

AWIPARROTS

worldwide



Interview
with
**Jacobo
LACS**
Zoologico del Istmo
PANAMA

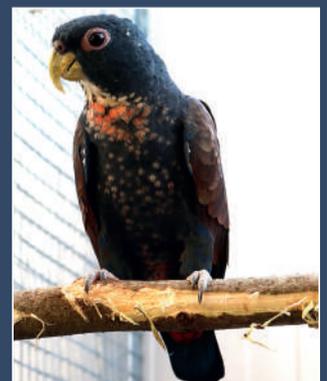
Amazon Parrots at Jan Nedelnik's facility

Simone Durigon: My parrot breeding in Italy 

GENETIC CALCULATOR

Feather plucking solutions

Domestic accidents and fractures in parrots



FYNBOS
PUBLISHING





MAY
2021

CONTENTS

122 **JACOBO LACS:**
My life devoted to nature
By Alena Winner

136 **Remembering**
Ing. Jan Nedelnik,
the famous Amazon Parrot
breeder
By Alena Winner

146 **SIMONE DURIGON:**
My parrot breeding
in Italy
By Christof Götz

152 **Domestic accidents**
and fractures - Loro
Parque Fundación
breeding tip
By Rafael Zamora Padrón

**MONTHLY DIGITAL MAGAZINE
FOR PARROT BREEDERS AND FRIENDS**

MAY 2021

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FYNBOS

Publisher

NAKLADATELSTVÍ FYNBOS s.r.o.
Dubne 168, 373 84 Dubne, Czechia
Company identification number: 07292520
VAT ID: CZ07292520

International standard serial number

ISSN 2695-138X

Registration number

MK ČR 11228
State: Czechia

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**154 Feather damaging
(plucking) in parrots**

By Rosemary Low

**162 Genetic Calculator
Project**

By Martin Rašek



Jacobo Lacs

My life devoted to nature



Text by Alena Winner & Jacobo Lacs
© Photos by Ydale Willinger & Tony Silva

Regrettably, the current times don't favour travelling, but thanks to technical possibilities such as video calls, it is viable, at least indirectly, to move over to the other side of the world within a few minutes. Today we are going to visit Panama, specifically the Portobelo area. It is a fortress on the Caribbean coast, which was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1980. Why are we exactly "heading" to this exquisite historic locality, surrounded by captivating scenery? I thought you might like it here. The stunning Conservation Centre Zoologico del Istmo with 720 aviaries is located in Puerto Lindo about twenty minutes by car from here. They take care of 50 species of mammals and 450 species and subspecies of birds, 140 of which are represented by parrots.

◀ **Jacobo Lacs - a bird breeder and the director of the Zoologico del Istmo with the young blue Black-headed Parrot**

In Memoriam:

Remembering Ing. Jan Nedelnik

The famous Amazon Parrot breeder



By Alena Winner



Red-spectacled Amazon (*Amazona pretrei*)

In April this year, two years have passed since the world-famous breeder Ing. Jan Nedelnik left us quite suddenly and unexpectedly at the age of 67. This charismatic bird lover went down in the history of parrot breeding, especially with his comprehensive collection of Amazon parrots and their subspecies. He built a breeding facility in Koberice near Prostějov, and only unobtainable species were missing to complete his collection – Kawall's Amazon (*Amazona kawalii*), Puerto Rican Amazon (*Amazona vittata*) and Imperial Amazon (*Amazona imperialis*). At present, the breeding continues under the direction of Jan's family. Let's remember this amazing person by reading some lines for parrot breeders, which we wrote in 2016.

Simone Durigon

MY PARROT BREEDING IN ITALY



By Christof Götz



"I know all parrots are wonderful but in life we have to make a choice".

Simone Durigon
Italian parrot breeder,
author of articles
and organizer of the
workshops related
to breeding.



How did you make your way into aviculture and which steps did you make on the way to the broad collection of parrots you take care of today? Was it a smooth way?

I started my experience in aviculture when I was 6. From a very early age, I was fascinated by all kinds of birds and animals, and when my father decided to buy some finches and canaries, I began to know the step-by-step management of these little birds. Parrots became my first aim because I found them more interesting - I saw them on book covers at the time.

