

BODY MASSES (WEIGHTS) OF PARROTS

by Johannes Erritzoe

The importance of avian body mass (weight) is well understood. In this paper, the masses (weights) of 328 individuals from 112 species of captive parrots are recorded, along with their sex and condition.

The birds all come from Danish captive collections. The masses were obtained using a balance weight, and the sex was determined by internal inspection. Age determination was made by studying the size of gonads, the form of the oviduct, and the presence or absence of bursa Fabricii, all methods described by Erritzoe (1985). Taxonomy follows Forshaw and Cooper (1989).

* = no weight information in Forshaw and Cooper (1989).

LORIINAE				
Black Lory	<i>Chalcopsitta atra</i>	♂ ad	201.8g	fat
Duyvenbode's Lory	<i>Chalcopsitta duivenbodei</i>	♂ ad	211.2g	a little fat *
		♂ ad	181.1g	normal *
		♂ ad	181.5g	normal *
Black-winged Lory	<i>Eos cyanogenia</i>	♀ ad	134.8g	
Violet-necked Lory	<i>Eos squamata</i>	♂ ad	118.1g	*
	<i>E. s. reciniata</i>	♂	112.5g	a little fat *
Red Lory	<i>Eos bornea</i>	♀ ad	118.1g	a little lean *
Rainbow Lory (or Lorikeet)	<i>Trichoglossus h. haematodus</i>	♂ ad	143.1g	very fat
		♂ ad	143.5g	a little fat
		♂ ad	112.9g	
		♂ ad	158.9g	
		♂ ad	96.9g	normal
		♂ imm	75.2g	normal
		♂ ad	129.2g	a little fat
		♀ ad	102.8g	
		♀ ad	105.5g	normal
		♀ ad	110.1g	a little fat
Yellow & Green Lorikeet	<i>Trichoglossus flavoviridis</i>	♀	47.8g	normal *
Perfect Lorikeet	<i>Trichoglossus eutelus</i>	♂	53.3g	normal *
		♀ ad	59.9g	normal *
Goldie's Lorikeet	<i>Trichoglossus goldiei</i>	♀ ad	43.1g	
		♀ ad	48.9g	normal
Black-capped Lory	<i>Lorius lory</i>	♂ ad	161.2g	normal
		♀ ad	96.5g	lean
		♀ ad	173.5g	normal
Chattering Lory	<i>Lorius garrulus</i>	♂ ad	144.8g	normal *
Papuan Lory	<i>Charmosyna papou</i>	♀ ad	71.5g	a little fat
CACATUINAE				
Galah (or Roseate Cockatoo)	<i>Eolophus roseicapillus</i>	♂ ad	266.4g	normal
		♀ ad	374.8g	fat

