

SOUTH SOUND EXOTIC BIRD SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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

<http://ssebs.org>

(The newsletter is now published every other month)

JUNE 12 MEETING

**Our speaker at the June 12 meeting will be Susanne Beauregard, Director, Joint Animal Services of Thurston County. She is always fascinating !
SEE YOU THERE!**

Heartfelt Thoughts From a Reformed Parrot Breeder

by Tina Usher, The Parrot's Perch

I'm Tina Usher, and all of my life I have been captivated by all types of birds. First, I would like to give you some of my history. I own and operate The Parrot's Perch, a small home-based aviary just outside of Chicago, IL. I have been breeding and raising Moluccan, Umbrella and Medium Sulphur Crested (Elenora) Cockatoos, Green Wing Macaws and African Greys.



My breeding pairs inhabit the upstairs of my house, with the cockatoos and macaws in one room and the greys in the other. Upstairs they have the advantage of fresh air and natural sunshine. They get to see the dawn and dusk, the tree tops filled with birds and can appreciate the sound of rainfall. They also have their own stereo on which I play nature CD's, classical music and occasionally some soft jazz. I love my feathered children and continually pursue giving them the best life they can have in captivity.

I have never shipped my babies or sold to pet shops because I always screened the potential new parents. Included with each baby was a lengthy consultation on proper care, understanding behavior and hands on training to learn proper handling techniques. Even if they were experienced bird people, we still covered everything to make sure we were "on the same page." Also, I am always available to my clients to answer questions or help guide them through a difficulty. I feel that I brought these babies into this world and it is my responsibility to make sure they are going to be properly cared for and have a much loved, healthy, happy life.

As a responsible and devoted breeder for 25 years it is because of this great love that I have for my birds that I have had a gradual change of heart about breeding. I cannot pinpoint exactly how or when it started, there was no big epiphany, just an awareness and a feeling that grew and grew. How can I justify bringing more birds into a world where ..

... THERE ARE COUNTLESS UNWANTED PET BIRDS IN NEED OF LOVING HOMES.

Almost every day I receive emails and telephone calls from people who have decided to give up their bird, hoping I'll want it. I talk to them hoping I can help them to change their minds, but so far I have had little luck. Many even call our two local zoos thinking they would be thrilled to take their birds, and are shocked when they are turned down. I explain to them that the zoos receive calls like theirs everyday; they operate a zoo, not a rescue for all the unwanted pets. The zoos don't even have the room to take in all these unwanted birds. I try to help these people find a good home for their birds, by contacting friends, clients and acquaintances to see if they have room to take in one more. Unfortunately now, I have exhausted all my resources and have to refer them to the local rescues and clubs. Sadly, our local rescues and clubs are bursting at the seams. They are filled to capacity and are unable to accept anymore. I feel sad and helpless. What is the fate of all these unwanted companion birds?



Having become truly aware and concerned about the overpopulation of countless homeless birds, I feel the time is now that I begin a new journey. So, for starters, The Parrot's Perch has decided to no longer breed the cockatoos and macaws. They have a permanent home with me; I have just retired them. For now, during my transition I have to raise a few African Greys while I pursue my dream of opening a desperately needed avian rescue/sanctuary here in the Chicagoland area.

A few years back I began to realize my birds may out live me and I need to have a plan for their future. Where will they go? Who will take them and love and care for them like I do? I don't want to see them in the hands of an unethical breeder, stuck in someone's dark, damp basement. I want them retired and living out their lives well taken care of and happy. In the past, I had fleeting thoughts of this and did some research. I had contacted Parrot Jungle and a couple of out-of-state sanctuaries, but no one was interested in taking my pairs when the time came. So the procrastinator that I am, I easily pushed it off to the side to worry about later. This is another reason I am pursuing opening a rescue/sanctuary: to insure the destiny of my pairs.

Not only is there a crisis of the overpopulation of homeless companion birds, but since I am a breeder, I thought about the thousands of breeding pairs out there. I've noticed that all the breeders I know of, myself included, are all "getting up in age". Thankfully, I am not seeing the younger generation getting into breeding birds, but...