At the age of 8-9 I had some aviaries with budgies, cockatiels, Lineolated Parakeets and some others, such as *Neophema* and *Agapornis* species. The interest grew dramatically and with the help of an expert

friend and mentor I took confidence with medium and large parrots, such as Alexandrines, Red-shouldered Macaws, Senegal Parrots and Amazons. I gradually learnt the techniques to hand-feed birds and take care of critical aspects of management, connecting it with the real needs of the species that live on different continents.

The way to become a serious breeder is of course full of good experiences, but sometimes it includes hard work and bitter happenings, for example when you face deaths, illnesses and other bad events.

I always stress the importance to link the real experience with studying: luckily, today we have many good books, and they can provide a lot of valuable help. Today I am focused on the *Pionites* genus, some African parrots and a few other species from South America.

DOMESTIC ACCIDENTS AND FRACTURES

LORO PARQUE FUNDACIÓN BREEDING TIP



By Rafael Zamora Padrón

When a bird enthusiast gets a parrot for the first time, it is very common for the new pet to suffer accidents due to the inexperienced caretaker's ignorance. For this reason, aviaries must be very well checked. A misplaced perch or wire used to hold food can be enough to become a death trap or the reason for the loss of a nail, toe, or even a foot.

When a parrot arrives for the first time at a new home or a breeding centre, it must pass a quarantine phase in which tranquillity must be the most important thing. In their new environment, they must get used to new sounds, new surroundings, people and sometimes other animals. This period largely determines the development of the bird for the future. If you are scared by anything unforeseen, you must know where to perch, and where to feel safe.

That is why it is good that at night they can have a night-light available to avoid a sudden flight that could end in an impact against walls or mesh. This type of accident generates insecurity in the birds and can end in injuries such as fractures, or psychological fears that are often difficult to correct. Another great danger occurs in tame parrots, raised by hand.

Red-shouldered macaw
(*Diopsittaca nobilis*)



By Rosemary Low

Feather Damaging (Plucking) in Parrots

Feather plucking is probably the most misunderstood and the most worrying problem that many parrot keepers will encounter. My advice has often been sought by inexperienced owners whose first line of enquiry was whether this was caused by mites and lice. If this happened, it would be extremely rare.

Feather plucking, feather picking (the ends of the feathers are bitten but not plucked out) and other feather damaging behaviours are, in fact, serious behavioural problems. It is no coincidence that this is frequently encountered with the most intelligent species: **Grey Parrots, Macaws and Cockatoos.**

THESE BIRDS NEED CONSTANT STIMULATION FOR THE MIND AND FOR THE BEAK.

The same is true for the highly active and inquisitive *Pyrrhura* and *Psittacara* (some species formerly in the genus *Aratinga*) parakeets and Patagonian Conures (*Cyanoliseus patagonus*). Of course, it could occur in any species, including *Eclolais* Parrots.

Feather plucking is the removal or mutilation of feathers. It usually starts on the breast and/or thighs. Later the inner thighs and wings and, in Greys, the tail feathers might also be removed or bitten. This behaviour has similar characteristics to hair-pulling in humans (trichotillomania) and hair-pulling in mice, guinea pigs, rabbits, sheep, dogs, and cats. It is usually a psychological problem.

It should not be confused with feather loss in viral diseases such as psittacine beak and feather disease (Pbfd), which looks different and often includes the top of the head. Also, and especially in cockatoos, the beak becomes overgrown. In, for example, Budgerigars affected by viruses, feather loss commences with the flight and tail feathers. This disease occurs in the wild. Feather plucking does not; unfortunately, viral diseases do.

When does feather plucking occur?

It occurs after a stressful event, after periods of boredom and lack of stimulation when a parrot spends too long on its own and when it is in pain, Hormonal changes, when a bird becomes sexually mature or comes into breeding condition, are other causes, frequently seen in companion birds, as well as in breeding birds. It can also be seasonal - not permanent.

In many female parrots, especially Greys, plucking of the breast feathers occurs in May in Europe, with the warmer weather and lengthening hours of daylight.