PSITTACINAE				
Desmarest's Fig Parrot	<i>Psittaculirostris desmarestii</i>	♂ ad	84.6g	a little fat
		♂ ad	68.6g	normal
		♀ ad	108.8g	fat
Edwards' Fig Parrot	<i>Psittaculirostris edwardsii</i>	♀ ad	88.0g	normal
Blue-rumped Parrot	<i>Psittinus cyanurus</i>	♂ juv	61.7g	*
		♀ juv	57.4g	*
Blue-crowned Racket-tailed Parrot				
	<i>Prioniturus discurus</i>	♂	86.0g	
Great-billed Parrot	<i>Tanygnathus megalorhynchus</i>	♂ ad	148.0g	lean*
		♀ ad	144.1g	lean*
Blue-naped Parrot	<i>Tanygnathus lucionensis</i>	♂ imm	168.0g	lean
		♂	168.0g	
Müller's Parrot	<i>Tanygnathus sumatranus</i>	♂ ad	173.0g	lean
Eclectus Parrot	<i>Eclectus roratus</i>	♂ ad	331.0g	
		♀ ad	342.7g	normal
		♀ ad	351.0g	
Australian King Parrot	<i>Alisterus scapularis</i>	♂ imm	204.6g	
		♂ ad	175.1g	lean
		♂ imm	178.2g	normal
		♂ ad	132.2g	lean
		♂ ad	200.1g	normal
		♀ ad	191.0g	normal
		♀ ad	145.4g	lean
		♀ ad	179.0g	
		♀ imm	190.2g	a little fat
Amboina King Parrot	<i>Alisterus amboinensis</i>	♂ ad	106.7g	
		♂ ad	111.0g	
Red-winged (or Crimson-winged) Parrot	<i>Aprosmictus erythropterus</i>	♂ ad	113.5g	a little fat
		♂ imm	109.2g	normal
		♂ imm	98.2g	a little lean
		♂ ad	130.2g	normal
Superb Parrot (or Barraband Parrakeet)	<i>Polytelis swainsonii</i>	♂ ad	121.8g	normal
		♀ ad	166.5g	
		♀ ad	155.5g	normal
		♀	81.5g	a little lean
		♀	132.8g	normal
Regent Parrot (or Rock Pebbler)	<i>Polytelis anthopeplus</i>	♀ ad	110.0g	lean
		♂ juv	149.0g	normal
		♂ ad	152.0g	
		♂	148.5g	normal
		♀ ad	148.2g	normal
		♀ imm	140.8g	normal
		♀ imm	158.6g	
Princess Parrot (or Princess of Wales' Parrakeet)	<i>Polytelis alexandrae</i>	♂ ad	98.1g	a little lean *
		♂ ad	106.9g	normal *
		♂ ad	99.6g	normal *
		♂ ad	116.3g	*
		♂	93.6g	a little lean *
		♀ ad	83.9g	a little lean *
		♀ ad	95.5g	*
		♀	102.5g	*

Red-capped Parrot (or Pileated Parrakeet)	<i>Purpureicephalus spurius</i>	♂ ad	93.8g	normal
		♂ imm	73.2g	very lean
		♀ ad	95.8g	a little lean
Mallee Ringneck Parrot (or Barnard's Parrakeet) (Cloncurry Parrakeet)	<i>Barnardius barnardi</i> <i>B. b. macgillivrayi</i>	♂ ad	106.0g	normal
		♂ imm	91.8g	lean
		♀ imm	72.8g	very lean
		♂ ad	116.6g	normal
		♂ ad	107.4g	
		♀ ad	107.8g	normal
		♂ ad	126.6g	normal
Port Lincoln Parrot (or Parrakeet)	<i>Barnardius zonarius</i>	♂ ad	106.5g	lean
		♂ ad	95.5g	normal
		♂ ad	114.7g	
		♂ imm	126.0g	very lean
		♀ imm	113.0g	
		♀ ad	129.4g	
		♀ ad	120.5g	normal
		♀	116.8g	lean
		♂ ad	141.5g	a little lean
Green Rosella	<i>Platycercus caledonicus</i>	♀ ad	91.1g	lean
		♀ imm	73.0g	lean
		♀ imm	100.8g	a little lean
		♀	102.1g	
Crimson Rosella	<i>Platycercus elegans</i>	♂ ad	148.9g	fat
		♂ ad	149.5g	
		♂ imm	114.5g	normal
		♀ ad	109.5g	a little lean
		♀ imm	90.5g	a little fat
		♀ ad	131.9g	normal
Yellow Rosella	<i>Platycercus flaveolus</i>	♂ ad	148.2g	a little lean
		♂ imm	93.4g	a little lean
Adelaide Rosella	<i>Platycercus adelaidae</i>	♂ ad	168.0g	very fat
		♂ imm	103.0g	normal
		♀ ad	97.5g	
		♀ imm	82.2g	normal
Eastern Rosella	<i>Platycercus eximius</i>	♂ ad	85.5g	normal
		♀ ad	115.2g	
		♀ imm	78.7g	normal
Pale-headed Rosella	<i>Platycercus adscitus</i>	♂ ad	132.3g	fat
		♂ ad	124.5g	
Northern Rosella	<i>Platycercus venustus</i>	♂ ad	83.1g	normal
		♂ ad	86.1g	
Western Rosella	<i>Platycercus icterotis</i>	♂ imm	45.0g	lean
		♂	64.9g	fat
		♂ imm	65.1g	normal
Red-rumped Parrot (or Parrakeet)	<i>Psephotus haematonotus</i>	♂ ad	70.3g	very fat
		♂ ad	56.2g	normal
		♂ imm	70.0g	normal
		♂ imm	65.6g	
		♀ ad	57.3g	lean
		♀ ad	62.2g	a little lean