... WHAT IS THE FATE OF ALL OF THESE THOUSANDS OF BREEDING PAIRS?

Where are they going to have to go? Who will or can take care of all of them? The rescues that we currently have are filled to capacity with companion birds. These breeders are mostly wild caught, up in age, not socialized to be companions, nor do they want to be at this stage of their lives. Many have been maintained as mere money makers in large production mills. They need somewhere to go to live out their lives when their owners get too old or sick. We have brought them here. We are responsible for their well being. They deserve to live out their lives well taken care of and happy!

Unfortunately, I can see in the very near future that we will have to euthanize the unwanted birds like we do with our cats and dogs. There is public awareness about the cat and dog overpopulation. WE NEED TO MAKE THE PUBLIC AWARE OF THIS CRISIS. We all have to do our part to get the word out on this and now. As I have been predicting, just the other day I got an email from a local bird club of a flyer notifying anyone interested, that a large factory breeder in North Carolina has cancer and can no longer care for his parrots. He has arranged to transport his birds to Florida to be auctioned off - not just a few birds, but over 500 large parrots! It also says that he has arranged with one of the national humane societies in Florida to take the birds that are not sold. Well, what does that mean? Are they equipped to take in a multitude of parrots? Especially breeder pairs that are not adoptable? I doubt it, because who is? Does this mean that the humane society will "humanely dispose" of them?

Everyone, in every aspect of this industry, needs to be made aware of this crisis of birds whose people no longer want them or can care for them and that includes breeders too. Bird enthusiasts need to get proactive in these areas; we need to inform the public so that they are made aware of this situation. People need to know that there are rescues filled with wonderful birds that need loving homes. They need to be aware of the option they have to adopt a bird in need from a rescue, so they don't unknowingly just run out to the pet shops and breeders to buy a bird. Most people are uninformed and don't even realize adoption is an option...

... WE NEED A PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN.

Most of us breeders love our birds and breeding and raising babies. I know I do, but at what cost? With every baby we bring into this world, are we depriving a bird in a rescue of a home? Are we, perhaps unknowingly, the major contributors to the overpopulation crisis?

Breeders...what will happen to your breeder pairs when you can no longer provide for them? Have you made provisions for their future? Do they have a place to go? Someone willing to take care of them for the rest of their lives? Or will your breeder pairs end up at a local humane society to be "humanely disposed" of? I wonder if this is not already a hidden dirty little secret...



... BREEDERS NEED TO BE MORE BENEVOLENT.

HIGH ON HEMP !!

Because my B&G, BamBam, can't handle the phytoestrogens in either soy or sunflower seed (which are the main source of plant proteins in most pellets), I have had to look for another source of plant protein in addition to chia seed. That has led me to hempseed.

Hempseed is from the cannabis plant. (yup, from which marijuana comes ...) It has been used by bird keepers to feed to numerous varieties of cage and aviary birds, but is more expensive than the soy and sunflower alternatives. It is an oil seed that contains high-grade proteins and other beneficial nutrition. And no, you don't get "high" from it – because it has very little THC.

Hemp was cultivated in China more than 6,000 years ago, from a wild plant that grew in central Asia. The Chinese recognized hemp's amazing nutritional value, and used it as a food source long before soy foods. About a thousand years ago, hemp traveled to Europe, where peasants used the plant in several ways, one of the most popular being the making of hemp butter by grinding the seeds. It is currently illegal to grow hemp in the US.

Hemp seed is considered by leading researchers and medical doctors to be one of the most nutritious food sources on the planet. Hempseed is packed with 33 percent pure digestible protein and is rich in iron and vitamin E as well as omega-3 and GLA. A recent report funded by the Canadian government states that hemp protein is comprised of 66 percent high-quality edistin protein, and that hempseed contains the highest percentage of this of any plant source. Hemp also contains three times the vitamin E contained in flax. Unlike soy, hemp is not genetically modified, and it doesn't contain the anti-nutritional qualities (or the phytoestrogens) commonly found in soy.

