

## BREEDING THE YELLOW-NAPED AMAZON

By K. W. Dolton (Worcester)

The Yellow-naped Amazon *Amazona ochrocephala auropalliata* is a large and handsome bird, which is easily identified by the area of yellow on the nape of the neck. It has a range which extends from southern Mexico southwards to north-west Costa Rica. The subspecies is imported into the United States in large numbers as it rivals the African Grey for its 'talking' abilities.

I purchased my first Yellow-naped Amazon from a pet shop in the late 1970s and the bird did indeed prove to be a marvellous talker. As far as I know, there was only one other example in the UK at the time and that was in Yorkshire. Unfortunately mine died from pseudotuberculosis in 1989.

Quite a few birds of this particular subspecies were imported in 1987 and in the autumn of that year I managed to make up two pairs from immature, but surgically sexed, examples.

In 1992 one of the pairs nested in a box measuring 24ins high x 10ins x 10ins. They laid two fertile eggs which were removed in order that a friend could put them into an incubator and hand-rear the resulting chicks. They proved to be male and female when sexed last year.

In 1993 the same pair laid three eggs which I left for them to incubate; all three hatched and the young were reared without any assistance from me. The diet was soaked sunflower, peanuts, pine nuts, carrot, apple and brown bread and milk.

All three young left the nest box when 12 weeks old on 18th July and were independent by 20th August.

These youngsters were as large as the two which had previously been hand-reared and late last year yellow feathers were already appearing on parts of the head and neck. The hand-reared birds - although 12 months older - were still not showing this colour.

I understand from David Spilsbury, who saw these birds with their parents, that this could be a first breeding.

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This is probably the first successful breeding of the Yellow-naped Amazon in this country. Anyone who knows of a previous breeding in the U.K. is asked to inform the Hon. Secretary.

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## SOCIAL GATHERING

Members of the Avicultural Society gathered at the home of Dulcie and Freddie Cooke on 8th May.

Guests were welcomed with lunch served in a pretty marquee which had been organised by the Cookes especially for this occasion. Aviculturists chatted and exchanged news, good and bad, over a buffet lunch of cold meats and salads with wine, followed by superb fruit cheesecakes all made by Dulcie.



Suitably enlivened, guests wandered out into the garden, over an immaculate lawn. The long border was a blaze of colour with all the azaleas in bloom, while the flights were flanked by tulips, forget-me-nots and blossoming espaliered apple trees. What was evident was not only the immensely hard work put into the garden by Freddie, but also the careful planning and eye for colour and design which produced such a ravishing effect.

As always at the Cookes, the birds look in superb condition. Dulcie and Freddie have bred lories very successfully for many years, and there is no doubt that the care and detailed work which goes into the feeding and management of their collection is clearly visible in the presentation and behaviour of their birds. Not only are the parrots confident and friendly with visitors, but it is clear that they are used to, and enjoy, the attention.

The Avicultural Society would like to thank Dulcie and Freddie for all the support they give to it, and for the hard work and care that makes this annual visit to their home such a memorable pleasure. All the proceeds from ticket sales were donated to the Avicultural Society.

Rosemary Wiseman





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