Mulga Parrot (or Many-coloured Parrakeet) <i>Psophodes varius</i>	♂ ad	55.7g	
	♂ ad	52.2g	normal
	♂ ad	45.2g	lean
	♂ imm	50.0g	
	♀ ad	46.7g	normal
	♀ ad	45.4g	lean
	♀ imm	39.7g	a little lean
	♀ imm	50.5g	fat
	♀ imm	44.3g	normal
Golden-shouldered Parrot (or Parrakeet) <i>Psephotus chrysopterygius</i>	♂ ad	49.6g	normal
	♂ ad	50.5g	normal
Yellow-fronted Parrakeet (or Kakariki) <i>Cyanoramphus auriceps</i>	♂ imm	50.1g	*
	♀	41.5g	*
Red-fronted Parrakeet (or Kakariki) <i>C. novaezelandiae</i>	♂ ad	65.4g	normal
	♂ ad	65.0g	
Bourke's Parrot (or Parrakeet) <i>Neophema bourkii</i>	♂ ad	36.1g	normal
	♂	34.1g	
	♂ ad	31.0g	a little lean
	♀ ad	49.4g	normal
	♀ ad	35.6g	normal
Blue-winged Parrot (or Parrakeet) <i>Neophema chrysostoma</i>	♂ ad	39.6g	a little fat
	♂ ad	55.2g	fat
	♂ ad	35.3g	normal
	♂	34.1g	
	♀ ad	32.0g	normal
	♀ ad	39.8g	fat
Elegant Parrot (or Parrakeet) <i>Neophema elegans</i>	♂ imm	42.1g	*
	♀ ad	32.1g	normal *
Turquoise Parrot (or Turquoise Parrakeet) <i>Neophema pulchella</i>	♂ ad	31.5g	a little lean
	♂ ad	28.7g	
	♂ imm	25.4g	normal
Scarlet-chested Parrot (or Splendid Parrakeet) <i>Neophema splendida</i>	♂ ad	30.1g	
	♂ ad	36.1g	normal
	♂ ad	39.6g	
	♂ ad	35.0g	normal
	♂	34.8g	a little lean
	♂	35.7g	normal
	♂	27.7g	
	♂ ad	33.2g	normal
	♀ imm	23.6g	
Swift Parrot (or Parrakeet) <i>Lathamus discolor</i>	♂ ad	69.1g	a little fat
	♂ ad	65.8g	normal
	♀ ad	77.3g	normal
	♀ ad	70.0g	fat
	♀	75.7g	
	♀ ad	72.2g	
Black Parrot <i>Coracopsis nigra</i>	♂ ad	113.7g	very lean
	♀ ad	230.2g	
Grey Parrot <i>Psittacus erithacus</i> <i>P. e. timneh</i>	♀ ad	368.5g	normal
	♀ ad	427.3g	fat
	♂ ad	281.3g	normal
	♀ ad	202.3g	lean