Fresh shelled hemp seeds are not available in the US – by law, hempseeds in the shell must have been heated so they cannot sprout (like a parrot owner would have the time to grow something illegal ???). That required heating probably destroys the omega 3's, at a minimum, so I didn't opt for that alternative. Instead, I purchased the unshelled raw seed. Absent the shell, of course, they can't be sprouted, so that makes the authorities feel better about things. Depending on the brand, this seed may or may not be refrigerated in the store in the sealed package. After opening, any brand should certainly be refrigerated because of the Omega 3s. Mine has a shelf life, after being opened, of about 12 weeks. Most of this product comes from Canada where it can be legally grown. Although I haven't seen it at the Co-op (which I see will be soon carrying hemp milk), it is available in local health food stores. I purchased mine at Smart Nutrition in Tumwater – they carry several brands, and mine was in the refrigerator. I don't add the seed to the bulk mash that I make, but sprinkle it on top after I warm it at each meal. And it really tastes good.

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LIVE AND LEARN

ENCOURAGE YOUR BIRDS TO BATHE. If you have a bird that isn't keen on bathing, try putting a bathing bowl in or on the cage and either turn on the dishwasher or vacuum. Dr. Onorati suggested this to Janet Wood, whose grey Max didn't like baths or sprays. She says the dishwasher didn't work, but when she turns on the vacuum, Max does in fact head for his bath on his own.

FOR SALE
PETS AND BREEDERS
GOODHART BIRD FARM
Shelton, WA 98584

360-426-6375

kegdharth@hctc.com

For Sale

One pair of proven Black Cap Conures \$350.00
6 parent raised 1 yr. old
Breeder birds: \$85.00 each
360-978-5164=

FOR SALE

Star Finches \$50/mated pair

Contact Linda James:

360-491-3216

jamesgang@thurston.com

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

SSEBS Officers Needed

Officers are needed for calendar year 2009.

**If you are interested in serving,
please contact Pegg Bauer.**

peggb@comcast.net or 360/584-6495.

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@yahoo.com. Learn how the group works: <http://help.yahoo.com/l/us/yahoo/groups/original/members/> is the place to go.

**SUPPORT YOUR CLUB:
COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING**

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

One half page \$50
Full page \$87.50

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

Business card size \$40
One-half page \$100
Full page \$175

All ads run for a 12-month period. Send camera-ready artwork or neatly printed ad copy to SSEBS, P.O. Box 15014, Tumwater, WA 98511-5014 (please do not use a little piece of scrap paper). Copy and payment received by the third Thursday of the month will appear in the following month's newsletter. Copy changes during the current period will be considered on a case-by-case basis and additional charges – if any – determined at the time of the 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 inappropriate. Questions Contact Pegg Bauer, Editor.

2009 Meetings

February 13

August 14

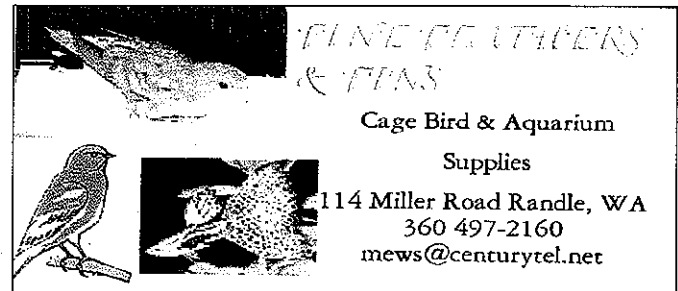
April 10

October 9

June 12

December Xmas party (date tba)

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



**FINE FEATHERS
& FINS**
Cage Bird & Aquarium
Supplies
114 Miller Road Randle, WA
360 497-2160
mews@centurytel.net

FOR SALE

Lineolated parakeet babies:

Greens -- \$150
Lucienos -- \$200
Breeding Pair (Cobalt X Lutino) -- \$400

Fine Feathers and Fins

114 Miller Road, Randle, WA
360-4997-2160 mews@centurytel.net

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
(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 Capitol 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
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8008 Ellison Loop NW
Olympia, WA 98502

