to 24 hours (so you want to do a whole bunch at a time). Use organic and human grade where



possible. But with the fruit, you need to sprinkle it with orange, cherry or lemon juice to prevent discoloration and loss of nutrients. Dry thoroughly before mixing with the above ingredients. You can also use a home dehydrator to dry your vegetables and fruit. A convection oven and home dehydrator are the best ways to dry vegetables and fruit with the least amount of nutrient loss and drying fruits produces less sugar. I do not recommend using products done by a commercial processor. If using commercial processing products, ones made specifically for birds are better than for humans.

You do not need to add all the fruits and vegetables with each mix. This is just to give you an idea what can be put together. It should have at least two or three fruits and four or five vegetables, although more vegetables are recommended.

My birds go crazy for this mix. This recipe can be doubled, tripled, etc.

**Species Specific Variations**—You can make it more species-specific as well:

- *Macaws and Conures*: Instead of 1/4 cup of various nuts, increase to 1 cup and eliminate the human grade dry roasted peanuts. Add macadamia and hazelnuts to the mix.
- *Alexandrines, Amazons, Cockatoos, Pionus and Quakers*: Stick to this recipe for the nuts and seeds. If you use more than what is recommended, it can lead to obesity and can also lead to fatty tumours and or fatty liver disease.

I hope that this helps and gives some ideas.

#### **Links for Research**

- Dried Fruits and Veggies Made Just for Birds <https://www.shop.babybirdfarm.com/categoryNavigationDocument.hg?categoryId=66>

Make sure that it is unsulfured, no artificial flavouring or artificial preservatives.

- Check out the following link: "Do dried fruits contain more nutritional value than fresh fruits?" <http://www.whfoods.org/genpage.php?tname=asknutr&dbid=102>
- Nutrient Content Per Ounce of Popular Fruits: <http://swimbikerunstlouis.com/fruit.htm>
- Fruits - Nutrition Information: <http://www.personalhealthzone.com/nutrition/nutrients/fruits/fruits.html>
- Cancer Fighting Nutrients: Fruits and Vegetables and Cancer Risk Reduction: <http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/pp/COPAN/5A DAYCancerFightingNutrients.html>
- Specific Nutrition Information on Individual Fruits and Vegetables: [http://www.dole5aday.com/ReferenceCenter/NutritionCenter/Chart/R\\_NutrChart.jsp?topmenu=1](http://www.dole5aday.com/ReferenceCenter/NutritionCenter/Chart/R_NutrChart.jsp?topmenu=1)
- Vegetables – Nutrition Information: <http://www.personalhealthzone.com/nutrition/nutrients/vegetables/vegetables.html>
- Nutritional Analysis of Seeds and Grains: <http://www.holisticbird.org/nutr/seednutrition.htm>
- The World's Healthiest Foods: <http://www.whfoods.com/foodstoc.php>
- Nutrients in 1 Ounce of Tree Nuts and Peanuts: <http://www.nuthealth.org/nutrition/nutrient1oz.html>
- Nutrients in 100 Grams of Tree Nuts and Peanuts: <http://www.nuthealth.org/nutrition/nutrient100g.html>
- Phytochemicals in 1 Ounce of Tree Nuts and Peanuts: <http://www.nuthealth.org/nutrition/phytochemical.html>
- Nut Nutrition Gallery: <http://www.nutnutrition.com/gallery/kaleidoscope.htm>

# PAWS: UPDATE – Discussion Draft

Marcy Covault

*Just a brief update in the continuing Santorum/HSUS anti-breeding legislative effort called PAWS. A discussion draft has been posted at this site: [http://santorum.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=PressOffice.View&ContentRecord\\_id=1720&Region\\_id=0&Issue\\_id=0](http://santorum.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=PressOffice.View&ContentRecord_id=1720&Region_id=0&Issue_id=0).*

The AKC, which supports PAWS, has its own analysis at its site, but nothing about birds is discussed there.

There doesn't appear to be anything on the AFA site at this time, although last year the AFA posted a message said they were assured by the USDA that birds would be excluded from PAWS. I see nothing in the discussion draft which supports that position.