Senegal Parrot	<i>Poicephalus senegalus</i>	♂ ad	122.9g	normal
		♀ ad	101.7g	lean
Red-bellied Parrot	<i>Poicephalus rufiventris</i>	♂ ad	110.7g	a little lean
		♂ ad	116.7g	a little lean
Meyer's Parrot	<i>Poicephalus meyeri</i>	♂ ad	96.2g	a little lean
		♂ ad	138.3g	a little fat
		♂ ad	114.0g	normal
		♂ ad	105.8g	normal
		♀ ad	82.3g	lean
		♀ ad	73.7g	lean
		♀ ad	81.6g	
Grey-headed (or Madagascar) Lovebird	<i>Agapornis cana</i>	♂ ad	26.5g	
		♂	28.7g	normal
		♀ ad	25.0g	normal
Red-faced Lovebird	<i>Agapornis pullaria</i>	♂ ad	32.4g	
		♂ ad	33.6g	a little fat
		♂ ad	27.0g	lean
		♀ ad	29.9g	normal
		♀ ad	31.2g	normal
Black-winged (or Abyssinian) Lovebird	<i>Agapornis taranta</i>	♂ ad	50.9g	normal *
		♂ ad	43.1g	normal *
Peach-faced Lovebird	<i>Agapornis roseicollis</i>	♂ ad	40.0g	
		♀ ad	34.7g	
Fischer's Lovebird	<i>Agapornis fischeri</i>	♀ imm	30.1g	
Masked Lovebird	<i>Agapornis personata</i>	♀ ad	40.8g	
Nyasa Lovebird	<i>Agapornis lilianae</i>	♂ ad	26.0g	normal
		♀ imm	29.3g	
Black-cheeked Lovebird	<i>Agapornis nigrigenis</i>	♂ ad	33.7g	*
Vernal Hanging Parrot	<i>Loriculus vernalis</i>	♂ ad	26.2g	normal *
		♂ imm	30.5g	*
		♂ ad	25.3g	normal*
		♀ ad	22.2g	normal*
Philippine Hanging Parrot	<i>Loriculus philippensis</i>	♂ ad	32.0g	normal
		♀ imm	35.0g	normal
Blue-crowned Hanging Parrot	<i>Loriculus galgulus</i>	♀ ad	41.6g	normal*
		♀ imm	30.0g	normal
Alexandrine Parrakeet	<i>Psittacula eupatria</i>	♂ ad	171.7g	a little lean
Rose-ringed (or Ring-necked) Parrakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>	♂ ad	95.8g	normal
		♂ ad	131.2g	
		♀ juv	69.4g	normal
Plum-headed Parrakeet	<i>Psittacula cyanocephala</i>	♂ ad	64.9g	
		♂ ad	54.2g	normal
		♂ ad	70.2g	normal
		♂ ad	69.2g	v. little lean
Derbyan Parrakeet	<i>Psittacula derbiana</i>	♂ ad	219.8g	fat *
Moustached Parrakeet	<i>Psittacula alexandri</i>	♂ ad	89.2g	normal
	<i>P. a. fasciata</i>	♂ ad	91.7g	very lean
Red-bellied Macaw	<i>Ara manilata</i>	♂ ad	291.5g	a little lean
		♀ ad	250.0g	normal
		♀ ad	299.2g	normal
		♀	253.5g	normal
Illiger's Macaw	<i>Ara maracana</i>	♀ ad	252.0g	normal *
		♀ ad	297.0g	*

Red-masked Conure	<i>Aratinga erythrogenys</i>	♂ ad	116.6g	a little lean *
		♂ ad	119.8g	a little lean *
Golden-capped Conure	<i>Aratinga auricapilla</i>	♂ imm	102.7g	normal *
		♀ ad	103.8g	normal *
		♀ ad	132.6g	normal *
Jandaya Conure	<i>Aratinga jandaya</i>	♀ ad	117.0g	*
Orange-fronted (or Petz's) Conure	<i>Aratinga canicularis</i>	♀ ad	50.4g	*
		♀ ad	67.2g	a little lean
Brown-throated Conure	<i>Aratinga pertinax</i>	♂ imm	63.3g	a little lean
		♀ imm	63.6g	normal
Patagonian Conure	<i>Cyanoliseus patagonus</i>	♀ ad	206.1g	normal
		♀ ad	216.1g	a little fat
		♀ ad	195.3g	a little lean
Maroon-bellied Conure	<i>Pyrrhura frontalis</i>	♀ ad	99.6g	normal
Austral Conure	<i>Enicognathus ferrugineus</i>	♂ ad	100.2g	*
Slender-billed Conure	<i>Enicognathus leptorhynchus</i>	♂ ad	223.2g	fat
		♀ ad	236.7g	a little fat
Monk (or Quaker) Parrakeet	<i>Myiopsitta monachus</i>	♀ ad	72.0g	
Sierra (or Aymara) Parrakeet	<i>Bolborhynchus aymara</i>	♂	23.6g	lean*
		♀ ad	21.1g	lean*
Barred (or Lineolated) Parrakeet	<i>Bolborhynchus lineola</i>	♂ imm	45.7g	normal
		♂ ad	29.2g	
		♀ ad	56.9g	a little fat
Andean Parrakeet	<i>Bolborhynchus orbygniesius</i>	♀ imm	34.3g	normal*
Mexican Parrotlet	<i>Forpus cyanopygius</i>	♀ ad	13.8g	*
		♂ ad	25.6g	*
		♂ ad	22.5g	*
		♀ ad	30.2g	normal*
		♀ ad	28.5g	normal*
		♀ ad	26.4g	normal*
Green-rumped Parrotlet	<i>Forpus passerinus</i>	♂ ad	21.4g	a little lean
		♂ imm	21.8g	normal
	<i>F. p. viridissimus</i>	♀ ad	26.3g	normal
		♂ ad	23.1g	normal
		♀	18.2g	normal
		♀ ad	31.4g	
Blue-winged Parrotlet	<i>Forpus xanthopterygius</i>	♂ ad	22.9g	normal
Spengel's Parrotlet	<i>F.x. spengeli</i>	♀ imm	16.4g	a little lean
		♂ ad	21.2g	normal*
		♂ ad	20.7g	lean*
		♂	21.4g	*
		♀	26.3g	normal*
		♀ ad	28.2g	*
		♀	20.3g	*
		♀ ad	30.5g	normal*
		♂ ad	21.0g	*
		♀	24.8g	*
Spectacled Parrotlet	<i>Forpus conspicillatus</i>	♂ ad	20.6g	normal*
		♀	20.5g	*
Pacific(or Celestial) Parrotlet	<i>Forpus coelestis</i>	♂ ad	21.9g	normal*
		♀ ad	22.7g	

