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### Extraordinary ... The Birds International, Inc.

Greg J. Harrison, DVM  
Dipl ABVP-Avian

Sitting on approximately 600 acres right smack in the middle of Manila, The Philippines, is Birds International, Inc (BII) — the world's largest, and considered by many to be the best, captive breeding facility.

Developed by Mr. Antonio De Dios over the past 30 years, the facility houses approximately 9,000 birds in large breeding aviaries and flight cages. It takes a staff of over 100 full-time employees to clean and feed the birds (including washing 25,000 feeding cups daily!).

BII is a true closed breeding farm that is not open to visitors. But the few invited guests can see something very



*BII closed the 1999 breeding season with a total of ten babies from the very rare and beautiful Spix macaws. (MB Walling/We Shoot Birds)*

special there — for example, the Cuban Amazon, Vinaceous Amazon, Red-tailed Amazon, Blue-headed Macaw, and the world's rarest parrot species — the Spix Macaw.

At the time of my visit, BII had 35 completely isolated baby hand-rearing rooms, and they were planning to add 20 more. The 1999 babies — including hawk-

headed parrots, many cockatoo species, blue-throated macaws, and even nearly 100 hyacinth offspring — were housed in individual cages. For many of the species, BII was the only facility in the world where they were bred that year.

Some of the offspring are sold through special distribution channels in Europe, each of which has its own quarantine station. After quarantine, Appendix I birds

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## Unusual Teflon® Toxicity

Kaci Beckett, DVM, Palm Bay, Florida

I normally advise my clients to “bake” branches in an oven prior to placing in a bird’s cage. Recently, one person used a Teflon®-coated cookie sheet for the process. The bird that received the branches quickly became ill: it developed fluid around the heart and liver, began bleeding and became comatose.

The bird was treated for polytetrafluoroethylene toxicity (with heparin) and recovered. However, shortly after it was released from the hospital, it was exposed to freshly sprayed insecticide and cigarette smoke and died.



## Using Leuprolide Acetate to Manage Common Avian Reproductive Problems\*

Donald W. Zantop, DVM  
Dipl ABVP-Avian  
Fallston, Maryland

Leuprolide acetate can be used in birds to treat chronic egg laying, cystic ovarian and oviductal disease, egg yolk peritonitis, granulomas of the ovary and oviduct, cloacal prolapse, continued ovulation after salpingo-

# Practice TIPS

hysterectomy, feather picking, and other behavior problems like aggression and persistent sexually induced regurgitation. Birds 300 grams or less are given 750 mcg/kg IM; birds greater than 300 grams are dosed at 500 mcg/kg IM. For most problems three injections are given at two-week intervals.



## Possible Therapy for Early Pox Lesions\*

Michael Lierz, DVM  
Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

We have used a technique in falcons whereby we burn very early pox lesions to halt further development of the pox lesion itself and to prevent a

viremia. If the lesions have become crusty and chappy, burning is no longer recommended because of potential injury to deeper tissues.

With the bird under anesthesia, a stump steel nail is heated in a gas flame. The nail must be red hot before it is touched directly to the lesion without any pressure. Only the epithelial cells of every pox lesion must be burned, and the burning should be confined to as small an area as possible to avoid damage to subepithelial tissue. When all lesions are treated, an antiseptic ointment is applied to avoid secondary infections.

## Summer Mist

Traci Tomte, Aurora, Colorado

Walgreens sells a device called “MISTER HB” for misting birds when the temperatures are above 85°F. It holds about 10 oz of water and can be pumped up to

produce pressure inside the vessel; a hose delivers a very fine mist. My birds thoroughly enjoy being misted by this and it is obvious that they prefer this over any “squirt-type” bottles. They hold their wings out and pose for the misting. It is also very quiet — no squeaking or other noises from the bottle.



## Treatment of Liver Disease in Psittacine Birds\*

Dr. Claudia and Manfred Hochleithner  
Vienna, Austria

Liver disease is one of the most common internal medicine problems we see in

.....  
**Our primary approach is to support the liver cells that are viable.**  
.....

our clinic. And our therapy is very similar for different kinds of liver disease. We know that each liver cell has the ability to be the site of regeneration as long as one-twelfth of the liver is still functional. Therefore, our primary approach is to support the liver cells that are still viable, and not to treat the parts of the liver that have degenerated. See Products at a Glance on page 3.

