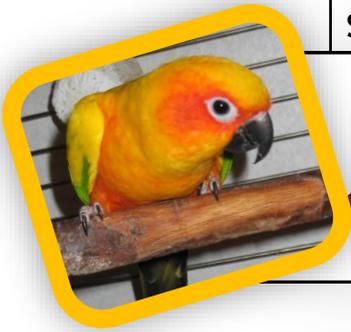


September / October 2022



# Feather Facts

Official Publication of the Wisconsin Cage Bird Club

[www.wisconsincagebirdclub.org](http://www.wisconsincagebirdclub.org)

## Calendar of Events

**OCT 2, 2022 (SUN): (the first Sunday of every month):** Madison Bird Fair ~ VFW post 7591 ~ 301 Cottage Grove Road ~ Madison ~ 10am - 2pm ~ \$2 admission, under 12 free ~ Contact Kim Perez for table rental or more information at: (608) 295-0025 or [tristatepets@gmail.com](mailto:tristatepets@gmail.com)

**NOV 6, 2022 (SUN): (the first Sunday of every month):** Madison Bird Fair ~ VFW post 7591 ~ 301 Cottage Grove Road ~ Madison ~ 10am - 2pm ~ \$2 admission, under 12 free ~ Contact Kim Perez for table rental or more information at: (608) 295-0025 or [tristatepets@gmail.com](mailto:tristatepets@gmail.com)

**DEC 4, 2022 (SUN): (the first Sunday of every month):** Madison Bird Fair ~ VFW post 7591 ~ 301 Cottage Grove Road ~ Madison ~ 10am - 2pm ~ \$2 admission, under 12 free ~ Contact Kim Perez for table rental or more information at: (608) 295-0025 or [tristatepets@gmail.com](mailto:tristatepets@gmail.com)

**APR 30, 2023 (SUN): WCBC Bird Fair & WCBC Meeting (after the Fair) ~ 9am - 12pm ~ Lucky Dog's Bar and Banquet Hall, 157 S. Green Bay Rd. Neenah WI ~ \$1 admission, free for age 12 & under ~ Dr. Scott McDonald will be at the fair performing bird sexing, grooming and health checks. Prices vary according to size of bird. ~ Contact Dave at (920) 428-4595 for vendor space or more info.**

**AUG 27, 2023 (SUN): WCBC Bird Fair & WCBC Meeting (after the Fair) ~ 9am - 12pm ~ Lucky Dog's Bar and Banquet Hall, 157 S. Green Bay Rd. Neenah WI ~ \$1 admission, free for age 12 & under ~ Contact Dave at (920) 428-4595 for vendor space or more info.**

<p><b>Rolling Meadows Bird Fair &amp; Sale (Saturdays Only)</b>  <b>10:00am to 3:00pm</b>  Rolling Meadows Community Center  3705 Pheasant Drive  Rolling Meadows, IL 60008</p>	<p><b>Joliet Bird Fair &amp; Sale (Sundays Only)</b>  <b>10:00am to 3:00pm</b>  Knights of Columbus Hall #382  100 S 129th Infantry Drive  Joliet, IL 60436</p>
<p>Website: <a href="http://midwestshows.org">midwestshows.org</a> - email: <a href="mailto:info@midwestshows.org">info@midwestshows.org</a> - Phone: (614) 916-6930  <b>ADMISSION: \$4.00 - Children Under 12: FREE</b></p>	
<p>September 10<sup>th</sup>  October 8<sup>th</sup>  November 12<sup>th</sup>  December 10<sup>th</sup></p>	<p>September 25<sup>th</sup>  October 30<sup>st</sup>  November 27<sup>th</sup>  <b>NO DECEMBER</b></p>

**If there is an upcoming event that you would like to have included in the calendar, please get the info to the editor as early as possible. Thanks! [wcbc.editor@gmail.com](mailto:wcbc.editor@gmail.com)**