Yellow-faced Parrotlet	<i>Forpus xanthops</i>	♂ ad	30.3g	a little fat*
		♂ ad	32.9g	normal*
		♂ imm	24.2g	
		♀ ad	27.5g	*
		♀	26.8g	*
Canary-winged Parrakeet	<i>Brotogeris versicolurus</i>	♀ ad	52.5g	lean*
Grey-cheeked (or Orange-winged) Parrakeet	<i>Brotogeris pyrrhopterus</i>	♀ imm	47.7g	*
Golden-winged Parrakeet	<i>Brotogeris chrysopterus</i>	♂ ad	53.4g	a little lean
Tui Parrakeet	<i>Brotogeris sanctithomae</i>	♀	49.1g	*
Pileated Parrot	<i>Pionopsitta pileata</i>	♂ ad	106.2g	normal
		♀ ad	72.7g	lean
Rose-faced Parrot	<i>Pionopsitta pulchra</i>	♀ ad	137.3g	normal*
Red-billed (or Coral-billed) Parrot	<i>Pionus sordidus</i>	♀ imm	113.8g	lean*
Scaly-headed (or Maximilian's) Parrot	<i>Pionus maximiliani</i>	♀ ad	199.8g	
White-capped Parrot (or White-crowned Pionus)	<i>Pionus senilis</i>	♀	120.1g	lean
Plum-crowned Parrot (Pionus)	<i>Pionus tumultuosus</i>	♀ ad	156.2g	a little lean*
Bronze-winged Parrot (Pionus)	<i>Pionus chalcopterus</i>	♂ ad	141.8g	lean *
White-fronted Amazon	<i>Amazona albifrons</i>	♂ ad	129.0g	lean
		♀ ad	156.4g	a little lean
Tucuman Amazon	<i>Amazona tucumana</i>	♀ imm	214.3g	normal *
Green-cheeked Amazon	<i>Amazona viridigenalis</i>	♂ ad	205.4g	lean *
		♂ ad	215.9g	lean *
Lilac-crowned Amazon	<i>Amazona finschi</i>	♂ ad	203.0g	a little lean*
		♂ ad	316.0g	normal*
		♀ ad	231.0g	*
		♀ ad	205.0g	a little lean*
Red-lored Amazon (Lilacine Amazon)	<i>Amazona autumnalis</i>	♂ ad	183.7g	normal
	<i>A. a. lilacina</i>	♂ imm	226.8g	lean*
Blue-fronted Amazon	<i>Amazona aestiva</i>	♂ ad	393.5g	a little fat
		♂ ad	404.5g	fat
		♀	182.7g	lean
	<i>A.a.xanthopteryx</i>	♀ ad	329.8g	*
Yellow-crowned (or Yellow-fronted) Amazon	<i>Amazona ochrocephala</i>	♂ ad	486.0g	normal
		♂ ad	434.5g	normal
		♀ imm	204.5g	lean
		♀ ad	547.0g	
Orange-winged Amazon	<i>Amazona amazonica</i>	♂ imm	284.7g	normal
		♀ ad	265.0g	lean
		♀ ad	217.5g	lean
Mealy Amazon	<i>Amazona farinosa</i>	♀ ad	492.3g	normal
Hawk-headed Parrot	<i>Deroptyus accipitrinus</i>	♂ ad	232.6g	normal