\* From Proceedings of the International Conference on Exotics, Ft. Lauderdale, May, 2000 (Vol 2.3 of EXOTIC DVM Veterinary Magazine) and used with permission of Zoological Education Network 800-981-4782.

## PRODUCTS AT A GLANCE

### For Supportive and Symptomatic Approaches to Liver Disease

- High quality, organic (pesticide-free) food, which we tube feed 20 ml/kg q12h (Harrison's Bird Foods Juvenile Hand-feeding Formula®)
- Multivitamins IM q24h (we think B-complex, A and D are most important) Every country has different formulations available (*ed note: If the bird has been on a formulated diet long-term, supplemental D<sub>3</sub> should be avoided.*)
- Lactulose 1 ml/kg PO q24h Laevolac®, Fresenius®, Cephulac® OTC drug
- Hepasan 1 ml/kg PO q24h Mixture of Indian herbs that supports liver cells and helps to excrete toxins Hepasan is produced by Indian Herbs Research and Supply Co. Ltd. Available in Europe – fax 43-1-796-3767
- Bykhepar 0.2/kg PO q24h Clamobutin Natrium and Chlorkrasol Essex, Munich
- Depending on the case, infusions of lactated Ringer's, amino acids (Aminin® - Merial GmbH) and glucose (5%) usually 5-20 ml/kg SC q12h

Our approach to liver disease in many cases includes the assumption that a bird on an all-seed diet HAS a liver disease — regardless of the reason he came to see us. If we have clinical signs (green or yellow feces), the case is more severe. The minimum we have to start with is supportive nutritional care.



#### Pesticide Video

“Green Blood — Red Tears” is a 1999 documentary film that examines the relationship between depression and suicide among US farmers. It presents studies that suggest use of organophosphate-based pesticides could increase the risk of suicide.

87 minutes

\$95 (plus \$5 shipping) for institutions

\$50 (plus \$5 shipping) for community nonprofit organizations.

Contact: Joe Terrence Gray  
Ag-Culture Media Project  
11503 Main St  
Middletown, KY 40243  
phone (502) 244-9444

From: Pesticide Action Network  
Updates Service (PANUPS)  
[panupdates@panna.org]

#### Antibiotics Article Reprints

“The Agricultural Use of Antibiotics and Its Implications for Human Health” GAO/RCED-99-74, 1999, U.S. General Accounting Office (US GAO). Presents research linking agricultural use of antibiotics to emergence of antibiotic-resistant strains of disease-causing bacteria, including *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter* and *Escherichia coli*.

33 pp

First copy free, additional copies \$2

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web site [www.gao.gov](http://www.gao.gov)

Aren't you glad you use HBD?  
Don't you wish everyone did?

#### Frederick B. Shulak Endows Avian Fund

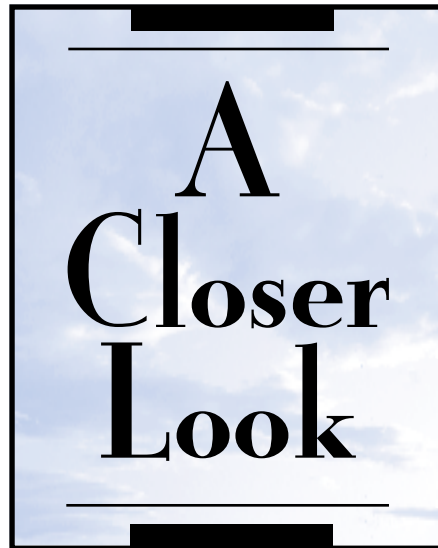
Dr. Fred Shulak, of the North Branch Animal Hospital in Southfield, Michigan, has established a generous charitable bequest through his personal trust for the College of Veterinary Medicine at Michigan State University (MSU). This bequest will fund the Frederick B. Shulak Endowed Fund in Avian Medicine to inspire others to pursue avian practice. A 1958 graduate of MSU, Dr. Shulak served in the United States Air Force and then worked in several private veterinary practices before being exposed to avian medicine, which became a passion of his. He was one of the charter members of the Association of Avian Veterinarians.