There does not appear to be an exclusion for birds other than "old" language which has been negated by the settlement between USDA and DDAL (which means birds ARE covered under the USDA regulations.)

DDAL has withdrawn its support for PAWS [<http://www.ddal.org/legislation/federal/>], supposedly because the discussion draft allows a third-party entity to do inspections (AKC's goal) which would be under performance standards.

If PAWS passes, DDAL would likely sue for using the engineering standards of the USDA rather

than the performance standards of AKC and similar entities.

And why wouldn't the commercial breeders object also, since they would not want smaller AKC dog breeders to be under performance standards, while they must adhere to the more rigorous engineering standards?

Note that this is NOT a replacement bill for the current PAWS amendment still in committee. If Santorum does replace the original, he will have to get all the co-sponsors on-board again (and he and HSUS have certainly fooled a lot of our elected federal representatives with this bill's intent and effect).

This "discussion draft" appears to affect some smaller bird breeders somewhat less by upping the minimum "sales of other animals" (not dogs or cats) to \$2,500 (from \$500). Note that this is GROSS sales, NOT after expenses!

Otherwise, this draft still leaves many animal breeders (of other than dogs and cats) at risk.

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***This is a thought-provoking allegory for all who feel the Animal Rights movement or the new PAWS law won't affect you! From Beth A. Alden, ASCA Senior Breeder Judge, Almostheaven Farm, Australian Shepherds, Since 1969, Home: Arizona.***

A mouse looked through the crack in the wall to see the farmer and his wife open a package. "What food might this contain?" He was devastated to discover it was a mousetrap.

Retreating to the farmyard, the mouse proclaimed the warning. "There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!"

The chicken clucked and scratched, raised her head and said, "Mr. Mouse, I can tell this is a grave concern to you, but it is of no consequence to me. I cannot be bothered by it."

The mouse turned to the pig and told him, "There is a mousetrap in the house."

The pig sympathized, but said, "I am so very sorry, Mr. Mouse, but there is nothing I can do

about it but pray. Be assured you are in my prayers."

The mouse turned to the cow. She said, "Wow, Mr. Mouse. I'm sorry for you, but it's no skin off my nose."

So, the mouse returned to the house, head down and dejected, to face the farmer's mousetrap alone.

That very night a sound was heard throughout the house -- like the sound of a mousetrap catching its prey.

The farmer's wife rushed to see what was caught. In the darkness, she did not see it was a venomous snake whose tail the trap had caught.

The snake bit the farmer's wife. The farmer rushed her to the hospital, and she returned home with a fever.

Everyone knows you treat a fever with fresh chicken soup, so the farmer took his hatchet to the farmyard for the soup's main ingredient.

But his wife's sickness continued, so friends and neighbors came to sit with her around the clock. To feed them, the farmer butchered the pig.

The farmer's wife did not get well; she died. So many people came for her funeral, the farmer had the cow slaughtered to provide enough meat for all of them.

So, the next time you hear someone is facing a problem and think it doesn't concern you, remember — when one of us is threatened, we are all at risk.

In the book of Genesis, Cain said this about Abel, his brother, to our God: "Am I my brother's keeper?"

We are all involved in this journey called life. We must keep an eye out for one another and make an extra effort to encourage one another.

**EACH OF US IS A VITAL THREAD IN ANOTHER PERSON'S TAPESTRY; OUR LIVES ARE WOVEN TOGETHER FOR A REASON.**

## For the Birds?

### Marcy Covault

*If you EVER doubted that there are groups who SERIOUSLY want to END exotic bird breeding and ownership and are working on the general public's perception, check out <http://www.forthebirds.us/>.*

From their web site [see site for MORE]:

*"For The Birds is anti-breeding and anti-pet store.*

*"Over the last dozen or so years, breeders and pet stores have glutted the market with baby parrots.*

*"These babies are now showing up as adults in thousands of shelters/rescues, given up because as they mature, many people are unprepared for the changes that occur in a fully mature parrot, and can't handle them.*

*"We need to find homes for THOSE birds and stop breeding more babies.*

...