References

- ERRITZOE, J. (1985). Geschlechts- and Altersbestimmung bei Vögeln. *Der Präpaartor* 31:81-93.
- FORSHAW, J.M. & COOPER, W.T. (1989). *Parrots of the World* (Third Edition), Blandford Press, Dorset, England.

BOOK REVIEWS

A GUIDE TO GRASS PARROTS

Toby Martin is one of Australia's best known aviculturists, a specialist in *Neophemas* - or grass parrots, as they are known there. He has lectured at many meetings, including some in the UK. In 1989 Australian Birdkeeper published his book *A Guide to... Neophema & Psephotus Grass Parrots*- an invaluable and colourful manual on the subject. Now the revised edition has been published. This is even more colourful, containing photographs of some of the newer mutations. Its 88 glossy pages contain an incredible 180 colour photographs. This is true to Australian Birdkeeper's style of never stinting on colour.

As a photographic guide to species and mutations alone it is worth much more than the £13.95 for which it sells in the UK. Some of the mutations depicted are not available in the UK; nevertheless, it is interesting to observe that in Australia there are pied, cinnamon, red-winged and olive Hooded Parrakeets, for example. Redrump mutations are shown in 31 photographs - the lutino opaline is especially eye-catching.

This book covers all the *Neophemas*, Redrumps, Many-colours, Blue-bonnets, Hoodeds and Golden-shouldered. Under each species there is information on sexing and mutations. In addition there is advice on housing, feeding, breeding, nest-boxes, hybrids (they must be avoided, says the author), ringing, keeping records and surgical sexing.

This is a highly practical guide, written as the result of years of experience. For example, Toby Martin relates how one day he found a number of young birds (Bourke's, Turquoisines and Splendids) dead on the floor in holding aviaries. His first thought was that cats or owls had disturbed them during the night. When he mentioned the occurrence to another breeder, he asked if there were any Elegants in the same aviary. There were. He was told that Elegants 'bomb' the other birds at dusk and hit them on the head with their beaks. He went to the aviaries at dusk - and that is exactly what was happening. Since then he has never housed young Elegants with other *Neophemas*.

This book is an absolute must for all breeders of these beautiful Australian parrakeets. It is available price £13.95 plus 75p postage from The Bookshop, Southern Aviaries, Tinkers Lane, Hadlow Down, Uckfield, East Sussex TN22 4EU. Tel:01825 830283 & 830930/Fax:01825 830241. It is also available from other avicultural booksellers.

Rosemary Low

AFRICAN BIRDS IN FIELD & AVIARY: A guide to a mixed collection

This latest offering from South Africa's Avicultural Research Unit (ARU) is a valuable addition to modern avicultural literature for it contains much original material - particularly in relation to nutrition (with detailed information about foods consumed in the wild by many species), breeding behaviour, husbandry, descriptions (including, where applicable, succinct but informative notes on identifiable races and an invariably useful array of synonyms for many species).

I confess that I remain somewhat nonplussed by the choice and range of species chosen for inclusion in the book. They include among others partridges, francolins, button quail, guineafowl, pigeons and doves, sandgrouse, parrots and a comprehensive array of weavers, whydahs, waxbills, etc. Softbilled species are not included, but - oddly, I think - the Congo Peafowl makes an appearance among better known gallinaceous species.

