

SOUTH SOUND EXOTIC BIRD SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Volume XXIII, Issue 5

May 2008

P.O. Box 15014, Tumwater, WA 98511-5014
<http://ssebs.org>

MAY 9 MEETING

(Note: This is a change from the last month's announcement)

We are fortunate to host Debbie Goodrich, "The Parrot Lady," who will present a program on bird training and behavior. Debbie has a degree in Psychobiology from the University of California with an emphasis on Animal Cognition and Intelligence. She has studied, worked with, and trained many types of animals, including 15 species of parrots. She has observed wild parrots in Peru and gained handling techniques from a variety of trainers. Teaching people and their parrots is her passion. We will be bringing some of her own flock.

Debbie will start her program at 7pm to give her adequate time to address all the questions we might have.

Note: Due to a lack of quorum, there will be no board meeting at 6pm. Available board members, however, are urged to be there at 6pm to help set up for Debbie.

JUNE 13 MEETING

Following our business meeting on May 9, and as a result of a number of requests, we will do our own collective participatory program:

HOW TO RECESSION-PROOF PACO'S TOYBOX.

Bring to share your on-the-cheap (cheep?) ideas and demos for toys and other bird equipment.

GRIT Do Birds Need It?

Whether companion birds need grit has long been a source of disagreement.

There are two general types of grit: soluble and insoluble.

Soluble grit is organic and includes crushed shells (such as oyster shells) or cuttlebone. Soluble grit is mostly limestone (calcium carbonate). Because it is easily digested by acids found in the proventriculus, there is little danger of it accumulating in the digestive system. Even though soluble grit is a source of calcium, it does little in aiding the digestion of whole seeds. Instances of heavy metal toxicity have been reported with the feeding of soluble grit which has come from areas with polluted waters.

Insoluble grit, the major focus of this article, is composed of minute stones such as silicates and sandstones. According to *Avian Medicine: Principles and Application* by Ritchie, Harrison and Harrison, the purpose of insoluble grit is to aid birds in their digestion of whole, intact seeds. Birds' digestive enzymes work well in digesting the inner portion of seeds, but have difficulty with their fibrous coating. Fibrous hulls of whole seeds, such as sunflower seeds, are barriers that prevent digestive enzymes from reaching the nutritious seed within. Grit, in the ventriculus, aids in grinding and wearing away the outer shells of the seeds and enables the digestive enzymes to reach the valuable inner portion. No other purpose for insoluble grit used by birds is

yet known. Pigeons and doves consume entire seeds and need such grit. Insoluble grit cannot be digested and remains in the body until expelled.

Because the purpose of insoluble grit is to remove the outer coatings of whole seeds, it is currently thought that only birds that consume intact seeds -- such as doves -- require grit in their diet. Grit is not required in normal, healthy, psittacine (parrots) or passerine (canaries, finches, starlings, mynahs) birds. Because these birds remove the fibrous hulls from their seeds in the act of eating them, their digestive enzymes have no barriers to prevent them from acting upon the seed. Some species of parrots have ridges on the inside portion of their upper beak which are believed to aid in the shelling of seeds. The seed is held in place by the ridges, while the lower beak is used to crack and remove the hull. Birds on a formulated (pelleted) diet also should not require grit.

Avian Medicine: Principles and Application reports that there have been many examples of healthy birds which have not had insoluble grit for periods of 15 to 20 years and show no signs of poor digestion. There is, however, some evidence that birds with pancreatic or physical digestion problems may benefit from some grit. In such cases an avian vet should be consulted.

Common problems with grit include:

Obstructive gastritis. If given free access to grit, some birds may over-consume it, leading to crop, proventricular or ventricular impactions. (According to *Avian Medicine: Principles and Application*, this problem is reported commonly in North America but appears uncommon in Australia, where grit is freely given. The cause for a regional variation in the occurrence of this condition is unknown.) Birds showing compulsive grit consumption should be evaluated for hepatopathy, pancreatitis, renal dysfunction, and general malnutrition. If an owner feels that grit should be given, *Avian Medicine: Principles and Application* recommends that it not be offered freely, but as a compromise: cockatiel size birds can be given 5 grains of grit biannually (every 2 years) and cockatoo sized birds may be given 1/2 teaspoon biannually.