*"... I feel we need more boards that address both the positive AND negative aspects of having a companion parrot and are willing to*

*take a hard stance on what we believe in, NO BREEDING, NO BUYING OR SELLING OF PARROTS...*

*"Our goal here is to try to stop you from ever buying a parrot from a pet store or breeder, again. (or for first timers, from buying your first parrot!)"*

WOW! As a bird lover (and bird breeder) who wants my grandchildren to be able to enjoy birds, this is a rescue organization I want to support—**NOT! These people just don't GET it.** Aviculturists can HELP them and birds needing rehoming, and that would truly be FOR THE BIRDS. But not if groups like this attack aviculture and aviculturists, and not if they adopt the Nazi-like "animal rights" mindset towards parrots.

## NAIS: Revisited!

*I keep reading about NAIS and individual states starting to implement the first stages of it at the state level, including Texas. It seems the large animal producing corporations are for it and the smaller farmers are against it. So who's right? It is definitely controversial—as to necessity, extent, feasibility, and consequences. Following is more, and lest I be accused of being one-sided in presentation, here's the link to a recent transcript from the USDA, discussing NAIS. . Judge for yourself! [http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/!ut/p/\\_s.7\\_0\\_A/7\\_0\\_10B?contentidonly=true&contentid=2006/04/0121.xml](http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/!ut/p/_s.7_0_A/7_0_10B?contentidonly=true&contentid=2006/04/0121.xml)*

*—Marcy Covault*

### National Animal ID Run Amok

Cheryl M. Eggers, February 12, 2006

The USDA has a new program coming to a state near you. South Dakota has begun and so far the program is voluntary. Wisconsin's program is not. As of Jan. 1, *if you have even one animal on your premises and are not registered, you would be subject to a \$5,000 fine.*[Ed: italics]

The plan is to register every property where even one 'livestock' animal is kept, 90 year old grandma with 4 chickens included. The additionally, each animal which ever leaves it's place of origin (Grandma takes her chicken to the fair, or one gets out and visit's the neighbor) would have a personal id tag/number. If you have a large enough operation, you can do a lot number for herds of say chickens.

This is how my life would have looked if the proposed regulations would have been in place in 2005. Don't worry; they won't go into effect until Jan. 1, 2008. Then this too could be you.

#### *Life Under the Animal ID System*

"Along about March of 2005 my brother and his wife moved to town and gave us 3 hens as pets for the kids. He had to file 2 sets of paperwork, one to notify the government of where the hens were and one to notify them that their premises was no longer keeping animals as they were moving to town. *Total forms - 4*

I, within 24 hours, had to file 2 sets of paperwork, one to obtain a premises identification number, giving name, social security number, address, and GPS number with the state and feds. I had to file 3 forms for the hens. *Total forms - 4*

Then my husband said, if you have to be here to feed 3 hens, why not get a few more. So we went in with the neighbors and ordered 100 chickens. They then had to file 1 form setting up a premises and 50 forms for owning the chicks + 50 forms since they would be 'off premises' boarding at my house. We had to file 50 forms reporting our 50 new chicks. *Total forms – 151*

.....

This year we have filed 499 reports, tagged all animals, purchased the equipment and software to do this, and it hasn't even been 12 months since we started. All we wanted to do was have a few animals to teach the kids a little about responsibility and grow some of our own food."

See the complete hypothetical tale and more at <http://reliableanswers.com/patriot/?2006011>

Check out also a newly formed organization, The Farm and Ranch Freedom Alliance (FARFA) at <http://www.farmandranchfreedom.org>

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## Animal ID Makers in Hog Heaven

### *Comments on NAIS "Draft Program Standards" and "Draft Strategic Plan"*

Mary Zanoni, Ph.D. (Cornell), J.D. (Yale), February 2, 2006

I have carefully examined the Draft Program Standards (Standards) and Draft Strategic Plan (Plan) issued by the USDA (the Department) on April 25, 2005, in furtherance of the Department's proposed National Animal Identification System (NAIS). Many aspects of the Standards and Plan appear to create insurmountable legal, fiscal, and logistical problems. The comments below address five categories of problems:

1. Constitutional infirmities of the proposed program;
2. An enormous economic cost to animal owners, the States, the Department, and, ultimately, to American taxpayers and consumers for a program likely to be ineffectual;
3. Weaknesses in the stated rationales for the program;
4. A lack of consideration of alternative, far cheaper and more easily administered measures which would more effectively protect animal health and food security; and
5. A lack of notice and an opportunity to be heard for medium-scale, small-scale, and home farmers, and for other citizens owning livestock solely for their own use or pleasure, in the Department's process thus far.