When judging any good book - and this is a good one - reviewers, if they are honest, will admit to a need to discover some kind of pinprick error on which to heap criticism if only to prove they have read the work from cover to cover! Well, I spotted one or two minor inaccuracies: Baglafecht (Weaver) becomes 'Bagafecht', in both text and index. There are also one or two type lapses in which capitals should have replaced lower-case. But there is so much that is good and informative, and the authors' efforts to make the book useful are so transparently obvious, that such transgressions should not be allowed to diminish its value to aviculturists.

Edited by Neville Brickell and Trevor Konigkrammer, one of its most important aspects is that it draws heavily on the experience and expertise of many practicing South African aviculturists. It has more than 270 pages including a central section of generally excellent colour photographs depicting 47 species. Many accurate black-and-white illustrations by Rex M. Shirley and Karen de Klerk complement the informative text.

Aside from the separate species' descriptions and information, there are chapters dealing with housing, breeding, feeding, diseases, vermin, catching and handling - even hints on photographing birds in captivity. There are also 15 pages of distribution maps covering 300 species.

Would this be a worthwhile addition to your library? Well, if you keep or are particularly interested in the families dealt with (specifically: Phasianidae - Spurfowl, Guineafowl, Francolin and Quail; Turnicidae - Button Quail and Quail Plover; Pteroclididae - Sandgrouse; Columbidae - Pigeons and Doves; Psittacidae - Parrots, Parrakeets and Lovebirds; Ploceidae - Sparrows, Weavers and Widow Birds (Whydahs), Estrildidae - Waxbills,

Mannikins, Twinspots, Firefinches, etc, Fringillidae - Finches and Canaries and Emberizidae - Buntings) the answer is a definite 'yes' for you are likely to find much between its covers (it is soft-back, by the way) that will be new to you, if you reside outside South Africa.

It is published by African Bird Book Publishing, 100 Innes Road, Durban 4001, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. Tel/Fax: (SA code followed by) 031 239701. It is not available in some countries but copies can be sent to the UK by surface mail at an inclusive cost of £16.00. Taking account of the present high price of books, this price represents excellent value.

On a purely personal note, I had never expected my name to be included among among a book's references in company with the late A.D. (Dudley) Nourse, one of South Africa's cricketing legends and an aviculturist of considerable ability who maintained a large collection at his home in Natal. I was introduced to him during a 1950's Springbok tour to the UK and we met on a couple of occasions at Old Trafford cricket ground when he broke-off from net practice to talk about birds in general - and specifically how he might be able to add one or two European species to his collection. I have not allowed this reminder of what I remember as a privileged and much cherished relationship to influence my opinion of what I regard as an admirable book.

Frank Woolham

THE BIRDS OF THE WESTERN PALEARCTIC

Oxford University Press recently published this two volume, boxed, concise edition based on *The Handbook of the Birds of Europe, the Middle East and North Africa: Birds of the Western Palearctic*, which was completed in 1994. The original nine volumes have been condensed into the present two - Vol-I Non-passerines (Ostrich to Woodpeckers) and Vol.2 Passerines (Tyrant Flycatchers to Warblers) - totalling over 1,800 pages. They have been edited by Dr David Snow and Professor Christopher Perrins.

This new concise edition includes an additional 80 species. This is the result of new species having been recorded in the region during the intervening years (the original project began in the 1970s) and others having been reclassified, and brings the total number of species described to 936. It is a fantastic array of species including as it does all the usual western European species, plus those of eastern Europe and western Russia, the Middle East and North Africa. Also included are North American vagrants/accidentals and 'exotic' introductions and escapees. In the latter categories are species such as the Avadavat, Common Waxbill, African and Indian Silverbills, Orange-cheeked Waxbill, Streaked Weaver, Common Myna, Ring-necked Parrakeet, Monk (or Quaker) Parrakeet, and Chilean Flamingo

which has been recorded breeding in Germany and the south of France. Not in these categories, but included in their own right are the Blue-naped Mousebird, which gets as far north as Mauritania and has been observed in northern Mali (and therefore just within North Africa), and the Grey-headed Kingfisher, whose range includes the Cape Verde Islands.