Charcoal. Grit mixtures containing charcoal can affect the absorption of vitamins A, B2 and K, resulting in deficiencies.

Nutrition. *Avian Medicine: Principles and Application* states that, in poultry, the addition of grit increases the digestibility of formulated diets by as much as 10%. The addition of grit has not been evaluated for companion birds on formulated diets. However, given that obesity is more of a problem than maldigestion in companion birds, increasing the digestibility of a formulated diet that exceeds suggested nutritional requirements is probably unnecessary."

To date, the benefits of grit for parrots has not been demonstrated to exceed the potential risks.

References: Highfill, Carol, "Winged Wisdom," A BIT ABOUT GRIT, Do Birds Need It?; "Avian Medicine: Principles and Application by Braison Ritchie DVM PhD; Greg J. Harrison DVM and Linda R. Harrison BS, 1994 Wingers Publishing

A Word About Parrots and Canine Toxicity

Parrots often "share" their meals with the household's canine companions. Ingestion of certain substances that might come your dog's way could be hazardous to their health:

Macademia Nuts. These nuts, although fine for parrots and for us, are toxic to dogs. One or more clinical signs of toxicity are usually seen within 12 hours of ingestion: ataxia (walking wobbly), depression, vomiting, muscle tremors, hyperthermia (elevated body temperature), weakness, and an elevated heart rate. The toxic dose for a dog ranges from 2.4-62.4 grams per kilogram of body weight. This is a very large range that means some dogs may become ill after ingesting just a small amount of nuts, while other dogs will need to ingest many more nuts before showing signs of illness.. [Note: The clinical signs can be markedly increased if chocolate is ingested along with the nuts, as seen in cases where the dog eats the box of chocolate covered macademia nuts.] Quick veterinary care is essential.

Raisins / Grapes. Dogs ingesting an excessive amount of raisins and/or grapes may exhibit gastrointestinal signs, including vomiting and diarrhea, and then signs of kidney failure with an onset of severe kidney signs starting about 24 hours after the time of ingestion. The amount of grapes eaten may vary between 9oz. and 2 lbs., (between 0.41 and 1.1 oz/kg of body weight). Dogs so

2008 MEETINGS:

February 8	July 11
March 28	September 12
April 11	October 10
May 9	November 14
June 13	December -- tbd

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 a 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.

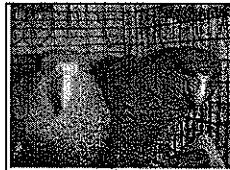
Questions? Contact Pegg Bauer at peggb@comcast.net.

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.

Join !! SSEBS YahooGroup.

This is not a "chat group" as such (a "chat group" generally means that everybody is on line at the same time, "talking" back and forth by typing messages in real-time.) With a YahooGroup, e-mail messages are posted to the group which then distributes copies of the messages to the subscribers, depending on how they want to receive the message copies.

Go to <http://pets.groups.yahoo.com/group/SSEBS/>. You can join by clicking on the "join this group" button on the home page or by sending an e-mail message to SSEBS-subscribe@yahoogroups.com. Learn how the group works: <http://help.yahoo.com/l/us/yahoo/groups/original/members/> is the place to go.



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Deanna Shafar, DVM

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Washington State University
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Puyallup, WA 98371

Phone: 253-445-4536; Fax: 253-445-4544;
Email: asdhillon@wsu.edu

FOR SALE

Budgies, variety of colors, \$25 a pair or \$15 each

Mature breeders (these are not tame birds; some were pets but were set up for breeding):

- Male Double Yellowhead (proven breeder). Was with older female that died of fatty liver disease.
- Male Yellow Nape (proven breeder). I sold his mate when they started fighting.
- Brotogeris species: White Wings, Yellow/Chevron Wing, and Orange chin.

