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Back to basics in genus *Agapornis*
PART 2. – BLUE





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Contact

WhatsApp/Mobile: +420 602 275 299

E-mail: info@awiparrots.com

Company advertising

E-mail: info@awiparrots.com

Digital subscription

online orders on the web

www.awiparrots.com

Editorial team

Alena Winner

publisher & editor in chief

Rosemary Low

honorary member & professional consultant

Christof Götz

general parrot breeding

MVDr. Helena Vaidlová

avian medicine

Ing. Martin Rašek

general parrot breeding & mutations

Mgr. Hana Ash & Christopher Ash

translations & language corrections



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Experience with the breeding of Panama brown-throated conures

By Alena Winner & Jaco Lacs
DEL ISTMO CONSERVATION CENTER / PANAMA
Photos © AWIPARROTS



The Brown-throated Conure species (*Eupsittula pertinax*) is divided into fourteen subspecies, ranging in size from 24 to 26 cm. Today's article is devoted to the Panama brown-throated Conures (*Eupsittula pertinax ocularis*), which represent the smaller subspecies within its own species with their twenty-four centimetres. In September, I had the opportunity to see this charismatic subspecies at the Del Istmo Conservation Centre in Panama, at the home of the renowned exotic bird breeder Jaco Lacs. A total of fifteen pairs are bred here and under professional management, the rearing is regularly successful.

Jaco Lacs at his Del Istmo Conservation Center, PANAMA

Hyacinth Macaw breeding BEFORE AND TODAY

By Lumir Hornansky • **Photos by** the author and Alena Winner

I have been involved in breeding parrots for thirty-five years. I started with Scarlet-chested Parrots and Cobalt-rumped Parrotlets. I kept one pair of each species. Then I moved to a family house in Sobotovice and built up an ornamental fish farm there. However, my love for parrots did not cease and it did not take long before the first aviaries appeared in the garden, where I kept Australian parrot species for nine years - Red-winged Parrots, Australian king Parrots, Eastern Rosellas, Crimson Rosellas and others. The turning point came in the late 1990s when I had the privilege of meeting Mr. Zdeněk Pichlík, the breeder with a capital B, and acquired my first Blue-and-yellow Macaws and Red-and-green Macaws. Next came Scarlet Macaws from Mr. Divácký and at that time beautiful Hyacinth Macaws as well.



I had always been fascinated by Hyacinth Macaws, but unfortunately, I didn't have any luck breeding mine. However, after a short time following their acquisition, I managed to rear Blue-and-yellow Macaws and Red-and-green Macaws. In 2002 I was approached by my colleague Skákal, as he knew that I already had had some experience with macaws. At that time, he was breeding Hyacinth Macaws that were breaking eggs, so he asked me to help him with artificial incubation. His pair had two eggs at the time, which I picked up two days before hatching. This was also the reason why one chick failed to hatch and died. The other was saved.

After placing the eggs in the incubator, I set a higher humidity, specifically 70%, as this was time very close to hatching. The temperature was set at 37.1 °C.

I based this on the experience of rearing other larger macaw species, since the humidity must be raised continuously during incubation until it reaches the aforementioned 70%. Even so, I proceeded more

VIRUSES THAT CAN ENDANGER YOUR PARROTS

By MVDr. Helena Vaidlova



Nowadays, a single virus is gripping the human population worldwide, having changed the lives of almost everyone. Some entrepreneurs have not contracted COVID-19, yet the economic impact on their businesses has already been virtually devastating. School closures have made life difficult for many parents, and many people have lost their jobs as a result of the quarantine. It really does not matter whether the virus is of natural origin or escaped from a scientific laboratory. People have been getting acquainted with its characteristics and behaviour in recent weeks, trying to find a working way to combat it. **"Not to encounter it"** has so far been the most effective protection.

Back to basics in genus *Agapornis*

PART 2. Blue

By Dirk Van den Abeele
Ornitho-Genetics VZW, BELGIUM

Blue is a primary colour mutation in parrots. It is a psittacine mutation type CPR (Complete Psittacine Reduction) because this mutation makes all the psittacine present disappear – and this not unimportant: "in the feathers of the structural type".

In genus *Agapornis* a purebred blue mutation currently only exists in *A. personatus*. The first blue *A. personatus* was captured in the wild almost 100 years ago and transported to England. There the first blue young were bred. Blue *A. fischeri*, *A. nigrigenis* and *A. lilianae* were created by genetic introgression or transmutation. In *Agapornis roseicollis* we have a blue phenotype, but these birds are a selection type.

In 2019 it became clear that in *Agapornis fischeri* and *Agapornis personatus* (just as in budgerigars) there is a second blue mutation. It looks exactly the same as the other blue mutation. So they named it blue1 and blue2. Interesting detail: if we combine blue1 and blue2, we don't get blue birds, but the youngsters have a blueish / green (turquoise like) colour. According to the international agreements we call these Blue1Blue2, others will call them yellowface.

Psittacine

With both blue mutations the psittacine is missing from the feathers. Psittacine (or psittacofulvins or parrodienes) is a pigment which has so far only been found in parrots (psittaciformes), hence the

name psittacofulvins used by C.F.W. Krukenberg, who first identified the pigment in 1882. The colour of the psittacine varies from red to yellow. A major misunderstanding among certain breeders is that this pigment can be influenced by injecting colourants as is the case with carotenoid in canaries.

Inheritance of blue1 and blue2

The blue factor (blue1 and blue2) is an autosomal recessive mutation. This means that both males and hens can be split for blue.

This is an overview of a number of basic inheritance types:

Green x blue1:

100% green/blue1

In this combination all young are phenotypically (outwardly) green but genotypically heterozygous or green split for blue.

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