The 600 colour plates, the majority of which occupy just over one-third of a page each, illustrate most if not quite all of the species (I noticed that a few of the 'exotic' introductions/escapees are not illustrated) and races, showing when applicable an example of a male, female and juvenile in various plumages, e.g. summer, autumn, first winter; many birds are also shown in flight. The artists include (in alphabetical order) Norman Arlott, Trevor Boyer, Robert Gillmor, Alan Harris, Ian Lewington, Chris Rose and Dan Zetterström.

With the inclusion of an extra 80 species and more than 230 new colour plates to illustrate these additional species or to replace earlier paintings, it is obvious that an enormous amount of other material has had to be omitted in order to condense the original nine volumes into the present two. I have not been able to compare this edition with the original, but gather that the typeface in the two volume set is marginally smaller, the sonograms have gone and, of course the text has been drastically slimmed down. So, while really serious birdwatchers may not find all the information they would like, aviculturists with an interest in the birds of this vast area will in the main, I think, find it a splendid addition to their library. It is not cheap, of course, but then few bird books are these days, especially such well produced books with so many colour plates.

It is available only as a two-volume hardback set (ISBN 0 19 854099 X) priced £150. It can be ordered from specialist booksellers or direct from Oxford University Press by telephoning 01536 454 534 (within the UK) or +44 1536 454 534 (from abroad)/ E-mail: book.orders@oup.co.uk.

Birds of the Western Palearctic is also about to become available on a CD-ROM, described as combining 'the landmark nine volume series, the new concise edition, extensive video footage and sound recordings.'

Oxford University Press is also publishing at regular intervals in the form of a journal, *BWP Update*.

Malcolm Ellis

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NATIONAL DATES

This year's National Exhibition of Cage and Aviary Birds will be staged the 5th and 6th December, at the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham, and the Avicultural Society hopes that it will again be invited to have a stand there.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

At the Council Meeting held on the 4th April, I reported to the Council that there had been absolutely no response to 'A Suggestion for a New Award' by Philip Schofield (Vol.103, No.3, pp. 143-144), in which he suggested a new award that recognises 'services to aviculture'.

Neither had I received any response to the questions I posed under the heading 'What do you think?' The lack of any response must have come as no surprise to one of my predecessors as Editor, namely Prof. Hodges, who has long been critical of the almost total lack of response from the membership to issues raised in the magazine.

Since the Council Meeting I have however received one reply. It came from Philip King in Canada. He started his letter by asking if I remember him from 1964-1966, when he worked at the Bird House at London Zoo? I do and recall that he was nicknamed 'P. King Robin'. I had though forgotten that I proposed him for membership of the Society, back in those days when this was how it was done. He still has his letter of acceptance from A.A. Prestwich, and has remained a member ever since.

Philip arrived in Winnipeg in 1972, to work in the newly-planned Tropical House (similar in design to that at Chester Zoo) being designed by the then-Director, Clive Roots, who hired him. Philip is still at Winnipeg Zoo. He said nothing though about the present whereabouts of Clive Roots, who many members will remember principally from when he was Curator at Winged World, and described in the magazine many notable UK first breedings there. - Ed.

With regard to the suggestion for a new award and in answer to the question 'What do you think?', Philip King wrote:-

'Basically I agree with the concept of broadening the criteria for qualification, and think that focusing on propagation in all its aspects rather than first breedings alone would be a good step. I think one has to take care, however, to use the definition 'aviculture' very carefully. Does, for example, breeding vast quantities of birds for the pet or hobby market equate to the successful and repeated propagation of an endangered species, or a species rare or difficult to keep in captivity? I think not. If one looks at the stated objectives of the Society - 'the study of British and foreign birds in freedom and captivity' - one should assume that this would seem to indicate rather substantial values.

I have been a member of the American Zoo & Aquarium Association for almost as long as I have been a member of the Avicultural Society, and it has changed its philosophy regarding the awarding of the Edward H. Bean Award, which used to be for first breedings only. It is now given for such things as breeding programmes almost exclusively. In short, I suppose that I agree



Erritzoe, Johannes. 1998. "Body Masses (weights) Of Parrots." *The Avicultural magazine* 104(1), 27–38.

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