

SOUTH SOUND EXOTIC BIRD SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Volume XXII, Issue 7

July 2007

P.O. Box 15014, Tumwater, WA 98511-5014

<http://ssebs.org>

July 13, 2007 MEETING

6:00 pm Board Meeting
7:00 pm Social
7:30 pm Program: Britt O'Leary on "Feathers."
8:15 pm General meeting: Agenda items will include (but not necessarily be limited to): planning for Expo '08 (location, dates, participants, etc), a report on the Renton bird show on June 2, additional fund raising ideas, storage of Expo materials, input for newsletter changes, scheduling/planning for Holiday party.

THANK YOU !!

Janet Wood thanks everyone for her "First Bird" shower held on May 11, 2007, her first meeting. She was hugely surprised and moved. Max - who is doing well, but has learned to emulate a fire alarm much to the consternation of the neighbors -- is enjoying his bounty.

Why Would Anyone Want To Rescue A Parrot?

Anne Feldhacker

Parrots are not pets. It is not mutually beneficial for parrots to live with us. Parrots are more intelligent and more empathetic than we, as humans, have even begun to understand. Parrots deserve to live their lives with their families, in the rain-soaked jungles, dense forests and fog shrouded mountains of the world. Unfortunately, as usually happens when human beings get involved, millions of parrots worldwide will never have the chance to live with their own families in their natural habitat. If you have never actually lived with a parrot and worked to understand its motivations, fears, unending memory, sense of humor and sense of loyalty, this concept of parrots 'not being pets' may sound like a hysterical response to a nonexistent problem.

Let me help you understand why this is a very existent problem. The most widely publicized attempt at understanding a parrot's intellect, by human criteria, is a university study. That study has estimated the learning capability of an African Grey parrot to approximate that of a five-year-old human being. Think about these implications. If you have ever spent time with a five year old, you know what their memories are like; how they soak up everything they see and hear and how their learning grows like a wild fire in a high wind. We take that mind and put it in a cage in our living room and wonder why so many of these captive birds literally go insane.

What does this have to do with adopting an older parrot versus buying a baby? Thousands of loving, brilliant and sensitive older birds are abandoned each year because people just don't want them anymore. These birds have not had a choice in the decision. These birds feel very lost and scared and have no idea what is going to happen to them next. Yes, they really do understand that the person they loved is gone, and they really do feel emotional pain and enormous fear when this happens. They have no control over what is going on and for a mind that knows it should simply fly to higher ground and find its flock for safety and comfort, this feeling is truly horrible. These birds need emotional nurturing as much as you and I do and, if they have lived in more than one home, they have very real fears and mistrust.

The amazing phenomenon is that most of these birds will bounce back within months if they get the chance to live with someone who loves them. They will always carry their experiences with them, and be more afraid of life, for the rest of their life, than they were before, but they will love you with all of themselves if just given the chance. After having had to stay in a pet store (most people sell their unwanted bird through pet stores or classified ads) or rescue shelter with many other birds, an opportunity to be back in a home with people who care for them is a chance at finding their flock and being safe again.

Over my years of living with parrots, all of whom are older "rescued" birds, it has taken anywhere from two days to two weeks, to (still counting) for my birds to fully recover, fully relax and, in most cases, become fully feathered again. Many parrots, large and small, pull their feathers out when they are stressed, sick or bored. If you had the mind of a five-year-old and were given

attention for an hour or two a day, lived in a cage that you rarely got out of and ate the same thing every day, you would pull your feathers out also.

One of my birds was kept in the foyer of the house in which he lived because he made too much "noise" to be closer to the family. When I finally met him, he had a few feathers on his wings and on the top of his head. He was completely picked clean everywhere else. He had lived this way for several years, completely ignored, and even spoke in voices that sounded far away since his people were never near him. He was a brilliant, loving bird who destroyed himself because his 'family' wouldn't pay attention to him, as if it were his fault. After four or five months of living with me, his feathers were back, with the exception of his tail feathers. He never seemed to be able to grow them back fully, perhaps never believing he was worthy of them. He sang, though, at the top of his little lungs, a song about his name that he had learned as a baby bird. He laughed a huge laugh whenever I even giggled and was a huge presence in my home. He didn't live for very much longer because the extent of the damage done to his mind was too large, but he demonstrated intense love when he was here and I am a better person for having known him.

Experiencing his loss helped me understand to an even greater extent how important rescuing a bird is. Watching him return to relative physical health as quickly as he did proved to me that, no matter how damaged a bird may be, these beings have an amazing amount of survival ability and an overwhelming desire to live and to love.

Am I a gifted bird healer? No. I didn't do anything special. I didn't do anything other than love him (they do feel that, you know), leave him alone when he wanted to be left alone, and let him sing, talk, scream, and play out of the cage whenever he desired. Usually, all it takes to bring a bird back to some sort of mental health is being there for him, paying attention to what he needs. Talking to him, feeding him what he seems to like to eat, even just watching television with him and letting him come to you if he wants to, allows a bird a chance to grow toward you in his own time. That's it - just be there for them, in as non-threatening and reassuring way as possible. The bird's sense of security and safety will grow a little every day. Every day is worth it. These parrots are amazing friends and worth more than all of the cleaning, feeding, time and noise that is involved in the experience.