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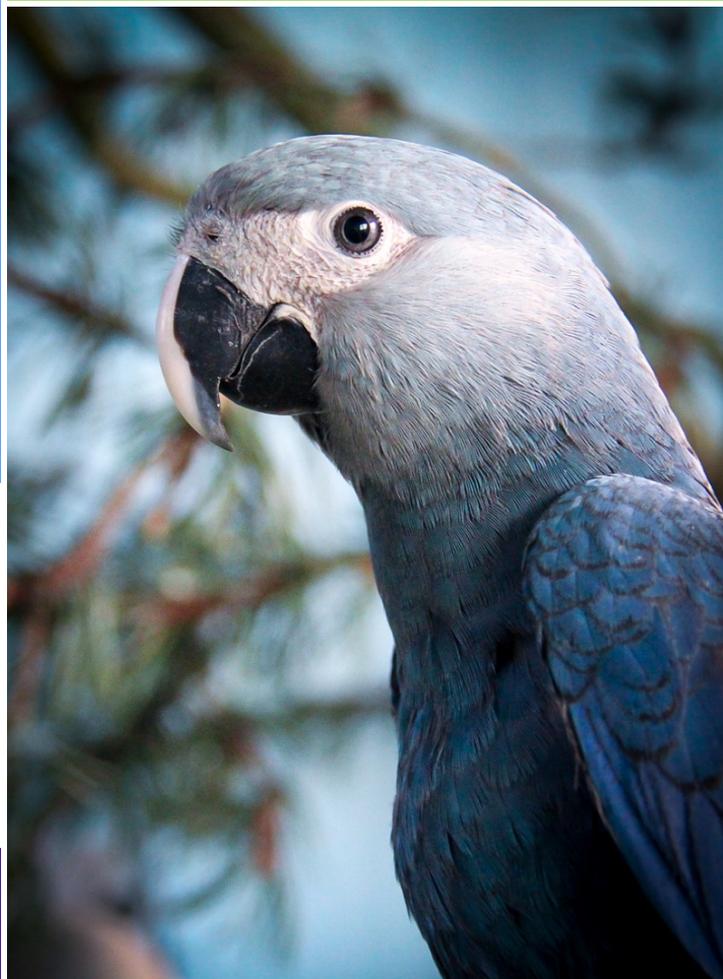
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**Member submissions  
are always welcomed!**

**Please send your stories,  
articles, pictures, etcetera to  
the editor. (contact info above)**

**Visit *WCBC* online at:  
[www.wisconsin cagebirdclub.org](http://www.wisconsin cagebirdclub.org)**

*Feather Facts* is a bi-monthly publication of the Wisconsin Cage Bird Club for its members. Issues are published in the even months of the year. The WCBC reserves the right to reject any material deemed inappropriate for this publication. The editor reserves the right to abbreviate or edit articles as necessary to fit the available space. All contents published in the Feather Facts and the Membership/Breeder List are solely for the use of the members of the WCBC. Commercial use or distribution without written permission is prohibited.

**DEADLINES:** All articles, classified ads, and business card ads must be received by the editor no later than the 1st of the month of publication.

**ADVERTISING RATES: Business Card Ads:** Club member: \$10/yr Non-Members: \$20/yr. **Classified Ads:** Club members: 21 words free: 5 cents per word after 21 with a minimum of \$1.00. Non-members: 5 cents per word with a minimum of \$1.00. All ads must be paid in full before publication. All prices are per issue. Ads not paid for will not be run. There are no refunds. Ads will run for at least 2 issues.

**MEMBERSHIP RATES:** Per Individual or Household. Dues are: **Free for Electronic (emailed) Newsletter -or- \$20/Year for Mailed Paper Copy.** Due by the 1st of the month in which you joined.

**WISCONSIN CAGE BIRD CLUB** is affiliated with The American Budgerigar Society.



## “Aratinga Conures: Avicultural Tips”

April 2016

There are many theories on how to best breed conures. A critical point is to not to try and breed very young birds. Those boasts of psittacines breeding at 18 months only prompt me to ask, “Why?” For every success tale when breeding ‘immature’ parrots there are three or four mishaps leading to bad habits. Our conures are given full nesting facility at age three to four. Now you have psittacines that not only have the capacity to lay, but which are ready to be responsible parents.