In addition to his special career focus on avian medicine, Dr. Shulak's personal time is spent pursuing interests in music, the arts, theater, sports and collectible cars. Here he is dressed as an Arabian street beggar in “Kismet.”

## Bach Flower Remedies for Birds

The interest in alternative therapies continues to increase in veterinary medicine. One reference, *Bach Flower Remedies for Animals*, offers some specific suggestions for use of infusions of certain flowers to affect the emotions of birds and thus restore health. Some examples are presented here.



From: Graham H, Vlamis G: *Bach Flower Remedies for Animals*. Findhorn Press, 850-893-2920 [www.findhornpress.com](http://www.findhornpress.com) \$12.95

Flower	Effect	Indications for Use
<b>Beech</b> ( <i>Fagus sylvatica</i> )	Restores tolerance and flexibility	Birds that peck intruders or strangers
<b>Cerato</b> ( <i>Ceratostigma willmottiana</i> )	Restores self-assurance, confidence and initiative	Birds, especially parrots, that develop severe behavioral problems in the absence of other members of their own species
<b>Chicory</b> ( <i>Chicorium intybus</i> )	Remedies possessiveness, clinging behavior and attention-seeking	Birds that sulk when they don't get their own way. Chicory has been successfully used in a swan that became overdependent on humans following the death of its mate.
<b>Heather</b> ( <i>Calluna vulgaris</i> )	Remedies noisy attention-seeking and loneliness	Birds, especially Amazon parrots, cockatiels, mynah birds and macaws, that will not be quiet.
<b>Impatiens</b> ( <i>Impatiens glandulifera</i> )	Restores patience, calm and cooperation	For birds, especially parrots, that are irritable
<b>Mustard</b> ( <i>Sinapsis arvensis</i> )	Restores serenity, dispels gloom	For gloomy birds, such as parrots, that remove their own feathers
<b>Oak</b> ( <i>Quercus robur</i> )	Restores resilience, endurance, strength and stamina	Birds, such as parrots, that spend all day trying to gnaw through a perch or branch. Oak has also proved effective in combination with Olive in treating seabirds poisoned and exhausted by oil slicks and pollution.
<b>Rock Rose</b> ( <i>Helianthemum nummularium</i> )	Restores courage, bravery, and calmness	Wild birds can die of terror so Rock Rose should be administered when they are caught, confined or handled, and in attempts to tame them.
<b>Scleranthus</b> ( <i>Scleranthus annuus</i> )	Restores stability and balance	Birds whose wings have been clipped, to minimize lopsidedness, and for other wing injuries
<b>White Chestnut</b> ( <i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i> )	Remedies preoccupation and sleeplessness	Birds restless when egg laying or during incubation
<b>Rescue Remedy</b> Combines Impatiens, Clematis, Rock Rose, Cherry Plum and Star of Bethlehem as a safe alternative to sedatives and tranquilizers.	For all birds visiting veterinarians, Rescue Remedy helps to relieve tension, which may mask the true nature of the presenting problem and makes for easier examination. (Apply 2 drops directly to the tongue.)	Birds (from 19 gram finches to 1356 gram ravens) should always be given Rescue Remedy no matter what condition they are suffering from, as they are easily stressed. Rescue Remedy, or its equivalent, should be given before treatment or procedures such as wing wrapping, leg splinting, wound debriding, or when banding for release. Where possible birds should be placed in the dark for a short while after administration.



## New Packaging Tips

You know how chips always seem to stay fresher if they are left in their original packaging with the top rolled down to keep out the air? It's the same with Harrison's Bird Foods. To increase the storage time, HBD products should be stored only in the new, oxygen-impermeable bags with the zip top closures. The food should not be taken out of the package, nor put in plastic containers, nor refrigerated or frozen. The new packaging was created to extend the freshness while maintaining HBD's commitment to avoiding preservatives. HBD recommends that opened packages be used within 4-6 weeks for best results.