MORE at the following site:

[http://magic-city-news.com/article\\_5317.shtml](http://magic-city-news.com/article_5317.shtml)

See also the NAIS and Economics blog on *DogPolitics* at [http://dogpolitics.typepad.com/my\\_weblog/2005/11/supply\\_chain.html](http://dogpolitics.typepad.com/my_weblog/2005/11/supply_chain.html)

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## NAIS Spawned by International Entanglements

By Doreen Hannes, April 1, 2006

If you've been wondering where the insanity masquerading as our federal government "food safety" and animal health protection regulations and laws are coming from, you can now say, with certainty, that they descend from the organizations within, and tied to the United Nations.

Before you throw a conditioned response out, that this is all just "conspiracy theory" propagated by right-wing nut-cases, you had best be able to understand the impact on trade of the SPS and TBT agreements made through the WTO (World Trade Organization), and be able to relate the position of the United States in the OIE and Codex.

Should you be unfamiliar with the NAIS (National Animal Identification System), the

shortest explanation that can be given of the proposed system is that anyone who has any type of livestock, say two chickens, will have to register their property, complete with global positioning satellite coordinates, microchip their chickens with an NAIS ISO11785 compliant chip, and report within 24 hours if said chickens ever leave the property, hatch out chicks (another chip required), go to the vet, or die. No kidding. To learn more about that, you must read the "Draft Strategic Plan" and the "Draft Standards" which are available only online. The USDA will not send you copies of these documents, but they will send you a nice glossy packet with a "soft" description of the program.

Complete article at

<http://eco.freedom.org/el/20060401/doreenhannes.shtml>

# Too Many Birds for Too Long?

by Michael Marcotrigiano, Montague, Massachusetts, © All Rights Reserved, reprinted with permission, michael@exoticfinches.com, www.exoticfinches.com

*Someone once asked me "How many birds can a person with a full time job handle? How do I know it when it has gotten out of control?" Since then, I've asked myself the same question as I spend countless hours "working the birds." So, I've come up with a quick list that will allow you to assess your involvement with your birds. If you can relate to more than ten of these situations you may be in over your head. Read and enjoy.*

## *You know you have too many birds for too long...*

- Ø When your idea of a quiet evening at home changes from a bottle of fine wine and candlelight to a bottle of Pedialyte and a Vita-Lite.
- Ø When you rush out to buy your vanity license plates because you're convinced that "INDIGO-BUNTING" might already be taken.
- Ø When you become so friendly with your veterinarian that you go bowling together on Friday nights.
- Ø When you undress at night and collect enough seed hulls from inside your "undies" to mulch your vegetable garden.
- Ø When your favorite food switches from a medium-rare filet mignon to a well-done hard boiled egg.
- Ø When your family eats 99-cent pesticide-laden lettuce but your birds get the "Certified Organic."
- Ø When an eye surgeon spends an hour removing a half a cup of seed hulls from beneath your eyelids.
- Ø When you have two copies of your daily newspaper delivered because one is not enough to line your cage trays.
- Ø When you feel less "comfy" on a therapeutic mattress than you do on a circular bale of hay.
- Ø When you try to auction your dirty bird papers as "fine examples of conceptual art."
- Ø When one house fly in the pantry "grosses you out", but it's perfectly OK to have live mealworms in your refrigerator.
- Ø When your spouse wakes up only to see you sleeping with your head tucked under your armpit.
- Ø When you are well known in the art community for your cuttlebone scrimshaw.
- Ø When you can reliably close-band a strawberry finch baby while mud wrestling.
- Ø When you start pre-chewing breakfast for your children.
- Ø When there is nothing left to do in the bird room but you go back in just to make sure they are still there.
- Ø When, without your spouse being aware, you legally change your family's surname to "Finch."
- Ø When you describe the shape of a Border Canary as "kinda sexy."
- Ø When you start sweeping the bird room by grasping the broom handle with both feet.
- Ø When you actually believe that newly hatched finches look beautiful.
- Ø When you need to replace the bird room HEPA filter each night before bedtime.
- Ø When your UPS deliveryman, now with the hernia, refers to you as "the jerk that keeps getting bird seed delivered."
- Ø When you bathe with your finches.
- Ø When you have joined so many bird listservers that your 2-gigabyte hard drive fills each day with emails.
- Ø When you hire a cleaning service to clean your house because you hate it so much but you don't mind scraping poop off of perches for two hours.
- Ø When your spouse greets you at the door dressed in nothing but Saran Wrap and you say "not tonight dear, I need to add egg food to the babies' cages."