Secondly, the first season my conures begin laying and incubating, I never open the box to bother the hen. She must realize that her nest cavity is secure and inviolate, and at any rate, it is essential that she learn to set to full term the first time, even if the eggs are infertile. If the aviculturist starts messing with her nesting environment, he will never know how fine a hen he could have trained. If there is a hatch 22-26 days after she disappears (as you marked on the calendar), you will hear the noisy chick begging sound within two days anyway. Do not confuse a true chick “peep” with the louder begging squeaks often made by the adult hen soliciting food in the box from her cock. This can go on all during incubation. For nestboxes, please try to avoid glued plywoods as experienced conure adults do feed wood material gnawed from the inside of the box to their chicks, especially at night.

We place several branches of fresh cut rosemary and young aromatic eucalyptus in the box bottom, stripping some leaves and mixing with rotted log material and some cedar wood chips. The box smells fresh and insects such as ants or red mites are deterred. As chicks grow past the three-week mark, and chips tend to get soiled, we watch when parents

are out, stuff a towel in the nestbox opening, and add 2-3” of fresh chips on top the substrate. Incidentally plastic and metal boxes soil much faster than the hollow logs we have used for suns in the past. The parents chew new substrate in the latter and a more natural biosphere is maintained.

Adult Aratinga instinctively do not poop in their nest box and young fledglings act the same as they approach weaning. They can be easy to potty train not to go on a human (unless on purpose when upset with us!). Beware the first dropping in the morning when raising these rascals in the house; they will fly to any comfort spot—to make a huge one. Another important point for aviculturists to consider is: What kind of breeding stock are they acquiring. Domestic, incubator-raised conure males can be dysfunctional as family caretakers, though why anyone would ever wish to incubate conure eggs is beyond me.



We recommend male birds parent fledged or at least left in the box for 4-5 weeks and then kept for some months with other like species. Females raised in unnatural ways will likely have chicks once they are taught to accept a cock’s advances, but can be dysfunctional when it comes to stopping the laying process after the babies are fledged and gone.

In all situations, leaving one or more chicks with parents to fledge and wean to food independence has strengthened the bond of the domestic parent birds and improved their subsequent nesting skills. Basically, these parrots with proper upbringing prove good parents if the keeper is patient and does not interfere.

There are few available mutations of these hookbills; and with the captive gene pool steadily shrinking as wild forebears pass on, I would not advise interbreeding even further. Some breeders in the U.S. have for years been holding back and pairing up birds with the darkest orange factors in order to selectively produce a “red” sun. I find this amusing as it tends to be a monetary endeavor, and my favorite sun color is that brilliant luminous yellow.

I choose to consider this regal Aratinga separately

from the others mentioned here both because it is a distinctly different creature and because it is my most beloved. *A. acuticaudata* is a beautiful, subtly-colored psittacine that is larger, quieter with a deeper-pitched call, a better talker, and an altogether more unusual species to find in the routine commercial pet market. Tens of thousands of the same were imported early on into the U.S. but because they were so inexpensive as wild-caughts most breeders passed on setting up a substantial gene pool for reproduction in favor of more valuable species like Suns and Patagonians. This was a shame as our remnant breeding numbers crashed about the turn of the century and one can now spend months even locating someone with Blue Crowns to sell. If I were to make a commitment to one more small parrot for captive conservation reasons at this stage of my birdkeeping, it would be the Blue Crowned Conure that I chose...

These hookbills make phenomenal companion birds. They are strikingly attractive with that fluorescent green and blue, the horn-colored bill, red and yellow tail under parts and bright orange feet and legs. They are longer in size than many Aratingas-large males and imports peaking out well beyond 12 inches, quite long lived (35+ years), have a clear talking voice, and are mild-mannered and

affectionate in a good, secure, loving home. They also, especially the hens, need not loudly 'go off' like a lot of the smaller conures when something appears awry.