Proven Pairs: Blue Front \$900; Red Lored \$900

Miscellaneous: I have 3 incubators to sell as a package deal. 2 Turnex (TX6) and 1 original Turnex. All are tested and ready to use. They hold heat very well. I have used the original Turnex as a hatcher/brooder, and the two TX 6s for incubating -- one is a backup in case the one running should fail (best to be prepared for all things). I have an extra brooder ring and extra egg carriers, 3 automatic turners, and dishes that I use for the hatcher/brooder. I also have new wick material for at least one more change. All three units with extras for only \$500.

Bamboo: you dig !!

Contact Smiles: 360-736-3973 (evenings)
sgermeau@yahoo.com

FOR SALE

PETS AND BREEDERS
GOODHART BIRD FARM
Shelton, WA 98584

360-426-6375

kegdharth@hctc.com

PET SITTING

Pet sitting services offered. Home visits for birds, dogs, cats, and small rodents. Price to be discussed depending on how many pets you have, how many visits per day you want, and your location.

Contact 360-455-0697
Sherylle: goffin90@yahoo.com

FOR SALE

Star Finches \$50/mated pair

Contact Linda James: 360-491-3216
jamesgang@thurston.com

Do you know someone who is interested in birds? If so, give the editor his or her address, and a complimentary newsletter will be sent.

The South Sound Exotic Bird Society is pleased to grant permission, upon written request, to other newsletters to reprint articles and features appearing in our newsletter. However, to preserve the integrity of the original article, we all articles and features must be reprinted in full, giving credit to the original author and date of publication. Individual authors may reserve the rights for reprinting their articles; please contact those authors for permission to reprint.

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As a Society, SSEBS does not endorse the products or services advertised in its newsletter. SSEBS is not responsible for advertisers' claims or products.

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Publications	Pegg Bauer	360-866-4088
Ways and Means	VACANT	
Education	Britt O'Leary	360-462-8210
Affiliated Organization Representatives	VACANT	

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

A REMINDER: PLEASE 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.

FOR SALE, TRADE OR WANTED

CLUB INFORMATION

- As a general rule, the first half hour of each General Meeting, from 7:00 to 7:30 pm, will be 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

FOR SALE:

Hand-reared cockatiels: Lutinos \$110, pieds \$85
Hand-reared lineolated parakeet \$250

WANTED:

Non-intensive yellow ground male canary (colorbreed)
Pair of society finches

ALSO FOR SALE:

Hand reared pearl pied cockatiel \$75
Zebra and Society Finches \$12

Fine Feathers & Fins, 114 Miller Rd., Randle, WA 98377
mews@CenturyTel.net 360 497-2160

Oral Medication Tip:

(requires no restraint)

Drill a 6-8" wooden dowel with several holes large enough to accommodate your medicine dropper. Present the dowel to the bird, who, being a parrot, will grab it. One of the holes will be aligned with the open beak. Insert the medicine dropper through it, and squirt the medication into the mouth. Works well on larger birds (Amazon on up.)

**Doane, *The Parrot in Health and Illness,*
An Owner's Guide (Macmillan Publishing Company, 1991)**

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
___ Doves ___ Eclectus ___ Finches ___ Lories
___ Parakeets ___ Pionus ___ Roselias ___ Others:

___ Cockatiels ___ Cockatoos ___ Conures
___ Lorikeets ___ Lovebirds ___ Macaws

SSEBS is proud to be associated with:

- NORTHWEST EXOTIC BIRD SOCIETY
P.O. Box 47377, Seattle, WA 98146
<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
http://www.geocities.com/bird_lovers_club/
Events and Educational Programs only – no meetings

SSEBS Meeting Time/Place

SSEBS meetings are NORMALLY (but not always!!) held in Room 103 at the Olympia Center, 222 Columbia St NW, Olympia, WA 98501-8208 on the 2d Friday of each month. This can, however, vary – check your newsletter and the website. From I-5, take the Capitol exit, which comes out onto 14th Street. Follow 14th through the tunnel and turn right at the stoplight after you come out of the tunnel onto Capitol Way. Follow Capital Way to State Street. The Olympia Center is just past this intersection on the left (light-colored 2-story building).

SOUTH SOUND EXOTIC BIRD SOCIETY

Pegg Bauer, Editor

Newsletter address only:

8008 Ellison Loop NW

Olympia, WA 98502