- Ø When you send your children off to school with egg food and veggie sandwiches.
- Ø When you find it pleasurable to breathe in feathers.
- Ø When you have enough "white dust" in your house to use as fake snow on your Christmas tree.
- Ø When your angry spouse tells you that they would rather that you have an extramarital affair than add one more birdcage to the living room.
- Ø When you ask your ABBA sales rep, "How much for a cubic yard of grit?"
- Ø When you enter your bird room as a brunette and exit with gray hair.
- Ø When you accidentally diaper your infant in newspaper.
- Ø If your children prefer collecting feathers to Pokeman.
- Ø When you are fairly sure you can convince your HMO to pay for the ivermectin.
- Ø When you put both of your children in one bedroom because you "need space to expand the bird room."
- Ø When you try to seduce your spouse by combing your hair forward, fluffing up your pajamas, and jumping up and down on the bed.
- Ø When you are so afraid to leave the birds with someone else, that your annual vacation consists of one weekend.
- Ø When that weekend vacation is spent in someone else's bird room.
- Ø When the most common phrase uttered by your family is "he's in the bird room."

*P.S. I think I have too many birds.*

## PBA Member Ads

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**June Diciocco, Hideaway Farms, [jdiciocco@mindspring.com](mailto:jdiciocco@mindspring.com)  
803-593-9500, <http://www.hideawayfarms.com/aviary>**

Currently hand feeding four, hatched 3/20/06, cinnamon GC. from unrelated cinnamon parents; four Roseifrons, hatched 03/11/06. They will be fully weaned and DNA sexed before shipping. For information if interested e-mail or call. Located in SC if you care to pick up. I will ship Delta Pet First.

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**R. C. (Chris) Fairchild, Pyrrhura World, [editor@pyrrhuraworld.com](mailto:editor@pyrrhuraworld.com),  
757-434-9669, <http://www.pyrrhuraworld.com>**

I would like to introduce you to our Pyrrhura Portal on the web. We are currently looking for individuals that are willing to contribute articles written on Pet, Breeder, Genetics, Colour mutation, Health and the general fun story geared towards Pyrrhura Conures. Full credit will be given to the author on each article on the site. The web site is going to be a collection of articles and pictures to help educate the general person about their conure. Being a Science teacher, I see the need for an educationally based site in a market dominated by sites geared towards of the selling birds first and education second.

—R.C. Fairchild, Director of Bird Clubs of America Green Cheek Conure Breeding Partnership; Bird Clubs of America Black Cap Conure Breeding Partnership

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**Marcy Covault, Feathered Companions Aviary, [birdcompanions@juno.com](mailto:birdcompanions@juno.com)  
512-250-0442, <http://www.birdcompanions.com>**

Pairs and singles: Yellowsided and pineapple green cheeks; .white-eared (griseipectus) male and female (related); Roseifrons; Crimson Bellied. See pictures, availability, and pricing at my website on the conures page. [Species articles are on the articles page, with links to more on the Links page.] Shipping via Delta or Continental from Austin, TX.

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# 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.

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

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



## PYRRHURA BREEDERS ASSOCIATION

c/o Kelli Eager, Secretary  
604 Fairway View Dr.  
Burleson, TX 76028

**FIRST CLASS MAIL**