## Special Pepper Product

The Adult Lifetime Formula with 1% cayenne pepper can once again be ordered from HBD. Only available in Coarse grind, the pepper provides an extra dose of capsiicum. In converting birds to a formulated diet, this food is especially useful for Amazons and others that like hot and spicy foods. The ALC pepper formula also appears to temporarily reverse clinical signs associated with papillomatosis during the time the bird is consuming the food. There is also a clinical impression that South American species set up for

**Cayenne  
Pepper**



breeding do better in general on a pepper diet; this is not true for African, Asian or Australian species.



## Best of Avian Examiners

Reminder: The four-year collection of tips and tricks for using HBD products and other hints for avian medicine is available upon request. Reviewed and updated in 1998, the compilation of articles from *Avian Examiners* No. 1-12 (1994-1997) still offers vital, relevant information to support your bird practice. Call 800-346-0269 for a hard copy, or visit <[www.harrisonsbirdfoods.com](http://www.harrisonsbirdfoods.com)> to access the HBD Library online.



## Still Have Some Old HBD Bags?

A knot-tying technique known as drawn work was used by Tony Sonza of Micco, Florida to make place mats from recycled HBD cloth bags.

## International Harrison's

HBD now has four major international importers of the Harrison's Bird Foods, and "The Organic Difference" brochure has been translated into German and Dutch.

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**Q Question:**

Can you tell me if it is uncommon for a breeding cockatiel (currently laying eggs) to have rather pungent-smelling poop? Once the bird stops cycling, her poop returns to normal, but it is quite voluminous and rather smelly. The bird is on pellets and appears to be in good health otherwise.

**A Answer:**

This is common in breeder females for three reasons:

1. The hen holds her stool to avoid fouling the nest.
2. The end gut chamber (cloaca) has had to enlarge to accommodate the passage of the egg.
3. For various reasons, the food may not be totally digesting and is fermenting in the gut, especially under the above circumstances. You may consider prescribing a

digestive enzyme (to boost the pancreas), a fecal exam for parasites and bacteria, or antigen test for giardia. There could be malabsorption from these, or even a virus may cause digestive problems in breeding cockatiels.

**Q Question:**

We recently had a 3-year-old Quaker present with signs of depression and inappetence. Laboratory tests revealed high liver enzymes and an elevated zinc level. While hospitalized we converted him to HBD easily. The owner had several of the bird's toys and previous foods tested and we were wondering what the levels of zinc are in your diets. I assume you have some in the



# Ask the BIRD GUY

## VETERINARIANS AND BIRD OWNERS ARE INVITED

to submit questions regarding the use of Harrison's Bird Foods. Go to the web site <[www.harrisonsbirdfoods.com](http://www.harrisonsbirdfoods.com)> and click on "Ask the Bird Guy." An archive of previous questions and answers may be viewed at "Bird Guy Responses."

food though not as an additive in and of itself. Another food company uses zinc oxide as an additive in their foods, and the Quaker was eating some of it as a source of pellets. Any comments?

**A Answer:**

We do not add zinc to our diets. We, like you, see a lot of elevations and never a deficiency. Our levels run in the 30-40 mg/kg level from the ingredients. So until we see the zinc situation differently we will continue to keep levels low.

**Q Question:**

A 3½ month old male senegal, is being treated for chlamydia. What type of food should I recommend for him?

**A Answer:**

Most sick birds need the extra boost from High Potency® formulas, which can be fed for 3-6 months.

**Q Question:**

A client has been feeding Adult Lifetime Coarse®, but even after three years, the bird still has some black in its feathers.

**A Answer:**

Feed High Potency® formula for at least a month each year during the molt. Also, from time to time, it may be wise to review with all your clients the recommendations for using and particularly, storing, a product like Harrison's Bird Food that does not contain any preservatives:

1. Severely limit the amount of supplements (people food) being offered.
2. Feed only enough fresh food at one time that the bird will consume at one sitting.
3. Do not "top off" previous pellets left over in the bowl.
4. Carefully scrutinize each bag of food — smell it, taste it — as it is opened and used

**Q Question:**

We would like to take our birds camping at an altitude of approximately 7400 feet. It can get relatively cool during the night, even during the summer months. We have put in a new propane heater that is vented to the exterior of the camper, but have been told to use an alternative heating source. We do not have electricity available. What temperatures can a bird withstand without causing harm? And what would be a good alternative source of heat? Heated rocks in a pan below their cages?