*Acuticaudata* can present a challenge to breed sometimes; fewer eggs laid and double clutching not necessarily being the rule with this parrot. Would that another hobbyist here or in Australia might venture to acquire and set up ten or twelve pairs for both study and domestic preservation. This is definitely another "sleeper parrot" in the commercial trade!



For anyone contemplating the purchase of a pet conure, it pays to do one's homework. There are many individual choices of species, each with a somewhat total personality "package." Please note that any time pet

characteristics of single species are considered, there are going to occur various standouts and exception birds. So much depends upon how the parrot was brought up in preparation for its new home life.

It has been many years since I raised Brown Throated Conures. I remember them as typically loveable. A bit shyer and somewhat noisier, with an independent streak manifest in the males and in groups of three or more.

Aloha nui loa, EB



## “Are You Prepared for Emergency...Are Your Birds?”

September 2005

While the horrible hurricane disaster on the Gulf Coast plays out before us, I find myself thinking about how prepared we all might be for an unexpected hardship or catastrophe in one of our home states? Do we have adequate supplies on hand? Do we have a crisis plan in place? What about a storm shelter for

our birds? Have we thought about the possible effects of extremely high winds? Days of torrential rain and floods? Fire? Freezing colds? Toxic spill? Loss of power, water, etc?

And what about our birds? Are they being raised and kept and trained in ways that will make them better able to cope with urgent threats?

This is something well worth sitting down, taking pad and pencil in hand, and considering seriously...

The most imminently dangerous kinds of disasters which could strike home or aviary are those where there is not substantial time to load up all your pets, cages, supplies, etc. and cautiously leave the vicinity. As such, any emergency plan should include 1) a lightning quick way of getting your birds out of their

cages, and 2) enough stacked and ready carriers to do so efficiently.

Take a good look at your cages, especially any larger suspended flights where birds can retreat to a far end and be out of reach of hands or a net. These kinds of facilities are an invitation to fatal delays when it is essential to gather up all your flock and depart promptly. I like the idea of huge, quickly removable floor panels in such flights—ones that can be unclipped or hinge dropped down so the keeper can inject himself into the center of the cage bottom and rescue his charges. Even better for the future is getting rid of any conventional aviaries which prove hard to access; then replacing them with walk-in flights, to the benefit of the birds and the aviculturist



It goes without saying that an auto vehicle which can take all your birds at once is better than one that has to be loaded up twice, or thrice on separate trips. If and when a full evacuation becomes necessary, there simply may not be enough time! I would even choose having available a large trailer for hauling all carry cages rather than having to drive to safety and return home for a second load of pets and breeders.

In the cases of pairs of birds, those that get along well and support one another peacefully under stressful confined conditions can be transported as a pair. The ones which bicker and bully and will not settle down to sleep in a jostling carrier will be better off transported singly--but where they can see one another en route.

Easy to dispense foods are the rule during any such adverse conditions. We prefer seed and shelled nutmeats since they are quick to feed, are liked by all

our birds even those who will not be so likely to eat when stressed or uncomfortable. These items also contain lots of energy and fat so a small amount eaten will last a long time in the bird. Remember that some parrots are loathe to eat from new and strange dishes, so emergency equipment should include food and water bowls that look pretty much familiar.

Personally, one of my strongest fears here in Hawaii is the dry season when tall grasses turn to fire hazards in the lands around us. It is not so much the fire which kills animals, but the smoke which precedes and accompanies it. Indoor breeding facilities are especially in danger of smoke inhalation parrot casualties, and it behooves keepers to be aware of such peril when they plan for emergency.

Were one's parrot flock to be in grave danger, or, in the case of New Orleans presently, were owners not allowed to evacuate with their pets, then the only real recourse would be letting our psittacines go free to save themselves. Ah, but not just any bird can succeed at such a formidable task. It takes a parrot with survival skills that have been kept alive by hand-raisers and owners year in, year out!