All of that aside, when you give a bird a second chance instead of buying a baby, you will eventually reduce, by one, the number of baby birds "produced" for sale. That means that you have reduced, by one, the number of birds that will suffer a miserable, lonely adulthood. That alone is hugely important. I acknowledge that my view on this is a very stern one, and I realize that not all people, especially those who breed birds, would agree. I must tell you, though, that although there are, undoubtedly, many ethical, gifted breeders out there, my view speaks to the larger issue of humanity's responsibility to respect and to safeguard species we have learned to exploit. This view, joined with incidents of breeders and pet stores selling unweaned baby birds who die from holes that are burned through their little crops, because the person who purchased them didn't know how warm to make their food (the pet store, and you would recognize the name, told the purchaser not to worry, she could come back and get another one if it died), and the fact that a certain seed company is running what amounts to 'bird mills' to keep major chain pet stores supplied to ensure their future financial success, has proven to me that protecting the rights or feelings of independent, decent bird breeders fades in importance when placed face to face with what amounts to unregulated torture and killing of baby birds. To address the issue of the emotional impact this "production" has on the parent birds would be to delve into an arena so dark as to be forbidding. Therefore, I leave my statements where they fall, placing a focused light on the need to prevent as much suffering as possible, on a personal level, and change, by one, the way we, as a society, do "business". There is no denying that we have created an entire population of misery - an entire population of emotionally lost and suffering adult birds with nowhere to go. Although certain aspects of the current status quo are dark and seem hopeless, the fact remains that we can still change the lives of so many amazing birds. Each of us has the ability to help, to listen, to give the time and energy necessary to become an abandoned bird's flock. Please become a place for even one of these birds to go. Please consider sharing your home and your love with these very deserving, very special birds.

A fairly comprehensive list of bird rescue foundations is available at <http://www.worldparrottrust.org/general/links2.html>, but don't limit yourself to rescue foundations. Remember that older birds for sale anywhere are abandoned, and if they seem to be picking feathers, or abnormally thin, or in a situation that you, as a human being, would not want to be in, please help the bird.

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A Note from the Editor

It is my privilege to have taken over the editorship of this newsletter - it will be a learning experience for me.

Kudos to former editor, Carol Frink, who delivered us with a quality publication for so long.

It is OUR newsletter, and my hope is that we will all, at some point, be contributors. I hope to solicit everyone's ideas at the July general meeting as to how this publication can be improved.

AUGUST PICNIC

Janet Wood *et al* (including Max) have graciously invited us to her home on Black Lake (directions will be in the August newsletter) for a picnic on August 12 from 11AM to 3PM. Her home is adjacent to a picnic area -- grill will be available. Regrettably, pets cannot be invited. We ask that everyone bring their own meat and one item to share. Nonalcoholic beverages, condiments, plates and flatware will be provided.

2007 DATES OF SOCIETY EVENTS

July 13	Board Meeting at 6 pm General Meeting at 7pm
August 12	Picnic (no meeting)
September 14	Board and General Meeting
October 12	Board and General Meeting
November 9	Board and General Meeting
December ?	Holiday Party

**SUPPORT YOUR CLUB:
COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING**

Each commercial membership includes one business-card sized advertisement in the newsletter. Commercial members may also purchase additional ad space at the following rates:

One half page	\$50.00
Full page	\$87.50

Non-members may purchase ad space at the following rates:

Business card size	\$ 40.00
One half page	\$100.00
Full page	\$175.00

All ads run for a 12-month period. Send camera-ready artwork or neatly printed ad copy to SSEBS, c/o Pegg Bauer, 8008 Ellison Loop NW, Olympia, WA 98507 or to peggb@comcast.net. Copy and payment received by the third Thursday of the month will appear in the following month's newsletter.

Copy change during the current period will be considered on case by case basis and additional charges – if any – will be determined at the time of request. All ads must be paid in full prior to being published. The SSEBS Board of Directors reserves the right to refuse any advertising it deems appropriate.

Questions? Contact Pegg Bauer at 360/866-4088 or peggb@comcast.net.

Please note: As a society, SSEBS does not endorse the products or services advertised or discussed in its newsletter. SSEBS is not responsible for advertisers' claims or products.

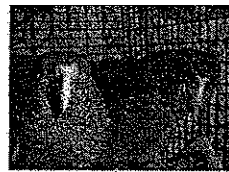
RECIPE BOX: Live Carrot Bread

This live bread is great for us and our birds -- submitted by Barbara Bradshaw.