**A Answer:**

Birds are slightly more sensitive to carbon monoxide than people, so you would want to monitor for safe levels with a detector. There are various battery-operated heating appliances at camping stores. Birds can easily handle temperatures down to 40°F if they are not in the wind. Rocks worked in the olden days, so why not?

**U Update:**

We did heat up rocks (approx. 10"L x 6"W x 2"D) with our Coleman stove outside of the camper and the two macaws were snug.



# Using Harrison's

## Liver Back to Normal

Denise Whitlow

My blue-fronted Amazon, Jae Jae, was suffering from an enlarged liver (it was 5 times its normal size!) when I took him for a routine checkup. I was shocked and panicked at the thought of losing him. The vet said that I would have to change his diet to a pelleted diet, which made me a bit nervous because I had tried store bought pellets before and he would have NOTHING to do with them. The veterinarian gave me a one pound bag of the Harrison's Adult Lifetime Coarse® and my bird LOVED it. A couple of months later, after some antibiotics and a new diet, his liver was back to normal size! The Harrison's diet helped his health, but it also helped his mood. He



"Curly" Before and After

actually became better behaved on the healthier diet!

## Sensitivity to Food Dyes?

Sarah Schondelmeyer

Curly, an African Grey, came to me severely plucked. He often bounced up and down, flew after and attacked others, and pulled out every feather he could reach. I had taken him to two vets who told me there is really no hope for birds like this. One vet even offered to give him Prozac and Valium. I did not want a drugged bird.

I switched Curly to Harrison's Bird Food. I also used Dr. Harrison's Aloe/Penetrant® spray for feather pluckers and tried some behavioral modification techniques. Curly soon turned into a different bird. He is now much calmer and absolutely gorgeous! After switching his food, I now believe that he is sensitive to food dyes and preservatives. If he accidentally gets a hold of anything with artificial colors in it he "goes nuts" within an hour, pulling out

feathers and biting. I now only feed Harrison's and make sure to keep dyed foods out of the house.

## No More Seed Junkies

Susan Olson

My vet recently recommended that I get with the program and convert my two "seed junkies" over to Harrison's Adult Lifetime Fine®. I thought it would be nearly impossible. I am writing to let you know that within one week of our vet visit both my lovebird and parakeet are eating Harrison's. Thank you for a wonderful product my birds enjoy and that I know is good for them.

## Happy Cockatiels

Vicki Anger

I have four cockatiels that I have been eating Harrison's Bird Food for seven months. I had to let you know how happy it makes me feel looking at my "babies" and seeing how they have changed: their coloring has improved, and they seem to be extremely happy and playful.



© 2000 McBird - Melissa



This white macaw with blue-tipped wings (called a blue-winged macaw) is actually the offspring from normal, red-colored, scarlet macaw parents. (MB Walling/We Shoot Birds)



Mr. DeDios stands in front of a large flight cage — 30 x 50 x 8 meters — where 150 juvenile macaws, representing all of the large macaw species except the Spix Macaw, are housed. (L Harrison)

Continued from page 1

are sent only to approved breeders; Appendix II birds are sent to breeders, collectors and selected pet markets. Some more common species, such as sun conures, are bred in colonies, and the babies are shipped to Japan at

four weeks of age.

All birds are tested negative for polyomavirus and PBFV prior to shipping; all birds entering Germany must be prophylactically treated for chlamydia.

It is very unusual in a collection of this size to find such an almost nonexistent level of feather picking. The credit for this may go to the excellent care, suitable climate, good diet and lack of visitors.



HBD's Avian Examiner is brought to you as a service of HBD International, Inc., manufacturer and distributor of Harrison's Bird Foods. This publication is part of HBD's commitment to building avian practice through education and nutritionally sound diets. Although every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information presented herein (particularly drug doses), it is the responsibility of the clinician to critically evaluate the contents, to stay informed of pharmacokinetic information and to observe recommendations provided in the manufacturers' inserts. Reader responses, comments and suggestions are encouraged. Please mail to Avian Examiner Publications, 5700 Lake Worth Road, Suite 107, Lake Worth, FL 33463 or fax to 561-641-0234.



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