Think whether your birds are even rudimentarily capable of flying into a tree above a flood or beyond a fire. Are your birds fit and light from proper diet



and exercise? Do they know how to fly—yea, do they have natural wing feathers to do so? Have your pets and breeders been kept in environments sufficiently large to enable them

to perfect long range (beyond 40 feet is a good start point...) flight maneuvers? Can they fly up, down, left, right, in a circle, etc? Our birds have the ability to flee beyond danger when danger overtakes their home.

But only the most conscientious aviculturists keep this in mind and train for it at all times in their flocks.

What about survival skills in food foraging? Only through constant exposure to new and natural foods can our caged birds begin to grasp the concept of eating things they might find out in nature. Unpeeled whole bananas and oranges and apples and guavas and other fruits; nuts and pods and whole vegetables that need to be gnawed open; flower buds and leaf tips and green growth bark and other chlorophyll-rich greenery; and of course, rain showers or dew on branches for drinking in place of a domestic water bowl. These are



the skills that, once learned, will remain with a captive bird forever. They are the wisdoms which someday may save their lives....

Hurricane Katrina has demonstrated many things to many persons in the U.S. the past few weeks. Not in the least to hobby and professional birdkeepers: think ahead, be imaginative, prepare for the worst, so that the worst may never catch you unawares...

May God bless and protect the lost parrots of the storm lashed gulf coast. (note: To all our dear friends. The day after tomorrow is our wedding day. We are eloping!) Aloha nui loa, EB and April.

# WCBC MEETING MINUTES

## AUGUST 28, 2022

Meeting called to order: 1:06pm

### **In Attendance:**

Dave Bluma

Jeff Myhre

Jim Mc Connell

Mary & Dale Wendt

Treasurer's report was given.  
Bird fair financials were reviewed.

New Bird Fair Times will be  
9am-12pm.

### **New Business:**

Cockatiel / Budgie Show Stands

3 stands and lights

Offered them to David Blas for \$150.00.

Jeff sent an email to him.

### **Old Business:**

Free WCBC membership if signing up for emailed newsletter.

Meeting adjourned: 1:25pm



# Spring Exotic Bird Fair

Sponsored by The Wisconsin Cage Bird Club

Sunday, April 30, 2023

9am 'til 12pm



**Lucky Dog's Bar and Banquet Hall**

**157 S. Green Bay Road, Neenah WI**

**\$1.00 admission, free for age 12 and under.**

**BUY! — SELL! — TRADE!**

**Cage Birds and Related Items**

**LARGE RAFFLE!**

**Dr. Scott McDonald will be at the fair performing bird sexing, grooming and health checks. Prices vary according to size of bird.**

## **VENDOR INFORMATION**

**Vendor Table Fee: \$20.00**

**Deadline for vendor table reservations is April 15, 2023**

**Make checks payable to WCBC. Payment must be received before deadline or table reservation will be released to the next vendor request.**

**For vendor space or more info call: (920) 428-4595**



## Feather Facts

Wisconsin Cage Bird Club  
Newsletter Editor  
1367 Eagle Feather Trl  
Neenah WI 54956



### Announcement

#### NEXT MEETING:

Following our Bird  
Fair on Sunday,  
April 30, 2023. Please  
see events calendar  
on page 1 for more  
details.

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM

Send completed form to: WCBC Treasurer, 1856 Jefferson Street, Oshkosh WI 54901-2316

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

NAME(S) \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

NEW MEMBERSHIP       MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

PAPER MEMBERSHIP (\$20 per year)       ELECTRONIC MEMBERSHIP (FREE, see \* below)

BUSINESS CARD AD - club member (\$10 per year)       BUSINESS CARD AD - non-club member (\$20 per year)

TOTAL REMITTED \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\* New Electronic memberships / membership cancellations can be emailed to the newsletter editor: [WCBC.editor@gmail.com](mailto:WCBC.editor@gmail.com)