Ingredients:

- 3 cups carrot pulp (from juiced or blended carrots)
- 1/2 - 1 cup raisins, soaked and pureed
- 1 vanilla bean
- 1 tsp. spice of your choice (nutmeg, pumpkin pie spice or cinnamon)
- 1/4 cup golden flax seeds, ground
- Pinch of Celtic or Himalayan sea salt

In a mixing bowl mix all ingredients by hand until they form a thick like consistency. If the dough is too sticky add more flax; if too add more water.



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Form into a small loaf. Using a serrated knife, slice into toast size pieces. Place in a dehydrator at 105 F for several hours, so the enzymes are not destroyed until desired moisture is obtained. Alternatively, place them in the sun (turning them over) on a hot day. The slices should be still soft and bread-like when done.

Store in the refrigerator.

Coconut butter icing (optional):

Ingredients:

- Pulp of 3 young coconuts (Thai grocery)
- 1 vanilla bean
- 3 Tablespoons raw coconut butter

Blend in high power blender until creamy. Chill until ready to use. Variation for a sweeter icing: add raisins water or coconut water. Play with spices, mesquite powder, rose or lavender essence.

CLUB INFORMATION

- As a general rule, the first half hour of each General Meeting, from 7:00 to 7:30 pm, is dedicated to socializing. The evening's program will begin at 7:30 pm, and the regular meeting will follow the program.
- For information, call 360/455-0697.
- The SSEBS mailing address is:
South Sound Exotic Bird Society (SSEBS)
P.O. Box 15014
Tumwater, WA 98511-5014
- Please use this address for all club correspondence except for items to be sent to the newsletter editor. Send newsletter correspondence to:
Pegg Bauer
8008 Ellison Loop NW
Olympia, WA 98502

SSEBS Officers and Committees

President	Leslie Simpson	360-426-3708
Vice President	Linda Morgan	360-705-0141
Secretary	Pegg Bauer	360-866-4088
Treasurer	Pat Hill	360-357-7865
Members-at-Large	Jackie Cotrell	425-210-4036
	Barbara Ann Smith	360-491-2387
	VACANT	
Membership	Linda Morgan	360-705-0141
Public Relations	Carol Frink	360-352-9792
Publications	Pegg Bauer	360-866-4088
Ways and Means	Leslie Simpson	360-426-3708
Education	VACANT	
Affiliated Organization Representatives	VACANT	

Send any suggestions for meeting topics or specific speakers or programs to any board member.

A REMINDER: NO BIRDS AT MEETINGS

Our contract with the Olympia Center requires that we follow its rule of no animals or birds at meetings unless a it is part of a speaker's presentation. This affects the SSEBS insurance policy.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

New _____ Renewal _____ Address/phone change _____

NAME(S) _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____

PHONES:

Home: _____

Work (if applicable): _____

Cell: _____

EMAIL ADDRESSES: _____

Referred by: _____

Membership type per year:

Junior (under age 18).....\$ 6 _____

Individual.....\$12 _____

Family.....15 _____

Commercial.....\$25 _____

Dues payable to:

South Sound Exotic Bird Society (or SSEBS)
(Returned checks subject to service charge)

Mail to: SSEBS Membership
P.O. Box 15014
Tumwater, WA 98511-5014

Your avicultural interests (please check all that apply):

- African Greys _____ Amazons _____ Caiques _____ Canaries _____ Cockatiels _____ Cockatoos _____ Conures _____
 Doves _____ Eclectus _____ Finches _____ Lorries _____ Lorikeets _____ Lovebirds _____ Macaws _____
 Parakeets _____ Pionus _____ Roselias _____ Others: _____

Roster for Refreshments/Door Prizes

Month:	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Refreshments:	Sherylle	Picnic	Linda	?	?	Holiday Party
Door Prizes:	Theresa	John G	Sherylle	Carol	?	Holiday Party

SSEBS is proud to be associated with:

- NORTHWEST EXOTIC BIRD SOCIETY
9594 First Avenue NE, #352, Seattle, WA 98115
<http://NWExoticBirdSociety.org>; Email: Info@NWExoticBirdSociety.org
Meetings on the third Thursday of each month
- THE WASHINGTON BUDGERIGAR SOCIETY
2126 Bedal Lane, Everett, WA 98208-2439
<http://mysite.verizon.net/resom1a2WBS1.htm>; Email: swanson28s@verizon.net
Meetings on the first Sunday of every month.
- THE BIRD LOVERS SOCIAL CLUB
Dimmitt Middle School, 12320 80th Ave. So., Seattle, WA 98178 (Renton area)
For information, contact: President Julie Corwin, 206-772-1730
Email: blconnection@hotmail.com; birdloverssocial@yahoo.com
http://www.geocities.com/bird_lovers_club/
Meetings on the third Friday of every month.

Note: Upcoming bird show on Saturday, September 15, 2007. Hosted by Olympic Bird Fanciers.
See: <http://olympicbirdfanciers.com>

SOUTH SOUND EXOTIC BIRD SOCIETY

Pegg Bauer, Editor
Newsletter address only:
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Olympia, WA 98502

